

World Tribune

No. 3162

THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

OCTOBER 24, 1997

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International U.N. Support Group Honors SGI President

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER
Tokyo, Sept. 13

At a meeting marking the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's call for the abolition of nuclear weapons, the World Federation of U.N. Associations lauded SGI President Ikeda for his dedication to peace. The award was given "in recognition of his invaluable services rendered in support of the United Nations and promotion of world peace."

WFUNA President Hashim Abdul Halim said that the United Nations is receiving support from people throughout the world who are demanding an end to war. He also lauded the SGI president for his relentless devotion to realizing a peaceful world.

WFUNA was founded in August 1946, only nine months after the birth of the United Nations. It is an international non-governmental organization de-



Youth from 50 countries look on as Mr. Ikeda receives a peace award.

voted to supporting the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter and to the promotion of public awareness and understanding of the activities of the United Nations and its agencies. It has member associations in almost 80 countries all over the world.

Mr. Ikeda remarked in his acceptance speech (which will be in an upcoming issue) that to so-

liday and invigorate the United Nations, it is vital to transcend national interests and bring together the goodwill of people and the passion of youth. More than 250 youth from 50 countries and territories were attending the event.

On the same day, Mr. Ikeda

PLEASE SEE U.N., 4

Forum Focuses on Hope in the Face of AIDS

By BUNNY ADAMS & GABRIELLE WISE
CORRESPONDENTS
New York, Sept. 27

"AIDS is not going to remain collected in pockets of people you don't know," said Dr. Iris Davis, keynote speaker at an SGI-USA-sponsored HIV/AIDS prevention and education forum today. Dr. Davis, a professor of medicine at the University of Maryland, dramatically illustrated her point by asking each 12th person in the audience to stand — on the average, one in 12 people in New York has AIDS or HIV.

With the theme "Embracing Hope and Possibilities," the day-long forum at the New York Culture Center enlightened members and their friends to the fact that this devastating disease must be faced with courage and hope. Dr. Davis encouraged each participant to be a warrior in his or her daily life when it comes to this disease. "HIV will not change," she said, "until we change." She believes that counseling and therapy can improve survival rates.

Jose Claudio of the New York University Medical Center gave a general overview of the disease, detailing exactly how HIV attacks the body's immune system. In spite of the preponderance of information on risk behavior, there are still believed to be 6,000 new HIV infections each day, he said. The World Health Organization estimates that by the year 2000, 30 to 40 million people will be infected globally.

Mr. Claudio explained ways to lessen the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, such as learning how to negotiate safer practices with one's sexual partners. "Of course, abstinence is 100 percent effective," he added.

The forum sponsored 10 afternoon workshops in which members and guests could speak or just listen and take notes. Among the topics of discussion were the emotional as-

PLEASE SEE AIDS, 4

A Destructive Course



The Grand Reception Hall, which Soka Gakkai members donated to the head temple in 1964, is demolished last year to make way for a new hall. Destruction of this and other Gakkai-donated structures shows Nikken's disdain for the SGI and its members. A special pullout section in this issue contains information and perspectives on his renewed campaign to destroy the SGI along with a message from SGI General Director Eiichi Wada and a timeline of the Seattle Incident trial.

VOICES
.....

**U.N. Day is Oct. 24.
Why do you feel we should continue
supporting the United Nations?**

Members from Hawaii joint territories respond:



I am a volunteer with the U.N. Association-Hawaii Division. U.N. associations nationwide provide forums to inform the public about the United Nations and the many global issues it addresses. The United Nations with its 185 member nations serves as an international forum for dialogues, helps to maintain peace in the world and parallels our Buddhist mission for kosen-rufu. I was so happy when CNN owner Ted Turner donated \$1 billion. I hope this will help Americans realize how important supporting the United Nations is for the helping the peoples of the world and for the sake of peace in the world.

— SALLY OKAZAKI, Honolulu



I attended a U.N.A.-Hawaii Division meeting where the speakers talked about the elimination of land mines. It is an important topic for the United Nations and for U.N. associations across the country. The land mine is a silent killer. It lays in wait for years and when stepped on maims the adult victims and usually kills little children. I was so happy when Princess Diana made the land mine issue one of her causes and brought world response to work to eliminate this tragic legacy. Most recently, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded for the cause of eliminating land mines! The United Nations is a most valuable global organization, and I heartily support it.

— MINAKO NAKAJIMA, Honolulu



To even consider such a satanic act as the detonation of nuclear weapons shows a total lack of respect for the environment as well as for human life. Therefore, the issue of nuclear disarmament, while extremely important, falls within the larger issue of global environmental problems.

The United Nations is limited by the self-

interest of sovereign nations. But we can transcend national interest by, as SGI President Ikeda says in his 17th peace proposal, "taking advantage of the constructive energies of NGOs in matters of policy-making." Thus, the United Nations is moving in the direction of reform, and while far from perfect, can serve as a forum for change on a global scale.

— ROY BRUNSON, Honolulu



I had not paid much attention to the United Nations and its functions until this September, when I participated in an SGI youth conference in Japan. SGI President Ikeda was honored for his work for peace by the World Federation of the U. N. Associations. President Ikeda has consistently made anti-nuclear peace proposals to the United Nations.

He encouraged the youth "to keep a vigilant eye on the world leaders" and also encouraged us to support the United Nations despite its problems. I came to a better understanding of why he really supports the United Nations. It is the only international forum where dialogue can take place and possibly prevent war from breaking out, so we don't destroy the planet and we can have a future!

— BRYAN ROONEY, Honolulu

Expressions

Reflections of Fall



Photo by Kirk Condyles.

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**WORLD TRIBUNE
MAILBOX**

A Wonderful Life

Thank you, Deborah Goodwin, for a superb "Perspective" (Sept. 19 *World Tribune*). I don't have a scanner and the *World Tribune* is still not available to download, so I typed the whole article to e-mail to my friends and family. Once again thank you for a wonderfully crafted tribute to the short but wonderful life of Princess Diana.

— MARTIN MOGEY, Allston, Mass.

Shrubs, Anyone?

Fall is a big time for gardening and the best time for planting shrubs. I would be interested in a short article in the *World Tribune* that would give suggestions about what shrubs provide a good supply of greens for the altar. Maybe one of the members who is a landscape professional could list a few shrubs that grow at least up to zone 6 with suggestions for full sun, part sun and shade options. I've had plants that work well for greens (hold up well in water and grow fast) and ones that don't do so well (branches are not very full, tend to droop quickly when cut). Up until now I've just depended on whatever is in my yard already, but I'd like to plant something with that in mind. It's a bit difficult to explain to the local nursery exactly what the requirements are.

— SHERA HAYNES, Richmond, Va.

Editor's note: OK gardeners, if you have suggestions, send them in. We'll be happy to print them.

Volunteers Record 'The Major Writings'

A major problem for many members wishing to study *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* has been that they were not in a format all members could use.

Not only are there many blind and otherwise sight-impaired members, there are also a significant number of members who cannot use printed materials or who have learning disabilities that make using printed materials extremely difficult.

To respond to that need, a project was voluntarily organized by SGI-USA members two years ago to record vol. 1 of *The Major Writings*. That project was successfully concluded this summer. The result is a set of 11 cassettes, which has been distributed to all SGI-USA joint territories.

There were some problems with the recordings, including some paragraphs of text inadvertently omitted and the mispronunciation of some Japanese names and terms. For those reasons, while the SGI-USA Study Department could not officially endorse the effort, the SGI-USA nevertheless has helped make the tapes available.

The tapes are not for sale. Rather, any member who wants to make a copy of them for personal use should arrange with his or her joint territory to do so. The member will be responsible for providing the blank tapes.

Many people deserve credit for this effort, born from a sincere desire to enable fellow members to have access to Nichiren Daishonin's teachings. Particularly, David Ackerman, a member and recording engineer who edited the tapes, and Steve Greene, also a member, who duplicated the tapes at cost, were critical to the success of the project.

— S.D. YANA DAVIS, Knoxville, Tenn.

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.

Out of the Ashes

PERSPECTIVE

By GINA JONES
RIVERSIDE, CALIF.

We must have been quite a sight for our neighbors that April morning. Our three small children, my husband and I, together with our altar in our front yard, while the fire department extinguished the last of the embers in our home.

Neighbors we didn't even know came from up and down the street with words of comfort, clothes and diapers for the baby, breakfast, coffee and other amenities. They looked on in amazement at our calm and surprisingly cheerful attitude in the midst of this disaster. We thanked them all heartily and welcomed them to return for an open house once we rebuilt.

We were not at all discouraged, having sensed immediately the great benefit this fire somehow was for our family. To many non-Buddhists, the idea of something apparently so negative being of value and offering an opportunity for growth is foreign. That morning, we talked at length with many neighbors, explaining our Buddhist philosophy to them.

A particularly close bond was created that morning between myself and Fran, who lived across the street. To her surprise, we soon moved temporarily into the house next door to her. Since then, I've spent many afternoons at her kitchen table talking about life, Buddhism, cooking, gar-

dening, family.... Recently, she was preparing to make a difficult cross-country trek in her car, and I taught her how to chant. She returned from her trip, sharing with me how she had chanted much of the way, and what a smooth trip it had been.

Though our reconstruction is not complete yet, we decided to host a district end-of-summer barbecue in our yard.

Preparations were well under way when, the day before the event, I awoke in the middle of the night with a pain in my abdomen that was worse even than I remember childbirth being. I kept waiting for the pain to lessen as I tried various remedies, but it only worsened. In between vomiting and groaning, I cried in my husband's arms. The pain was nearly unbearable.

The next morning, I called Fran and asked her to bring me a heating pad and some pain reliever. She kindly came over, prepared a meal for my children and sat with me for a while.

"Why don't you cancel your party tomorrow?" she suggested. "I'm sure everyone will understand."

I assured her that I would be fine by then — though I felt anything but fine at the time. I had known all night, though struggling in agony, that this enigmatic pain was arising as an opportunity for me to challenge my life and grow. I wasn't going to die. I was changing karma. Once again, Fran was surprised by my "unconventional" (to her) spirit.

The morning of the district barbecue, I awakened feeling absolutely invigorated. And all

of our preparation paid off. The event was thoroughly enjoyable for everyone involved. The laughter of good friends and the sounds of children playing are still ringing in my ears.

Later on in the day, I went to Fran's to return the heating pad and the platter she'd loaned me for the barbecue. She said to me then: "You look really great! I mean it. You look beautiful."

It was then that I explained to her my philosophy about obstacles from another perspective. "It is the difficulties I encounter in my efforts to bring joy to others," I said, "that makes those efforts so valuable. If it were easy, there would be less value in those efforts."

That day Fran had a friend visiting. She told her friend the story about our fire and even about my illness the day before. Then she told her that we were Buddhists.

"Oh, yeah?" her friend said. "Nam-myoho-enge-kyo?"

Incredulously Fran replied: "Yes! How did you know?"

Turns out, 15 years ago this friend was invited to an SGI meeting and chanted briefly.

Fran took out some articles I'd copied for her from the *World Tribune*, and they read them together.

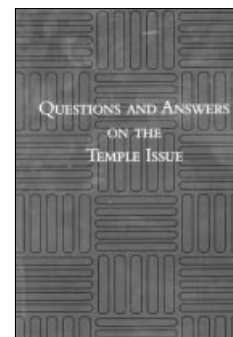
"We really should get to one of those meetings," her friend said.

"Yes, we really should," said Fran.

I believe that our confidence in the great outcome of any situation is incredibly powerful, sending ripples out into places we didn't even know existed. ❧

**For Your
Information**

The SGI-USA has published a pamphlet, Questions and Answers on the Temple Issue, which seeks to provide succinct information on this important issue. It is available free of charge through the organization and can be downloaded from the SGI-USA web page (www.sgi-usa.org).





Linda Vitalie leads the Philadelphia Chorus at the joint territory's Family and Friendship Festival.

Festival Brings Friends Together

By JOANNE BUNCH
CORRESPONDENT
Philadelphia, Aug. 24

More than 800 members and guests of Philadelphia Joint Territory came together today for the Family and Friendship Festival at Mermaid Lake, Pa., celebrating the 50th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's joining the SGI. Just as the event's name suggested, members, friends and families used the occasion to create and deepen bonds of friendship and have a wonderful time together.

Between the entertainment, sports activities and food, there was more than enough to keep people plenty busy and plenty full.

Almost everyone appeared to find some time to relax and enjoy some casual conversation as well.

Those attending shared the diversity of their cultures and customs through song and dance. Observing this, one guest commented that she "truly enjoyed seeing this many people come together — everyone from different ethnic groups and of different ages — and have a good time just as people." She added, "You can include me every year."

Activities included aikido demonstrations, team sports, dancing, karaoke and miniature golf. One member, a professional masseuse, even gave massages to

anyone who wanted one.

Summing up the feeling he gained, Brian Mount, who helped direct people to activities, said he was reminded of his experience at the Florida Nature and Culture Center. Likewise, the Mermaid Lake workers who served the food and helped to coordinate activities said that they had never seen a group of people so spirited and enjoying themselves so thoroughly.

Indeed, almost everyone seemed to find the festival meaningful, encouraging and enjoyable — which was only appropriate on an occasion commemorating President Ikeda's 50th anniversary of practicing. W

International U.N. Group Honors SGI President

U.N., FROM PAGE 1

met with President Halim, who recounted how the first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, boldly resisted Japanese militarism and subsequently died in prison. Without true courage and a firm desire for peace, Mr. Halim said, Mr. Makiguchi could not have given his life when his country betrayed him and branded him a traitor. He went on to say that, with Mr. Makiguchi's example as its foundation, the SGI has advanced a global movement of peace.

Mr. Halim further emphasized that no one comes out a winner in war; the citizens of warring countries suffer no matter who claims victory. War inflicts irrevocable damage, leaving people maimed and disabled, and it causes lasting mental and psychological disorders, he said. For this reason, Presi-

dent Halim stressed, his organization, WFUNA, firmly supports the United Nations in its efforts to stop war.

Concurring, President Ikeda stated that war is an absolute evil, and that it is vital for people to

'Without true courage and a firm desire for peace, Mr. Makiguchi could not have given his life when his country betrayed him and branded him a traitor.'

— Hashim Abdul Halim, World Federation of U.N. Associations

join together toward raising voices of conscience if there is to be any hope for the future of humankind. Herein lies the importance of the United Nations, he said. But without the support of nongovernmental organizations such as WFUNA, the SGI leader added, the United Nations will not be able to accomplish its fundamental purpose.

Mr. Halim agreed that the importance of NGOs would increase as the

United Nations continues on its quest for peace, and he expressed the desire to see WFUNA and the SGI strengthen bilateral cooperation toward U.N. reform. W

AIDS Forum Focuses on Hope

AIDS, FROM PAGE 1

pects of dealing with AIDS, ethical issues, socio-economic issues and nutrition.

Donna Tinnerello, an AIDS nutritionist who led a nutrition workshop, said that since AIDS is a catabolic disease — the body is continuously breaking down — the patient needs to eat larger quantities of food than the average person for the body to repair itself. Fruits and vegetables, because of their antioxidants and phytochemicals, are imperative, she said. Exercise is also crucial because lean muscle mass builds the immune system and vastly increases the T-cell count. "Aerobic exercise is the best for immunity, and patients must do 45 minutes three times a week," she advised. Of equal import is food safety, since those with weakened immune systems are vulnerable to parasitic and bacterial infections.

Francia Castro, an organizer of the forum, said that like Buddhism, the forum aimed to cre-

ate value in the face of the obstacles of AIDS. For example, SGI-USA member Doug Lambe, who has been infected for 14 years, described contracting HIV as "the best thing that ever happened to me." It forced him to do some soul searching and put an end to a chain of love relations that had gone nowhere. He described himself as a long-term progresser — he, like about 1 percent of those infected, is likely to never get full-blown AIDS.

Reactions to the forum were positive. Barbara Walters, who counsels people before and after HIV testing, said that "the dialogue with Dr. Davis was very empowering. It has encouraged me to upgrade my counseling certification to include more training on a humanistic level."

Clare Chapman concurred: "It answered a lot of questions for me. I'm determined to keep in touch with what's going on with the disease rather than thinking it's going to go away by itself." W

The Student Files

Name: Yuko Fuchigami
School: San Antonio College
Major: Management
City: San Antonio, Texas



Being a college student in the United States is much tougher than I expected before I left Japan.

But my studies motivate me — I challenge myself to achieve higher grades. Without chanting, no matter how much I study I make mistakes and fail to get the scores I want.

I enjoy learning and making friends on campus. It is sometimes very hard to start talking about my religion, though, be-

cause many of my friends are either not interested in religion or have strong religious beliefs already.

I've explained my practice using what SGI President Ikeda has taught me in his dialogues.

I'm a sophomore this year. I will be graduating from this school at the end of this year with an associate degree, but I want to continue studying in the United States. I might go on to a four-year college. W

The New Human Revolution

BY HO GOKU — ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Volume 6, Chapter 4

Rough Seas

Translation of parts 25–29 of the ‘Rough Seas’ chapter, as printed in the *Seikyo Shimbum*, 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.

The Osarizawa labor union leaders contradicted themselves. While they claimed that religion wasn’t the issue, they had forced Shiro Hongo to sign a pledge that he would quit the Soka Gakkai and were now making an issue out of his failure to obey that pledge.

Whatever the union was going to decide, the constitution guaranteed each individual freedom of religion and freedom to engage in political activities. Every Japanese citizen enjoyed these fundamental rights.

The action that the union was considering against Hisaya Yamao and Hongo violated not only the constitution but also the article whose inclusion, under Japan’s Labor Union Law, was compulsory in every union’s bylaws. It stated plainly: “No person, under any circumstances, shall be disqualified from union membership on the basis of race, religion, sex, birth or social status.”

On Aug. 29, the special meeting of the union was held. At this meeting the fates of Yamao and Hongo were to be decided.

However, the two men at the center of this controversy were informed of the meeting only two hours before it was scheduled to begin, with the message that if they wished to speak in their own defense, they would have to attend. Neither in the end attended, and in their absence a resolution was passed to strike their names from the union rolls in accord with the disciplinary committee’s recommendations.

That meant, of course, that both men’s employment at the mine would be terminated. This unjust action, which completely disregarded their basic human rights, was totally indefensible in a nation of laws and democracy such as Japan.

The following day, Aug. 30, Yamao and Hongo filed a petition in the Odate Branch of the Akita District Court requesting a temporary injunction against the union’s decision to expel them. This would halt their expulsion from the union and termination of employment and thus spare them from the drastic consequences those measures would spell for their families and livelihoods.

On Aug. 31, Yamao and Hongo were called once more to the union office. There, they were met by all the union’s executive officers, who glared at them menacingly. The union chief held their expulsion papers in hand and said to them with a cold smirk: “It was decided at the union meeting, so I’m giving you your expulsion papers. You didn’t show up to speak on your own behalf, which means that you forfeited your

right to do so, and so we decided without you.”

It was an intentionally callous, cruel remark. Yamao was incensed. His clenched fists shook with rage. But he accepted the paper, making a tremendous effort to remind himself that he would win in the end. On it was simply written: “This is to inform you that at the 54th special meeting of the Osarizawa Miners Union held on Aug. 29, 1962, it was decided that, in accord with the recommendation of the disciplinary committee, you be expelled from the union.” The document stated no reason for the action taken.

The union pressed the mining company to immediately terminate Yamao’s and Hongo’s employment, since the mining operation was a union shop and the two were no longer members. They even went so far as to declare that if the mining company failed to do so, the union would call a strike.



On the afternoon of Sept. 5, the company’s management summoned the two and told them that their employment was terminated. And since they were no longer employed at the mine, they would also have to leave the company housing units in which they lived.

The Yamaos’ and Hongos’ neighbors stopped talking to them. When Miya Yamao went to the public bath, all the women

abruptly turned away, refusing to look her in the eye. When she walked through the town, they would whisper among themselves: “Look, there goes Yamao’s wife, the Soka Gakkai member.”

The Yamaos endured these slights, and then one day, Miya’s mother, who lived with them, said quietly, “Maybe we should leave Osarizawa and go somewhere else....”

In Osarizawa, the mine was the sole employer, but there was plenty of work to be had elsewhere. Miya understood the pain that had prompted her mother to suggest leaving their hometown — she understood it all too well. But she shook her head vigorously and replied: “Never! If we go, what will happen to our fellow members we leave behind? We’d be leaving them in a terrible spot. We aren’t going anywhere.”

After having Yamao and Hongo dismissed, the union began to closely watch the other Soka Gakkai members at the mine. Using all sorts of underhanded means, the union applied steady pressure, slowly tightening the noose.

The small number of Gakkai members in Osarizawa began to waver in their faith. So Towada Chapter Chief Tatsuo Shimazu and other local leaders joined forces to encourage, support and guide the members there. In response, the Osarizawa members rose up with the resolve to challenge the harsh oppression confronting them. They told one another: “We beat the ‘king of unions’ in

Yubari! There’s no reason why we can’t do the same here.”

They were recalling the Yubari Coal Miners Union incident, involving union oppression against Soka Gakkai members in the town of Yubari, Hokkaido, some five years earlier. In 1957, the Japanese Coal Miners Union, so powerful and influential that none dared oppose it, had adopted an anti-Soka Gakkai

policy, and the affiliated union at the Yubari Coal Mine — Hokkaido’s largest coal miners union — had begun to expel and exclude Soka Gakkai members. The union leaders’ reasoning was the same as in Osarizawa: that by supporting Gakkai-backed candidates in the 1956 elections, Soka Gakkai members who belonged to the union had disrupted union solidarity.

The pressure that the Yubari Coal Miners Union had placed on the Soka Gakkai mem-

bers clearly violated their freedom of religion guaranteed by the constitution. And the Soka Gakkai fought doggedly against this infringement of human rights.

President Toda sent Shin’ichi Yamamoto, then youth division chief of staff, to Hokkaido to solve the problem and encourage the members. Shin’ichi traveled throughout Hokkaido in defense of human rights and his fellow members. In the end, the Yubari Coal Miners Union completely rescinded its policy against Soka Gakkai members.

That victory at Yubari, a momentous chapter in the history of the Gakkai’s grass-roots movement, inspired and filled the Osarizawa members with courage and hope. All of them — including Yamao and Hongo, who had been stripped of their union membership and lost their jobs — firmly believed that they eventually would win.

Yamao was indignant at the moral wrong that had been dealt him. If this terrible injustice and blatant violation of rights were to go unchallenged, he felt, reason and justice would be placed at risk in Japan. The expulsion from the union had to be rescinded — not for his sake, but for the sake of all Soka Gakkai members.

The petition for a temporary injunction against the union’s decision, which Yamao and Hongo had filed with the Akita District Court, was accepted, thus bringing their struggle into the halls of justice. During the hearing, it became clear that the two sides’ interpretations of religious freedom were completely at odds. According to the union, freedom of religion existed only to the degree that it did not interfere with union solidarity, and union regulations and discipline superseded the right to freedom of religion as guaranteed in the constitution.

After the third session of hearings, Oct. 18, the court advised that the union rescind its expulsion order and that both parties try to arrive at an amiable settlement. The union accepted this, having realized that it stood little chance of winning an actual trial.

Yamao and Hongo were satisfied. They had only been interested in getting the expulsion lifted and had no particu-

ROUGH SEAS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

lar wish to engage in a legal battle. They agreed to settle peaceably.

Later, there was some dispute over the settlement terms, but in the end the union decided at a special Dec. 20 meeting to rescind its expulsions of the two. This was only right and reasonable, but because the union had refused to accept this fact, Yamao and Hongo had undergone half a year of terrible hardship and humiliation.

In the end, they won. That the union had been forced to completely reverse its stand had been an unprecedented development. An atmosphere of victory prevailed among the Osarizawa members.

About the same time as the Osarizawa events, a similar incident took place in the city of Sasebo, Nagasaki Prefecture, in the northwest corner of Kyushu, Japan's southernmost major island. The site of this particular controversy was the Nakazato Mine, located in a hilly area along both sides of the Ainouragawa river, northwest of central Sasebo.

Here, as well, two members, Tsunezo Yoshiyama and Goro Kida of the Gakkai's Sasebo Chapter, who belonged to the local coal miners union, had supported a Komei candidate instead of the union-endorsed candidate in the Upper House election. And in retaliation, the union had expelled them. The "support" for which they were condemned consisted of pasting up a single poster for the Komei candidate, Katsuharu Oniyama, at a local fish shop.

Beginning in late July, the two were summoned repeatedly to the union office for questioning. Then, on Aug. 4, a month after the elections, the issue of their expulsion from the Nakazato Coal Miners Union was raised at a special union meeting. The decision to expel was to be made

by a vote by all union members, but union officers stood in a line to glare at each person as he walked up to mark his ballot at the voting table. This scare tactic was hardly conducive to a fair ballot based on individual conscience and free will, and so both Yoshiyama and Kida were expelled — by an overwhelming majority. The union's actions in this case, too, were inexcusable.

The Nakazato Mine was also a union shop, and Yoshiyama's and Kida's removal from the union rolls made it certain that



they would be dismissed from their jobs. So on Aug. 10, the two men filed a petition in the Sasebo Branch of the Nagasaki District Court, requesting a temporary injunction against the union's expulsion order. The Soka Gakkai sent leaders to Sasebo to offer advice to the two, to negotiate with the union, and to support and encourage local members.

On Aug. 13, Yoshiyama and Kida's petition was granted by the court. The decision had been speedy; for the time being, at least, the two remained union members, in no danger of being driven from their jobs.

That same day, Eisuke Akizuki, youth division chief and a Soka Gakkai director, traveled to Sasebo to speak to members at a meeting held to protest the union's unjust actions in the Sasebo

Municipal Auditorium. All those who attended were deeply determined to fight this flagrant violation of human rights.

When it was announced that the petition filed by Yoshiyama and Kida had been granted, the auditorium exploded with cheers and applause. The confidence that justice would surely prevail spread through the room, filling everyone's heart.

But the problem was not to be solved so easily. Unbelievably underhanded plots awaited the two as they headed back to work in the mines.

Toward the end of September, Kida was suddenly fired. And the reason cited had nothing to do with his union problems.

At 40, Kida was a hard worker and in his prime, but about a year earlier he had broken his leg on the job. Because he had to make regular visits to the hospital for physical therapy, he was frequently absent from work. Stating that he had been neglecting his duties, the mining company now used this as a pretext to fire him.

As for Yoshiyama, shortly after the court granted his petition, the mining company removed him from mining work, transferring him to what turned out to be a janitorial position. The change brought with it a one-third reduction in pay.

This placed the 36-year-old Yoshiyama, who had a wife and four young children to support, in a difficult position. He applied for assistance to the district welfare commissioner, who in Japan, though officially appointed, works on a volunteer basis. Employed full-time at the mine himself and a member of the miners union, the commissioner refused to help Yoshiyama on the

grounds that it would be damaging to the company's reputation. Though Yoshiyama asked to be transferred back to his previous job, and though the mine was actually short of mine workers, his request was turned down.

Hard as all this was to bear, he could have endured it if the pressure had only been at work. But when he saw that his neighbors refused to let their children play with his, or when his children came home picked on and bullied by others, it broke his heart. "Why do they have to take it out on the kids!?" he cried out in exasperation and rage. But there was nothing he could do except put up with it.

The high spirits of his wife, Yoshie, though, had been a great source of encouragement. When the union had begun interrogating him, she had resolutely told him: "You don't have to apologize for anything. You haven't done anything wrong!" Her confident words had helped him bear the unjust actions of the union and resolve to keep fighting until he won.

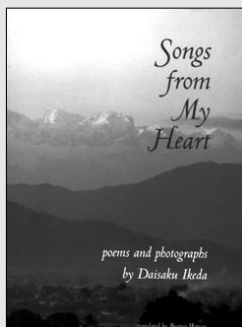
Both Nakazato's Yoshie Yoshiyama and Osarizawa's Miya Yamao were brave women who never lost their cheerfulness in spite of the hardships they faced. Their support is what made it possible for their husbands to keep fighting. If they had complained about their situation, their husbands surely would have wavered.

Mr. Yoshiyama always pursued life with a wholehearted commitment, and when things got really tough, he would chant daimoku with great earnestness and read the Gosho with a passion. His favorite passage was "Though one might point at the earth and miss it, though one might bind up the sky, though the tides might cease to ebb and flow and the sun rise up from the west, it could never come about that the prayers of the practitioner of the Lotus Sutra would go unanswered" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 7, p. 46). The study movement launched by Shin'ichi had inspired unwavering faith in the hearts of Soka Gakkai members like Yoshiyama.

(To be continued)

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APPLYING
NICHIREN
DAISHONIN'S
WRITINGS TO
DAILY LIFE

Getting the Here Out of Hell

By JEFF FARR


SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

The Lotus Sutra reveals this truth [that the pure land and hell exist nowhere but in our hearts], and one who embraces the Lotus Sutra will realize that hell is itself the Land of Tranquil Light. (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 208)

According to Nichiren Daishonin, Hell is a life-condition everyone experiences, not a fiery place down below. When he wrote this Goshō, he had been remonstrating with priests of the Shingon and other Buddhist sects, who were always telling people to beware falling into the gnashing teeth of Hell at the moment of their death. But the Daishonin wanted people to realize Hell was ultimately something within themselves, something that they could thus overcome.

What's most liberating about this idea to me is that you can escape Hell in the here and now, you don't have to stay there forever. I wasn't raised a Christian, but I remember, growing up, my Christian friends telling me all about Hell. And what would terrify me most was not that it was such an awful place but the idea of eternal damnation, that you had to stay there forever and ever. When I became a Buddhist, I was relieved to hear the Buddhist version of Hell was so different from this.

Lately, I've been thinking about the Daishonin's intent in writing this Goshō: It was clearly to save people from Hell. When you read it you feel his determination to destroy the very idea of Hell — he says Hell can become the Land of Tranquil Light. The priests of Nichiren Shoshu, however, now planning to excommunicate Soka Gakkai members a second time, say that if you're excommunicated you'll go to Hell, if you chant to the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon you'll go to Hell, etc.

Nichiren Daishonin never excommunicated anyone, Shakyamuni never excommunicated anyone; they weren't hot on sending people to Hell. The priests, instead of wanting to save people from Hell, seem eager to send them there. Sure doesn't sound like Nichiren Daishonin in this Goshō. 

PERSPECTIVE ON MENTOR AND DISCIPLE

Coming Home Again

By DEBORAH GOODWIN
LOS ANGELES

Buddhism teaches the way of mentor and disciple, and our fundamental practice of Buddhism is inextricably linked with this way of life. "Once you appreciate the inspiration and potential for growth inherent in the true bonds of mentor and disciple," SGI President Ikeda tells us, "the amount of strength you can tap, the amount of wisdom and compassion that will well forth from your life, is immeasurable. Strength, courage and responsibility all flow from this" (*A Conversation With Youth*, p. 73).

As we attempt to demystify the tangled puzzle our Generation X represents, one overriding concern surfaces — the waning luster of family values. A deeply troubling aspect that has touched many of us lies in the fact that we can't, as Thomas Wolfe put it, "go home again." The divorce rate and rising number of single-parent families has made the concept of a homestead virtually extinct. Even in instances where the family unit is not re-configured by divorce, it is rare that one's family remains in the place where one grew up.

In short, young people are being edged out into the "real" world at an early age, often unprepared to take responsibility and largely without a set of intrinsic values that might serve in guiding us. Without this preparation, we youth find ourselves in a wholly unknown experience that is not always helpful to our growth. We may experience a sense of loss or deprivation, regret or resentment at having been somehow forced to abandon our only known sense of security — and to grow up alone.

As we move off into college dorms or roommate situations abroad or to live with relatives, the sense that we can't go home can instill a pervasive unease to our newfound freedoms. This nomadic life in our late teens and early 20s can foster a sense of profound loss that perpetuates itself in our adopting "beliefs" about ourselves and our relationships with others that are incomplete and rooted in a search for lost security. And this can raise the stakes in our lives to disproportionate heights that work at odds with our understanding of the world.

For example, the idea of success, instead of taking the form of a long-cherished dream coming to fruition through the journey of living and working toward successive goals becomes a mandate for our very survival. If you fail, you're on your own. You can't come home again. Failure then becomes some-

thing to be feared and shunned at all costs. It can no longer be viewed from the perspective of one leg of a substantial journey unfolding but only as a harsh test to the fragile or undeveloped self.

Success becomes measured by status, which is given the power to uplift or destroy indiscriminately. No wonder so many young people have already adopted a hard outer shell — a false identity or rough exterior to protect ourselves from failure. We may see the road ahead but only as fraught with potential defeats from which no one will be on hand to pick us up. Dust us off. Set us back on the right track. We feel incapable of surmounting the odds.

Where, then, are we to gain the wisdom, the courage and foresight? The correct perspective we sorely need? Where can we access the sense of true security and well-being we need to pursue our dreams and overcome our anxieties? The security that many of us will continue to find lacking in our homes or immediate environments?

I can only believe that the answer lies within. In our hearts, we must — even if only half believing it at first — fuel the desire to seek out our mentors and become disciples.

With this kind of purposeful desire within, there is no doubt that such a person, such a teacher, parent, relative, friend or coach will appear at the crucial time.

Soka Gakkai Vice Study Department Chief Takanori Endo tells us in "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra":

The earnestness and vigor of the disciples' vow are expressed by the famous line "to roar the lion's roar" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 193). Nichiren Daishonin explains ... "The 'roar' [of the lion] is the sound of mentor and disciples chanting [daimoku] in unison" (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 748). (*August Living Buddhism*, p. 37)

This spoke deeply to me. How many times have I heard messages from President Ikeda with the moving passage "I am chanting daimoku for your health, for your happiness"? Understanding this as the "roar" of which Nichiren Daishonin speaks revealed to me again how immense is the bond between mentor and disciple. Daimoku thus allows us to establish a profound connection with our mentor. We can experience the oneness of mentor and disciple this way even

though our mentor may be far away. If our hearts are cherishing the encounter, and our voices through our daimoku are expressing what our hearts feel, then the connection between our mentor and ourselves will be vibrant, powerful and limitless. It will provide new hope and courage to challenge whatever we many be facing.

This rip-cord connection cannot, however, be achieved without the "earnestness and vigor" of the disciple. We must be the ones to actively seek out this connection. We must be the ones to freely initiate this connection. Why? "To 'initiate' is to take positive action," says President Ikeda in the same dialogue. "This is entirely different from doing something because someone had told you to; such a passive practice has nothing to do with 'the lion's roar'... the mentor 'roars' but then it is up to the disciple to 'roar' in response" (p. 37).


The 'roar' of the lion is the sound of mentor and disciples chanting in unison.

So at the heart of the mentor-disciple relationship, I believe, is comradeship, a like-minded purpose that unites mentor and disciple in a single pursuit. Each gaining strength from the other.

But the beauty and purity of this bond could not be maintained if the mentor had

to nag or force the disciple to live up to his or her end of the relationship. Or if the disciple complained about or abandoned the mentor. For instance, it would be of no value to the disciple to berate the mentor: "I'm not feeling inspired by you today" or "You need to pay more attention to me, I don't feel hopeful." These are silly exaggerations, of course, but how many times, in our heart of hearts do we actually harbor these kinds of feelings? Enough times, I believe, to convince ourselves that the way of mentor and disciple is beyond our capacity.

It is in those moments, at those times, though, that we have the opportunity to open our lives even more and deepen our faith — because our faith in others must begin with our faith in ourselves. One builds the other, and together, they become the foundation of a truly large life. This always requires efforts, a conscious move in the direction of one's happiness. Our resolve to roar in response will determine our true success.

The heart of the disciple can always reach out to that of the mentor. And in this way, no matter how far apart they may be physically, each can always come home again. 

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BILLY HENRY, DALLAS

Conquering Helplessness

Confronted with more than one serious illness, Billie Henry chooses a life of empowerment and hope. 'Your mission is important,' she says, 'no matter what your circumstances.'

In May 1995, before I began my Buddhist practice, I had been diagnosed with cancer of the endometrium. The first six days after surgery were just fine. My neighbor Audrey McClure was working the night shift at the hospital then, and when she stopped by to visit, I told her I was recovering as well as could be expected and preparing to go home.

Then, I developed a massive infection. My incision was reopened, and doctors were scrubbing inside my abdomen with betadine and gauze sponges twice a day. I am a person who rarely takes anything for pain, but the pain from the infection and scrubbing was horrible. I was taking pain pills and morphine shots. The medicine made me hallucinate, but nothing stopped the pain.

Audrey and I were friendly but not close. I knew she practiced Buddhism but had not been particularly interested when she had explained about the practice and told me the words that she and her husband chanted together each day.

When she came to visit me again a week later, things had really changed.

I was in excruciating pain, and she could tell that I was really out of it. She asked if I knew who she was, and I did. For some reason, I clung to her as if I knew she would save my life, and she did. She promised me calmly that if I chanted Nam-myoho-enge-kyo for one-half hour, the pain would go away. She also said that if it didn't, she would never try to talk to me about Buddhism again. I had nothing to lose.

"Tell me the words again," I said.

I began to chant. I had 30 minutes until my next shot. I never needed it. When Audrey came to check on me in about 45 minutes, I was sleeping soundly.

For the rest of my hospital stay, the chanting continued to stop the pain. When I was released from the hospital after 17 days, I went to discuss this with Audrey.

As a life-long Seventh-Day Adventist, the idea of changing the way I had thought about the world for 55 years was almost as frightening as the cancer and the pain. I had to change, though. I had proof of this Buddhism.

I received the Gohonzon on Oct. 5, 1995.

From the beginning of my



Photo by MARK MANNING

Billie Henry refuses to let illness control her life. She volunteers in the community teaching English to Vietnamese adults and contributes her time to SGI-USA activities, including reception and bookstore responsibilities. She stands in front of a mural she helped design and paint for the children's room at the Dallas Culture Center.

practice, I chanted a lot of daimoku because many of my health problems persisted. I had spells of feeling extremely overheated, a persistent pain in my abdomen, and I was extremely tired all the time. I still don't know how I managed to work, except that I chanted constantly. I was driving a taxi, and I chanted at the cab stands, at red lights, waiting for passengers — all day long.

In spite of all the tests and surgery I had undergone, the doctors didn't seem to know what was wrong with me. Finally, after much daimoku and several trips to the Endocrine Residents Clinic, I was diagnosed with diabetes and possible kidney damage. That was the pain in my abdomen that wouldn't go away.

I sat crying in front of the Gohonzon — the thought that I might have kidney damage was almost unbearable. I can face a lot of things, but I didn't think I could face kidney dialysis. For two days, I chanted every time there was no one in my cab.

After that two days of daimoku, the tests showed no signs of kidney damage. Through all of this, Audrey and

many other SGI members in Dallas stood by me and chanted with me and did everything they possibly could to support me.

I learned everything I could about diabetes. I modified my diet, chanted a lot, and felt I was out of the woods.

Then, in April of 1996, a routine mammogram came back showing two small, suspicious lumps. I was told I would need a needle biopsy. Here was the specter of cancer again, and besides that, I am terrified of needles. After the appointment, I made it to the Dallas Culture Center and fell into the arms of one of the leaders who happened to be there. She began to chant with me, and another member joined us. She didn't even know why we were chanting — just that I was crying and chanting and needed help.

The needle biopsy was a real ordeal. My first reaction was to faint. As I was coming around, the technician came in and said there was a woman named LaDrena McDowell at the door who said I needed her. Did I want her to come in?

You bet I did. LaDrena is a hospital employee and also an SGI member. Her computer system

had crashed that day, so she was free to leave her office. She spent the rest of the day helping me to get through the procedure. She chanted with me, and there was no pain. The technician said, if it helped, to go ahead and chant. The doctor agreed and told me just to hold out until he said it was all right to faint. LaDrena and I kept chanting until he said they were through — then I fainted again.

How could I not believe that even though I had to endure all this bad health, I am protected when I chant. Of course, I did have cancer gain. I had to have a radical mastectomy. During the surgery, another lump, larger than the others, was discovered. It was under my arm, so it hadn't shown in any of the tests. I am very thankful it was caught before it spread. I did not have to take radiation or any of the horrifying treatments that I might have needed if it had continued to stay there and grow.

I did get another infection. This is common with diabetic patients. During the ensuing struggle, I had surprisingly little pain. I felt fine. I spent only three days in the hospital after surgery, feeling so good that I

spent most of the time either in the meditation room chanting or in LaDrena's office, visiting.

I have been asked why I have faith to believe as I do when I still have all these health problems. I am not unhappy about my health. When you believe in indestructible happiness, you can get through anything. If I had not become a Buddhist, I would still have had the bad health problems, but I would have been helpless. Because of this practice, I don't feel helpless. I know I can win against all these problems by chanting and by taking the best care of myself. I also would not have had the support of the SGI members who have helped me, chanted with me, and comforted me.

I get a bit frustrated when I hear people say they can't work for kosen-rufu if they are ill. Your mission is important no matter what your circumstances. The people I have met in hospital waiting rooms are the people who need to hear about this practice the most. I have discussed Buddhism with my doctors and nurses even on the operating table.

I am a unit chief in my district, I work in the bookstore and as a volunteer receptionist at the culture center, I sing in the SGI Sunset Chorus, and I am a member of the publications bureau. I helped to design and paint the walls of the children's room at our center and do volunteer work in the community teaching English to Vietnamese adults as a tutor for the Literacy Council. I am determined not to let my health problems prevent me from doing activities.

It is wonderful when someone chants and is completely healed. But short of that, there are other kinds of actual proof that can deeply affect the lives of those around us. I have a dear friend (a Mormon, if it matters) who said if I had told her I was miraculously healed of cancer (which I wasn't), she would have thought I was full of baloney. However, she was there when the doctors were scrubbing my infected abdomen with betadine. Because I had been chanting, I could laugh and talk to her without pain. As far as she was concerned, that was a miracle.

As long as there is enough life in my body to chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, there is enough life to tell others how to conquer helplessness and take charge of their problems. ☸

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

SGI President Ikeda gave the following address at the 14th Headquarters Leaders Meeting and the 15th Chubu¹ General Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Aug. 27.

Chubu members, congratulations on your general meeting! Members of the brass band, thank you for the wonderful performance!

The Tokyo Brass Band earlier performed "Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle" from Richard Wagner's Tannhäuser.

A Surefire Method

In the aftermath of the French Revolution two centuries ago, people's hearts were in great turmoil. They had rejected the ossified and oppressive authority of the Church, but no new morality had yet arisen. Murder was rampant. The times were chaotic and devoid of standards.

The situation in Japan today, I feel, is quite similar in many ways.

A noted specialist on Western studies, Nitobe Inazo (1862-1933), has shared the following anecdote. One day, a person dismayed by the state of French society visited the renowned statesman and diplomat Talleyrand (1754-1838). The latter, incidentally, served for a time as Napoleon's foreign minister but later turned against him.

The visitor told his influential host, "I have thought up a new religion that may bring an end to the disorder in the world."

After hearing him out, Talleyrand remarked: "I see. What you say is very good. But how will you promote this religion?"

The man answered: "That's why I have come to see you — to ask you to use your influence to have it promoted through all institutions of the state, including the schools."

Certainly, if this were done, then in time there wouldn't be anyone who didn't know of it; this would definitely cause a stir and get people to sit up and listen.

But Talleyrand flatly replied: "That's no good. You won't succeed just with that. If you truly wish to spread this religion, then there is only one path open to you."

A gleam of hope came into the man's eyes. "What would that path be? Please tell me," he entreated Talleyrand.

Talleyrand told him: "If you want to establish your religion



THE SPIRIT OF SELFLESS DEVOTION

'We are not the center around which things revolve. Central are the Buddhist teachings and Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Central is the goal of kosen-rufu, the happiness and peace of all humanity. Central are our precious fellow SGI members. It is our place as SGI leaders to exert ourselves thoroughly for this nucleus of faith. Ultimately, selfless devotion means possessing such deep sincerity of purpose.'

— Daisaku Ikeda

as a genuine one, you'll have to get yourself crucified and die in the center of Paris. Short of that, there is no surefire method of promoting a religion."²

To Give One's Life

The willingness to give one's life for faith is the very heart of religion. Christians and Muslims have endured endless persecution, often at the cost of their lives. In Buddhism, too, from Shakyamuni's time down to the present, untold numbers have laid down their lives to uphold the correct teaching. Despite per-

secution, people have continued to hold fast to their faith and, as a result, these religions have spread and become world religions.

A religion will not spread unless its followers give their lives to it. It will not capture people's hearts. Only a noble spirit of selfless devotion can elicit a powerful response in others' lives.

The first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, laid down his life for Buddhism. The second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, also gave his life to the propagation of the Daishonin's teach-

ing. And I, too, have practiced with this selfless spirit to ungrudgingly give my entire life. That's why this Buddhism has spread so widely throughout the world.

There certainly is no such spirit of selfless devotion within the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood. On the contrary, the priests are consumed by Animality and driven by egoism and self-interest. Such people cannot possibly accomplish kosen-rufu.

Returning to the guest in Nitobe's anecdote, he had no thought of putting himself on the line or sacrificing himself. He simply thought he'd cleverly get

someone else to make the painstaking efforts necessary to propagate his new religion. If he could woo the state authorities to support him, he calculated, his work would be made easy. But with his sardonic remark, Talleyrand crushed the man's naïve hopes.

The mentality of one getting others to do the hard work while sitting back and taking it easy — that is bureaucratism at its worst; that is not faith. The spirit of taking on the hard work oneself — that is faith, that is humanism. And that is the won-

PLEASE SEE SELFLESS, NEXT PAGE

SELFLESS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

derful spirit of all of you who have worked so hard to make the Soka Gakkai and SGI what they are today.

We have no place among our leadership for those who cunningly manipulate others and put them to work, while neither making strenuous effort nor taking risks themselves. Such individuals are not practitioners of Buddhism.

Those members who have gained position and respect in society thanks to the support of fellow members have an obligation to exert themselves with utmost dedication and sincerity to people's happiness and welfare. This is the true path of humanism.

The Secret to Our Growth

Many years ago, a group of journalists asked me why the Soka Gakkai had developed to such an extent. "It's because we're giving it 100 percent," I told them. "We are waging an earnest struggle. It's because we've been working with all our might."

Of course, I could also have offered them a more in-depth explanation, detailing the Soka Gakkai's development in terms of the three kinds of proof: doctrinal, theoretical and actual. But, at the very core, the Soka Gakkai has developed because we exert ourselves wholeheartedly and single-mindedly in faith. This is our true history.

Those motivated in the slightest by an egotistic desire for fame, status, praise or personal survival cannot wage a genuine struggle for kosen-rufu. Such individuals are unlikely to fight against obstacles or endure persecution.

Someone once said to me: "Even though it has been slandered, persecuted and attacked to such an extent, the Soka Gakkai has not wavered in the least. This is truly amazing. It is incredible.... I'd vouch there is no other organization as strong and resilient anywhere in the world." These words are testimony to your greatness.

I also have not wavered in the least — no matter how fierce the storms that have assailed me. I have faced successive difficulties of a magnitude that might easily have caused someone else to fall sick, die, go insane or even commit suicide. But I have endured and surmounted all. This is the Soka spirit. This is practicing with the heart of a lion.

I have always striven with the determination to bear the brunt of



'Let's move forward! Let's advance! At this new juncture, it is vital that leaders stand in the vanguard and lead the way in high spirits.'

all persecution personally so that my fellow members might be spared suffering or victimization. I want you to understand my spirit.

During these 50 years since taking faith, I have struggled with a spirit of selfless devotion. All of you have stood up heroically in response. The present development of our movement to spread the ideals and philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is the direct result of our committed actions. Kosen-rufu can only be advanced through unselfish dedication. All other methodology is secondary.

Discarding Selfishness

There is nothing tragic or pathetic about selfless devotion. What it essentially means is to discard egoism and selfishness.

Some people are quick to complain about the organization or about their fellow members. But true Buddhist practice is never egoistic.

Our commitment should be such that even if forced to go to prison for our beliefs, we would do so without complaint. This is because we are the ultimate and prime beneficiaries of our practice. All our efforts in the sphere of faith bring us closer to attaining Buddhahood. In contrast, when we base ourselves on egoism, we erase and pull the plug on our benefit.

If we think that we are special, an exception from the rest; if we think we are better than others because we have graduated from a good school or because we hold a certain position in society; or if we have the attitude that ac-

tivities are not important and that we'll just chant by ourselves without bothering with the organization — then we are ruled by ego and selfishness.

Master Your Mind

It may seem perfectly all right to put ourselves and our own wishes first, to simply follow the dictates of our emotions and cravings. But the truth is that there is nothing more unreliable than one's mind. Life doesn't always go like clockwork, and things will not necessarily turn out as we hope or plan.

Consequently, Nichiren Daishonin frequently stressed that you should become the master of your mind, not let your mind master you (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p.146). We mustn't allow ourselves to be ruled by a self-centered mind. Rather, we have to discipline the mind and gain mastery over it. This is the Daishonin's strict admonition.

We are not the center around which things revolve. Central are the Buddhist teachings and Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Central is the goal of kosen-rufu, the happiness and peace of all humanity. Central are our precious fellow SGI members. It is our place as SGI leaders to exert ourselves thoroughly for this nucleus of faith. Ultimately, selfless devotion means possessing such a deep sincerity of purpose.

On the other hand, leaders who are not sincere, who are cunning and arrogant, are frauds. Leaders are making a big mistake if they think they can treat mem-

bers as subordinates. In Buddhism, there is no such thing as a boss-follower relationship. It is the leaders' job to serve and support the members. Leaders are supposed to be there for the members — not the other way around.

On being appointed to a leadership position in the organization, some fall under the delusion that they are somehow special and cease to think about the genuine welfare of the members. Some become entirely absorbed with maintaining their popularity or protecting their position. There are also those who fail to go out and take action themselves but just call meetings. The SGI organization does not exist to allow such arrogant individuals to act in such a cavalier, ego-centric fashion. Behavior of this kind is unforgivable.

The organization exists for the members. It exists to help people in suffering and pain become happy. It exists for the purpose of accomplishing kosen-rufu. Those in senior positions who have abandoned their faith and betrayed their fellow members were all self-centered individuals who used the organization, Buddhism and their mentor's trust to advance their personal agenda.

In society at large, too, there seems to be an absence of any appreciation that leaders should exist to serve the people. Too many leaders in society have clearly been doing just the opposite.

Out of Alignment

When we thoroughly dedicate our lives to Buddhism, we

approach the condition of oneness of the Person and the Law; we move a step closer to the immense state of life of Nichiren Daishonin; we advance toward attaining Buddhahood; we become one with the Mystic Law.

On the other hand, a person who carries out a self-centered practice veers from the sure path of the Mystic Law and kosen-rufu. The Person and the Law are thrown totally out of alignment. The life of such an individual becomes confused and out of control. It careens into a crazy, downhill spiral.

A self-centered existence may seem free and uninhibited, but the truth of the matter is that it will only lead us to suffer in the life-state of Hell. In contrast, a life dedicated to Buddhism and the happiness of our fellow members will enable us to attain the state of Buddhahood, to achieve enlightenment.

Our Fellow Members Are Buddhist Gods

The Daishonin states, "The Buddhist gods will surely manifest as men and women and make offerings to the votary of the Lotus Sutra" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 738). Broadly speaking, "votary of the Lotus Sutra" indicates all those who are working for kosen-rufu. When we take action for the Mystic Law, the Buddhist gods — appearing as men and women — will function in various ways to protect us.

In some instances, "Buddhist gods" might indicate such bene-

SELFLESS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

fictional functions of nature as water or wind. But that is not the only form they take. The Daishonin says that they “manifest as men and women.” In other words, their functions are expressed through the actions of the people around us. Above all, no one offers us greater support than our fellow members. Their presence is deeply gratifying. Through their actions, they are truly Buddhist gods.

If we work hard to support and encourage a thousand of our fellow members, a thousand Buddhist gods will protect us. If we support 10,000 of our fellow members, 10,000 Buddhist gods will protect us. If we manipulate our fellow members for our selfish ends, however, the Buddhist gods will turn their backs on us in lifetime after lifetime. Do we exploit the members, or do we serve them? It comes down to this one point.

No Room for Bureaucracy

The Soka Gakkai has made a fresh departure with new leaders being appointed in each region throughout Japan. Let’s move forward! Let’s advance! At this new juncture, it is vital that leaders stand in the vanguard and lead the way in high spirits.

Leaders should be second to none when it comes to prayer. Day and night, I am praying wholeheartedly for all of you — for your happiness and prosperity, for your lives to be free of accidents, and for you to succeed in your efforts to spread the Daishonin’s teaching and advance kosen-rufu. Leaders who do not pray for their fellow members are leaders in name only.

Leaders should also be second to none when it comes to working hard and agonizing for the advance of kosen-rufu. All of your struggles for kosen-rufu are causes that will bring you eternal good fortune and benefit. There is no room in Buddhism for the bureaucratic mentality of making others do the hard work, while you take all the credit and occupy yourself with protecting your position.

Speaking of the *secret and mystic expedient* of “Expedient Means,” the second chapter of the Lotus Sutra, the Daishonin says, “The term *secret* means strict and that it [the causal law of Buddhism] applies across the 3,000 realms” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 714). In other words, all phenomena in the universe are embodied in the 3,000 realms of a life-moment, and no one is exempt from this strict law of life.

No one gets any freebies or discounts. Before the uncompromising law of cause and effect, distinctions of leader and member simply do not exist. Thinking you can get away with something wrong or immoral just because you’re a leader is utterly misguided. It will never work.

Rather, the higher your position, the greater is your responsibility. The magnitude of both the benefit for fulfilling your responsibilities and the retribution for failing to do so increase correspondingly.

Finally, leaders should be second to none in taking action. We have to take the initiative ourselves, encouraging those who are suffering and visiting those who are unwell and need to be cheered. We have to spring to action quickly — with a light step, warmth in our voice and a friendly, down-to-earth attitude. To the extent that we take action, kosen-rufu will advance in our local communities and the greater progress we will make in our human revolution.

I want to see leaders standing in the forefront in every activity. In this day and age, advancing SGI activities is hardly likely to place you in personal danger or have you thrown in prison. Failure to press ahead in times such as these would have to indicate a singular timidity or apathy.

Because of my leadership in this unprecedented movement, I was falsely arrested and detained in prison. My life has been constantly threatened. Nevertheless, I have continued advancing straight ahead on the path I have chosen.

It is only to be expected that a champion of the Lotus Sutra, of kosen-rufu and of the SGI will encounter difficulties. The Lotus Sutra states that its votaries will be subject to “curses and abuse” (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 267). If we did not encounter obstacles, the Lotus Sutra would be a lie. Being subject to curses and abuse means being maligned right and left, and perhaps even being killed. To persevere in one’s efforts to spread the correct teaching undaunted by such attacks — that is the spirit of the Lotus Sutra and the behavior of its true votaries.

The Soka Gakkai and SGI have always advanced with this spirit. That’s why we have received such tremendous benefit. That’s what makes the SGI so great. I look to you, my dear friends of the youth division, to carry on this proud tradition.

Start From Here — Start From Now

I want each of you to rise to the challenge of revolutionizing the

area where you live into an ideal community and to do so with the determination to start from where you are right now. This means building a good SGI organization in your local area — and building it yourself with loving, painstaking care, the way an artist pours his or her heart and soul into creating a work of art.

It also means fostering capable people. Buddhism, after all, can flourish only if there are people who uphold and practice its teachings.

We cannot hope to succeed in our goals unless we actively strive to find, gather and nurture able members and widen our network of dedicated individuals around the world. If we just surround ourselves with flatterers, or people we can feel superior to, nothing will come of our efforts. We will simply find ourselves tumbling rapidly down the descending slope of defeat. Great leaders keep at their side people who are strong, talented and able to constructively voice contrary opinions.

By selflessly working to build an organization and foster capable people, we lay the foundation for our own happiness.

The history we leave behind in this lifetime depends entirely on our own determination and action. “I am a Bodhisattva of the Earth! I was born to contribute to the accomplishment of kosen-

rufu. I will therefore take full responsibility! I will become the driving force for victory in all endeavors!” To stand up with such strong faith is the Soka Gakkai spirit. This is the strength of our organization. When we strive with such powerful resolve, we can come to understand our true mission and awaken to our true selves.

President Makiguchi cried, “Wage a ceaseless struggle!” And President Toda also urged, “Wage a ceaseless battle!” Now I say to you: “Create an eternal history!”

Since the days of my youth, my motto has been “The greater the resistance waves encounter, the stronger they become.” The bigger the obstacles I meet, the more vigorously I am determined to confront them and break through them. That is my spirit. I want the members of the youth division to carry on this spirit.

A Life of Boundless Exhilaration and Joy

Congratulations again to the Chubu members on the holding of this wonderful general meeting. Why has the Chubu organization become strong? Because you have stood up and declared to all, with pride and courage: “We will show you the true Soka Gakkai!” This is where Chubu gets its strength. You have surmounted the at-

Photo by MIKE MULLEN

‘Since the days of my youth, my motto has been “The greater the resistance waves encounter, the stronger they become.” The bigger the obstacles I meet, the more vigorously I am determined to confront them and break through them.’



tacks and harassments of enemies that seek to destroy Buddhism and have emerged triumphant. You have won a resounding victory.

Today, along with ever-victorious Kansai, the Chubu organization has become a model for the entire world. Your victory is splendid. I applaud you from the bottom of my heart.

One other reason for Chubu’s strength is the rigorous pursuit of the path of oneness of mentor and disciple by its chief Kazuo Ono. He has resolved to walk this path, no matter what anyone else might say, and to create an organization permeated with the spirit of oneness of mentor and disciple. Each morning for decades now he has been the first to arrive at the Chubu Headquarters and chant daimoku, creating the foundation for Chubu’s magnificent victory as a result.

I hope every SGI member will leave behind an indestructible history. I pray that your names may live on eternally in the annals of kosen-rufu. Striving to live to the fullest, please exert yourselves wholeheartedly, pursuing dialogue with as many people as you can and forging an exhilarating victory.

Death will come to each of us some day. We can die having fought hard for our beliefs and convictions, or we can die having failed to do so. Since the reality of death is the same in either case, isn’t it far better that we set out on our journey toward the next existence in high spirits and with a bright smile on our faces — knowing that in everything we did, we did the best we could, and thrilling with the thought “That was truly an interesting life”? This is the way I look at it. What do you think?

Let’s continue to work together to make the SGI the foremost organization in the entire world! Let’s really give it our best!

Please convey my warmest regards to all those whom I could not meet today. I hope all of you visiting from other countries will enjoy a pleasant stay. Members of the brass band, again thank you very much!

I look forward to seeing you again next month in high spirits!

1. Located in central Honshu, Japan’s main island. In the SGI organization, it comprises Aichi, Mie and Gifu prefectures.
2. This episode is related in Nitobe Inazo, *Tozai Aifurete* (At the Crossroads of East and West) (Tokyo: Jitsugyo no Nihonsha, 1929), pp. 384–85.

These Are My BLESSINGS

Some call her Grandma.

Blanche Zembower comes from a long line of people who cared about the welfare of others. She shares that compassion now with other Native Americans who come to Denver seeking help.

By JAN TYLER
DENVER CORRESPONDENT

Tradition is important to Blanche Zembower. To this day, she still dries corn each August at her home outside Denver. She remembers life on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota fondly: "We used to run in the fields as kids and mark wild turnips with a stick. The men of the tribe would follow behind us and pull the meat of the plant out with tire irons. The grandmothers still carried babies on their backs and wore long dresses. We spoke our native Dakota 'D' language." In fact, Blanche was amazed when her family moved during her teen years to the Crow Creek Reservation, and the people there all spoke English.

Blanche's respect for her people was handed down from her great-grandfather, Chief Husha-sha. Abraham Lincoln once intervened and spared the chief's life, along with 550 others in his tribe, at the request of Episcopal Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple. Thirty-eight others — the ringleaders of the 1862 uprising in New Ulm, Minn. — were hanged by local government order. Red Leggings, as her great-grandfather was also known, had fought to help his people hold on to their land, then acted as a mediator between the settlers and his people. For his spirit and bravery, Bishop Whipple gave Red Leggings the Whipple name, which the chief considered a great honor.

Her father, in turn, was an Episcopal priest who traveled long distances to be with the sick and dying on the reservations — Pine Ridge, Crow Creek and Lower Brule. "We never even knew if he would come back to us, especially during winter blizzards," she says. "He taught us how to live for others by example."

Now Blanche Whipple Zembower shares the spirit of her ancestors with all native people through the Caring Association for Native Americans, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing comfort and assistance to Native Americans who travel to Denver for medical care. Often the patient is alone or his or her family members have no place to stay while in Denver. Traditional social service programs rarely assist these people, so CANA steps in to close the gap.

Blanche understands the problems that face these people in crisis — she has faced crisis in her life, too. Blanche donated one of her kidneys to her brother 10 years ago. "It meant so much to me, my life, to give my brother life," she says.

Blanche gives to each person as a brother, without judgment about the why of their sufferings. She accepts their hardship as her opportunity to serve. Her rewards, she says, are many.

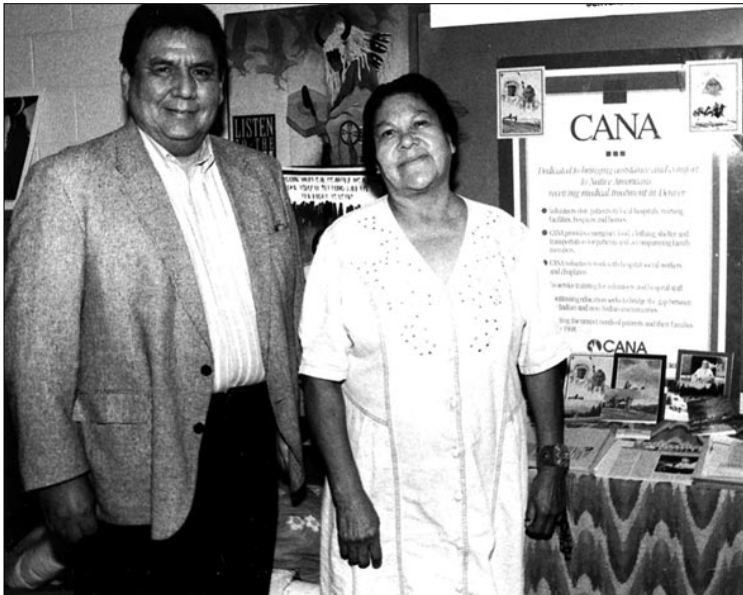
"A young Assiboine Sioux from Montana came to Denver for a kidney transplant," she says. Blanche visited him so often he began to call her Grandma.

When he returned later for a check-up, he joyfully told her, "Look, Grandma,

I can run!" And he started running.

Another boy, paralyzed from the waist down and in residence at a local hospital specializing in spinal injury rehabilitation, asked Blanche to be his mother and go with him to a Mother's Day tea.

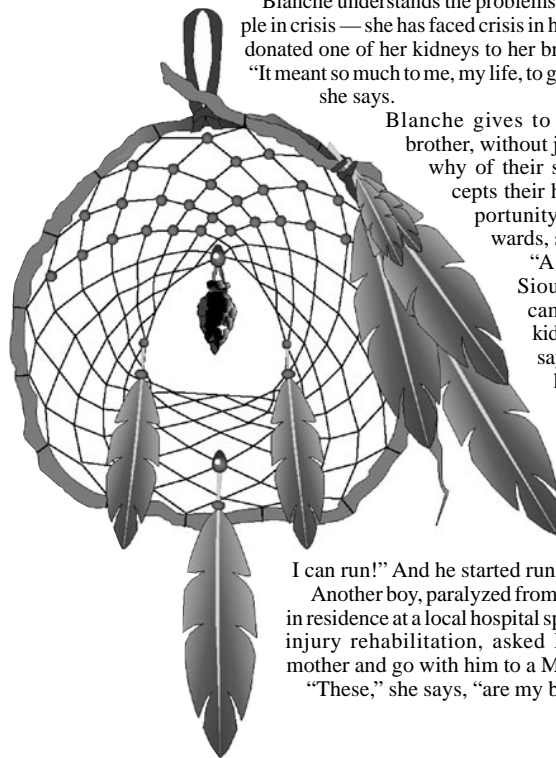
"These," she says, "are my blessings." ❧



Photos by Joe Powlaka



(Above) Blanche Whipple Zembower with friend and CANA supporter Dr. Emerson Falls. Blanche finds her work to bring comfort and assistance to Native Americans rewarding. (Below) Zembower's non-profit organization is housed in a quiet Denver neighborhood.



With Nichiren Shoshu 'excommunicating' the SGI yet again, the temple issue remains an important topic to discuss as we work for the...

Photo by JONATHAN WILSON



VICTORY *of the* PEOPLE

Against a backdrop of recent developments in the 'Seattle Incident' case, Nichiren Shoshu starts a new campaign to attract SGI members. Straying even further from Nichiren Daishonin's spirit, Nikken tells members the only way to enlightenment is through him.

By EIICHI WADA
SGI GENERAL DIRECTOR

On Oct. 1, Nichiren Shoshu began sending letters to all Soka Gakkai members in Japan warning them to quit the organization or lose their "believer-status within Nichiren Shoshu." It makes little sense, but this is how the priests have started the latest chapter in their campaign against the SGI. For Nikken, this is the logical conclusion of Operation C, his plan to "cut" the SGI. It began in 1990 with the dismissal of the SGI president and continued with the excommunication of the SGI in 1991. It will end on Nov. 30, the deadline he's set, with the excommunication of every member who does not leave the Gakkai.

It's impossible, of course, to belong to an excommunicated religious body and not be excommunicated yourself. That's why members have not taken this announcement seriously — they have considered themselves excommunicated since 1991.

The priests raised this Nov. 30 ultimatum anyway, as a ruse to scare even a few more members into joining them. The temple's renewed emphasis on attracting Gakkai members to its own organization is also an attempt to shift at-

tention away from the fact that Nikken was finally ordered to testify in court about the Seattle Incident. The priests must be concerned that his testimony will be detrimental to their case.

Nikken's campaign to attract SGI members has never been as successful as he had first hoped. Now, aiming toward his goal of having 100,000 members attend a pilgrimage to the head temple next March, the priesthood is using this empty threat of excommunication to try to sway the members.

I must point out, too, that the Nov. 30 deadline is aimed especially at elderly Gakkai members, whom Nikken believes may be concerned about death, as well as inactive or ill members. The letter threatens that "it is indeed foolish to close off your way to enlightenment by continuing your slanderous association with the Soka Gakkai, which has turned into a heretical group..." I am deeply saddened that the Nikken sect, rather than warmly encouraging elderly members, seeks to strike fear in their hearts.


While few members in Japan are likely to fall prey to these scare tactics, I believe the Nikken sect sees a greater potential audience for such threats in overseas countries. Since members outside Japan are less familiar with the history of Nichiren Shoshu and have little personal experience with the priests, they may listen to Nikken's message more seriously.

This year, which he is calling the 30th anniversary of the start of Nichiren Shoshu's worldwide movement, Nikken

has dispatched many priests overseas. He's sent them primarily to Asian, South American and Latin American countries and also to the United States, which has the largest concentration of temples outside Japan. Though we're not sure, based on the Oct. 1 letter, it seems there will eventually be an effort overseas, too, to scare people again with the word *excommunication*.

In a letter he wrote on Oct. 1, 1279 — the same day as the priesthood's letter — Nichiren Daishonin says, "Should you slacken even a bit, demons will take advantage" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 242). At that time, Nichiren Daishonin's followers in Atsuhara were being persecuted by Tendai priests and government officials. He encouraged them to deepen their faith through these persecutions, to never slacken.

Let's, too, never slacken. Let's be prepared to encourage members about the temple issue. And let's be ready to answer their questions with reason and compassion, instilling confidence in them that practicing with the SGI is the way to practice as the Daishonin taught.

This special pullout in the *World Tribune* includes background information on the temple's new campaign and a full explanation of the recent developments regarding Nikken in the Seattle Incident trial. I hope it will be useful to you in upholding the justice of the SGI together with SGI President Ikeda for the Victory of the People Toward the New Century, the SGI's theme for next year. 



Eiichi Wada

Nichiren Shoshu Renews Ties With Minobu

Recent mingling with the Minobu sect shows how Nichiren Shoshu has lost sight of Nikko Shonin's founding spirit.

By TED MORINO

SGI-USA STUDY DEPARTMENT CHIEF

Keeping Nichiren Daishonin's teachings pure has been the challenge of his disciples ever since his death. Nikko Shonin in the 13th and 14th centuries, Nichikan Shonin in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the Soka Gakkai presidents in modern times have all had to defend the purity of the Daishonin's teachings from the influence of other Nichiren sects — especially the Minobu sect, an influence that keeps creeping back in. Lately, this influence is seemingly back in a big way, as Nichiren Shoshu is once again establishing close ties with the Minobu priests, who so misunderstand the Daishonin's teachings that they, alongside beads and bells, peddle the Gohonzon to tourists.

Since 1994, more than a dozen documented times, Nichiren Shoshu priests and officials have visited Minobu temples, and Minobu priests have visited Taiseki-ji, Nichiren Shoshu's head temple. (A supporter of the Nikken sect and organizer of attacks on the Gakkai, ex-Gakkai lawyer Masatomo Yamazaki has also been attending Minobu events, urging Minobu to join the attacks on the Soka Gakkai.) Such mingling points strongly to the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood's fundamental loss of Taiseki-ji's founding spirit.

The Minobu sect was initiated at Mount Minobu, the place where Nichiren Daishonin lived the last years of his life. Nikko Shonin, Nichiren Daishonin's successor, left the mountain to found Taiseki-ji after becoming convinced that the so-called five senior priests had drifted away from the essence of the Daishonin's teachings. One of these five senior priests, Niko, then be-



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

The Minobu sect, with which Nichiren Shoshu has been meeting recently, distorts the Daishonin's teaching and sells the Gohonzon to tourists.

came the high priest of the Minobu sect. His distorted view was proven when his sect began referring to the Daishonin as a bodhisattva instead of the original Buddha. Moreover, neglecting the Daishonin's guidance to respect the Gohonzon as the sole object of worship, Minobu started to worship other objects, which today include statues of Shakyamuni, the Hariti demon and many others.

While establishing Taiseki-ji, Nikko Shonin completely refuted Minobu's misconceptions. With his determination to protect the purity of the Daishonin's teachings, Nikko devised 26 admonitions for priests. Among these, one forbids Nichiren Shoshu priests from visiting heretical temples like Minobu even to "have a look around," an admonition the Nikken sect is clearly ignoring.

After Nikko Shonin's death, the founder's spirit unfortunately evaporated at Taiseki-ji — to the point where Nichiren Shoshu and Minobu priests eventually reconciled. In fact, some Nichiren Shoshu high priests came from the Minobu sect.

Literally for centuries, and virtually throughout its history, the head temple has existed in ignorance of its founder's basic spirit.

Four hundred years after

Nikko Shonin's time, a reformer emerged from within Nichiren Shoshu. Nichikan, the 26th high priest, cleansed Taiseki-ji of the influences of other Nichiren sects. Since the Daishonin's death, these slanderous Nichiren sects had promulgated their teachings throughout Japan, diffused the significance of the Gohonzon and split into many factions. Nichikan refuted them all.

But Taiseki-ji eventually began mingling again with the Minobu sect, which had become much larger and more powerful than Nichiren Shoshu, with some 10,000 temples (compared to a mere 50 for Nichiren Shoshu pre-World War II). Before and during the war, the priesthood, under the influence of Minobu and fearing the military government's power, deleted certain passages of Nichiren Daishonin's writings and amended the silent prayers to reflect nationalist goals.

In a recent speech, SGI Deputy President Einosuke Akiya said that Nichiren Shoshu had an inferiority complex toward Minobu, which it even looked to as the primary lineage of the Daishonin's teachings.

The Soka Gakkai was the latest force to cleanse Nichiren Shoshu of the Minobu influence. During the famous 1955 Otaru Debate, chronicled in *The Human Revolution*, vol. 9, Nichiren Shoshu priests were supposed to debate Minobu

priests. But when Nichiren Shoshu bowed out at the last minute, it was up to the Soka Gakkai and the young Daisaku Ikeda to defeat Minobu. "With that victory," Mr. Akiya said, "Nichiren Daishonin's true teachings began to flow at Taiseki-ji, just as Nikko Shonin had intended."

With the emergence of the Soka Gakkai, Nichiren Shoshu was forced to reexamine the true spirit of faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, especially during the time of Josei Toda, the second Soka Gakkai president, when suddenly there were thousands upon thousands of followers embodying the Daishonin's spirit.

And through witnessing the many faith experiences Gakkai members accumulated by practicing strictly in accord with the Daishonin's mandate, the priesthood was reacquainted with the power of daimoku and the benefits of faith. A harmonious relationship between priesthood and laity developed, and Nichiren Shoshu disassociated with Minobu.

The recent exchanges between the Minobu and Nikken sects suggests Nikken's nostalgia for the days when Nichiren Shoshu got along well with Minobu. This nostalgia, along with Nikken's jealousy toward the Gakkai, explains why he destroyed the Grand Reception Hall — which the Gakkai donated — to build a new structure reminiscent of Minobu sect halls. Perhaps never having shaken its inferiority complex, the priesthood wants to return to the times before the Gakkai emerged.

Befriending Minobu priests without taking issue with their heretical doctrines, though, is a fundamental error. Compared to Nikko Shonin, who had to depart Minobu so he could purely carry on the Daishonin's correct teachings, the Nikken sect's current actions show the priests want to go back to Minobu and don't care what the Daishonin would say. ❏

SUMMARY

Four Views of Nikken

A summary of points made by SGI Deputy President Akiya at a conference for representative leaders at the Soka International Friendship Hall, Sendagaya, Tokyo, Oct. 2.

1) Nikken's Betrayal of the Daishonin's Teachings. Now Minobu priests, heirs to the mistaken doctrines of the five senior priests, are making frequent visits to Taiseki-ji. At the same time, priests of Nichiren Shoshu branch temples are visiting Minobu branch temples. Thus it would appear that the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood, under Nikken, has developed close relations with Minobu.

2) Nikken's Attitude of Discrimination. The priesthood has been promulgating the discriminatory concept that priests are inherently superior to lay people. Nikken says he is a "living Buddha" and views lay believers as subservients.

3) Nikken's Character. Evidence of his jealousy toward both SGI President Ikeda and High Priest Nittatsu, who preceded Nikken, can be seen in his extreme action to tear down the head temple's Grand Reception Hall, which was constructed during Nittatsu's tenure as a crystallization of the members' desire to support the priesthood. In its place, he is constructing a reception hall closely resembling one that stands at Minobu.

4) Nikken's Persecution of President Ikeda. From the time of President Ikeda's appointment as third president of the Soka Gakkai in 1960, the Gakkai, under his leadership, has contributed many temples, buildings and facilities to Nichiren Shoshu, including the Grain Main Temple (Sho-Hondo) and the Grand Reception Hall. But, as we have learned, in response Nikken quietly planned Operation C, the plan to "cut off" President Ikeda. ❏

'Seattle Incident' Timeline

March 16, 1963: Nikken departs Japan to conduct Gohonzon-conferral ceremonies in the United States, the first overseas ceremonies.

March 19, 1963: Nikken, then Nichiren Shoshu Study

Department chief, conducts a Gohonzon-conferral ceremony in Seattle.

March 20, 1963: According to Hiroe Clow's testimony, she receives an early morning call from the police and reports to

the scene, where the police tell her that Nikken has had an altercation with prostitutes over payment for services rendered.

May 3, 1963: According to Hiroe Clow's testimony,

when she attends the 25th Soka Gakkai Headquarters General Meeting at the Nippon University Auditorium in Tokyo, High Priest Nittatsu invites her to his waiting room. With Nikken at his side, he says, "Thank you very

much for your hospitality in Seattle." Turning to Nikken, he continues: "We caused you a lot of trouble. I am well aware of him." Nikken jumps up from his seat and bows.

Dec. 9, 1980: Nikken visits the United States

for the first time after becoming high priest. According to Hiroe Clow's testimony, he requests her presence at the Los Angeles International Airport for his arrival.

June 17, 1992: Soka Shimpo, the Soka

Gakkai youth division's newspaper, reports on the "Seattle Incident" based on Mrs. Clow's account. She decides to tell her story after Nikken excommunicates the SGI, so people will know Nikken's true

Nichiren Shoshu's Three Errors in the Seattle Incident Trial

By SHIN YATOMI

VICE SGI-USA STUDY DEPARTMENT CHIEF

On Sept. 29, the Tokyo District Court officially decided to call Nikken Abe to testify in the Seattle Incident trial. Four years have now passed since the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood filed this \$20 million libel suit against the Soka Gakkai for publishing Hiroe Clow's account of the 1963 incident. The late Mrs. Clow twice gave detailed testimony about the incident — in October 1995 and in February 1996.

Nikken's decision to pursue this suit has turned out to be a big mistake, especially now that he has received a court order to testify, say lawyers for the Soka Gakkai. In this lawsuit, they say, the priesthood's lawyers have made three major errors.

● First, they changed one of their contentions essential to the merit of the case. After this incident was first publicized in 1992, Nikken denied it completely, saying, "I did not set foot outside [the hotel the night of the alleged incident]." However, on Sept. 29, 1995, just before Mrs. Clow's first testimony, Nikken suddenly changed his story, stating that he took a walk to have some drinks and then returned to his hotel room



Nikken's signature on a prayer bead box sent to Hiroe Clow.

(please see box at right). This was a considerable alteration of his previous statement — an alteration that led, Gakkai lawyers believe, to the court deeming it necessary to question Nikken himself about it in the courtroom.

● Second, it has been revealed in court that Nikken lied about other aspects of this incident. For example, he denied ever sending a gift to Mrs. Clow. He also said that because he never knew that Mrs. Clow had a daughter, it was impossible that he ever sent her a wedding gift. (Mrs. Clow testified that she believes Nikken sent her these gifts to buy her silence about the Seattle Incident.)

Through evidence submitted by the Soka Gakkai, however,

Nikken's statements were proven false. When the Soka Gakkai's defense team submitted photographs of prayer beads sent by Nikken, the cover letters from him attached to other gifts, a congratulatory note hand-written by Nikken, and a letter from his wife, among other items, the priesthood was compelled to produce Mrs. Clow's letter to Nikken informing him about her daughter's wedding.

● Third, the priesthood's legal team failed to disprove Mrs. Clow's testimony. In their efforts to disparage her credibility during cross-examination, the priesthood's legal team tried out such confusing assertions as freeway construction at the time making it impossible for Mrs. Clow to have taken the route she said she took to the scene of the incident. In response, the Soka Gakkai's defense team produced aerial photographs of the area proving that Mrs. Clow was not obstructed in the route she took.

As the trial proceeded, it became clear that the court needed to hear from Nikken directly regarding the incident, in order to examine the overall merit of his case. Nikken's scheduled testimony (Dec. 22 and Feb. 2, 1998) has become the focal point of the case.

The Significance of the Recent Court Decision

By SHIN YATOMI

VICE SGI-USA STUDY DEPARTMENT CHIEF

According to Soka Gakkai lawyers, the judge's recent decision to have Nikken testify in the Seattle Incident trial is significant for three reasons.

● First, because the question before the court is essentially whether Mrs. Clow or Nikken is telling the truth, Nikken's testimony is crucial. Mrs. Clow already testified about the incident in detail, and former Seattle police office Ronald Sprinkle's testimony supported hers. A

large volume of evidence has been submitted to substantiate Mrs. Clow's testimony. So the only person left to testify is Nikken, Gakkai lawyers say.

● Second, the decision clarified that the priesthood has been putting a spin on the case. The priesthood printed on Nov. 16, 1996, a special issue of its newspaper, *Daibyakuho*, proclaiming that the trial should end because Mrs. Clow's testimony had been "proven false" by cross-examination of Mrs. Clow and Mr. Sprinkle. And all attempts by the Gakkai to substantiate Mrs.

Clow's account of the incident had ended in failure, the priesthood asserted. The court not only decided to continue the case but to call Nikken as a witness.

● Third, what will happen if Nikken does not testify? The Code of Civil Procedures in Japan stipulates that if a witness called to testify does not appear in court without proper reason, this will be considered an admission of the opposing party's allegation. So if Nikken does not appear, the court will acknowledge the Gakkai's version as true.

DID HE OR DIDN'T HE?

Nichiren Shoshu changes one of their main contentions in the 'Seattle Incident' trial.

NO: Aug. 28, 1992: During a certified priests guidance meeting at Taiseki-ji, Nikken stated: "I have been asked whether or not I left the hotel, and I have no memory of stepping out of the hotel." Also: "It did not happen. **I did not set foot outside.... I absolutely didn't go out....** If I had, I would remember the night scenes of America."

NO: Aug. 28, 1992: At the same meeting, Kotoku Obayashi, chief of the Nichiren Shoshu Overseas Bureau, stated: "No matter what you think, it is **utterly impossible** for someone who was charged with such a grave responsibility and was physically exhausted to go out into the streets of Seattle, which is located close to the Canadian border, in a country where he could not speak the language, when it was still severely cold.... In fact, the high priest has stated that he did not set foot outside the hotel except to conduct the Gohonzon-conferral ceremony." Also, Jiho Takahashi, chief priest of Myoshin-ji temple in San Francisco, stated: "It is an undeniable fact that on March 19, 1963, **the high priest did not set foot outside the hotel** from when he returned from the Gohonzon-conferral ceremony until checking out the next morning.... On March 19 and 20, the weather was bad. There is a record that on both days it rained a little. It is totally impossible to walk around Seattle late at night in bad weather...."

NO: June 25, 1993: In a suit against the publishing company Kobunsha for its report on the incident, Nichiren Shoshu submitted a document to the court that read in part: "In response to the coverage of what the Soka Gakkai calls the Seattle Incident, Nikken Abe has consistently maintained that **he did not set foot outside** the hotel where he was staying and therefore denies the allegation that he did."

NO: May 23, 1994: During the second session of Nichiren Shoshu's libel case against the Soka Gakkai at the Tokyo District Court, Nichiren Shoshu's lead attorney, Mr. Konagai, stated: "This is a fabricated incident. **Nikken Abe did not set foot outside the hotel.**"

NO: June 26, 1995: During the seventh session of the trial at the Tokyo District Court, an attorney representing the Soka Gakkai asked the Nichiren Shoshu side, "Will you maintain the plaintiff's claim that **he did not set foot outside** the hotel on the night of the incident?" Nichiren Shoshu's lead attorney, Mr. Konagai, then replied, "Of course, that is our intent."

YES: Sept. 29, 1995: Nichiren Shoshu submitted to the Tokyo District Court a document that read in part: "After he conducted a Gohonzon-conferral ceremony at the home of Keiko Kawada from 7:00 p.m. on the 19th of the same month [March], the Study Department Chief [Nikken] returned to his room at the Olympic Hotel where he was staying. **He then went for a walk alone, had drinks and went back to his room.** He went to bed by 1:00 a.m. on the 20th of the same month. After that, the Study Department Chief did not set foot outside the hotel and got up at 10:00 a.m. the next morning."

YES: Sept. 29, 1995: Nichiren Shoshu issued a notice to all Nichiren Shoshu believers that read in part: "The high priest conducted a Gohonzon-conferral ceremony from 7:00 p.m. After completing it, he returned to the Olympic Hotel where he was staying. **Then he went for a short walk around the town.** Without experiencing any noteworthy incident, he returned to the hotel and went to bed by 1:00 a.m. From that time until he got up at 10:00 a.m. the next morning, he did not set foot outside the hotel."

character.
July 10, 1992: Nichiren Shoshu issues a notice that reads in part: "The incident in Seattle, as it has been publicized, is an utterly groundless lie, a fabrication."
Aug. 1, 1992: The

Daibyakuho again calls Nikken's altercation with prostitutes "fabrication." Regarding the prayer beads that Nikken and his wife sent to Mrs. Clow and her daughter, it denies

everything, stating, "The high priest and his wife did not know that Clow has a daughter."
Aug. 12, 1992: Kotoku Obayashi, Nichiren Shoshu Overseas Bureau chief, and Shinsho Abe, Nikken's

son, visit Seattle to investigate.
Sept. 17, 1992: Mrs. Clow files a libel suit against Nikken at the Los Angeles District Court. (Before examining the merits of the case, the court would decide it did

not have jurisdiction. That decision has been appealed.)
Dec. 15, 1993: Nichiren Shoshu files its libel suit against the Soka Gakkai at the Tokyo District Court.
Sept. 29, 1995: Nichiren Shoshu

submits to the Tokyo District Court a document that changes its previous position, acknowledging for the first time that Nikken left the hotel the night of the incident.
Nichiren Shoshu

issues a notice to the same effect.
Oct. 2 & 9, 1995: Mrs. Clow testifies at the Tokyo District Court.
Feb. 7, 1996: Mrs. Clow is cross-examined by Nichiren
PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE

Nikken, Temple Renew Scare Campaign

Nikken's six-year campaign to attract SGI members has not met his expectations. His latest excommunication play fits the pattern of fear tactics he has used all along.

By **JEFF FARR**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Nikken's latest move is no surprise if you've been following the temple issue over the years. His announcement that Soka Gakkai members in Japan have until Nov. 30 to join the temple or else be excommunicated marks the start of a new round in his campaign of several years to attract SGI members into his temple organization. This news came from the Nichiren Shoshu Administrative Office in the form of an Oct. 1 letter, the latest in a long line of notices, orders and statements from that office, all on the surface clarifying the temple's position but with the underlying intent of creating doubt

about the SGI in the eyes of SGI members.

This notice starts the fourth phase of Nikken's campaign, the first of which began just a few months after the dismissal of SGI President Ikeda as head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations in December 1990.

March–November 1991: In March 1991, Nikken made his initial bid for the Gakkai's membership. First, he started his own overseas membership drive with a March 5 notice. Then he announced the end of the traditional Gakkai pilgrimage system with a notice on March 16. The Administrative Office, which issued the notices, cited "current circumstances" regarding the Soka Gakkai as the pretext, meaning the Gakkai's protest of President Ikeda's dismissal and its calls for priesthood reform.

From President Ikeda's inaugural trip overseas in 1960 until March 1991, there was an agreement that only the Gakkai would propagate Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism outside Japan. By 1991, the SGI had taken the overseas membership from zero to 1.2 million people practicing in

100 different countries. Nikken wanted the revenue from this membership.

He also wanted to, and did, take over the Gakkai pilgrimage system, which the second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, initiated in 1952. Aided by President Toda's system, 70 million people had visited the head temple by 1991, all making financial donations to the once-impooverished temple.

November 1991–September 1993: Despite these aggressive moves, so few SGI members switched to Nichiren Shoshu that Nikken decided to take an even bolder step. The second phase of his campaign began with the November 1991 excommunication of the SGI. On Nov. 8, 1991, the Administrative Office issued a preliminary order for the SGI to disband. And on Nov. 28 it issued the notice of excommunication. This notice cited as a motivation the Gakkai's not heeding various disciplinary measures the priests had taken against it that year.

Still, SGI members stayed away in droves. In fact, Nov. 28 became the members' rallying point for SGI independence. President Ikeda even dubbed it Soka Gakkai Independence Day, conveying that the excommunication was the best thing that could have happened. The SGI was now free to practice the Daishonin's Buddhism correctly, he said.

The only real meaning the excommunication had for SGI members was that they could no longer receive the Gohonzon. By focusing on this point, priests tried to persuade SGI members to join the temple. Meanwhile, the Administrative Office was quieter for a time, especially when a steady stream of priests left the temple in 1992.

September 1993–October 1997: But the SGI soon began to issue the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon to its members around the world. The third phase of Nikken's campaign began when the SGI announced its intention to do so in September 1993. Nichiren Shoshu saw

The Temple's Four-Step Campaign

March–November 1991

Temple launches overseas membership drive; takes over pilgrimage system.

November 1991–September 1993

Temple excommunicates SGI organization; denies Gohonzon to SGI members.

September 1993–October 1997

Temple calls the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon "counterfeit."

October 1997

Temple threatens to excommunicate Gakkai members.

October 1997: Needing a new idea if he is to make his goal of 100,000 members visiting the temple next March, Nikken started this fourth phase: re-excommunication. "It is indeed foolish to close off your way to enlightenment by continuing your slanderous association with the Soka Gakkai, which has transformed into a heretical group by committing a number of slanderous acts including creating a counterfeit Gohonzon," the temple's Oct. 1 letter told members in Japan. "Now it is the time for you to sever your evil ties with the Soka Gakkai and carry on your pure faith as lay believers of Nichiren Shoshu." This, essentially, has been the temple's message to Gakkai members for six years.

SGI-USA members wonder, if members in Japan are to be re-excommunicated Nov. 30, when will overseas members be? The priesthood now says it's discussing the best way to implement the Oct. 1 letter overseas. But for all intents and purposes, what it's discussing is, once again, how best to convince overseas members to leave the SGI.

Never in the history of world religion has a group of priests so betrayed the people who brought it prosperity, then excommunicated their organization (whatever that means), then continued to criticize them for six years, and then started excommunicating them again, this time one by one. That's no way to treat people.

No one knows what other plans Nikken may have to get SGI members to join him. But two things are fairly certain if history's any judge: He'll use fear tactics, and informed SGI members will pay no heed. **WT**

This special section was compiled and edited by the staff of the World Tribune, SGI-USA's weekly newspaper, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA, 90401. E-mail: SokaNews@aol.com.

Reception Hall Torn Down

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS



The Grand Reception Hall, donated by Soka Gakkai members in 1964, is torn down in 1996. The hall symbolized priesthood-laity unity during the time of Nikken's predecessor, Nittatsu, but was destroyed by Nikken under the ruse that it was unsafe. Building inspectors, however, said the hall far exceeded all safety codes. Wanting to build one that more suits his tastes, Nikken's new hall will be reminiscent of Minobu sect buildings.

'Seattle Incident' Timeline

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Shoshu's attorney at the Tokyo District Court, completing her testimony.

March 23, 1996: Mrs. Clow dies.

Sept. 18, 1996: Mr. Sprinkle, a former Seattle police officer who was allegedly at the scene of the incident, testifies at the Tokyo District Court.

Oct. 30, 1996: Nichiren Shoshu's attorney cross-examines Mr. Sprinkle at the Tokyo District Court.

Jan. 7, 1997: Nichiren Shoshu lawyers

request the Tokyo District Court to conclude the examination of the case.

July 14, 1997: Because the chief judge has changed, the court

holds a session for the plaintiff and defendant to restate their cases.

Sept. 29, 1997: The Tokyo District Court orders Nikken to testify.

Editor's note: The Japanese justice system differs from the U.S. system in significant ways. In this trial, there is no jury, and the court decides when to stop hearing witnesses and make a judgement. Furthermore, trials in Japan, like this one has, can last for years.