

World Tribune

No. 3189

THE YEAR OF VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE FOR THE NEW CENTURY

MAY 1, 1998

INSIDE THIS WEEK

2

PERSPECTIVE

Meeting expectations is what success is about.

3

MAILBOX

Meat, murder, moralizing and more.

4

NEWS

The Liberal Democratic Party in Japan apologizes for spreading false stories about SGI President Ikeda.

7

EXPERIENCE

Her promise to her cat eventually leads her to begin the healing process.

8

WORLDVIEW

Ron Boender and his Butterfly World.

SPECIAL SHO-HONDO PULLOUT INSIDE THIS ISSUE

'FRIENDS FOR PEACE' PULLOUT INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA 90401
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
Return To: SGI-USA Subscriptions
525 Wilshire Blvd.
Santa Monica, CA 90401-1403

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVER BY ISSUE DATE

SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION INSIDE

Sho-Hondo To Be Torn Down

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



The Nichiren Shoshu priesthood announced April 8 that demolition of the Grand Main Temple would begin in May. This temple, donated by some 8 million believers worldwide, housed the Dai-Gohonzon until early April. The reason given by Nikken for the demolition is that this building was the idea of SGI President Ikeda, whom Nikken now considers a slanderer, and is thus no place for the Dai-Gohonzon. Cost for the demolition will be some \$35 million, according to the notice posted inside the priesthood's administrative offices. A special pullout section inside this issue contains more stories related to this latest development.

NASA Program Commends SGI Leader

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER
Pasadena, Calif., March 28

Telescopes In Education, a Mount Wilson Institute program sponsored by NASA, presented SGI President Ikeda with a Certificate of Commendation today. This was in recognition of his support of the educational program that the Kansai Soka high schools have participated in since 1994. A delegation of educators from the Soka high schools received the certificate on the SGI leader's behalf from TIE Program Director Gilbert Clark at the Mount Wilson Institute and Observatory in Pasadena today.

The commendation lauds Mr. Ikeda for "his remarkable vision and understanding of the importance of a diverse education for the leaders of tomorrow."

It continues: "His vision has brought a new and unique perspective to the education process in Japan. This approach now opens the door for the students of Soka schools to partner with students around the world in joint research efforts in the future."

In September 1993, Mr. Ikeda met with Dr. Robert Jastrow, director of the Mount Wilson Institute. At that time, Mr. Ikeda said that he felt that learning about the universe was

meaningful for everyone, especially youth. "Gazing up into the heavens enables us to open our hearts and broaden our outlook, as well as deepen our understanding of the importance of peace," he said.

Dr. Jastrow, the American astronomer and physicist well known for his work in the Apollo space program, then took the opportunity to explain the TIE program, designed to promote the study of astronomy and astrophysics among students around the world. He proposed to President Ikeda that a computer link be established be-

PLEASE SEE NASA, 4

Keep 'Graduating' Throughout Life

SGI President Ikeda gave the following speech at the joint graduation ceremony for the 24th class of Soka University and 12th class of Soka Women's College, held at the Soka University Auditorium in Hachioji, Tokyo, March 18.

Congratulations to all who are graduating today! Your faces shine with a beautiful hope and nobility.

It is important to keep "graduating" throughout life, moving up and on to higher challenges. Please never quit or give in to defeat. To do so would be your loss, and it would also cause your precious parents to worry.

This past February, I visited the city of Manila in the Philippines. I laid a wreath at the monument honoring the country's national hero, Dr. José Rizal (1861-96). I also received the first Rizal International Peace Award in a ceremony with Philippine President Fidel Ramos.

Rizal, the champion of Philippine independence, gallantly took on the oppressive authorities and corrupt clergy of his day. His words are well known: "We...fight so that there may be more justice and more liberty, and for the sacred rights of man. We ask nothing for ourselves, we sacrifice everything for the common good; what more do we have to fear?"

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 7

Commemorative Contribution

To mark April 28, the day Nichiren Daishonin first chanted Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and May 3, Soka Gakkai Day, the SGI-USA will again be holding our annual May Commemorative Contribution. Contribution dates run from April 28-June 7. Please check with your leaders or your community center for more information.



The World Tribune is the weekly newspaper of the SGI-USA.

OUR ORGANIZATION

SGI-USA (Soka Gakkai International-USA) is an American Buddhist organization based on the philosophy of the Nichiren school of Mahayana Buddhism. The SGI exists in 128 countries and has its international center in Japan, where the organization was founded in 1930. In the *World Tribune*, you'll see news of our organization both in America and internationally.

OUR PURPOSE

The SGI-USA promotes peace and individual happiness based on Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Our position is that peace in the community — whether it be in a neighborhood or the world — is inseparably linked with individuals' happiness. SGI-USA members, through their faith, are seeking to become happier and contribute positively to society. In the *World Tribune*, you'll see experiences from members about this process, which we call human revolution.

OUR PRACTICE

Our basic practice is chanting the phrase Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the Gohonzon, our object of devotion. According to Nichiren Daishonin, the workings of the universe are an expression of the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. So chanting it allows us to be in tune with our environment and create the most value. The *World Tribune* carries many study articles to explain the practice in detail.

OUR HERITAGE

Myoho-renge-kyo is the title of the Lotus Sutra, which is the foundation of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. This sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha's highest teaching, sets forth that the Buddha nature is inherent in all living things — all people have the potential to become Buddhas. Nichiren Daishonin, a Japanese priest who lived in the 13th century, championed the Lotus Sutra and introduced the concrete way of putting it into practice, the chanting and sharing of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. In keeping with the sutra's teaching that people are Buddhas, the SGI teaches that the heritage of this Buddhism is passed from generation to generation of the people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the SGI-USA community center nearest you — there are more than 60 across the country. (You can look in the phone book or call our national headquarters at (310) 451-8811.) The community center can direct you to SGI-USA members in your town, so you can ask questions and find out more.

Get the 'World Tribune' at Home

- 6 months \$28 (26 issues)
 - 1 year \$50 (52 issues)
 - 3 years \$110 (156 issues)
 - Check/money order enclosed Please bill me
- Name (Please print) _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ ZIP _____
 Source code (if known) _____

New Orders Only

Mail to:
SGI-USA
P.O. Box 1427
Santa Monica, CA
90406-1427

Or call toll free:
1-800-835-4558

We Can Reach for the Moon

PERSPECTIVE

By BILL ENDSLEY
CHICAGO

A recent survey found that while the majority of Americans believe in the afterlife, few feel they need the presence of a clergyman at the time of death to secure this passage. Fewer and fewer people are seeking the counsel of religious leaders at this crucial time. Our fierce independence has us arriving at the Pearly Gates without an escort.

Americans have high expectations for a better life after death but not of their religious leaders. And not, it seems, of life in the here and now. Somewhere along the line, priests and preachers have failed to meet our expectations.

Meeting expectations is what success is about. I work in the theater on nights and weekends and for a professional association from 9 to 5. In the theater, a successful play meets the audience's expectation. A successful theater company creates an expectation through advertising and the press and then consistently meets or exceeds that expectation. Over the years, I have been involved with two theater companies that closed their doors. In both instances, the people involved failed to take the audience's expectations into account.

At my day job, I recently had a conversation with the newly appointed CEO. The association has been losing money and members, and he was brought in to stop the bleeding. Over the last several years, we have gone from 160 employees to 99. The morale at the office is very low and more time has been spent on interdepartmental fighting than in providing solutions to the member-

ship we serve.

The CEO and I talked about a basic lack of mission in the office because of the absence of strong leadership. The company is floundering because the employees don't know what to expect and are not working toward a unifying goal. We have lost sight of what the members expect from the dues they pay. Over the last several weeks, we have been working to define members' expectations and evolve a strategy for meeting them.

In the religious world, faith is often defined as expectation. We continue to pray because we expect results.

Ultimately, though, the answers to our prayers depend on the actions we take. No matter how many Sundays we spend in front of an altar, no matter how many pages are written on the validity of one belief over another, nothing happens until we take the reins and guide the horse.

Expectation is an elusive concept. As time passes, we may find ourselves yoked to the same limited expectations: "I'll never get that job." "I'm destined to be alone." "This problem is too big for me to make a difference." These expectations become our reality. And this reality is reinforced by a never-ending stream of negativity from the media and new heights of ineptitude from our institutions.

In Buddhism, a key concept is the mentor-disciple relationship. A mentor has great expectations for the disciple. A mentor inspires the disciple to go one step further, to push beyond the limits. But for this concept to work, the disciple must have even greater expectations of him- or herself.

The same is true in the workplace. Good employees work hard because of what they expect of themselves. Good employers inspire. And it is the interaction

between the two that creates forward motion. In the art world, as well, the interaction between the artist and the patron requires action on both sides. We can't just sit and let the world wash over us and expect to be happy.

"Many people become angry or grieve over phenomena that are actually nothing but the reflection of their lives — their state of mind and the causes they have created," SGI President Ikeda stated in his "clear mirror" guidance of Feb. 27, 1990. What responsibility do we take for the mess we're in? What do we expect for tomorrow?

In the last few months, I have been caught up in the scandals of the moment. I've been letting the tide of information wash over me, and I find myself adrift. As I struggle to find terra firma, I have to begin by expecting better. We bring out our best by expecting the best. In today's world of accusations and innuendo, of multi-media defamation of character and high-speed car chases, of cyber-talk and cure-all pills, we have to hack through the clutter — and raise our expectations.

"We must gain decisive victory over the harsh realities of society and lead a correct and vibrant life," President Ikeda said in 1990. "This is the purpose of our faith. We have to become wise and strong."

The answer to our prayers will not come from the latest product offered by Multi-World, Inc., no matter how much it spends for 30 seconds of cathode rays during *Seinfeld*.

If you take an infant out into the clear night, the baby will naturally reach for the moon. But as time passes, we stop reaching beyond our grasp. Gradually we lower our expectations. If we are to rise above the negative tide of our times, we have to learn again to reach for the moon. ❧

World Tribune

(ISSN-0049-8165)

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

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

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

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Copyright © 1998 by SGI-USA.
All rights reserved. Printed in the USA

Publisher	Fred M. Zaitsu
Executive Editor	Ted Morino
Managing Editor	Dave McNeill
Assistant Managing Editor	Lisa Carter Kirk
Associate Editor	Jeff Farr
Staff Writer	Lisa Jones
Graphic Artist	Don Sanders
Contributing Editors	Nikki Amdur Joel Drazner Terry Ellis
Staff Translators	Jeff Kriger Shin Yatomi Yoshiko Nakamura
Chief Photographer	Gregory Nakasuji

Bureau Chiefs

Phil Simpson, Atlanta; Fletcher Dalton, Boston; Veronica Evans, Chicago; Terry Ellis, Florida; Joanne Tachibana, Hawaii; Dave McNeill, Los Angeles; Cheryl Utley, Midwest; Robert Taliaferro, New York; Dave Shadovitz, Philadelphia; Chuck Evans, Rocky Mountain; J.L. Henriques, San Diego; Ron Baird, San Francisco; Bill Lawrence, Seattle; Wendy DeOre, Texas; Jane Crystal Brown, Washington, D.C.

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Meat, Murder, Moralizing and More

Editor's note: The essay about vegetarianism and Buddhism — "Want Fries With That?" — in our March 20 issue prompted more reader responses than any other article in recent memory. Because of the volume of letters we received, we are unable to print them all but have chosen to print an extended "Mailbox" column. Thank you to all who responded.

Having been a vegetarian for seven years, and now an omnivore, I found my health suffered from a strict no-meat diet; my metabolism is exceedingly fast, my frame is small, and I don't have the stomach capacity to eat the large bulky meals vegetarianism required. The current "meat is murder" fad is something I studiously ignore. If someone's personal choice is a no-meat diet, that's cool....

Eating or not eating meat is a choice that should be based on health and personal values; there is no right or wrong here, especially for followers of Nichiren Daishonin....

— JOE STEVENS,
San Francisco

What do you mean you are "usually" a vegetarian [as Lisa Jones states in the author's bio]? You either kill animals or you don't. I know that killing may be a real "icky" prospect for some people, so they have it done for them, thinking they somehow will insulate themselves from the deed. Your uninformed, jaded article was tantamount to a three-pack-a-day smoker writing an article on the dangers of cigarettes. Your statements were ungrounded, incorrect and misleading. I protest against this kind of biased, inept "reporting" on such a critical and important issue. I will do my best to repair the damage you have done to members or people in general, who might have been considering making a change, a change that has saved countless lives, at whatever meetings I attend from now on....

— MIKE GILMORE, Seattle

What a great article. Thank you. I've been a vegetarian since before I became a Buddhist. It's been about 13-14 years now. It

would be nice if you did a survey on how many in the organization are vegetarians and how many are thinking about becoming vegetarian or just plain eating healthy. I also think there ought to be a column in the *World Tribune* about health and fitness.

— ELEANOR J. DUPONT,
St. Albans, N.Y.

Lisa Jones has addressed an issue which, to my knowledge, has no bearing on our practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and therefore no place in the pages of "the weekly newspaper of the SGI-USA." She correctly points out that there would be no benefit in practicing the ancient Buddhist precepts in modern times, according to Nichiren Daishonin himself. Unfortunately, neither she nor the *World Tribune* stopped there. The article and its accompanying information boxes go on to say, in essence, that maybe we should eat meat, maybe we should not, but as Buddhists we should deeply ponder the issue. This is nonsense.... We are, like most of the great apes, neither carnivores nor herbivores, but omnivores (even chimpanzees hunt and eat animals, including other primate species, along with insects, fruit, nuts and berries). Our teeth, our digestive systems and our lifestyles from prehistoric times to the present reflect this fact.... Our dietary habits may "warrant reexamination and new dialogue," but not on the pages of the *World Tribune*.

— ANDY HANLEN,
Long Beach, Calif.

I'm a vegetarian, but I never try to "preach" it to anyone. But on the other hand, I find that people discriminate against me because of my choice, even some of our leaders, which I think is a shame. I hope your article will increase the awareness that people make certain choices, and that's OK.

— HEDIO LOBO,
North Hollywood, Calif.

I loved your article! I've been a vegetarian (off and on, mostly on) for 17 years and a Buddhist for 12. I agree with freedom of choice — however, I'm glad you wrote this article because I deeply feel this is an issue that practicing Buddhists should at least THINK about, whether they agree, disagree or don't care. People are so

anesthetized to institutionalized killing — such as in the meat industry and even the death penalty. They may love to eat meat but disdain the thought of hunting or killing animals. They may embrace the sanctity of all life but feel capital punishment is just in some cases. It's hard to let go of beliefs and lifestyles we're comfortable with — and maybe it's not even necessary. But I appreciate the opportunity for more dialogue on the subject inspired by your article....

— LAURA McFARLAND,
Austin, Texas

Perhaps we should remember, in our goal to obtain the same life condition, that Nichiren Daishonin sacrificed his own health and nearly starved to death, rather than hunt, kill or inflict suffering on animals even for his own nourishment.

— ANDREA KOVACS,
Greeneville, Tenn.

The reality is that it's IMPOSSIBLE to rear animals for mass consumption without inflicting unspeakable misery — even small-scale farming involves castration, the separation of mother and young and, finally, the slaughter itself. Yes, plants may feel, too, but you're missing the point. We cause harm with every step we take, but our goal should be to inflict as little suffering as possible within practicality. A practical place to start is the end of the senseless slaughter of millions of sentient beings. Beings who we know feel pain, joy and who desperately cling to life as much as you or I. I guess I can't blame you for trying to justify

your own eating habits, but I do feel it was completely irresponsible to lay this

guilt-induced opinion on members who may have otherwise chosen the compassionate way.
— VIVIAN DOMINGUEZ,
Seattle

Because meat is cruel to animals, destructive to the environment, polluting of the water, bad for human health and a huge cause of worldwide starvation, I think it should not be presented to children by those of us who are praying every day for compassion, wisdom and protection.

As Buddhists, we seek the middle way. We are praying to end the suffering of all sentient beings, and though we need not tell anyone to say no to meat, we surely ought not be telling them to say yes to it by serving it to children as if it were cruelty free. Meat is a violent tradition, just like war, and the SGI needs to teach children the truth about it in word and deed. Meat is unnecessary killing.

— SUSAN HENNINGER
FETTA, Los Angeles

The front page of a newspaper is very significant. I would prefer to see us lead off with articles like SGI President Ikeda's guidance or [General Director] Zaitu's article in this issue. It could also contain information that expresses the direction of the organization (e.g., annual theme, divisional reports, geographic reorganization, etc.). President Ikeda's guidance was on page 11, Mr. Zaitu's on page 10, meat-eating vs. vegetarianism on page 1. Priorities??

I have no issues with the information expressed in Lisa's

article. But I really feel that it is not *World Tribune* front-page material.

— ZENOBIA D. ODIASE,
Piscataway, N.J.

I eat meat, fish and fowl (in moderation) and do so with dignity and appreciation for my evolutionary niche as a homo sapiens omnivore.... In a world as complex and as imperiled as ours, acquiring a "respect for life" is unlikely to be found with a simple dietary decision. Discussion and careful consideration of such everyday matters, however, can certainly be a vehicle to better understand the core of how we conceive of ourselves as well as the fundamental effects of our actions. I applaud the *World Tribune's* efforts in promoting this. I suggest, however, that as Buddhists we try to avoid donning the mantle of self-righteousness, where simplistic views are propelled by a "sense" that we are absolutely right....

— BENJAMIN SCHOEPPLE,
Chicago

Huge sections of the *World Tribune's* readership live in locations whose lifestyles and (in some cases) livelihoods include the production and consumption of meat. How can we in Nebraska — or, I imagine, members in Texas, Kansas, the Dakotas, Iowa, Illinois or Wisconsin, to name a few — give this issue of the *World Tribune* to our friends? Isn't it saying to them that they do not have true compassion if they don't refrain from eating other living things? What are they going to think the SGI is, when its organ newspaper puts such a picture and article on the front page?

— JIM CELER, Omaha, Neb.

HAVE YOU GOT A STORY TO TELL?

THEN TELL US!

Did you recently learn something new about your practice or your life? Share it in a "Perspective." Have you accomplished a cherished goal? Send us your experience. Have you been studying the Goshu and what it means to your life? Turn it into an essay or a "Wow!" column.

Or maybe you don't want to write, but you've got a great idea for a "Worldview." Perhaps you heard someone give a great experience.

Or maybe you just finished reading the latest issue of *World Tribune* and want to get something off your chest — send a letter to "Mailbox."

Call your region bureau chief or contact the *World Tribune* directly:

Address: 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. 90401
Telephone: (310) 451-8811 **E-mail:** SokaNews@aol.com

GUIDELINES

Perspective and Worldview articles should be 600-900 words long;
Experiences and Essays, around 1000 words;
Wow! columns, 300 words;
Study articles, 500-600 words.

Become the Sun of Hope

SGI President Ikeda sent the following to the entrance ceremony for the new first grade classes of both Tokyo and Kansai Soka Elementary Schools, April 8.

To all of the new first-graders, congratulations on your first day of school! And congratulations to your parents as well. I'm sure all of you know about the sun. When the sun rises, morning comes. And when morning comes, the moon and stars disappear from sight. This is because the sun's rays are so strong and bright.

When the sun shines, it gets warm outside. The warmth feels so good that the flowers and trees, bugs and animals, and even us human beings feel happy and at ease. This is because the sun's rays are also gentle and soothing.

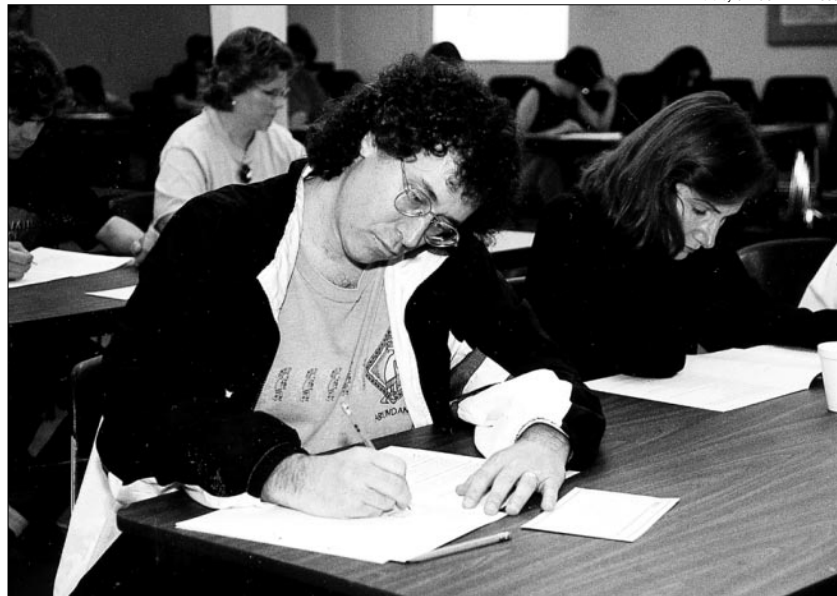
All of you are shining princes and princesses of the sun who will light up the 21st century. Over the next six years, while you are here at Soka Elementary School, I hope you will read many books, learn many new things and make many friends. I also hope that you will become as strong and as gentle as the sun.

On rainy days or cloudy days, the sun cannot be seen. But high above the clouds, it continues to shine brightly. In the same way, I am always warmly watching over you. I am constantly sending you rays of hope and courage. Please always remember this.

I am really looking forward to seeing all of your bright, cheerful faces as soon as possible. ❏

Study Exam Held Nationwide

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUI



'Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism.... Both practice and study arise from faith' (MW-1, 95). Buddhist study inspires and guides our faith and practice. It is a way to empower our lives. In this spirit, on April 19, about 3,000 members participated in the Study Department Entrance Examination held nationwide. This exam marks the first exam in the new four-year curriculum cycle that started this year. The Study Department holds an Entrance Examination every spring and promotional exams (to move to the next Study Department level) in fall every year. This fall, an Elementary Examination will be held (the date is to be announced in the future). Eligible candidates will be those who passed the Entrance Examination before 1998.

NASA, FROM PAGE 1

tween the Soka schools in Japan and the Mount Wilson Institute.

This link was made the following September, making it possible for students of the Kansai Soka high schools to use a remote controlled telescope in a real-time, interactive environ-

ment via the Internet. Some of the astronomy photographs the students have taken during those sessions have been introduced in technical journals. The Kansai Soka high schools are the first secondary schools in Japan to participate in the program, which has been applauded by specialists and the general public alike. ❏

LDP Apologizes to Soka Gakkai

By JEFF FARR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Santa Monica, Calif., April 23

The Liberal Democratic Party has publicly apologized to the Soka Gakkai for its coverage of the Nobuhira case in its newspaper, *Jiyu Shimpo*.

In 1996, Nobuko Nobuhira falsely accused SGI President Ikeda in a tabloid of raping her three times over a 23-year period. *Jiyu Shimpo* picked up the story, running a series based on her claims, while LDP politicians used it to attack President Ikeda and the Soka Gakkai's support of the now defunct New Frontier Party.

The LDP apology was prompted by an April 13 letter of protest from Soka Gakkai attorneys. Printed in the April 21 *Jiyu Shimpo* and *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper, the apology said: "We failed to conduct an adequate investigation of the facts.... We must acknowledge the inappropriateness of having in effect cooperated in

the spreading of falsehoods. For this we apologize...."

In addition, the April 22 *Asahi Shimbun* reported that Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto apologized to the Soka Gakkai by telephone, admitting, "We caused you trouble."

Behind the LDP's apology is an acknowledgment that Nobuhira's case is falling apart. Most of the charges have been thrown out, and her appeal for a postponement of the case has been denied twice.

"We are gratified by this long-overdue apology," SGI spokesperson Rie Tsumura said. "The ruling party has acted in a highly irresponsible manner, as it has exploited these sensational charges for clearly political purposes." ❏

The Student Files

Name: Yumi Konno
School: University of Washington
Major: International Business
City: Seattle



Being a student — a point in life where you can grow so much. You realize that you have the capability to reach any goal.

I was among 60 students accepted into the University of Washington business school, when I was a freshman.

This was possible only through my consistent daimoku and dedication to my studies for the entrance exams.

Now I'm taking business classes like

economics and accounting, and I'm in my third year of Japanese.

When I explain my practice to my friends at school, I say that I chant to achieve my highest potential in everything: my studies, marching band and work.

This Buddhist practice helps me set goals and challenge myself always to do better as a student. ❏

Corrections

• Two words were inadvertently dropped from the article "The Instant Your Destiny Changes," by Mark Kaplan, which appeared in the April 10 *World Tribune*. The sentence that jumps from page 1 to page 11 should read:

One of the god's tears falls on the fire and completely extinguishes it.

• In the Feb. 20 "Worldview" on Viktor Frankl, the picture shows him with Jorg Haider of Austria, a politician who has advocated neo-Nazi views. We regret this choice of photo.

SPEECH, FROM PAGE 1

When Rizal was a boy, his mother was arrested and imprisoned on false charges brought by scheming authorities. It was then that he boldly resolved to right the wrong that had been perpetrated on his mother and to win freedom for his oppressed fellow citizens. This determination set the course for the rest of his life.

He began studying foreign languages eagerly and challenging various fields of academia. He rallied other young people and forged a network of youth pursuing the liberation of their homeland.

Youth mustn't be frittered away in empty, vacuous, self-centered pursuits. Rizal called out, "May our compatriots... obey the voice of their heart and devote the precious time of their youth to something great, which is worthy of them." If he lived today, he would be calling on youth not to waste their time in mindless pastimes, watching television or playing video games.

The authorities came down hard on Rizal. On several occasions, he was banished and forced into exile. In the end, he was found guilty on trumped-up charges and executed at the young age of 35. He nevertheless died with great dignity.

The courageous freedom fighter once serenely proclaimed: "Heaven gets clouded. In heaven there is tempest, they say, but in reality it continues the same. It is our atmosphere that is clouded, that becomes tempestuous. Some kilometers higher up absolute calm prevails." Our state of mind is of vital importance. With hearts vast as the heavens, let us live with firm conviction, never swayed by life's vicissitudes. This was the spirit of Dr. Rizal. It is also the spirit of Buddhism. And it is the spirit with which I have lived my life.

Congratulations again to all of you, my treasured graduates of the 24th class of Soka University and the 12th class of Soka Women's College. I also heartily applaud the graduating students of the correspondence education course, the graduate school and the Intensive Japanese Studies Program. You have all worked hard!

I also acknowledge the faculty: Thank you for pouring your energies into nurturing and developing our students, whom I cherish as if they were my own precious sons and daughters. In addition, I wish to voice my deep appreciation to the univer-



Wearing the medal that accompanied his honorary doctorate from the University of Mórón, Mr. Ikeda speaks of the spirit of Soka University.

sity staff members.

Just now, I have received an honorary doctorate from Argentina's prestigious University of Morón, an institution dedicated to serving the people. I thank our distinguished guests from the university for the great honor they have bestowed upon me.

This year marks the centennial of the establishment of friendly relations between Argentina and Japan. I accept this honorary doctorate together with the Soka University graduates and students gathered here today, with the determination to forge an even closer bond between the two countries over the next century. I also accept this award as a symbol of the ongoing, boundless glory that will surely adorn the life of each graduate.

The Spirit of a Soka Student

Situated atop a beautiful hill, the University of Morón is known as a fortress of intellect dedicated to eradicating ignorance, servitude and injustice. It is also famous as an institute built out of the earnest wishes of the people. Soka University, too, was actualized through the efforts of the people.

To never be arrogant, to never put on airs, to be sincere in all things — this is the spirit of Soka University students past

and present. I hope that each of you will carry on this spirit and convey it to all who follow after you. This is the most admirable way to live and is the sign of a truly educated person. I hope you will never develop the mentality of a privileged elite who think they are better than others.

The University of Morón was founded in May 1960. I understand that its first board of directors meeting was convened on the third of that month. This is the same day, incidentally, that I became the third president of the Soka Gakkai at age 32.

Thirty-eight years have passed since then. In that time, the esteemed University of Morón has produced many outstanding graduates and developed a fine network of citizens who are contributing to Argentine society and the world. Under the farsighted leadership of its president, Dr. Mario Armando Mena, the University of Morón will begin offering degree courses in medicine with the opening of its new School of Medicine this April.

The process of construction is filled with hope.

Work on the brand-new main administrative building here at Soka University is also proceeding at a rapid pace. Although it could not be completed by the time of your graduation, I would like you to always carry with you an image of the construction work on its foundations. There is

surely no more noble and satisfying time in life than when we toil and struggle to lay the foundations for our future.

The groundwork for the Orange County campus of Soka University of America is also progressing smoothly. I would dearly love to see some of you gathered here today teaching there in the future.

Unceasing Efforts Lead to Victory

Speaking of medicine, I am reminded of the highly acclaimed Argentine physiologist Dr. Bernardo Alberto Houssay (1887–1971). In 1947, Dr. Houssay received the Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine for his research into the function of the pituitary gland. I thought about him when I visited Argentina five years ago. What had given rise to such a creative and innovative thinker? He personally used to declare that the only way to foster one's creativity is through utter dedication.

In the last lecture he gave to a class of his beloved students before retiring from his position as university professor, Dr. Houssay encouraged them with these words of the distinguished French chemist Louis Pasteur (1822–95): "Let me reveal that the secret to all my achievements in life can be attributed solely to my tenacious efforts."

Dr. Houssay came to the con-

clusion that perseverance is the answer. The person who never gives up is unbeatable. This is the noble path to victory in life.

Patience is vital. I firmly engraved this point into my heart during my youth under the guidance and tutelage of my mentor, Josei Toda. That is why I'm undisturbed when storms of persecution come our way. Without depending on power or money, I have worked single-handedly to spread a message of peace across the globe, demonstrating the power of the individual and the power of the people. I am patiently awaiting the day when all of you will play pivotal roles on the grand stage of the world. The only way to win in life is to put everything you've got into your endeavors and be determined to stick to your chosen path no matter what.

As you embark upon your respective journeys, I call to each of you: Strive for prosperity! Strive for development! Strive for victory!

Life is about striving all out to achieve our aims; it is about hard work and effort. Regardless of how smart you may be, intelligence alone cannot guarantee your future.

Today, five Soka University professors have been named professor emeritus. They are professors Mitsuo Morita,

SPEECH, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Kazuko Yamaguchi, Kazuyuki Sakai, Gen Itasaka and Motohiko Nishikawa. I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to each of you. I also sincerely thank the retiring professors and teaching staff for their long and dedicated service to our university. Let's send them off with a hearty round of applause!

Victory for Mentor and Disciple

Dr. Houssay was a person of intellect and great moral courage. He boldly criticized the ruling military government and was promptly dismissed from his post at the University of Buenos Aires. His life was threatened on numerous occasions — once, a bomb was even planted in front of his home. He was a truly outstanding educator of the people. Persecution is the hallmark of the great. The small and petty, on the other hand, do not inspire such a strong reaction from the powers that be.

Among Dr. Houssay's students, there were those who only looked out for themselves and who shrank from attack by his opponents. Some also betrayed him. "What shall I do with such faint-hearted students?" he lamented. As many of you may well know, I, too, have been betrayed numerous times. I can deeply empathize with Dr. Houssay's sentiments. His cry contains a world of feeling.

This reminds me of the famous, timeless words of the great liberator of Latin America, Simón Bolívar (1783–1830): "Forgetting one's debts is the greatest crime a person can commit."

Dr. Houssay received many invitations to work overseas where he could continue his research in an unrestricted environment. Doing so would have released him from the criticism and persecution he faced in Argentina, but he declined every offer. Instead, he chose to stay and tread the thorny path toward the development of his country together with his loyal disciples. It was a momentous, silent struggle.

Position and appearances are irrelevant. The important thing is to carry out our personal duty, our commitment, no matter what anyone else may say. This is a life of true victory, a life of unsurpassed nobility and fulfillment.

Talented scientists came from all over the world to work with Dr. Houssay [at a private research institute he founded], and many of the researchers he

fostered went on to make great names for themselves. In his later years, he even saw one of his students awarded the Nobel Prize. Both teacher and student, mentor and disciple, triumphed in the end.

My life will be complete only with the ultimate success and victory of each Soka University graduate.

Students Rise Up Against Authority

Also honoring us with their presence today are President Cho Moon-Boo and faculty representatives from South Korea's Cheju National University. In March 1919, Korean youth, including those on the island of Cheju-do, stood up one after another in a landmark, nonviolent struggle against the invading Japanese army. It is remembered as the March 1st Movement.

Living with the constant threat of death or imprisonment, the Korean youth demonstrated invincible courage. Countless episodes attest to their valor. One that springs to mind is that of a young student who held fast to her convictions with unflinching tenacity. She had been captured and was being cruelly interrogated by a Japanese prosecutor. He demanded to know for whom she was working. She replied fearlessly and with stinging contempt, "You are mere island dwellers who know nothing of the world or reality!" Such boldness, even at the risk of her own life! She was truly courageous.

Today, this spirit to fight for justice lives on in the hearts of Cheju National University students.

Wings of the Human Spirit

Incidentally, in his youth, University of Morón President Mena was a pitcher on his school's baseball team. I applaud all of the extracurricular activities groups here at Soka University.

Also joining us today are Masashi Kishi, coach of the Soka University baseball team; Hidehiko Ushijima, the well-known author; and Akihisa Okamoto, the famous film director. Mr. Ushijima wrote the novel *The Lost Spring* (Kieta Haru), a true story about the baseball player Shin'ichi Ishimaru, who was drafted into the air force at the height of his career during World War II and died in a kamikaze attack. Mr. Okamoto directed a film based on the same story titled *Wings of the Human Spirit* (Ningen no

Tsubasa).

I mentioned this film in a speech I gave recently [Feb. 4]. At the age of 24, around the same age as many of you here today, Ishimaru was forced to give up the baseball he loved so dearly. The war robbed him of his youth and ended his life tragically too soon.

Each of you will soon spread your wings and fly from this citadel of peace. I hope that you will live out your lives to the fullest no matter what may happen. Please form a network of friendship with youth throughout Asia and the entire world, and remain ever vigilant of the schemes of corrupt, self-serving powers.

Surmounting the Rough Seas of Life

As you prepare to take your place in the workforce, the rocky waves of economic recession continue to buffet all sectors of society. But it is precisely at turbulent times that people's true worth shines through.

I would like to share a quote with you from one of my favorite Argentine poets, the great educator Almafuerte (1854–1917): "To the weak, difficulty is a closed door. To the strong, however, it is a door waiting to be opened." Difficulties impede the progress of those who are weak. For the strong, however, they are opportunities to open wide the doors to a bright future. Everything is determined by our attitude, by our resolve. Our heart is what matters most.

"Depending on one's outlook, even hell can be enjoyable." These are the words uttered from the confines of a prison cell by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the originator of *soka* (value-creating) education and first Soka Gakkai president, who held firm to his beliefs and died speaking out against Japanese militarism.

I would like our graduates to embrace this intrepid Soka spirit throughout their lives. May each of you make your way boldly and confidently through these troubled times and lead wonderful, golden lives of value-creation wherever you may go in the world.

In closing, I offer my prayers for the eternal glory of the University of Morón and Cheju National University. I hold both institutions in the highest esteem. I also pray for the boundless happiness and good fortune of all of you who have gathered here today.

Muchas gracias (thank you very much). ❧

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SPEECH

Position and appearances are irrelevant. The important thing is to carry out our personal duty, our commitment, no matter what anyone else may say. This is a life of true victory, a life of unsurpassed nobility and fulfillment.



As you embark upon your respective journeys, I call to each of you: "Strive for prosperity! Strive for development! Strive for victory!" Life is about striving all out to achieve our aims; it is about hard work and effort. Regardless of how smart you may be, intelligence alone cannot guarantee your future.



Dr. Houssay came to the conclusion that perseverance is the answer. The person who never gives up is unbeatable. This is the noble path to victory in life.



Youth mustn't be frittered away in empty, vacuous, self-centered pursuits. Rizal called out: "May our compatriots... obey the voice of their heart and devote the precious time of their youth to something great, which is worthy of them." If he lived today, he would be calling on youth not to waste their time in mindless pastimes, watching television or playing video games.



Our state of mind is of vital importance. With hearts vast as the heavens, let us live with firm conviction, never swayed by life's vicissitudes. This was the spirit of Dr. Rizal. It is also the spirit of Buddhism. And it is the spirit with which I have lived my life.



Difficulties impede the progress of those who are weak. For the strong, however, they are an opportunity to open wide the doors to a bright future. Everything is determined by our attitude, by our resolve. Our heart is what matters most.



"Depending on one's outlook, even hell can be enjoyable." These are the words uttered from the confines of a prison cell by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the originator of Soka value-creating education and first Soka Gakkai president, who held firm to his beliefs and died speaking out against Japanese militarism.

Sandy Patrick was given an old cat named Chef. Through him — after years of numbness and self-loathing — she found the will to take the first steps toward healing.

SANDY PATRICK, VAN NUYS, CALIF.

Honoring Sorrow



Photo by LISA HOLLIS

The treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 238)

At 11:10 a.m., Saturday, March 21, I had my cat, Chef, put down. I held him in my arms, with my daimoku sounding in his ear. I made a plea to the protective forces to come get him, that he might not be abandoned, not even for an instant.

The lesser self, I think, must be the one that loathes itself. Its shell can be as adamant as a bank vault door. It took a small, old, lonely little cat to put the first crack ever in mine.

I started practicing Buddhism in 1968 and have spent the intervening decades in a struggle, occasionally passionate, usually desultory, to care whether I lived or died. The animal in me made me eat food, made me work to buy the food, made me dodge cars and lock my door at night. My human self has mostly been a sleepwalker, only seemingly alive.

This is one of the common effects of childhood abuse, molestation, betrayal and abandonment. In a study of male and female adult molested children, when asked what object they saw as themselves, some 68% said, "A toilet." My heart tripped when I read this — I had believed this to be my very own "vain little melodrama." We find it hard to honor even our sorrow.

In 1980, unable to anymore endure the terrible intimacy of intermingling with masses of other human beings at a karmic fever pitch, seven nights a week for 12 years, I, body and mind, retreated from the organization.

After several weeks of huddling in my room, someone said, "Look, you've been relieved of your position, and you should leave town." I was in such a low place in my life that I didn't question. I just obeyed.

And I ran. I practiced, more or less, on my own for the next seven years, until vague dreams of SGI President Ikeda in some kind of distress pushed me to consider rejoining the organization. But the idea so unnerved me that I had a breakdown, lost

my job and was evicted. Still, I moved into a motel, got temporary jobs and sort of reconnected to the SGI.

A year and a half later, a stranger broke into my motel room and raped and nearly murdered me. Two months later, he did it again. It took that to move me out of the paralyzing lethargy of despair into an apartment with an SGI-USA member as a roommate.

Clearly, all these years, I've needed therapy. But if you don't care to live — and I never did — therapy seems expensively pointless.

Eventually, I moved on to a small place of my own, but still no "real" job. A company hired me as a floater — no benefits, no security — and I settled for that.

Then, one day at work, somebody asked, "Can anyone take a sweet old gentleman cat for a month 'til he goes into a permanent shelter?"

I said sure — who knows why. A woman brought him to my place that night. She said his name was Chef, and this was the third time she'd given him away because she was moving

to Europe.

She said she'd kenneled him many times, so he'd do fine in a permanent shelter. He'd been declawed by his first owner, who had continued to let him go outside until he'd been caught by a dog he couldn't fight off and had nearly lost his life. He did lose his tail. He was standoffish and hated to sit in laps and didn't much like to be petted. That I could understand — to this day, I can hardly bear to be kindly touched.

For the next two weeks, he huddled: crying by the door, in the closet, in the bathtub. He wouldn't come near me. I couldn't wait to get rid of him in two weeks' time.

Then (you'll say, "at last!"), one night, I sat down and chanted for his happiness for 20 minutes. Whereupon he jumped in my lap, curled up and started purring. After that, he never missed a gongyo. He became a petting addict and my dear friend.

I found myself promising him, again and again, that I would never abandon him, not even for a moment. Gradually, I came to mean it — my first com-

mitment in 50 years to another living being.

I lost my job, such as it was. Another failure, and I was so very, very tired of failing. But I had to go on. I had sworn to never abandon Chef. We were evicted, but were able to move in with a friend and then another friend.

After seven years of temporary jobs, I got a "real" one with benefits. Of course, it was a nightmare of a job. So bad that, on Feb. 23, 1997, my boss shot himself to death, in part because of work pressure that he was not whole enough to withstand.

I, however, had made a vow to a cat. And I went on.

The company encouraged us to get psychotherapy, insurance-paid, if we wanted. A few months later I vaguely inquired, then dropped it. And Chef began to get sick.

When I first got him, he was 11 and had had a hard, hard life. Though daimoku and love gave him the best four years of his life, the past caught up with him and his kidneys started to fail. Around that time, I contacted a psychotherapist.

Chef, his work done, began to die.

One morning, bleeding from the mouth, his hind legs not working, he insisted, after gongyo, on going downstairs to his beloved bed by the window (his very own present from our roommate) to watch once more the children and other cats playing in the courtyard. It took him a full five minutes to drag himself down those stairs, but he did it.

Later, when somehow I knew it was time, I took him, in his now-bloody bed, to the hospital. There, with his face pressed to mine, his ever-possessive paw wrapped around my arm and an anthem of daimoku in his ear, the feline protective forces came running from all over the universe to accompany him to Eagle Peak.

I will undergo psychotherapy — though I'd rather eat glass — and, if it is possible for me to heal, then *I will do it*. And then I will tell the world.

"More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body, and the treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all. From the time you read this letter, strive to accumulate the treasures of the heart." (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 238)

Oh, Cheffy-Chef, what a gift you were. ❧

If you're interested in contributing to this section, please call us at (310) 451-8811 or e-mail us at SokaNews@aol.com.

Ron Boender (right) whistles to a lorikeet, one of the many residents at Butterfly World. (Below) Boender pauses to answer one young visitor's question. He makes a point of being accessible to visitors.



WONDERS of Nature



By TERRY ELLIS
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Hundreds of thousands of people have visited Butterfly World since it opened in Coconut Creek, on the outskirts of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 10 years ago. Among them have been about 40,000 students each year, some of whom, until then, had never seen a butterfly.

"They're frightened at first, but by the time they leave, they've had their eyes opened," says Ron Boender, the electronics engineer, music lover and self-made scientist who founded Butterfly World. "We give them tickets to come back with their families."

When Boender started what is the only free-standing butterfly house in the country, it was difficult even to find butterfly memorabilia for the gift shop. Today, not only is butterfly merchandise flourishing but so is butterfly gardening. And Boender takes pride in knowing he helped create the trend. Butterfly gardening classes are taught regularly at Butterfly World. Boender himself continues to teach the advanced classes.

"Where you have a healthy environment, you have a lot of butterflies," says Boender. And anyone can raise them, even from the balcony of a condo — if they're willing to grow host plants and forego chemicals. The problem is (even at Butterfly World's garden

shop) that people often only buy beautiful flowering plants, which offer nectar for the butterflies but little else. Females butterflies will travel for miles to lay their eggs on a particular host plant because the caterpillars that hatch won't eat anything else.

A walk through Butterfly World with Boender is like taking a full-fledged course. He's like a big kid, as he bounces across the swaying wooden suspension bridge — a replica of one he has crossed 18 times on expeditions to Ecuador. He points to a passion vine from Costa Rica named after him, since he was the first to identify it. He literally knows every plant and butterfly by name and eagerly tells some bit of history

or story about it.

Boender grew up on a farm in a family of Dutch immigrants. The fourth of five children, he was the first allowed to attend high school. Today he's considered one of the top lepidopterists (butterfly and moth experts) and botanists in the world — and he's entirely self-taught.

He's also wonderfully accessible. He takes time to answer even the most basic questions.

Some 80 to 90 percent of the butterflies at Butterfly World are flown in from around the world each week. The other 10 to 20 percent he raises in an area reserved primarily for his own research. While most first-graders today know that caterpillars mys-

teriously turn into butterflies, Boender points out that scientists don't know much more than that.

It's this vacuum — along with his love of beauty — that explains Boender's fascination. A man of deep religious conviction, his study of the natural world only confirms to him the wonder of life.

"Most butterfly chrysalises metamorphose in one to two weeks," says Boender. "But there are some that take years and years. We know of those on mountain barrier islands that waited for as long as eight years for the right rain.

"Everything in this garden," says Boender, "is tied together perfectly." ❏

This Time It's Personal

While Nikken may have the legal right to tear down the Grand Main Temple, morally it is wrong. Gerry Hall asks for an outcry from the true owners of the Grand Main Temple, the people.

By GERRY HALL

SGI-USA VICE GENERAL DIRECTOR

The Grand Main Temple is the embodiment of the greatest dream ever dreamt by humankind. Thirty-one years ago, I was one of hundreds of young dreamers who believed that social justice and the end of war were within reach and certainly worth striving for.

There was no Grand Main Temple then, just a growing number of Americans in Santa Monica who had been given a new lease on life by the dedicated members of the Soka Gakkai of America. I was 22 years old and had begun practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism with the same enthusiasm as a person drinking water after a long drought.

Just seven weeks after my first Buddhist meeting in 1967, I was eight miles above the Pacific Ocean, looking out the window of a 707 bound for Tokyo and pondering what my first spiritual journey to the land of Buddhism would bring. A pre-dawn bus trip from Haneda Airport took me and my fellow pilgrims to ancient temple grounds where we were led silently up a stone-lined path, past fog-shrouded lodgings reminiscent of an Akira Kurosawa epic, and into an open meadow. Here, we became part of the 6,000 lay members gathered from all parts of the world for the Invocation Ceremony for the construction of the Grand Main Temple.

This was my first exposure to the global family and my first glimpse of Daisaku Ikeda as he led High Priest Nittatsu through the assembly in a traditional procession. As I listened to President Ikeda and High Priest Nittatsu declare that the High Sanctuary of Buddhism was now to be built, fulfilling centuries of anticipation, what permeated my life was the solemnity of the event

PLEASE SEE PERSONAL, IV



The Grand Main Temple, near the foot of Mount Fuji, has won numerous architectural awards and was built to last hundreds of years.

UNBELIEVABLE!

Unbelievable, but

true: The Grand Main Temple —

donated by 8 million believers

worldwide — is scheduled to be

demolished by the priesthood. It raises

many questions.

By EICHII WADA

SGI GENERAL DIRECTOR

It's been several days now since the news broke that Nikken plans to demolish the Sho-Hondo (Grand Main Temple). On April 8, the announcement came from the head temple that "the demolition of the Grand Main Temple will start in May and continue for 24 months until April 2000. The estimated cost will be ¥4.5 billion [\$35 million]."

It still seems hard to believe this is happening. Even when Nikken transferred the Dai-Gohonzon out of the Main Temple on April 5, it seemed unbelievable that he would really go so far as to destroy the world-famous building. To SGI members, the Main Temple connotes nothing less than world peace — it is the grand temple 8 million of us donated so that people from throughout the world could gather and chant for peace to the Dai-Gohonzon, which Nichiren Daishonin inscribed for all humanity.

Unbelievable news, but true. From one standpoint, it's not that surprising: Nikken's purpose from day one of the

temple issue has been to destroy the SGI. His motivation? Jealousy toward SGI President Ikeda, the previous high priest, Nittatsu, and the SGI members. "The great slander of Ikeda and others" is his stated reason for his latest, most drastic moves.

This news raises many questions: Will the priesthood really support this? Don't



The priesthood suddenly and secretly transfers the Dai-Gohonzon from the Grand Main Temple, April 5, taking many priests and temple followers by surprise.

the priests see that Nikken's turning his back on the previous high priest and his great respect for the Main Temple? Will the temple members, who also contributed for the construction, really let

PLEASE SEE WADA, III

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

On the Significance of the Grand Main Temple

Nittatsu:

■ Therefore it is proper that today the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary be enshrined in the Grand Main Temple so that people may come there to worship it. (From the first meeting of the Grand Main Temple Construction Committee, Feb. 16, 1965)

■ The Grand Main Temple is the actual High Sanctuary of True Buddhism of this time, which contains the significance described in the "Minobu Transfer Document" and "On the Three Great Secret Laws." In other words, the Grand Main Temple is the supreme edifice that shall be the High Sanctuary of Hon'mon-ji [the Temple of True Buddhism] at the time of kosen-rufu. (From "Admonition," April 28, 1972)

■ The Grand Main Temple is a building that will protect the Dai-Gohonzon for all eternity. (From the photo album *President Ikeda and the Sho-Hondo*, published Oct. 12, 1973)

Nikken Then:

■ Some 680 years after the founder Nichiren Daishonin fulfilled the purpose of his advent, the present high priest, Nittatsu, and Mr. Ikeda, head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations and the leader in the protection of Buddhism, are for the first time about to shed great light upon the Daishonin's mandate to achieve the kosen-rufu of the True Law and build the actual high sanctuary. (From *Dai-Nichiren*, November 1967)

■ Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the high sanctuary mandated in "On the Three Great Secret Laws" and the "Minobu Transfer Document." (From a chief priests guidance meeting, March 26, 1972)

■ It is clear from the "Admonition" of April 28, 1972, that the current Grand Main Temple will become the main hall of Hon'mon-ji temple at that time. We have to say that the high sanctuary mandated by Nichiren Daishonin will thus come to fruition. (From the postscript to the second edition of *On the High Sanctuary*, December 1974)

Nikken Now:

■ High Priest Nittatsu stated: "The Grand Main Temple is the supreme edifice that shall be the High Sanctuary of Hon'mon-ji [the Temple of True Buddhism] at the time of kosen-rufu." *Shall* here is used as an auxiliary verb to express one's estimation.... *One's estimation* also indicates one's expectation or prospect. It is often said that one's prospect is yet to be determined, thus indicating uncertainty or a possibility of alterations. So what High Priest Nittatsu defined and decided upon, in short, is that the Grand Main Temple does not directly refer to the high sanctuary as mandated in "On the Three Great Secret Laws" and the "Minobu Transfer Document." (From *Dai-Nichiren*, February 1991)

■ It is now most appropriate...to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon from the Grand Main Temple in order to completely refute the grave slander of Ikeda and others. (From his sermon on April 5, 1998)

■ The old building will lose its purpose after the transfer of the Dai-Gohonzon and be nothing more than a useless ruin of gigantic stature. Since it will be completely useless, I would like to take a measure appropriate to the circumstances. (From his sermon on April 5, 1998)



Thousands of members participate in the Main Temple's opening ceremony, Oct. 12, 1972.

What Is the Sho-Hondo?

By TED MORINO
STUDY DEPARTMENT LEADER

Q What is the Sho-Hondo (Grand Main Temple)?

A The Sho-Hondo is the Grand Main Temple donated by Soka Gakkai members to house the Dai-Gohonzon.

At the core of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism are the Three Great Secret Laws: the Object of Worship of True Buddhism, the Invocation or Daimoku of True Buddhism, and the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism. The first two, the Gohonzon and Nam-myoho-rence-kyo, the Daishonin established himself. The third, the high sanctuary, he asked his disciples of future generations to establish.

With this in mind, Josei Toda, the second Soka Gakkai president, came up with the idea to build the Grand Main Temple and donate it to the Head Temple Taiseki-ji. Years passed, however, until on May 3, 1964, at the 27th Headquarters General Meeting, President Ikeda proposed a plan to realize Toda's idea, a plan the members approved unanimously.

Delighted at the Soka Gakkai's offer, the 66th high priest, Nittatsu, set up the Grand Main Temple Construction Committee in January 1965, appointing President Ikeda, then head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations, its chairperson. Also on the committee were representatives from the priesthood, Hokkeko and the Soka Gakkai. At the com-

mittee's first meeting, on Feb. 16, 1965, Nittatsu formally announced that the Dai-Gohonzon would be enshrined in this new edifice.

The priesthood soon after issued its "Statement of Intention for Offerings Toward the Construction of the Grand Main Temple," signed by executive priests including then-Nichiren Shoshu Study Department Chief Shin'no Abe (Nikken). The statement reads in part, "The construction of the Grand Main Temple is essentially the construction of the high sanctuary."

In response to this statement, a special offering campaign for the temple's construction was conducted for four days, Oct. 9-12, 1965, and some 8 million people around the world donated ¥35.5 billion (\$100 million at the time; \$270 million at today's exchange rate).

In the late '60s and early '70s, the priesthood repeatedly stated that the Grand Main Temple would fulfill the Daishonin's request that a high sanctuary be built. On March 26, 1972, again representing the Study Department, Nikken issued an official statement that said, "Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism as mandated by Nichiren Daishonin in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'"

There was a lay society, the Myoshinko (currently known as the Kenshokai), however, that insisted the high sanctuary be built by the sovereign of the country,

which they believed to be the government. On April 28, 1972, in response to the Myoshinko, Nittatsu issued an official "Admonition," stating again that "the Grand Main Temple is the actual High Sanctuary of True Buddhism of this time, which contains the significance described in the 'Minobu Transfer Document' and 'On the Three Great Secret Laws.' In other words, the Grand Main Temple is the supreme edifice that shall be the High Sanctuary of Hon'mon-ji [the Temple of True Buddhism] at the time of kosen-rufu."

The Main Temple was completed in 1972, with the Dai-Gohonzon being transferred there in grand fashion on Oct. 7. Ceremonies celebrating the Main Temple's completion were held at the head temple from Oct. 11-17 with members from all over the world.

Q What is the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism?

A Buddhism in general is said to consist of three types of learning — precepts, meditation and wisdom. These all Buddhists should strive to perfect.

The Daishonin defined these in the Latter Day of the Law to be the Three Great Secret Laws: In several writings, including "Repaying Debts of Gratitude" and "On the Three Great Secret Laws," he says that they are the Object of Worship of True Buddhism, the Invocation or

PLEASE SEE Q&A, NEXT PAGE

1964

May 3: At the 27th Headquarters General Meeting, President Ikeda announces a plan to construct the Grand Main Temple and donate it to Taiseki-ji.

1965

Feb. 16: the first meeting of the Grand Main Temple Construction Committee, chaired by President Ikeda, is held. At this meeting, High Priest Nittatsu states: "Therefore it is proper that today the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary be enshrined in the Grand Main Temple so that people may come there to worship it." This 50-member committee and its sub-committees will meet more than 100 times.

Sept. 12: High Priest Nittatsu issues an "Admonition." He states, "I, Nittatsu, proclaim that the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism will be enshrined in this Grand Main Temple in hopes that all people of the Latter Day of the Law will believe in [the Dai-Gohonzon] and there find the source of attaining Buddhahood in their present form."

A GRAND MAIN TEMPLE TIMELINE

October: Eight million believers donate more than ¥35 billion (\$100 million) for the construction of the Grand Main Temple in response to the "Statement of Intention for the Offerings to the Construction of the Grand Main Temple," which is signed by the executive priests, including Nikken. It states in part, "The construction of the Grand Main Temple is essentially the construction of the high sanctuary."

1972

March 26: As Study Department leader, Nikken issues an official statement that "Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'"

April 28: In response to the Myoshinko (presently known as the Kenshokai), which insists that the High Sanctuary be built by the sovereign, High Priest Nittatsu issues an "Admonition," in which he states, "The Grand Main Temple is the actual High Sanctuary of True Buddhism of this time."

Oct. 7: The Dai-Gohonzon is transferred to the Grand Main Temple in a grand ceremony witnessed by thousands of members from around the world.

Oct. 12: The completion ceremony of the Grand Main Temple is held.

1991

Jan. 6 and 10: In his sermon, Nikken denies the significance of the Grand Main

Temple as the high sanctuary: "The Grand Main Temple does not directly refer to the high sanctuary as mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'"

1993

From September 1992 to February 1993: Nikken cuts down 278 cherry trees, which were planted to commemorate the construction of the Grand Main Temple.

1998

April 5: Nikken announces his plan to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon from the Grand Main Temple to "completely refute the great slander of [SGI President] Ikeda and others." The transfer is completed on the same day in a secretive procession.

April 8: Taiseki-ji's Internal Affairs Department posts a notice that the demolition of the Grand Main Temple is slated to begin in May for 24 months at the estimated cost of ¥4.5 billion (or approximately \$35 million).

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



As part of the opening ceremony in 1972, President Ikeda pulls a cord to unveil the Grand Main Temple. Built, as High Priest Nittatsu said, to last 'for all eternity,' it is now going to be demolished by Nikken out of spite. 'The recent developments show that Nikken and his sect are entering the phase of self-destruction,' President Akiya said.

What Is the Sho-Hondo?

Q&A, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Daimoku of True Buddhism, and the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism.

The three types of learning correspond directly to the secret laws: Precepts corresponds to the high sanctuary, where votaries chant daimoku and develop their innate Buddha nature, subduing the evil inherent in life; meditation to the Gohonzon, the object of worship on which to focus our lives; and wisdom to chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, the source of all wisdom in this Buddhism.

In explaining the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism, the 26th high priest, Nichikan, taught that it can be understood from two different viewpoints: one is in a general sense and the other is in a specific sense. Generally speaking, any place where the Gohonzon is enshrined and where we chant

Nam-myoho-enge-kyo constitutes the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism. By spreading the Daishonin's Buddhism to 128 countries and 12 million people, the SGI has substantiated this significance of the Three Great Secret Laws in accord with the Daishonin's intent; the general meaning of the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism is being realized globally every day by the SGI through its movement of kosen-rufu.

In the specific sense, however, the Daishonin, in writings such as "On the Three Great Secret Laws" and "Two Transfer Documents," left us with the mandate that the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism be built to house the Dai-Gohonzon, which he had inscribed for the peace and happiness of all humanity. The Grand Main Temple was finally built to realize this intent under the auspices of Nittatsu, the 66th high priest. III

Nikken's Demolition of Grand Main Temple Raises Questions

WADA, FROM PAGE 1

Nikken do this? Can the SGI take any legal action, since SGI members donated most of the money?

I want to assure all SGI-USA members that appropriate actions to protest Nikken's demolition of the Main Temple will be taken by the SGI. The Main Temple is not going down without our voices heard. At the same time, we may not be able

to stop this from happening.

Nichiren Daishonin says that "fire can at once reduce even a thousand-year-old field of pampas grass to ashes" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 243). Here we have the case, I believe, of Nikken's fire of jealousy about to reduce to rubble a temple that, in Nittatsu's words, was to last "for all eternity."

And this fire of jealousy is essentially self-destructive. On

April 20, at the 20th Headquarters General Meeting, SGI Deputy President Akiya said that "the recent developments show that Nikken and his sect are entering the phase of self-destruction" and that the demolition of the Main Temple "is an omen foretelling the destruction of the Nikken sect."

Although our great contribution to kosen-rufu may be physically destroyed, the sincerity of this offering and the fortune ac-

rued from it can never be. President Ikeda has said that "the children and grandchildren of the contributors, as well as those who joined after the Grand Main Temple campaign and who devote their lives to kosen-rufu — that is, the present and future members of the SGI — all share the great fortune and merit that derive from this offering. I want you to be confident of this."

Our offering of the Main Temple will live forever in the history

of kosen-rufu — as will Nikken's disregard of it. What's most important now is, in the face of this great destruction, that we continue to construct a better and better SGI organization. As President Ikeda wrote in his 1969 poem on the construction of the Main Temple: "Destruction comes in but a moment — / Construction only after desperate struggle. / Dark is the force of habit but bright is hope. / Retreat is death while advance is life." III

Nikken's Line of Reasoning — It Keeps Changing

By JEFF FARR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The way in which the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood announces any new, controversial move, like its scheduled demolition this month of the Grand Main Temple, has been consistently inconsistent since 1990. The priesthood usually gives two or three different reasons — all of them false — for Nikken's newest plan, so if one reason is attacked another can take its place. As Machiavelli put it, "If...you need to conceal a fact with words, do it in such a way that it does not become known, or, if it does become known, that you have a quick and ready defence." Such is the work of Nikken's spin doctors.

Beginning late last year, for instance, the priesthood started floating claims that the Main Temple was structurally unsound. Corrosive ocean sand had been mixed in the concrete, which had weakened the temple's reinforcing bars, the priest-hood said. So the Main Temple was, rather suddenly, on the verge of caving in.

But in his April 5 announcement of the Dai-Gohonzon's transfer, Nikken made no mention of this, perhaps foreseeing the protests of the Main Temple's chief architect and general contractors that were to come a few days later (no ocean sand, by the way, was used). Nikken's reasoning was that the Main Temple had to be deserted to "completely refute the great slander of Ikeda and others."

This may be just as problematic a line of reasoning for



Nikken's reasoning that 'refuting slander' is why he's tearing down the Grand Main Temple calls into question his real reason for cutting down Gakkai-donated cherry trees and demolishing the Grand Reception Hall.

Nikken as the previous theory. If donations from the SGI should be destroyed because the SGI is slanderous, then all the land the Gakkai has donated to the head temple since World War II, which now makes up 80 percent of the head temple's grounds, should also be destroyed. And what of the 343 temples "Ikeda and others" have donated to the priesthood since 1953? What of the six temples donated in the United States, three by the Soka Gakkai (Hawaii, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C.) and three by the SGI-USA (San Francisco, New York and Chicago)? So Nikken may need to soon come up with another reason for the Main Temple's razing.

And Nikken's current reasoning calls into question again what

motivated past actions he has taken, like his removal in 1992 and 1993 of 278 cherry trees donated by the Soka Gakkai. Why did he cut down all these trees, donated in the late 1960s and early 1970s to the head temple during the Main Temple's construction? They were of an inferior variety, they were diseased, etc., the temple answered.

The SGI's position, though, was that these healthy trees were felled solely because they reminded Nikken of previous high priest Nittatsu's and SGI President Ikeda's days of cooperation at the head temple. This position seemed borne out by the subsequent demolition of the Grand Reception Hall.

The case of the Reception Hall

in many ways predicted what is happening now with the Main Temple. In August 1995, Nikken announced that the hall, donated by 1.4 million Soka Gakkai members in 1964, needed to be replaced — it could not withstand an earthquake, he argued. The hall's architect, Kimio Yokoyama, who together with a seismic expert had earlier in 1995 conducted a seismic survey on the hall (and recommended only some reinforcements), protested this "fabricated reason, based upon a distortion of the facts."

The SGI naturally put the cherry trees and the Reception Hall together and saw something systematic going on: Wasn't Nikken trying to remove all signs that Nittatsu, President Ikeda and the SGI members had ever been

at the head temple? And now the Main Temple...

Yokoyama, also the chief architect for the Main Temple, is calling for "a thorough professional investigation" of the Main Temple's structure. No such investigation occurred before the priesthood's previous claims of ocean sand in the concrete.

Nikken's consistent inconsistencies are, of course, not limited to his head temple makeover. We have seen him make significant changes to his story in the Seattle Incident trial and give different reasons at different times for why he started the temple issue in the first place.

But we have never heard him say honestly in public his true intent, which he has only expressed privately to other priests. To one priest, who later left the temple, Nikken explained Operation C, his clandestine plot to destroy the SGI, this way: "C stands for C-U-T. Yes, it means to cut off the head of that bastard [President Ikeda]." Nikken's "renovations" at the head temple, from cutting down the cherry trees to tearing down the Main Temple, are an extension of Operation C.

Whatever excuses he gives, his real intent is to keep trying to hack away at the SGI, despite the fact that he has already excommunicated the organization twice, and that the SGI is now in every way separate from his sect of Buddhism. One U.S. temple member perhaps gave voice to Nikken's true feelings when, on the Internet, he told an SGI-USA member of the Main Temple's imminent destruction, "As long as it p____ you off, it is a good idea." ❧

PERSONAL, FROM PAGE 1

and the profound atmosphere of commitment.

I had been taught the concept of kosen-rufu and world peace before I left home. Here, under a clearing blue sky, it somehow became an indisputable fact in my heart. It was a process that was well under way, and the joy in the eyes of my newfound friends from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas convinced me that I was not alone in this conviction.

I realized that my confidence came from the absolute determination of President Ikeda. I don't know how I sensed it, but it was clear, "This man is never going to give up."

Most of my fellow pilgrims had saved and donated money

for the construction of the Sho-Hondo. These were ordinary folks and they were proud as could be. They were honored to be a part of such a great construction project, but through their humility, I could see that this was "their" Sho-Hondo. It was truly a building being built by the will of the people.

Each year thereafter, a ceremony was held at the same place marking the progress of construction. I can still remember Nittatsu and President Ikeda seated together at one of the ceremonies. The high priest had the biggest smile I ever saw. We were on the same team then. Ground-breaking, foundation completion, framework completion, exterior completion and finally the opening in 1972; the names of these ceremonies recall the par-

allel construction of the dream of kosen-rufu in nations and in the lives of people. In our lives.

When Nikken began his reign and led his followers in a different direction, what happened to the dream? Have they forgotten the joy on the faces of the people? The dream is still alive and well in the hearts of the people of the SGI. I see it everywhere.

When I heard of the continuing destruction of trees and lodging buildings at Taiseki-ji, I was incredulous. What a waste, I thought. Nikken must be so jealous of President Ikeda and Nittatsu's achievements.

When I heard of the destruction of the Grand Reception Hall, I was astonished. This was a modern, beautiful building. I had spent important time there.

These buildings were the product of the sweat and prayers of the people who dared to dream the dream. Have the priests lost all of their dream?

Never in my wildest imagination did I think the Main Temple would be subject to such vandalism of the spirit. There are no words to express the outrage felt by people who have dedicated their lives to the happiness of others and whose spiritual courage and sacrifice are crystallized in that beautiful shining palace of world peace.

This time it's personal. The older man who sat next to me on that first flight to Japan died a number of years ago. Many others who contributed to the Main Temple and watched it take form are no longer living. Does anyone think they are not protesting,

just because we cannot hear them? Can Nikken begin to hear their swelling roar in his dreams?

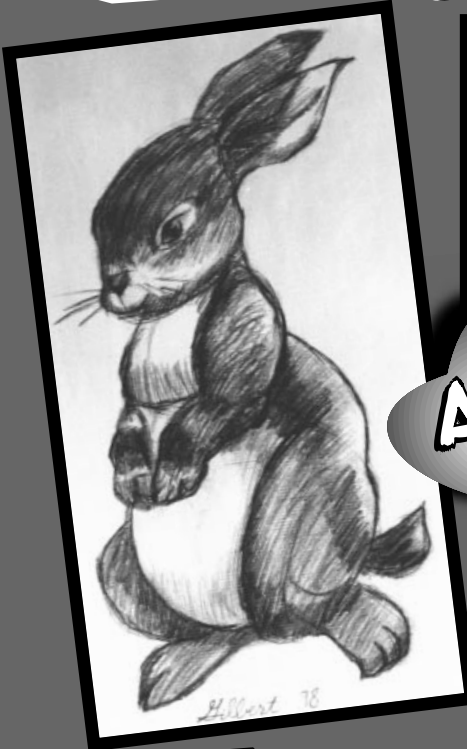
Are there no priests remaining at Taiseki-ji who have minds of their own? Who among them has the courage to stand up and speak out against this travesty that will forever put an end to what little remains of the honor of Nichiren Shoshu's 700-year history?

Legally, I suppose the priesthood, Nikken and his obedient followers can do whatever they wish with the Main Temple. Morally, however, they have no rights at all. I call for a massive outcry from the true owners of the Grand Main Temple, the millions of courageous people who fight for social justice and an end to war, the caretakers of the dream. ❧

SPECIAL
PULLOUT
SECTION

FRIENDS for Peace

MAY 1, 1998



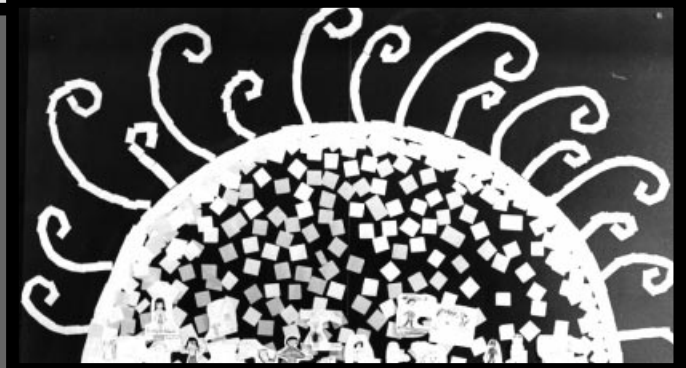
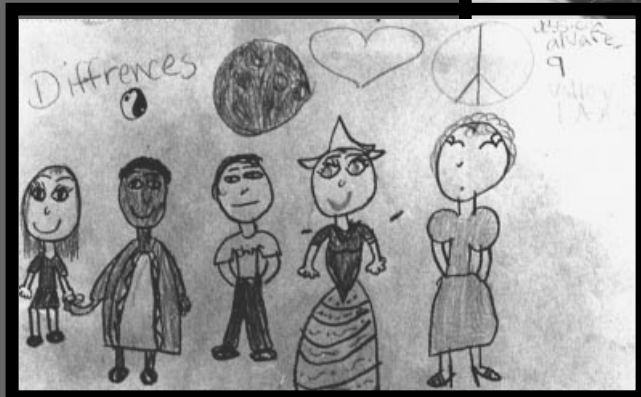
AN ARTFUL

HEART

FULL



To help celebrate March 16, Kosenrifu Day, boys and girls in Southern California and Las Vegas filled the lobby of the World Culture Center with many different kinds of art. Paintings, drawings, clay sculptures, mobiles, mosaics and many other art forms were displayed on tables and walls. "It's like walking through a museum," said one delighted visitor. This year was the 40th anniversary of the day that the second president of the Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda, entrusted young people with the mission to carry on efforts for world peace. ☸



EXPERIENCE

JULIE MARTIN, 9

Odenton, Md.

In a game during my first season of soccer, I was hit by the ball in the stomach. When I sat down to rest on the bench, I chanted that I would not get hit for the rest of the season. I also chanted on the field after I went back into the game. After that game, I decided to chant before every game. I didn't get hit by the ball the rest of that season.

The following season, I got hit by the ball again in my stomach. I forgot to chant before that game. When I was on the bench, I chanted until I had a chance to go into the game again. I chanted to myself that I would not get hit after I went back into the game. I remembered to chant before every game, and I didn't get hurt for the rest of that season.

This year I am playing basketball. I've remembered to chant before every game, and I haven't been hurt in any games so far. I think that everyone should chant before they do any activity where they might get hurt. This way, they can have protection and confidence that they will not get hurt. 🌟



POETRY

A CHILD'S PRAYER

(Fern Reynolds, Las Vegas Boys and Girls Group coordinator, wrote this for all the children of the SGI-USA)

If I do gongyo every day
Before I go to school or play
If I can chant a few minutes more
so many benefits to explore!

Face the Gohonzon, sit up straight
Think of what I can create
I'll feel good the whole day through
Maybe I can help you, too!

Ring the bell and light the candle
There are no problems I can't handle!
I can make the sun shine bright
and be happy day and night! 🌟



i HAVE A GOHONZON

By Nicolas Rutherford, 6
Philadelphia

I have a Gohonzon
This Gohonzon is so great
That poison can turn into medicine! 🌟

(This is Nicolas)

"FRIENDS for Peace" thanks everyone who contributed to this issue. Please send your experience (around 150 words), comments, questions or news article to: "Friends for Peace," World Tribune, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

**What Is
'Cause
and
Effect'?**

Everything we do — our thoughts, words and actions — are causes that make effects. Ask yourself this question about cause and effect in your life: Do the words I say or the actions I take weigh me down or give me wings?

When we chant Nam-myoho-rence-kyo, do gongyo and help others to practice, we make good causes for our happiness, and we experience benefits. SGI President Ikeda says this about benefit:

"While we speak of receiving benefit, it is not bestowed on us from without. It wells forth from within our own lives like water from a spring. Through the Buddhist principle of the oneness of life and its environment, we can also change our environment and gather fortune from 'ten thousand miles afar'" (*The New Human Revolution*, vol. 1, p. 104).

AHOY, MATEYS!

Pirates Invade the Las Vegas Community Center

by Fern Reynolds

Actually, it was only one pirate, Sonny Tipton, who works at the famous Treasure Island Hotel Pirate Ship Battle. Pirate Sonny did gongyo with us and asked questions about Buddhism. Even pirates have a seeking spirit!

Since our February theme was "Courage," Sonny talked about the courage it takes to work around fire and dive into icy cold water — all part of the Treasure Island show. He encouraged everyone to have the courage to try new things and to meet new people.

He brought his sword and a special scroll listing the Pirate Code of Ethics. He gave all the kids a special pirate hat. Sonny then stayed to help the kids challenge their double-dutch jump rope skills.

We are so lucky to live in Las Vegas!

Andy, 9: "It was fun and interesting. It was nice to know I wasn't

the only one doing gongyo — there are other kids who do gongyo! I like the kids meeting, and I think if I go to more, it will make my life and others' happy."

Evan, 4: "I liked the black pirate hat."

Chase, 8: "The whole meeting was nice. The pirate talked a lot about courage."

Kobei, 6: "I liked jumping and watching the pirate jump rope."

Sidney, 10: "I liked that the pirate did gongyo and asked about the beads."

Kacie, 8: "I liked his pirate scroll. It was made from the sail of a boat."

Allie, 4: "It was fun to do Nam-myoho-rence-kyo and jump rope."

Nick, 6: "It was fun! I had a great time. I like the meeting with Sonny there. I liked doing gongyo because it doesn't help just one person — it helps a lot of people. You can help your family and lots of people."



CAUSE & EFFECT: The Game

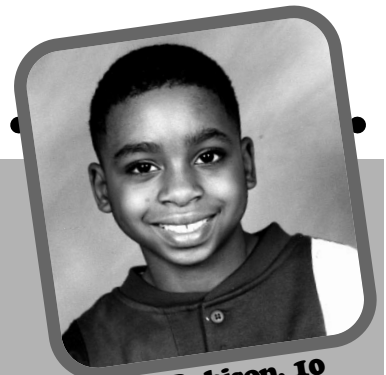
Start with three contestants, each with some kind of noise-maker (for example, triangles). The game leader reads out an example of an effect in daily life. The contestants sound their noisemaker when they

have an answer about what cause might lead to that effect. When a contestant has answered five questions correctly, he or she collects a prize and a new contestant takes his or her place.

What cause do you think led to this effect:

1. You earned great grades on your report card.
2. Your parent is very angry with you.
3. You have a terrible stomachache, and it isn't because you have the flu.
4. You were really tired all day at school today.
5. You are developing really strong muscles.
6. Your piano teacher says your technique is improving.
7. You are unhappy with the way you look.
8. You received a bonus in your allowance.
9. Your parents told you that they are proud of you.
10. You were named most valuable player on your soccer team.
11. Someone at school said something nasty to you.
12. You are happy with the way you look.
13. You had a great time playing with your brother or sister.
14. Someone at school said something nice to you.
15. You used to have a difficult time with reading. Now, you enjoy it.

16. You have a terrible headache.
17. You received some poor grade on your report card.
18. Your pet died.
19. Your dad got a speeding ticket while taking you to gymnastics.
20. Your best friend is mad at you.
21. Someone at school invited you over to his or her house for dinner.
22. You got the birthday present you wanted.
23. You wrecked your bike.
24. You feel really happy inside.
25. You feel really depressed.
26. You skinned your knee on the playground.
27. You just won a coloring contest.
28. You didn't get picked to be on the baseball team.
29. Your friend never wants to play the games that you like.
30. You feel really hopeful about your future.



Jordy Robison, 10
East Cleveland, Ohio

Don't Let Anybody Stand in Your Way

The man named Nichiren Daishonin said, "There is no one who shall not attain Buddhahood." All of us are different in many ways. Some of us prefer good and some prefer evil. I, for one, prefer good, and I am one who shall attain Buddhahood. This other man, Nikken, says if we do not do

what he says we shall go to Hell, and we will not attain Buddhahood. But Nichiren Daishonin said something else that made sense: There is no Hell.

The only Hell there is, is in you. If you want to attain Buddhahood, go right on; don't let anybody stand in your way.

Do You Want To Know More About Cause and Effect?

From Martha Lange, Washington, D.C., Region

As SGI President Ikeda encourages us, "We have to make a determination, pray and take action" (*Lectures on the "Expedient Means" and "Life Span" Chapters of the Lotus Sutra*).

The lotus blossom is used in Buddhism to show the law of cause and effect. The word *renge* of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo means lotus blossom.

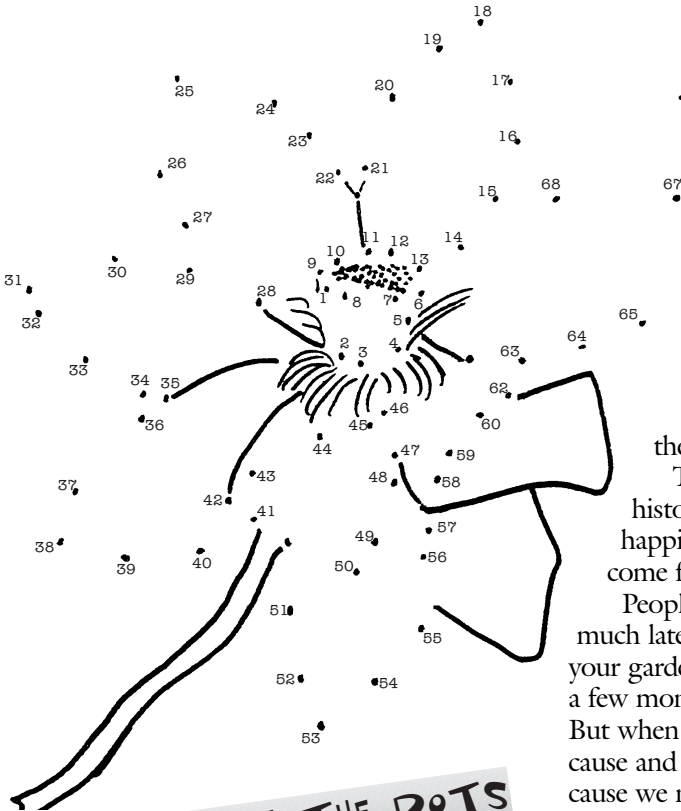
The lotus is a remarkable plant. It produces its blossoms and seeds at the same time. That's why it represents the law of cause and effect.

The lotus is one of the oldest plants. It dates back 135 million years. In history, it has been used to show many things, like fruitfulness, wealth and happiness. The lotus grows in the mud, which shows that beauty can even come from things that are not beautiful.

People usually think that you first make a cause and later get the effect. How much later sometimes depends on the event. For example, if you plant a seed in your garden in spring, give it water and sunlight, it will blossom or bear fruit in a few months. The cause is planting the seed. The effect is the fruit or blossom. But when we chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the Gohonzon, we are making a cause and receiving the effect at the same time. Our Buddhist practice is the cause we make to receive the effect of enlightenment (ultimate happiness).

You can see cause and effect working in your life every day. Let's look at a few examples:

- If you eat five personal pan pizzas, you get the effect of a stomachache.
 - If you pay attention in class, you get the effect of learning more.
 - If you water a plant or feed your puppy, your effect is that they will grow.
- Can you think of more examples?



CONNECT THE DOTS
AND SEE
WHAT A LOTUS
FLOWER LOOKS

DO YOU WANT TO BE A CORRESPONDENT FOR

If you want to report on activities and people in your area, please fill out the form below and mail to us:

Name: _____

Area and Region: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

