

World Tribune

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THE YEAR OF VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE FOR THE NEW CENTURY

MAY 29, 1998

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 is again 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.

SGI President Honored In So. Korea Visit

Korean SGI members endured years of persecution over their religious beliefs. Thanks to their efforts and those of SGI President Ikeda, they've earned society's trust, making it easier to practice there.

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER
Seoul, Korea

Yun Shinha started his practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in 1963. Two years later, he was arrested and imprisoned for 58 days because of his religious beliefs. But he never gave up.

Persecution of Soka Gakkai members in Korea was common in those days: meetings were

under surveillance and often broken up by the police; members were interrogated about what was perceived to be a Japanese religion; police overturned altars and arrested members for "anti-government activities."

Korean members could not openly enshrine or pray to the Gohonzon in their homes and were forced to conceal them inside cupboards or walls. They were shunned and even harassed

by neighbors and co-workers who knew of their beliefs. Such persecution continued through much of the '80s.

Antagonism toward the Soka Gakkai and its followers stemmed from Korea's widespread hatred of Japan, a legacy of Japan's occupation of the Korean peninsula (1910–45). Even today, South Korea prohibits the im-

PLEASE SEE KOREA, 6

INSIDE THIS WEEK

2 MAILBOX

Members speak out about the Grand Main Temple.

8 STUDY

What it means to act against the intent of the sutra.

9 EXPERIENCE

Karina McMillan went through a nightmare of self-doubt to achieve her dream.

15 ENTRANCE EXAM

The questions and answers from the April exam.

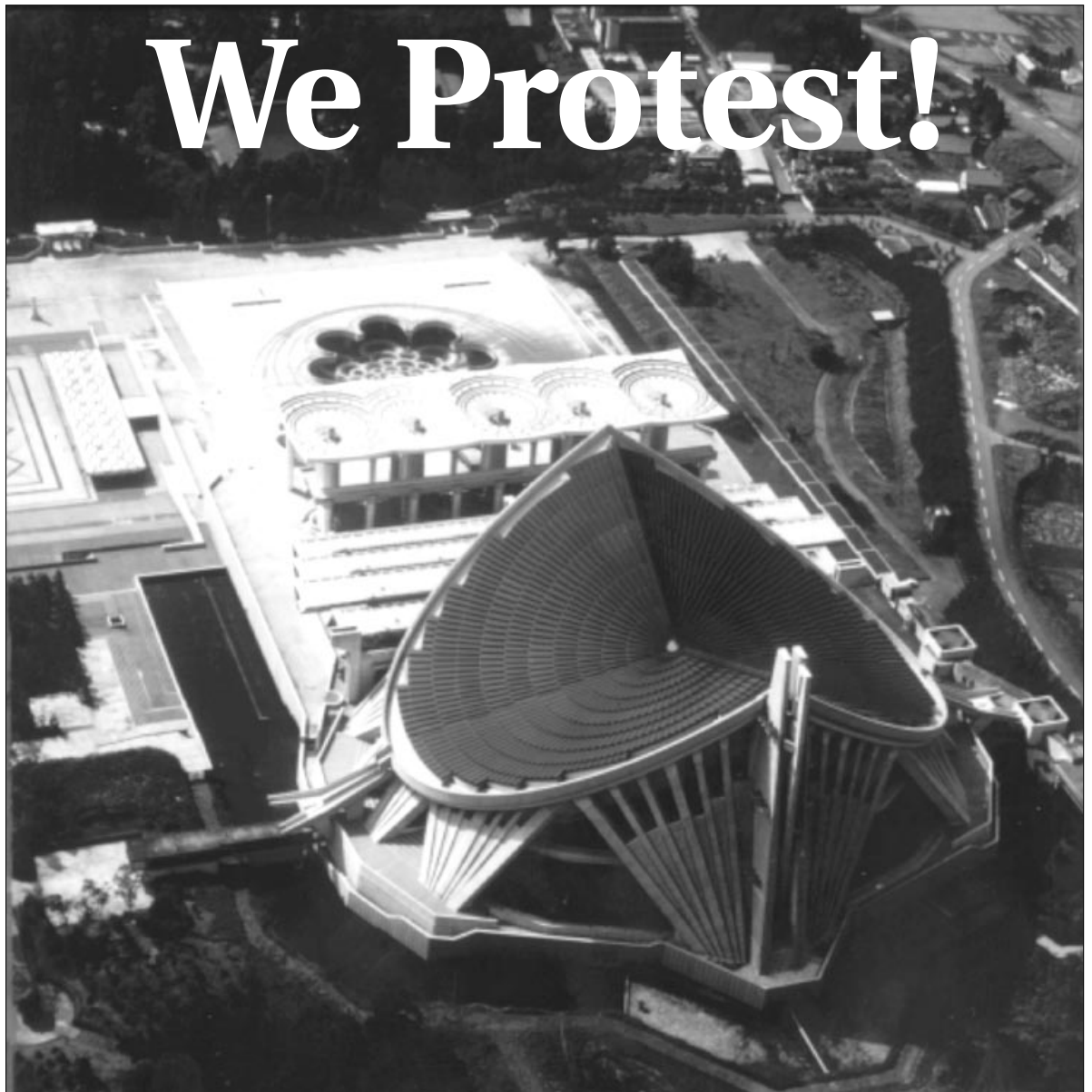
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We Protest!



To protest Nikken's planned demolition of the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo), General Director Zaitu has suggested that SGI-USA members hold family rallies over the next few months. The rallies should be planned to not only express protest but to show our joy of practice. (See p. 4 for details.)



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.

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I Have Some Bad News for You

PERSPECTIVE

During a chance meeting, an architect described an architectural masterpiece, one of the world's 'sacred spaces,' that he longed to see. That sacred space was the Grand Main Temple at the foot of Mount Fuji.

By FLETCHER DALTON
BOSTON

To an architect in Atlanta:

I have no idea whether this letter will reach you, but the news I have is so devastating that I must try to get your attention.

We met in Haiti some 18 years ago, where each of us was involved in various business transactions. As chance would have it, a waiter seated us at adjoining dinner tables one evening.

During the meal, you revealed that you were an architect. We had both traveled extensively and, somehow, the conversation turned to "sacred spaces." We talked about York Cathedral in England, St. Peter's in Rome, Notre Dame in Paris, St. John the Divine in New York, Chartres and Reims and so on.

Then you told me of your strong desire to see one of the masterpieces of 20th-century architecture, a temple at the base of Mount Fuji in Japan, which belonged to a sect called Nichiren—something. You won-

dered how you might be able to see it, because you had heard it was for followers only. You had seen an architects' model and had studied the plans. Also, you wondered what one had to do to gain admittance to this glorious structure and what people did when they went there.

I remember your look of longing as I described the high

myoho-renge-kyo right there at the dinner table. You took down the name I gave you for reference, saying that when you arrived back in Atlanta, you would give the SGI a call.

I truly hope that you were able to visit the temple, because I am writing to tell you that the likelihood is slight that you will see it now. The very priesthood to whom the building was donated by millions of Soka Gakkai International members has scheduled the temple for demolition (such a terrible word!).

It is your loss at having never visited the Grand Main Temple (if, indeed, you didn't) that I mourn. The spirit of Nichiren Daishonin, the founder of the Buddhism that the Soka Gakkai practices, has long since vacated the structure.

Meanwhile, the Soka Gakkai International continues to grow, to advance and to carry out the directive of Nichiren Daishonin, which is to bring peace and security to the world over.

I send you my best regards and am truly sorry to relate to you this terrible news. The loss of an architectural wonder is a form of blasphemy that can never be forgiven.

I hope we meet again sometime. At least I can share with you photos I took of the building, its columns, its magnificent splendor when the sun shone on its roof, and the view of the temple as pilgrims walked the path leading to the entrance.

Yours truly, WD

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



Fletcher Dalton

The spirit of Nichiren Daishonin, the founder of the Buddhism that the Soka Gakkai practices, has long since vacated the structure.

sanctuary and told of my visits there. I also remember your willingness to chant Nam-

World Tribune

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WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Grand Main Voices

After receiving the May 1 issue and reading about the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo), tears welled up. I cried not for the destruction of this beautiful temple but for those 8 million PIONEERS who sincerely struggled and contributed financial and daimoku support.

This is the last straw for me personally. I have determined as of today to fight the priesthood by totally educating myself about this issue, introducing others to this practice, encouraging my members' practice and reading every single letter of Nichiren Daishonin from beginning to end. This is how I am going to respond.
— JUAN-TITO A. ALVAREZ,
Long Island, N.Y.

The priesthood issue can be compared to the transformation of scientists' original speculations about space travel to the moment when Neil Armstrong delivered his famous line from the weightless, grey and rocky lunar surface. More than 750 years ago, a medieval Buddhist priest carefully penned the theories of true Buddhism. And today, SGI members are living their truth — in essence, walking on the moon....

Nikken is everywhere there is injustice or evil. He represents the forces that try to destroy life, to destroy true Buddhism. That's why the razing of the Main Temple is only one more piece of evidence in a mile-long laundry list of it. The same kind of evil that tries to destroy life itself is also found in the decimation of tribal peoples, in war massacres and in the greed-based consumption of essential natural resources.

Think about Nikken's true intentions. Imagine how things would be if he were to have his way with no opposition.

With the Seattle Incident, we have had the vital opportunity to bring him to trial and make him stand accountable. It doesn't need saying that he has sworn to step down if his words were proven false. And the evidence continues to mount against him. We can view his destruction of the Main Temple as that of a wounded, adrenaline-charged bull....

We are the ones with the rare

fortune to be born at this time in the history of Buddhism. Realize the significance and take the action that you are here, on Earth, practicing right now, to take. As SGI President Ikeda says, "Break the hard-shell of the lesser self."

— JENIFER MILLER,
Washington, D.C.

Being a member who never went there nor participated in its construction, it is very hard for me to relate to all of you who were there and prayed and fought for that building to be erected.

I cannot see myself spending time chanting for that building to come back "to the people," as I don't see the point of it.

Not to belittle its significance, but rather to put it in perspective: Couldn't it be that it already served its purpose, that what really had meaning was the determination to build it, all the efforts to construct it, and most especially, the seemingly simple fact that thousands of pure-hearted members were able (for a few precious years) to gather and pray for world peace in such a beautiful setting? In front of the one Gohonzon made expressly for that purpose?

(Yes, Nikken is showing how hideously envious he is, and this will all go down in the history of Buddhism as a very important chapter, a very expensive lesson.)

But do we really need that place now?

Given that it is somehow regained: Would it be worth the effort to start making pilgrimages again to that piece of land, now that it has been defiled by Nikken and his cohorts? Would it ever feel the same way as back then?

Nikko Shonin left Minobu when it became soiled with the heresy of those who never understood the Daishonin's intent....

Given that I have never felt attached to that place, I have been steadily praying for those who seem to have an attachment, so that they may look ahead and see that the future of kosen-rufu is not in the foothills of Mount Fuji but rather in the house next door....
— FRANCISCO PALACIO,
Miami

We are an America-based company which also does business with several Japanese firms, as well as the Tokyo Hilton. We stand against the destruction of the Main Temple.

We feel this action is an insult to the intelligence of the world business community. This man should return to school and take a course on economics. He is obviously not qualified to make these types of decisions.

— TAMI K. RADLEY,
President,
Good Karma Industries

At a recent conference at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, there was a discussion of the imminent destruction of the Main Temple. One point was that the Three Great Secret Laws, of which the High Sanctuary is one, have a general and a specific aspect. And while the Main Temple...had been dedicated as the High Sanctuary in the specific sense, in general the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism is the home altar where each of us has a true object of worship — a Gohonzon — enshrined....

I would like to suggest that one of the more insidious distortions of doctrine introduced during our association with the Fuji School priesthood was an emphasis on the specific vs. the general. We were always told, for example, "The Daishonin is specifically the true Buddha, and, oh yes, generally speaking we are all true Buddhas, so to speak, but don't get too excited about it," more or less. Or "The High Sanctuary

will be/is the building at Taiseki-ji. In a general sense it's also your home altar, sort of, but it's really this temple."....

But isn't the Daishonin's Buddhism about people in general? And isn't the thrust of this practice to revolutionize your personal view of the world by seeking and finding the ultimate truth within your life? What's important is not the uniqueness of the Daishonin but the humanity he has in common with all of us. Way general....

— STEVE BELL,
Santa Rosa, Calif.

In light of the (appropriate) outcry against Nikken's announcement of his intent to destroy the Main Temple, I want to express my conviction that, while Nikken may succeed in destroying a magnificent building of great significance on the Taiseki-ji temple grounds, he has no power to destroy the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism [in the general sense].... I am absolutely convinced that as long as the SGI continues to advance, the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism will remain secure.... Nikken (and his followers) left the High Sanctuary years ago; it is no surprise to me that he would seek to destroy a magnificent structure born of the sincerity of Soka Gakkai/SGI members.... The High Sanctuary is strong and ever victorious — and I have never been more happy to be an SGI member.

— JOE KOSTECKE,
San Diego

I am grateful for the *World Tribune* including a recent special

edition about the current demolition of the Main Temple. After much daimoku and soul searching, I feel that the time has come for SGI-USA members to stand up with courage and dignity and respond with the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi to Nikken's latest actions to destroy the Main Temple....

I believe that, at this crucial moment in history, we must stand up and show the world that we will not tolerate the injustice Nikken is perpetrating by destroying a perfectly good building built through the sincere efforts of members from throughout the world.... Martin Luther King Jr. inspired millions of people to stand up for civil rights and march peacefully. It is our heritage in this country to take action. To not take action goes against the heart of the American spirit.

I therefore propose that in this 50th anniversary year of the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights...the SGI-USA demonstrate its intolerance for Nikken's trampling on the human rights of Nichiren Daishonin's disciples throughout the world by holding peaceful, nonviolent, dignified demonstrations....

It is my hope that the peaceful demonstrations will enable this injustice perpetrated by Nikken to be covered by U.S. and international press. I want to tell future generations that we did our best to try and stop the lunacy set in motion by Nikken. It is beyond my comprehension that priests at the head temple and temple members are not outraged at this action....

— GAIL JACOBSON,
Arlington, Mass.

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."

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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.

NEWS BRIEFS

Photo by MIKE MULLEN



San Francisco Region musical group 'Ichinen' performs at the 1998 Concord Earth Day Festival, April 26.

CALIFORNIA

Sacramento Celebrates Earth Day

With colorful displays showing examples of SGI's involvement in restoring the environment and offering copies of the Earth Charter, youth division members introduced Buddhism to other environmental groups in the Sacramento area on April 26. YMD Mark Kennedy took the stage to offer an explanation of the purpose and goals of the SGI and our involvement as an NGO with the United Nations. Taka Hawk, Maryann Rosario and Marlene Juette staffed the booth and handed out information.

— ELAINE ZENTNER, Correspondent

JAPAN

Brazilian University Honors SGI President

On April 29, Rio de Janeiro State University conferred an honorary doctorate and the José Bonifácio Medal upon SGI President Ikeda, founder of Soka University, in recognition of his efforts to promote peace, the dignity of human life and international harmony. Rector Antônio Celso Alves Pereira and Professor João Eduardo Alves Pereira, chief of the Rector's Office, traveled to Tokyo to attend a presentation ceremony held in conjunction with the Soka Gakkai's 4th All-Japan Student Division Leaders Meeting at the Soka University Auditorium in Hachioji, Tokyo.

Previous recipients of honorary doctorates from the Rio de Janeiro State University include world leaders and notables such as South Africa's President Nelson Mandela, UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor and former Portuguese president Mario Soares. Mr. Ikeda is the first Japanese citizen to receive this honor.

— Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER

AUSTRIA

SGI President Commended by European Academy of Sciences and Arts

On April 4, SGI President Ikeda, founder of the Fuji Art Museum, was awarded a Gold Medal of Special Commendation by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in recognition of his outstanding contributions artistic and cultural exchange. Dr. Felix Unger, academy president, handed the ac-

PLEASE SEE BRIEFS, NEXT PAGE

Summer Rallies

General Director Zaitzu recently suggested that members hold rallies to protest Nikken's planned demolition of the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo). Please keep the following points in mind when planning these events.

- This event is an opportunity to confirm our solidarity as families and as an organization toward our mission of world peace.
- In addition to protest, the event should naturally display the happy and embracing qualities of our organization to guests and temple members.
- Signatures can be collected for petitions.
- Guest speakers, such as architects or scholars who also protest the planned demolition, may be invited.
- The key to success lies in home visits to invite people and inform them about the importance of the temple issue.
- This is a good opportunity to contact friends who practice with the temple and let them know the facts of the Main Temple's demolition.
- Naturally, all rallies should be peaceful, non-violent and non-confrontational.
- Please report your plans to the Organization Center at the World Culture Center, attention Reiko Groshell and James Herrmann.

Diversity Workshops Target Racism

By KATHLEEN DOCKETT
CORRESPONDENT

Nationally, the SGI-USA and the Culture Department are focusing on developing a spirit of tolerance for diversity within our organization. In fact, one of the principles of the recently adopted SGI Charter reads that the SGI "shall respect cultural diversity and promote cultural exchange, thereby creating an international society of mutual understanding and harmony" (Cultural diversity refers to a wide range of differences among people including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, social status, age and physical/mental impairment.)

In response to this thrust, the Washington, D.C., Region Culture Department in June 1997 established a committee and named it "Jiyu" to reflect its mission of awakening us to our true selves. Based on the concept as set forth in President Ikeda's poem "The Sun of Jiyu Over A New Land," *jiyu*, literally "to emerge from the Earth," embodies the notion of awakening to our fundamental true self as a Buddha, bringing forth the qualities of compassion, respect, fairness and honesty, and then teaching others in society to exhibit their true selves as well.

Thus, emerging from the Earth of our true identity and going forth to teach others is the mission of the Jiyu Committee.

One result of this committee's work is a new series of workshops designed to train a cadre of Culture Department leaders and members in cultural diversity. Like taking a mini-course, the initial group will complete a sequence of sessions held each month.

The basic model is one of training the trainers. Upon completion of the training sequence, it is expected that this group of members, working with co-facilitators, will conduct low-risk diversity training sessions with other members of the Culture Department and eventually with chapter, area and region leaders as a component of the latter's ongoing leadership training.

The committee's ultimate aim is to develop a resource bank consisting of human and material resources for use by the general membership in diversity training. Material resources will

include a manual of guidance, readings, standard exercises and videos, and the human resources consist of the members experienced in diversity education and training. In these ways the committee is striving to foster respect for diversity throughout the Washington, D.C., Region.

The success of these efforts is

beginning to be felt and is reflected in one participant's comments after a recent workshop. "The dialogue phase in the small groups afforded me the opportunity to express some deep feelings I've had for years but kept inside," Angela Baden said. "It

The committee is striving to foster respect for diversity throughout the region.

was such a personal and cleansing experience for me. The fact that my words were listened to in such a setting gave me a feeling of hope that, I believe, can only be achieved in the SGI. We're working toward the same goal, so those who sincerely want world peace based on Nichiren Daishonin's teachings are the ones who are willing to listen and talk and change from within to achieve this goal." ■

Gakkai Attorneys Complete Cross-Examination of Nikken

By **JEFF FARR**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., May 19

More than 100 times on May 18, as if it were his strategy, Nikken answered questions from Soka Gakkai attorneys with variations of "I don't know" and "I don't remember." So ended an important chapter in the Seattle Incident trial: After three appearances in court, Nikken has completed his testimony.

Despite the fact that the Seattle Incident trial is Nikken's libel suit against the Soka Gakkai, his attorneys tried for years to keep him out of court. Last September, the court ordered him to appear, and after his Dec. 22 direct examination and Feb. 2 cross-examination by Soka Gakkai attorneys, the presiding judge, Fumio Shimada, ordered Nikken to appear once more for further cross-examination.

All in all, the Feb. 2 and May 18 sessions comprised more than four hours of questioning of Nikken by the Soka Gakkai side.

At issue is what Nikken did the night of March 19-20, 1963, after he held a Gohonzon-conferral ceremony in Seattle. According to the testimony of the late Hiroe Clow, an SGI-USA member, he had an altercation with prostitutes and a subsequent run-in with the police from which she, in effect, rescued him. According to Nikken, it was an uneventful evening spent alone: He left his hotel only for a walk and a couple double shots of whiskey at a nearby bar.

Nikken said on Dec. 22 that the bar he patronized was the Carousel Room (this name is recorded in the diary of his 1963 U.S. visit, which the plaintiff introduced in December along with a photograph of the bar's exterior). When the Soka Gakkai attorneys introduced evidence May 18 that the bar was frequented by prostitutes, Nikken said, "I sat down at the counter by the entrance, so I don't know very much about the inside of the bar." He also said, "I never went in such a place."

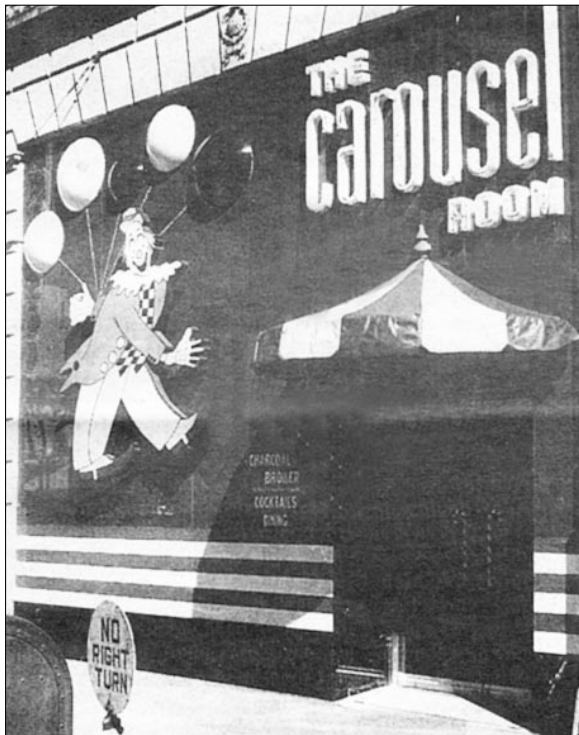
The attorneys pointed out as well that from the Carousel Room it would only have been a six- to seven-minute walk to the scene of the incident, 7th Street and Pike. Nikken did not

deny this. But the priesthood's public relations chief, Kogaku Akimoto, has been saying of late that the site and the bar were not within walking distance of each other.

In a seeming attempt to cast doubt on Nikken as a witness, the attorneys asked him many questions not directly related to the night in question but pertinent to previous testimony by

doorway to the room, one of the attorneys asked, "Isn't this Mrs. Clow?" "Well, it looks like her," Nikken answered. "Isn't this priest you?" was the next question. "Well, it looks like me," he answered.

Mrs. Clow also testified in 1995 that, over the years, her family received various gifts, including prayer beads for her daughter's wedding, from



The Carousel Room, where Nikken testified he went for a drink in March 1963, was well known at the time as a hangout for prostitutes.

Nikken and Mrs. Clow. Again, many of his answers were "I don't know" or something similarly inconclusive.

For instance, the attorneys asked him about May 3, 1963. Mrs. Clow testified that on that day the previous high priest, Nittatsu, with Nikken present, apologized to her. "I'm sorry for causing you trouble," High Priest Nittatsu said, according to Mrs. Clow. "I know him [Nikken] well enough."

This apology occurred at the Nihon University Auditorium in Tokyo after the 25th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting. Nikken previously denied the story, saying that "in no way was Clow invited to High Priest Nittatsu's room." Showing Nikken a photograph of him with Mrs. Clow at the

Nikken and his wife. These were to buy her silence, Mrs. Clow believed. Nikken has denied sending the family gifts, at one time even asserting that he didn't know Mrs. Clow had a daughter. The defense on May 18 introduced a video, though, of daughter Judy Clow's March 1983 wedding, in which Chief Priest Shobo Sakata of the Los Angeles temple, Myoho-ji, presents the beads to her and clearly states that "these are a gift from High Priest Nikken." On viewing the video, Nikken acknowledged Sakata's statement as fact.

After the May 18 cross-examination, the Soka Gakkai side was confident that Nikken had been discredited.

PLEASE SEE TRIAL, 6

NEWS BRIEFS

BRIEFS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

colade to a representative of the Japanese museum before a gathering of 300 guests at the opening of the "Man Ray — Paintings, Objects, Drawings and Photographs from the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum" exhibition in Salzburg, Austria. The exhibition is being shown with the academy's cosponsorship at the Rupertinum, the city's leading museum of modern art.

— *Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER*

CALIFORNIA

First Aid Seminar Held in San Francisco

On April 26 at the San Francisco Ikeda Auditorium, health care professionals who belong to the Culture Department presented a forum titled "Introduction to First Aid: What To Do in an Emergency." Steve Jo, MD, stated that human life is the most important treasure in the universe, so we need to learn through our own efforts how to use the basic techniques of first aid to save a person's life. Medical professionals made presentations on topics such as general first aid, CPR, disaster preparedness and suicide prevention. By the end of the afternoon, SGI members and friends had learned practical methods that may save a life.

— *ZONIA ALSTON, Correspondent*

WASHINGTON/ALASKA

Two Cities and a University Recognize the SGI

On May 11, the Office of the Mayor of Tukwila, a small city south of Seattle where the SGI-USA Seattle Culture Center is located, issued a proclamation designating May 18 as International Justice Day in recognition of the SGI's efforts for peace. The proclamation was signed by Mayor John W. Rants.

On May 18, the Mayor of Anacortes, Wash. sent a letter of appreciation to SGI President Ikeda. Mayor H. Dean Maxwell wrote: "What I feel is most respectfully is the unwavering attention the SGI places on the happiness of each human being, always focusing on the unlimited potential within." Further, the mayor invited President Ikeda to visit Anacortes.

Also on May 18, Edward Lee Gorsuch, chancellor of the University of Alaska Anchorage, issued a certificate of recognition stating: "I congratulate Soka Gakkai International, led by President Daisaku Ikeda, that strives to contribute to the happiness and welfare of world citizens through peace, culture and education."

— *BILL LAWRENCE, Bureau Chief*

JAPAN

SGI President Meets with Chinese Vice President

SGI President Ikeda met with visiting Chinese Vice President Hu Jintao in Tokyo on the evening of April 22. This was their first meeting since 1985, when Mr. Hu, as director of the All-China Youth Federation, led a Chinese youth delegation to Japan. On this reunion, they discussed topics ranging from the importance of youth exchanges for promoting lasting friendship between China and Japan to relations between North and South Korea. Mr. Hu, who was elected as vice president by the National People's Congress this past March 16 and is regarded as one of the new generation of leaders who will guide China into the new century, said he was honored to renew his acquaintance with the SGI leader.

— *Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER*

Nikken Completes Testimony

TRIAL, FROM PAGE 5

"Throughout the cross-examination, whenever the questioning came to a crucial point, he repeated, 'I don't recall' or 'I don't know,'" said Soka Gakkai attorney Morio Miyahara. "Furthermore, he often contradicted his own statements from the direct examination."

SGI General Director Eiichi Wada, in a memo to all SGI organizations, similarly pointed out that "Nikken repeatedly said, 'I do not remember' and 'I don't know,' without presenting any logical arguments to defend himself against the evidence...."

A Nichiren Shoshu Administrative Office memo meanwhile claimed the session a great victory for the temple side: "The high priest, with his testimony of truth, completely crushed the Gakkai's insistent machinations in the previous cross-examination [Feb. 2]." The memo also predicted a favorable decision for Nikken in the near future.

The next session, June 16, will be a closed session with attorneys from both sides going over evidence with the presiding judge. Although the temple side has been requesting the judge to reach a verdict for many months, neither side knows how close the court is to announcing one.

In the United States, the six Nichiren Shoshu temples have been playing down the current trial — it's rarely mentioned at temple meetings and not at all in the temple magazine or temple newsletters. The U.S. temples have tried to deflect attention from the Tokyo trial by focusing on Mrs. Clow's state-side libel case against Nikken, which, because of two jurisdictional rulings against it, has now been dropped. No decision was ever reached on the merits of Mrs. Clow's case.

Although much evidence discovered in preparation for that trial is now being used in the Tokyo District Court trial, the two cases are entirely separate. Many temple members, though, have misunderstandings that the U.S. and Japan cases are one and the same, and that the jurisdictional decisions by California courts were on the merits of Mrs. Clow's case, which they were not.

KOREA, FROM PAGE 1

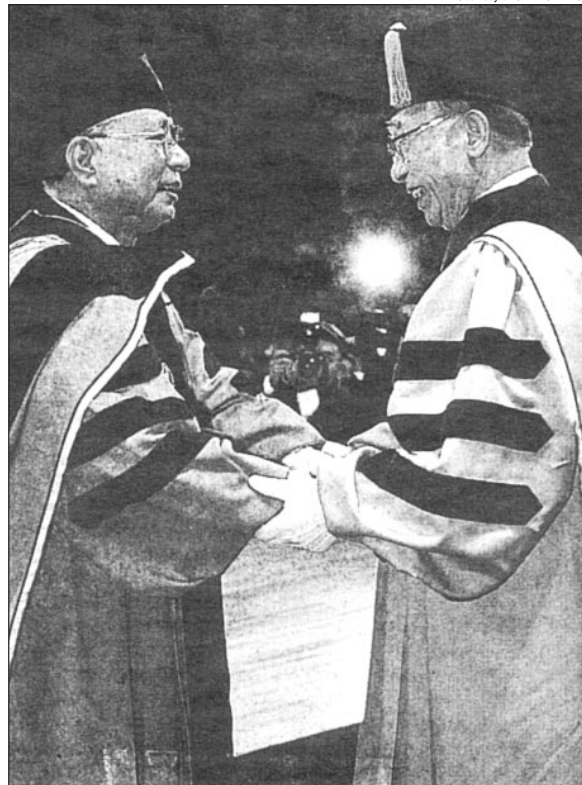
port of Japanese films, videos, pop music and cartoons unless they are deemed to have educational merit. And recent polls indicate that more than 80 percent of Koreans oppose opening up the country to Japanese culture.

In that context, the significance of SGI President Ikeda's 1990 visit becomes clear. (As founder of the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum, President Ikeda attended the exhibit opening of "Masterpieces of European Oil Paintings" in Seoul, co-sponsored by the Tokyo museum.) It was, in fact, one of President Ikeda's first visits to that nation.

Since then, the KSGI launched civic-minded activities, such as its environmental clean-up campaigns for which the organization has been commended. And over the past year, the SGI president and the KSGI have received numerous acknowledgments from local governments.

During President Ikeda's recent visit, the accolades continued. Many cited his pioneering efforts toward better relations between Korea and Japan and lauded his willingness to acknowledge Japan's culpability during its years of occupation. Highlights of his visit included:

- May 5: President Ikeda was awarded a Plaque of Commendation from the city of Kwangju, citing his efforts to oppose militarism and nuclear testing. It is



Chancellor Choue Young Seek of Kyung Hee University congratulates SGI President Ikeda on his honorary doctorate. Mr. Ikeda emphasized time and again during his recent trip how Korea has been a benefactor to Japan.

the first time Kwangju has honored any individual.

- May 7: President Ikeda was honored with a Plaque of Commendation from the city of Koyang, near Seoul.
- May 15: SGI President Ikeda, founder of Soka University,

received an honorary doctorate in philosophy from Kyung Hee University in Seoul. The event was followed by a dinner hosted by the university, during which Chancellor Choue Young Seek described his hope that the strengthened ties between Soka

University and Kyung Hee University would contribute to improved relations between their two nations.

• May 16: The Global Cooperation for a Brighter Society (GCS) Club International conferred its Emerald Award on Kaneko Ikeda, citing her contributions to the betterment of society. Mrs. Ikeda is the 10th recipient of this award from GCS, a cultural and humanitarian nongovernmental group that promotes the Brighter Society Movement in 30 different countries.

• May 17: President Ikeda hosted a dinner in Seoul to repay the hospitality they received during their Korean visit, and to celebrate Kyung Hee University's 49th anniversary.

• May 18: Kyongsangbuk Province conferred a Certificate of Commendation upon President Ikeda in recognition of his commitment to human rights and world peace.

• May 18: President Ikeda visited the KSGI headquarters in Seoul for the very first time and met with Korean representatives.

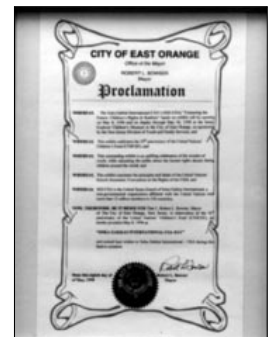
It was at this meeting that he noticed a white-haired gentleman — Mr. Yun Shinha, who is now a KSGI guidance counselor after 35 years of practice in Korea. "I appoint you SGI president for a day," President Ikeda said as delighted smiles filled the room.

Compiled by LISA KIRK, assistant managing editor

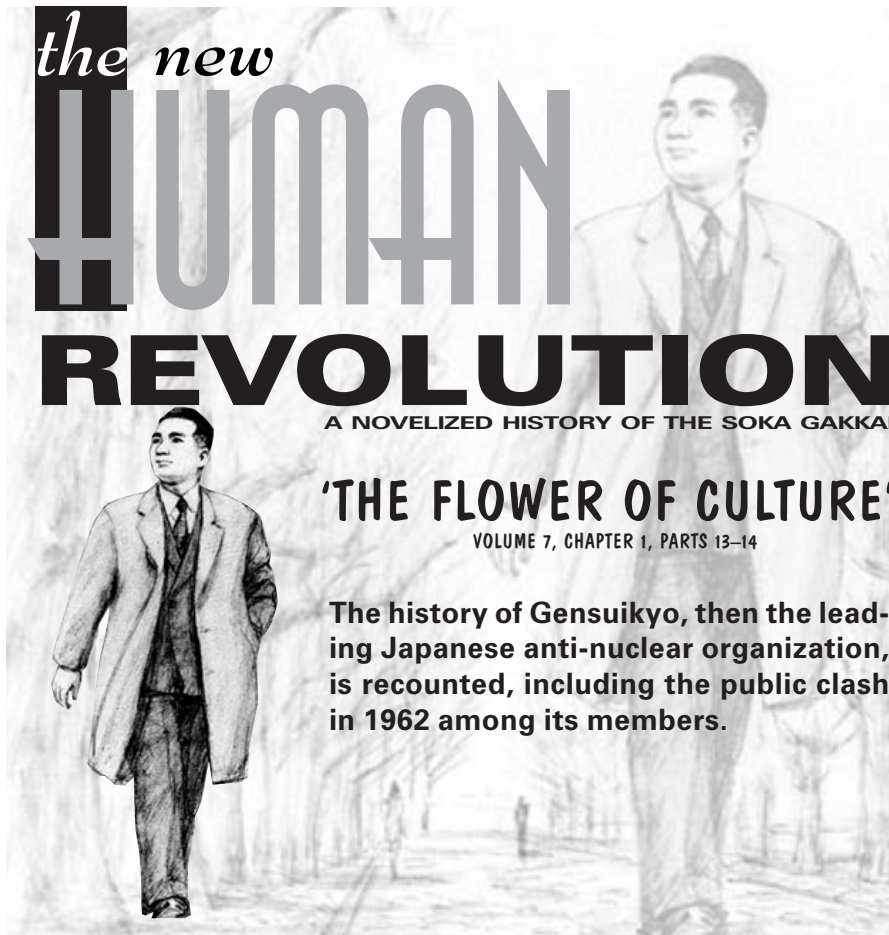
Children's Rights Exhibit Opens in New Jersey



Children help cut the ribbon to open the exhibition at the Jersey Explorer Children's Museum.



To commemorate the opening of the SGI-USA's children's rights exhibit there, the city of East Orange, N.J., proclaims May 8, 1998, as SGI-USA Day. Signed by the mayor, the proclamation lauds the exhibit for educating the public about child abuse around the world. In East Orange, the exhibition was co-sponsored by the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services.



'THE FLOWER OF CULTURE'
VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 1, PARTS 13-14

The history of Gensuikyo, then the leading Japanese anti-nuclear organization, is recounted, including the public clash in 1962 among its members.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto continued persuasively to make his case: "The third point is that you, the youth division members who embrace this great Buddhist philosophy of life, grow to be fine leaders in every area of society. And that you fight with all your might for the people's happiness and for world peace.

"We mustn't be narrow-minded, thinking of ourselves only as Nichiren Shoshu or Soka Gakkai members. As true disciples of Nichiren Daishonin, let's advance with the proud determination that we will enable every person in our country, every person in the world, to savor genuine happiness and fulfillment."

Shin'ichi's words were brief, but he managed to express the most fundamental and gradualist approach to the elimination of nuclear weapons, an approach deeply rooted in the lives of the people, in humanity itself.

Shin'ichi had referred to the public clash among members of Gensuikyo, then the leading Japanese anti-nuclear organization, at the plenary session of the 8th World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs held at the Taito Gymnasium in Tokyo, on Aug. 6, 1962.

Gensuikyo had been founded in September 1955 after a Japanese fishing boat, the *Lucky Dragon V*, was exposed to radioactive fallout from the U.S. hydrogen bomb testing on Bikini Atoll in the Pacific in March 1954. This tragedy motivated a women's group in Sugiyama Ward, Tokyo, to begin a petition drive for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Their grassroots campaign spread throughout Japan, eventually leading to the founding in August 1954 of the Japan Council for the Petition to Abolish Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs.

In May 1955, the Japan Preparatory Committee for the World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was established, and the 1st World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima for three days from Aug. 6, 1955, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the atomic bombing there.

The success of that international convention led to a merger of the Japan Council for the Petition to Abolish Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs and the Japan Preparatory Committee for the World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, thus giving birth to Gensuikyo, the

largest Japanese organization in the movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

Gensuikyo began as a people's peace movement, drawing from all levels and sectors of society and transcending political persuasions. But gradually the Japan Communist Party and other radical forces came to dominate the council. They claimed that the United States was an aggressor and the Soviet Union a peaceful power. Soviet nuclear weapons testing, they said, was simply an unavoidable, defensive measure. They tried to recast the anti-nuclear weapons movement as an anti-American movement.

In 1960, with the signing of a new U.S.-Japan Security Treaty on the horizon, Gensuikyo came out against the treaty. And as the organization's anti-American position became stronger and clearer, its more conservative members resigned. In addition, organizations linked to the Democratic Socialist Party and the Japan Labor Council parted ways with Gensuikyo and in November 1961 formed another organization, the National Council for Peace and Against Nuclear Weapons.

Wrangling over control of Gensuikyo continued. The Communist Party, which held the majority, pitted itself against the Japan Socialist Party and the General Council of Trade Unions of Japan within Gensuikyo. The latter two groups opposed all nuclear testing, including that conducted by the Soviet Union.

Their differences surfaced during the 7th World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in 1961, but did not result in a further split. The JSP and General Council of Trade Unions decided to remain with Gensuikyo and work from within the organization for change. Their hope was to redirect the council politically and improve its overall effectiveness through having their will reflected in personnel appointments and operations.

At the 8th World Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in August 1962, the JSP succeeded, at least in part, in achieving this. A statement of opposition to all nuclear weapons testing, by both the United States and the Soviet Union, was included in the keynote report.

But right in the midst of the conference, on Aug. 5, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission announced that the Soviet Union had that morning resumed atmospheric nuclear testing. This prompted the Socialist and Trade Unions delegates to submit an emergency motion to protest the Soviet nuclear test in the name of the World Congress of Gensuikyo

at the Steering Committee meeting prior to the plenary session. The motion, however, was voted down by the Communist Party delegates and foreign representatives from the Soviet Union and other nations of the Communist bloc.

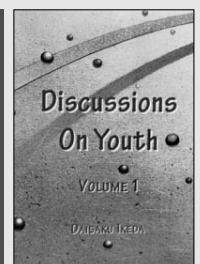
The plenary session opened at 3:30 p.m. Immediately after it started, several dozen youth shouting "An emergency motion!" rushed to the podium. They were from the JSP and Trade Unions factions, taking direct action to have the motion adopted by the World Congress.

Pandemonium broke out in the Taito Gymnasium as a group of JCP youth joined in trying to prevent their JSP and Trade Unions counterparts from reaching the podium. They jostled and traded angry shouts: "Bring our motion to a vote!" "Sit down!" "Shut up!"

Representatives from other countries watched the tussle with expressions of alarm and disgust.

To be continued

Ho Goku is the pen name of Daisaku Ikeda, who appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962. Illustration by Kenichiro Uchida.



Discussions On Youth

This compilation of dialogues among the SGI president and high school division leaders of the Soka Gakkai was published to commemorate this year's May 3, Soka Gakkai Day.

Topics explored include: love, dealing with hardships, friendship, the importance of reading literature, finding happiness at school and in the workplace and how to bring out the best in oneself.

Price: \$5.00

M/O#: 0110

SIGN POST APPLYING NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S WRITINGS TO DAILY LIFE

Accelerate Into Curves

By VALERIE THOMAS

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE


Many hear about and accept this sutra, but few continue their faith in the face of great obstacles. To accept is easy; to continue is difficult. But Buddhahood lies in continuing faith. ("The Difficulty of Sustaining Faith," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 127)

Upon hearing of doubts expressed by his disciple Shijo Kingo, Nichiren Daishonin wrote this. Shijo Kingo was concerned that, even though he was practicing earnestly, he was facing great hardships. He was practicing to have a peaceful life and had not expected such challenges. Here the Daishonin reassures that his practice is correct and reminds him of the importance of continuing in the face of such obstacles.

This is a basic teaching of Buddhism, but one that has been difficult for me. From a young age, I learned to avoid obstacles. If I planned ahead, if I finagled, it was often possible to avoid situations that would have been challenging. However, through my understanding of Buddhism, I have started to appreciate the value that I can create by facing obstacles in my life.

I was driving recently and thought about the analogy of life being like a winding road. There are some curves you can see a ways off, and there are some sharp curves that come up all of a sudden. Sometimes you just can't be sure what lies ahead. I can't remember much from my driver's ed class in high school, but one thing I do remember is learning to accelerate into curves. "If you brake," I was told, "you will lose control."

The way to maintain maximum control is to accelerate into curves. If I am overcome by doubt when faced with obstacles and put on my "brakes," I will lose control and not accomplish my dreams. However, when I use my practice to accelerate into the curves of my life (the obstacles), then I can not only maintain control and get through the curves but also end up with my life being enriched (moving faster).

Although it is not always easy, I continue because "Buddhahood lies in continuing faith." 

WHAT A CONCEPT

ON THE BASIC IDEAS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM

By LISA JONES

STAFF WRITER

Most people are familiar with the concept of cause and effect, the idea that if you do something now, you'll see the result of your action in the future. Buddhism teaches that karma is created in accordance with this causal law.

We may be tempted, though, to take a mechanistic or literal view of this law. For example, if you sock someone in the arm, someone will come along and sock you; what goes around comes around.

But the Buddhist view of cause and effect is much more subtle and profound.

Nichiren Daishonin writes: "If you want to understand the causes that existed in the past, look at the results as they are manifested in the present. And if you want to understand what results will be

manifested in the future, look at the causes that exist in the present" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 172).

On one level, this passage could be interpreted as referring to a linear progression of causality in which past, present and future exist as different points in time. But on a deeper level, as the Daishonin teaches, cause and effect occur simultaneously.

SGI President Ikeda comments on this in his recent peace proposal: "Of most interest to us as human beings...are the results that will be manifested in the future. More than any other factor, these are shaped by inner causes in the present moment, that is, by the intensity of our conviction in the plane of...existential time. This is central to the Buddhist view of time in which the present moment is pivotal — in a sense, is everything.... Without this pivotal 'now,' past and future are empty and illusory."

Buddhism posits, then, that time is eternally in the present. It is without beginning or end. If we have no conviction in this, everything we say, do or contemplate is rooted in an "empty and illusory" understanding of past and future. What's more, if we try to resolve

our problems from the standpoint of this illusory understanding, our temporary solutions will only compound our problems.

The eternal present is a type of *ku* (formlessness) where all phenomena and all dreams are possible. In keeping with the simultaneity of cause and effect, a dream becomes possible the instant that you dream it — even if it may seem impossible in terms of linear time or physical obstacles. Faith is a bridge between this realm of possibility and what manifests materially in our lives. Ultimately, dreams become facts where prayers and desires persist.

Of course, this isn't to say that linear time doesn't exist. All of us grow and age. Historical events happen one after another. But the perspectives of physical and historical time are inadequate in describing the Buddha's compassion, which is eternal and all-encompassing — and which is synonymous with the universe.

This compassion, expressed in the eternal present, is the basis of understanding cause and effect in the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Nine in a series

Against the Intent of This Sutra

STANDS TO REASON

LESSONS FOR TODAY FROM THE WRITINGS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN

By JEFF FARR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

There is a difference if one chants the daimoku while acting against the intent of this sutra. There are many forms of slander that go against the correct practice of this sutra. ("The Fourteen Slanders," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 207)

The Fourteen Slanders," written in 1276, is another of the later letters that Nichiren Daishonin sent from his retirement at Mount Minobu. This one was to Matsuno Rokuro Zaemon Nyudo, a believer who had written the Daishonin with a question that had been troubling him: "How great is the difference between the blessings received when a sage chants the daimoku and the blessings received when we chant it?" The Daishonin's answer was simple: "One is in no way superior to the other" (MW-3, 207).

Matsuno's question might seem silly. Basically, it was like asking "Are the benefits a smart person gets from chanting

better than mine?" There's no difference, the Daishonin assures him.

Taking Matsuno's question seriously and praising him for asking it, the Daishonin uses his answer to expand on the idea of correct practice — to stress that it's not enough just to chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. You have to be in accord with the Lotus Sutra's teachings, too, if you want to experience the full benefit of practicing Buddhism.

The religious practice of the temple and the SGI may seem identical. Both groups chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo to the Gohonzon. Both study the Daishonin's writings. Both try to spread their practice.

But by "acting against the intent of the sutra," the temple diverges from correct practice. *Acting against the intent* means, in one sense, to chant with a contrary spirit and understanding to the Daishonin's. The Daishonin, after all, emphasizes in "The Fourteen Slanders" that we should practice as expressed in this Lotus Sutra passage: "We care nothing for our bodies or lives / but are anxious only for the unsurpassed way" (*The Lotus Sutra*, pp. 194-95). The Law, the unsurpassed way, the road to enlightenment, should be the center of our practice, of our lives.

In the temple, though, this spirit is skewed. Since "the high priest alone receives the Buddhism of the Daishonin," as one U.S. chief priest said in a lecture earlier this month, Nikken becomes the way. And this misunderstanding then misinforms prayer in the temple. In the same lecture, this chief priest told his audience

that "having faith in the present High Priest Nikken Shonin" is the very foundation of correct practice; people wind up essentially praying to him. This "grave offense" of going against the intent of Buddhism — for following another way than the unsurpassed way — "piles up until it sends one plummeting to hell!" (MW-3, 216), the Daishonin writes.

The Daishonin lists the 14 slanders, from arrogance to grudges, and, if you take a close look at them, they all boil down to not seeking the Law. Not being selflessly committed to it. Not making the unsurpassed way our own.

"The ultimate measure of faith is found in the spirit to devote one's life, far transcending any quest for personal merit," SGI President Ikeda explains in an upcoming "Third Stage of Life" installment. "This spirit of devotion is true selflessness. It is to cast aside selfish desires. It is complete dedication to the Law and to humanity.

At the end of "The Fourteen Slanders," the Daishonin describes the freedom to which a life so committed leads. He promises Matsuno, "To your amazement you will see that the entire universe is the land of Tranquil Light" (MW-3, 217). Your mind will take flight into the universe, he seems to say.

When we deepen our resolve to travel the way, our minds and our lives soar. With-the-intent practice is like flying. Against-the-intent practice is like plummeting.

Ten in a series

KARINA MCMILLAN, SAN FRANCISCO

Translating Failure Into Benefit

Karina McMillan was accepted into the master's program at a prestigious school for translation and interpretation. Little did she know that she'd have to go through a nightmare of self-doubt to achieve her dream.

When SGI President Ikeda came to the United States in 1990, I was so impressed by his interpreter that, even though it didn't seem at all feasible at the time, I began to dream of becoming an interpreter.

I spoke Spanish, but I couldn't imagine ever mastering such a difficult skill as interpretation. Four years later, full of hope and excitement, I was on my way to Monterey, Calif., to get a master's in translation and interpretation at the world-renowned Monterey Institute of International Studies.

My high hopes came crashing down, however, when the head of the department informed us that fewer than half the students who begin the program actually finish. I heard a little voice in my head say, "I'll never make it." And from that moment on, I was constantly plagued with the fear of failing.

When classes started, I felt like I was in a military boot camp. In interpretation class, the professor ridiculed us, made sarcastic remarks, laughed at our mistakes and even told some students that they were stupid. The atmosphere was extremely competitive.

To my despair, no matter how hard I tried, I could not interpret. It seemed that my worst fears were coming true. I began to hate myself and wonder what was wrong with me.

Far away from the members with whom I usually chanted and with practically no time to do activities, I began to slip back into the same depression I suffered before I practiced Buddhism. I felt so lonely and isolated! Sometimes I was tempted to skip my usual hour-a-day of chanting because of the huge workload, but I tried my best to keep it up; I knew it was the only thing that kept me going.

I read certain statements by President Ikeda so often that I memorized them, such as: "Worrying about other people's capricious evaluations of you is a pettiness that has nothing to do with Buddhism." Also, I often heard President Ikeda say that instead of comparing ourselves to others we should compare ourselves to the way we

were at the beginning of our practice. Even so, I was obsessively worried about making a fool of myself in class and constantly compared myself to other students.

As the year progressed, the number of students in the program dwindled. I was hanging on by the skin of my teeth, expecting to be approached by my professors at any moment with the typical "Maybe you should consider another profession."

By the second semester, I was at the bottom of my class. I began to feel there was no hope for me. When it came time to form groups with other students to practice interpreting, everyone avoided me, because I was so slow, and I ended up with fewer practice groups than I was supposed to have.

But the worst part was interpretation class. I was terrified of my professor. I couldn't sleep at all the night before class, and I would go to class shaking so hard I couldn't even listen to the speech I was supposed to interpret. My professor seemed to enjoy tearing me to pieces. It was the worst humiliation I ever experienced.

Finally, the moment we had all been dreading arrived: the qualifying exams, which each student must pass to go on to the second year. You're given only two chances. Those who don't pass are forced to drop out of the program.

A few weeks before the exams, my interpretation professor called me into her office and told me to make other plans for the following year. She didn't think I was going to pass. I was devastated, but I knew she was right.

If it weren't for my Buddhist practice, I would have given up right then and there. Common sense told me I didn't have a chance. But I always heard that anything is possible with this Buddhism, so I started chanting six hours a day.

In spite of all my chanting, I only passed three out of seven exams — not even half! I was furious! I had put all my faith in the Gohonzon and chanted so many hours. What had gone wrong?

However, President Ikeda has said many times that those

who persevere achieve much more than those who were born talented. I knew I still couldn't give up. Soon afterward, I found out that some changes had been made in the testing system. I had to retake only two exams instead of four. I thought, "Maybe the Gohonzon hasn't abandoned me after all."

After studying all summer in Chile, I returned home and started chanting my six hours a day again in preparation for my second and final chance at the exams. But you can't chant that much without gaining some wisdom....

The day before I was to take my exams, I suddenly realized I wasn't ready. I then recalled some unsolicited advice that I was given by another student at Monterey. She had suggested that I take a leave of absence for a year to take some classes in economics and political science before attempting the exams. I hadn't paid any attention to her, because I didn't like her — besides, I was too old to be spending another year in school and had no money to pay for another year. But suddenly, I thought, "You know, instead of hating her for being so talented, maybe I should try to learn something from her."

I made a split-second decision and called the school to let them know I'd be back in a year.

I spent the year studying full time at a community college. It was a huge struggle financially, but somehow I managed to survive. Before I knew it, the year was over and the time had come to retake my exams. But I didn't feel any closer to passing than I had a year before. My interpreting was still a disaster. I almost hoped I wouldn't pass, so I would be spared another year of torture.

I went to speak to a women's division leader who told me how fortunate I was to be getting this type of experience, and that I should really appreciate my professor. She told me that it's not easy to be an interpreter, and that I would have to be really good and also very tough to make it in such a difficult field. She said that my attitude should be: "Gohonzon, this is not hard

enough. Give me more! I want the best training so I can become a great interpreter." That was just what I needed to hear.

I started chanting to pass the exams not so that I could become an interpreter but to get training for my life that would make me so strong that nothing could ever make me suffer again. I began to realize how immature and self-centered I had been. At 38, not only was I one of the oldest students in the program, I was also a Buddhist. Yet I had completely forgotten the spirit of this Buddhism. I decided my mission for my second year in school was to encourage the other students through what I knew would be a difficult time for all of us.

Well, I passed my exams and was told that I did an excellent job. When I saw my interpretation professor a few days later, I could tell she still considered me a lost cause, but on the first day of class, I realized that something had really changed. I still felt nervous, but my fear no longer dominated me. To my astonishment, one day, after I did my interpretation, my professor looked at me with a surprised look on her face and said, "Good."

After that, she became my strongest supporter. She even used me as an example in class and at the end of the semester gave me an A-minus. Talk about the impossible becoming possible!

The most challenging part of the second year was interpreting in front of hundreds of people. Sometimes I was so scared, I thought I would faint. I had to continually remind myself, "This is my training!" And it always gave me the courage to get through it.

When I saw how difficult the second year was, I realized what a benefit it was that I had failed some of my exams the first year. If I had somehow managed to pass them all, I would have never made it through the second year, be-

cause I wasn't ready then.

And by the end of the second year, I was one of only four students left in the interpretation program. We were all close, and I could see that I had achieved what I had been chanting for. I really had become like an older sister to them, and they often came to me for encouragement.

However, the biggest obstacle of all was yet to come — the dreaded professional exams we



Karina achieved her seemingly impossible dream. Her graduation day was the happiest day of her life, she says.

had to pass to get our degree. I felt light years away from passing them. But I chanted to do my best, and to my surprise, I passed seven out of 10 on the first try and two more a few months later. I have one more to go, which I will be taking soon.

After the exams, one of my professors asked me to talk to another student who had failed miserably. She wanted me to tell her what I had done that had enabled me to improve so much. The only advice I could offer her was to not give up.

I am now working as an interpreter, and I love my job. Every time I think about it, it feels like a dream. I would like to close by telling everyone who has an unfulfilled dream that no matter how impossible it may seem, as long as you persevere and chant, you can definitely achieve it. **W**

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

By HO GOKU

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY

AN ALL-STAR CAST IS ASSEMBLING



Tsunesaburo Makiguchi believed that the purpose of education is to bring happiness to children. More than half a century after he developed his philosophy of value-creating education, we see it blossoming in the graduates of Soka University.

Soon we'll be greeted by the smiling faces of cherry blossoms [this essay was published in Japan in mid-March].

Tens of thousands of brilliant, talented young graduates have already passed through the gates of Soka University, our citadel of wisdom and intellect, on their way to the 21st century. Just the other day, I heard that 162 of our students (including correspondence course students) passed the prefectural teacher employment examinations for 1998. As the founder of Soka University, I cannot tell you how happy this makes me.

In recent years, because of the economic downturn and lackluster performance of private enterprise, the number of applicants for the exam has risen. Birthrates, however, have continued to decline. And fewer school-age children means fewer new teachers have been hired.

Yet, in spite of the intense competition, each year, for seven consecutive years, more than 100 Soka University students have passed the exam. People all over Japan have praised this wonderful record.

I congratulate our students on their unbeatable spirit. At the same time, I express my profound gratitude to their teachers and the university staff members who have encouraged and supported them.

From Soka University's first graduating class in 1975 to the present, more than 2,400 graduates have secured employment as teachers in public and private schools. I'm sure this would delight first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the father of value-creating education.



Education is the most important task we face. It shapes our future leaders.

In the spring of 1930, Mr. Makiguchi wrote in a letter to a friend: "Recent educational policies as well as teachers in the classroom have become completely bureaucratic and lifeless, destroying the whole purpose of education. This places Japan's very future in grave peril."

The decline of education results in the moral and spiritual decline of the nation's citizens and of society itself. Thus, Mr. Makiguchi advocated educational reform and desired more than anything to foster outstanding educators.

On Nov. 18 of the same year he wrote that letter, Mr. Makiguchi, together with Josei Toda (later second president of the Soka Gakkai), founded the Soka Kyoiku Gakkai.



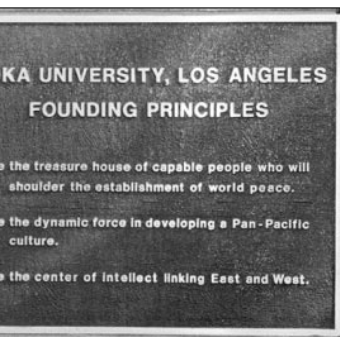
Students at Soka University of America's Calabasas campus hold class outside.

Mr. Makiguchi believed that the purpose of education is to bring happiness to children. The kind of teacher he envisioned who would carry out that sacred task was not of someone sitting enthroned on the throne of learning, an object of veneration, but a public servant who guides those aspiring to ascend that throne themselves.

His was a revolutionary cry for humanistic education. Mr. Makiguchi often used to say to his family: "In the future, there will be a school that puts the methods of value-creating education into practice. It will



go all the way from kindergarten to the university level. Young Toda will see to it that my work is carried on."



And Mr. Toda said to me, his disciple: "Let's work together to found Soka University. If not in my generation, then in yours. I'm relying on you. Let's make it a world-class university!"

That was late autumn 1950. Mr. Toda's business ventures

were in difficult straits, but he could still look serenely into the far distant future.



Education will be my final work.

Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda were both teachers. Although I never studied as a teacher nor taught in the classroom, I realized the wish of both these great mentors, establishing the Soka educational system and gaining wide recognition for the ideals and principles of value-creating education throughout the world. That has been my mission as their disciple.

Mr. Makiguchi's authoritative statement of his educational ideals, *The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy*, has so far been

translated into four languages. This pleases me immensely.

Also, in Brazil and the United States, a number of schools have incorporated Mr. Makiguchi's ideas into their teaching curricula. They have all had remarkable results. The students are excited about their studies, and their grades are improving. In Brazil, in particular, value-creating education has gained widespread public acceptance: In 1995, there was one school using this method; today there are 18.

We are facing a worldwide educational crisis, and over the years, Mr. Makiguchi's educational ideas have come to shine as a hopeful remedy, a light in the darkness.



I have many bound volumes of essays written by Soka University graduating students in what has become a school tradition. They include essays from students from the first graduating class through those of recent years. There are some two dozen volumes all told.

I keep them before the Gohonzon and continue to pray for the growth and happiness of each graduate. I frequently go through the pages, asking after this person and that, sometimes sending books, short messages or poems to encourage them. They are all precious students who have come to study at the university that I founded. Ours is a bond forged through the vows of youth.



Many of our students go to Soka University of America in Calabasas, Calif., for short-term language study programs and to experience life abroad. The day when SUA's Orange County campus will open is also fast approaching.

Soka University is involved in exchange programs with 67 universities around the globe.

An all-star cast is now assembling in preparation for the stage of a grand performance on the stage of the 21st century.

In this essay series, SGI President Ikeda uses his pen name Ho Goku, as he does in *The New Human Revolution*. This series is published as "Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*" in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

How To Support Families

General Director Zaitso offers some points on how to make the organization more family-friendly.

By FRED M. ZAITSO
SGI-USA GENERAL DIRECTOR

First, let me say that I'm no expert on creating a joyful family. I learned a lot of lessons the hard way, as my children can tell you. For instance, I used to have a "hard power" approach to parenting. I had certain standards that I wanted my children to meet; I wanted them to do SGI activities and become exemplary in faith, practice and study.

PRIME POINTS



By Fred M. Zaitso
SGI-USA
General Director

Deep down, my desire was for my children to be happy, but they participated in activities with a spirit of obligation. As a result, they developed resentment, which has only slowly dissipated. I learned that it's better to support children in developing their interests naturally rather than to impose standards or obligations on them.

Today, I feel that I have a good relationship with my children. One of my sons has come to understand why I was so adamant that he practice Buddhism — he made that realization on his own, while studying at Soka University in Japan. My daughter and I used to set aside time just for us — each month we'd spend a whole day together or have a special dinner where we could talk. Over time, I think we've created a real bond of trust. My other son is very focused on his career, and I feel that he has a good heart. I'm very proud of them all.

In the interest of strengthening the organization and society, many members have asked: How can the SGI-USA better support families?

I'd like to offer a few points and suggestions on this matter.

The SGI-USA is a pro-family organization, with no discrimination regarding how families are composed. All people are welcome to practice Bud-

dhisim and be themselves — whether gay or lesbian, heterosexual, single, in a relationship, married, divorced, widowed, with children or without. I feel that this needs to be explicitly restated. The SGI-USA is an open, inclusive organization, and we have no wish to reinforce hurtful judgments or stereotypes that may exist in society.

Primarily, the SGI-USA focuses on the individual. We strive to support each person in achieving his or her dreams based on Buddhism. At the same time, we recognize that each individual is part of a family. We all have or had parents (to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for giving us life), and many of us have siblings, significant others and children of our own. On a broader level, communities and nations can be seen as extensions or reflections of family. On an even broader level, we're all members of the human family. Although we're individuals, we're ultimately interrelated with all people.

Faith is most important in developing a family. One person who practices faith is building a foundation of happiness for his or her entire family. By developing strong conviction in our Buddhist practice, chanting, engaging in dialogue and exerting ourselves to overcome obstacles, each of us is setting an example and offering the light of hope to others. While it "takes a village" to raise a child — and while we all collectively are responsible for society — change begins with us as individuals.

Children grow to be capable and happy when they're surrounded by supportive people. As we all know, young people are our future. But many young people today are struggling with life-threatening and spirit-crushing problems that were perhaps unimaginable a decade ago.

While we know that our children will benefit from practicing Buddhism, it's not advisable to put pressure on them to practice. Instead of asking, "How can I get my kids to chant?" we'd do better to ask, "How can I support

them in enjoying Buddhism?" For parents with teens, I recommend reading SGI President Ikeda's "Discussions on Youth" together with your child.

Also, some members are taking initiative in their local communities to create parenting classes based on Buddhism and to develop activities for children and youth. As we chant about how to support our youth, many wonderful ideas emerge. Whether or not we have children, creating a more family-friendly organization is something that we can all take part in.

Love and commitment make strong families. In an essay on marriage that appeared recently in a Philippine newspaper, President Ikeda shared many insights on love and commitment:

- "Unlike the kind of trust which wavers depending on the situation, true love, in the deepest sense of a bond between two people, is something that develops in the face of rough seas. But this doesn't mean that one partner has to always give in to the other, or that the happiness of one can be built on the suffering of the other."

- "In today's society perhaps a family should be thought of as an airplane. buffeted by winds of change, the [pilots or] co-pilots have the responsibility of assuring safe arrival. The stability of a plane in flight requires clear direction, momentum and constant effort. And a successful flight requires that the co-pilots keep the same destination in sight."

- "Love takes a thousand different forms.... It is not, in fact, the outward appearance that matters. I always think that when a couple has shared the joys and sorrows of life over a long period of time, a deep tie grows up between them that cannot be severed by outside forces. This is not the kind of open, direct love we might see amongst young couples. It is something broad and deep, a sense of shared destiny."

As I re-read these points, I feel a renewed enthusiasm for creating a joyful family — in the Zaitso household and throughout the SGI-USA. ❧

FOR WOMEN

My Source of Encouragement



By MOMOYO MARTIN
L.A. #4 REGION WOMEN'S LEADER

After 32 years of reading the 'World Tribune,' Momoyo Martin finds in its pages the inspiration to go on and the tools to promote peace.

When I first came to the United States in 1966, the *World Tribune* was the Soka Gakkai's only English-language tool to introduce others to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. SGI President Ikeda's guidance reprinted in every issue was my direct link to his tremendous determination and spirit to awaken humanity to its fullest potential. It became my outlet to revitalize my faith, my source of encouragement to muster my determination, and it helped me navigate the challenges of my daily life.

More than 30 years later, the *World Tribune* remains essential to our individual practice. It is also a critical weapon in our efforts to spread kosen-rufu. That's why, during the month of June, SGI-USA women's division members are being encouraged to help increase the readership of this vital publication. This is not only a campaign to increase the number of subscriptions. Rather, this is an opportunity for us to help our members establish their own link with President Ikeda and tap the bounty of hope, encouragement, inspiration, lessons in history and culture his guidance imparts.

Calling the *World Tribune* "a news journal for humanity," President Ikeda wrote in *The New Human Revolution*:

"Ordinary papers are filled with dark and dismal news. To some extent this can't be helped because it's a reflection of society. Nevertheless, none of these newspapers applies any thought or editorial effort to enabling people to find hope and experience joy while living in such a society. None of them teaches its readers how to truly challenge and overcome life's

sufferings. But it is just this kind of newspaper that society needs most..." (vol. 1, p. 209).

Recently, four women's division members in the Twenty-nine Palms area of Southern California began their own personal promotion campaign of the *World Tribune*, which they referred to as "my paper." They determined that they would use the newspaper as a resource for giving encouragement when visiting members at home; as a tool in discussion meetings, and as a means to re-ignite their individual sense of mission. Their determination was that each family member would have his or her own copy of the *World Tribune*.



By consistently using President Ikeda's guidance and experiences in the *World Tribune* to encourage members, and using the paper as the foundation for discussion meetings, more people became interested in reading it. Within months, more members began to subscribe to the *World Tribune*, and the number of people receiving the publication grew from less than half of the district to 80 percent! But most important, according to Sachie Jamison, one of the women's division members involved in this effort: "The members of the district united. They're opening up."

President Ikeda's vision for the *World Tribune* is that it will be instrumental in cultivating a peaceful future and a new century of humanity. With the success of the women's division members in Twenty-nine Palms as an example, it is my determination to increase the readership of the *World Tribune* so that we can continue to help people challenge and overcome life's sufferings, which is most urgently needed in America today. ❧

DISCUSSIONS ON YOUTH

Human Revolution Is Raising Your Sights



Photo by LISA HOLLIS

'Human revolution is raising your gaze beyond your restricted, ordinary, everyday world and striving for and dedicating yourself to achieving something more noble, more profound, more all-embracing.'

This is the 22nd and final installment in part one of a series of discussions on youth among SGI President Ikeda and Soka Gakkai high school division leaders Hidenobu Kimura (young men's leader) and Kazue Igeta (young women's leader), representing the high school division members.

KIMURA: This is the final installment of "Discussions on Youth." Over the last year, you have shared guidance and advice on different aspects of daily life in a thorough, all-encompassing way. I know that the principles you have imparted will serve as a foundation that will support all the high school division members throughout their lives. Thank you so much.

In this last installment, we'll discuss with you the most important topics of human revolution and kosen-rufu.

IGETA: Your foreword to your novel, *The Human Revolution*, contains the famous line, "A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change the destiny of a nation, and further, will enable a change in the destiny of all humankind." I see this as not only the main theme of the novel but

a description of your life, President Ikeda.

KIMURA: Human revolution — transforming or revolutionizing our lives at the most fundamental level — holds the key to realizing change in all spheres. Nonetheless, some members remain unclear as to just what human revolution entails.

IKEDA: Human revolution is not something extraordinary or divorced from our daily lives. Let me give you some practical examples.

Let's say there's a young boy who spends all his time playing and never studies. Then, one day he decides to try to improve his future chances, and he begins to take his studies seriously. That is his human revolution.

Or perhaps there is a woman who only seeks happiness for her family on a superficial level. She's satisfied with her life until one day she asks herself: "What if our present happiness doesn't last? Maybe I should look for more solid, enduring happiness."

She begins practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and, basing her life on this philosophy, starts working for her family's absolute happiness. That is her human revolution.

Or there is a father who thinks only of his small world — himself, his family and his friends. Then, one day he decides to break out of these narrow confines just a little to extend a helping hand to the ill or suffering, giving earnest thought to how he can help them find happiness. As a result, he starts participating in activities for that purpose. That is his human revolution.

In other words, human revolution is raising your gaze beyond your restricted, ordinary, everyday world and striving for and dedicating yourself to achieving something more noble, more profound, more all-embracing.

KIMURA: Could we say it means striving, even just a little, to become a stronger person?

IKEDA: Yes. That spirit of "even just a little" is important. Will you take a step forward, or will you be content to stay where you are now? Everything in your life is determined by that.

IGETA: The Kyushu young women's high school division leader, Junko Matsuda, shared the following experience with me recently.

A member going to music

school was having trouble getting along with others, including her mother, and started skipping classes. She began to chant daimoku about her problems and soon started attending school again regularly. Her friends said that even her piano playing improved. And she began to get along better with her mother.

This experience led her to have more appreciation. Junko Matsuda said the thing she appreciates most about this practice is that it's helped her become a person who prays for others' happiness.

KIMURA: While we hear many such inspiring stories, some members feel the challenge of human revolution is beyond them. They're convinced that their lives can never change. They describe themselves as weak-willed — always making resolutions just to break them almost as quickly as they are made.

IKEDA: There's nothing wrong with that. If we were all perfect from the start, we wouldn't need to do human revolution!

In fact, those who in the beginning may be completely overwhelmed by their environment or constantly defeated by

their weaknesses — but then undergo a dramatic transformation as a result of solid Buddhist practice — can be a wonderful inspiration for others.

The times we experience the most intense suffering, unbearable agony and seemingly insurmountable deadlock are actually brilliant opportunities for doing our human revolution.

If you're the type whose resolve tends to melt away easily, if you find it difficult to stick to your goals, then just renew your determination each time you find yourself slipping. You will achieve your human revolution without fail if you keep struggling valiantly, pressing forward despite setbacks and disappointments, always thinking "This time I'll make it! This time I will succeed!"

KIMURA: I see.

IKEDA: Life is complicated. We are defined by all sorts of factors — our personality, our habits, our karma, our family background. It is difficult to free ourselves from these, which are all intertwined and linked.

And life flashes by in an instant. Many spend their days busily running around, absorbed with small, trivial worries and shallow concerns. Many never get beyond the six lower paths of life — Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity and Rapture.

However, when we resolve to break through those lower worlds and access the states of Bodhisattva and Buddhahood, showing greater compassion in our daily conduct and behavior, we are undertaking an "action revolution" — human revolution.

Let me give another example — university entrance examinations. Many of you may be feeling right now that that's all there is to life. And at the same time, you probably have friends who are experiencing problems. If you ignore your friends' needs and are only concerned with yourself, you remain locked in the six paths. On the other hand, if you try to help and encourage them at this crucial point, realizing that you'll regret it if you don't, you are walking the path

PLEASE SEE SIGHTS, NEXT PAGE

Photo by LISA HOLLIS

SIGHTS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

of a Bodhisattva.

When such compassion spreads from the individual level to the family level, to the nation and then the world, an unprecedented nonviolent revolution for peace is taking place.

KIMURA: Our society is a perfect example of the six lower paths. It is a society dominated by Hunger and Animality.

There are so few role models today of decent, admirable lives. The news is full of government and business leaders — people who hold positions of trust and responsibility — involved in corrupt and underhanded dealings.

Simply making structural changes or reforms isn't going to help, either. The bad guys will just find sneakier ways to get around the system and do even worse things.

There needs to be a fundamental change. People have to change.

IKEDA: There are all sorts of revolutions: political, economic, industrial, scientific, artistic and in distribution and communications. And there are many others. Each has its significance and, often, necessity.

But no matter what one changes, the world will never get any better as long as the people — the guiding force and impetus behind all endeavors — remain selfish and lack compassion. In that respect, human revolution is the most fundamental of all revolutions and, at the same time, the most necessary.

Immediately after World War II, the president of Japan's prestigious University of Tokyo, Shigeru Nambara, called for a revolution in people. Aurelio Peccei, cofounder of the Club of Rome, also underscored the need for a revolution, renaissance and revival of humanity. Thinkers the world over have arrived at the same conclusion.

KIMURA: When you met with the Brazilian poet Amedeu Thiago de Mello in April 1997, he said, "I thought that there was no longer anything that would move me as a poet, but when I came upon your philosophy of human revolution, I was greatly moved — for the first time in decades."

IKEDA: Human revolution is going to be an increasingly important subject of discussion in the years ahead. To lead people's attitudes toward life, society and peace in a new, positive direc-

tion is human revolution. I believe that human revolution will be a catch phrase in the 21st century.

IGETA: Is human revolution any different from the normal process of growth and development?

IKEDA: Revolution means an overturning. It means a sudden and dramatic change.

Gradual change over the years as we grow and mature is part of life's natural process. But human revolution occurs when we transcend that normal pace of growth and undergo a rapid change for the better.

The process of human revolution is one of steady, marked improvement, enabling us to keep growing and developing throughout our lives, for all eternity. We will never hit a limit, a dead-end, in our journey for self-perfection. Faith is the engine, the power source for our ongoing human revolution.

IGETA: I think that few people can do their human revolution with only intellectual stimulation — for example, by reading books about ethics and moral principles.

IKEDA: An uncountable number of such books have been written since ancient times. There have also been books designed to inspire us toward self-improvement and self-perfection. If human revolution could be achieved simply by reading, if we could change our karma through the power of words alone, it would be an easy matter indeed.

The SGI is not in pursuit of some abstract intellectual doctrine but a complete, real human revolution — one in which people change their fundamental attitudes and ways of thinking, and focus their minds, their actions and their lives on the highest good.

Essentially, this revolution takes place when our lives are in the state of Buddhahood. When we fuse our lives with the enlightened life of the Buddha, we can tap the power within to fundamentally change ourselves.

IGETA: Buddhahood, then, is that power deep within us that makes such self-transformation possible.

KIMURA: Let me share the experience of a member that was related to me by the Hokuriku young men's high school division leader, Toshiaki Tanaka.

This member had three close friends with whom he spent a lot of time talking, reading



'Gradual change over the years as we grow and mature is part of life's natural process. But human revolution occurs when we transcend that normal pace of growth and undergo a rapid change for the better.'

comics and just hanging out. One day, during summer vacation, as they talked about the things they found wrong with society, the meaning of destiny came up. They talked about their views on life for hours.

After that, one friend asked the member, who at the time wasn't very active in the Soka Gakkai himself, to lend him one of your books, President Ikeda. He wanted to take it home and read it.

Then they all started reading the series "Discussions on Youth" together. In the process, the four friends, who had been the biggest goof-offs in their class, became the most serious, dedicated students.

I think that, in their heart of hearts, everyone wants to grow, to improve, to change. That's why even the smallest thing can become an impetus for growth.

IKEDA: Human beings possess the unique capacity to aspire for self-improvement and personal growth. We can conceive changing the direction of life instead of merely following its flow.

When people speak of wanting to be a success, they generally mean gaining prestige in society. But doing human revolution is a more profound aspiration, for

it involves changing and elevating our lives from within. The transformation achieved is everlasting and far, far more precious than prestige.

A human being is human. No one is superhuman.

For that reason, the most important thing is simply to become the best human being you can. No matter how you adorn yourself with the trappings of fame, rank, academic credentials, knowledge or wealth, if you are impoverished or bankrupt inside, your life will be barren and empty.

What kind of person are you when all those externals have been stripped away? When you stand unadorned, except for your humanity? Human revolution is the challenge to change your life at the core.

Shakyamuni Buddha was born a royal prince, but he gave up everything. He cast off worldly titles and privileges to devote himself to religious practice, to seek the truth. He pursued his human revolution.

Nichiren Daishonin, who had no wealth or status — who proudly proclaimed his heritage as a member of the *chandala* class, then the lowest stratum of society — also devoted himself selflessly to Buddhism.

KIMURA: Many of the rich, powerful and famous in society compare unfavorably to the ordinary, hardworking people with their warmth and humanity.

IGETA: All the average person wants is to live in peace and be happy. Yet we have seen time and again throughout history how leaders of nations, out of failure to pursue their human revolution, have plunged their fellow citizens into war and misery.

IKEDA: We have had two world wars in the 20th century. Millions upon millions have tasted the sufferings of hell. When we ponder why this happened, it becomes clear that humankind must change into a compassionate presence on this planet.

KIMURA: The opening lines of *The Human Revolution* — "Nothing is more barbarous than war. Nothing is more cruel" — have profound significance.

IGETA: And your sequel, *The New Human Revolution*, opens with the passage "Nothing is more precious than peace. Nothing brings more happiness."

To be continued

Part I: The Life of Nichiren Daishonin

- Q1. What was the teaching that Nichiren Daishonin proclaimed on April 28, 1253?**
- (A) The Lotus Sutra, expounded by Shakyamuni.
(B) The Orally Transmitted Teachings.
(C) Chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo for attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime.
(D) Hinayana Buddhism.
(E) T'ien-t'ai's *ichinen sanzen*.
- Q2. Describe the significance of the Tatsunokuchi Persecution in terms of Nichiren Daishonin's identity.**
- (A) He revealed himself to be greater than common mortals.
(B) He began to carry out the role of Bodhisattva Jogyo.
(C) He underwent a change of heart.
(D) He revealed himself as the Buddha who is one with the Law of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.
(E) The Tatsunokuchi Persecution was the end of a series of persecutions that had befallen him.
- Q3. Nichiren Daishonin repeatedly stated in his writings that a Buddha is what?**
- (A) A superior being.
(B) A person without problems.
(C) A person who will appear after *kosen-rufu* is achieved.
(D) An awakened common mortal.
(E) One who attains happiness only in the afterlife.
- Q4. To foster the faith of the disciples he was training at Mount Minobu, the Daishonin gave an important series of lectures. What were these lectures on, and under what name were they set down in writing by Nikko Shonin?**
- (A) The events from the Tatsunokuchi Persecution until his retirement to Minobu — "On the Buddha's Behavior."
(B) The inappropriateness of Shakyamuni's teachings in the Latter Day of the Law — "Teaching, Practice and Proof."
(C) Spreading the teaching to save all people — "Repaying Debts of Gratitude."
(D) Understanding the time and the appropriate teaching — "The Selection of the Time."
(E) Nam-myoho-enge-kyo and the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra — "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings."
- Q5. What activity by Nichiren Daishonin's followers caused the authorities to persecute them?**
- (A) As the followers of the Daishonin became more active in propagation, the authorities began to persecute them.
(B) As the followers of the Daishonin began accepting the teachings of other sects, the authorities began to persecute them.
(C) As the followers of the Daishonin began gathering together to study the Daishonin's letters, the authorities began to persecute them.
(D) As the followers of the Daishonin stopped going to the temples of other sects, the authorities began to persecute them.

Study Department Entrance Examination

The SGI-USA Study Department held the Entrance Examination on April 19. Each answer was worth 3 points except for No. 33, which was worth 4 points. A perfect score was 100. (See box at the bottom of p. 15 for answers.)

- (E) As the followers of the Daishonin began to slander government officials, the authorities began to persecute them.
- Q6. Why did five of the six senior priests abandon the Daishonin's teachings after he died?**
- (A) They gave up their faith when accused as spies for the Mongolian invasion.
(B) Upon examining various documents, writings and treatises, they determined that the Daishonin's philosophy contradicted Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings.
(C) The desire to marry, have children and accumulate money was very strong and they did not care for the strict guidelines set down by Nichiren Daishonin.
(D) The steward of the Minobu area, Hakiri Sanenaga, refused to allow them to visit the temple there and threatened to behead them.
(E) They did not really understand the Daishonin's teachings and his intent in faith, believing he had only taught a form of Tendai Buddhism.
- Q7. What was Nikko Shonin's purpose in writing "The Twenty-six Admonitions?"**
- (A) The purpose was to enable lay believers to comprehend the role of the priesthood.
(B) The purpose was to help believers understand the true meaning of practice for oneself and practice for others.
(C) The purpose was to protect the purity of the Daishonin's teachings and convey a correct understanding of the Daishonin's intention.
(D) The purpose was to explain why the lay believers were persecuted and why the Dai-Gohonzon was inscribed after the Atsuhara Persecution.
(E) The purpose was to teach the meaning and consequence of slanderous thoughts, words and deeds.
- Part 2: "On Attaining Buddhahood"**
- Q8. What does it mean to "perceive the nature of your own life"?**
- (A) To understand the source of the world's problems.
(B) To understand that we can always be forgiven for our bad karma.
(C) To realize our shallow understanding of life.
(D) To realize that Buddhahood exists at the most fundamental level of life.
(E) To realize that we share a common destiny with all people.
- Q9. What is the Daishonin trying to illustrate by using the analogy of a poor man counting his neighbor's wealth day and night?**
- (A) Good fortune includes material wealth.
(B) Money is not the answer to a happy life.
(C) Only by depending on our own Buddha nature can we overcome the sufferings of birth and death.
(D) If we are preoccupied with other people's good fortune, we cannot focus on creating our own.
(E) By associating with "good friends," those who have good fortune, we will eventually gain our own fortune.
- Q10. What constitutes the attitudes of non-Buddhists according to this letter?**
- (A) Perceiving the true nature of our life and the lives of others.
(B) Striving to have confidence in our Buddha nature.
(C) Seeking the Law outside oneself.
(D) Never being swayed by external circumstances or obstacles.
(E) Strengthening our conviction to change our destiny.
- Q11. What does this letter emphasize as a key element in our Buddhist practice?**
- (A) That we cannot change our destiny without the help of others.
(B) That we should sum up deep conviction that Myoho-enge-kyo is our life itself.
(C) That we should not fear death.
(D) That we will perceive the nature of our life through abandoning the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha.
(E) That we will grow through overcoming hardships.
- Questions 12-13 are based on the following passage:
"It [the Jomyo Sutra] further states that if the minds of the people are impure, their land is also impure, but if their minds are pure, so is their land. There are not two lands, pure or impure in themselves. The difference lies solely in the good or evil of our minds" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 4).
- Q12. What Buddhist principle is illustrated**

by this passage?

- (A) The oneness of the Person and the Law.
(B) The oneness of life and its environment.
(C) The oneness of body and mind.
(D) That faith manifests itself in everyday life.
(E) That earthly desires are enlightenment.

Q13. According to the Daishonin's emphasis, where should we understand the Buddha land to be?

- (A) In the west.
(B) It is actually an eastern land where Taho Buddha lived.
(C) In the heavens where the Buddhist gods dwell.
(D) Wherever someone chants Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.
(E) Where the correct object of worship is physically enshrined and at least one priest resides.

Q14. According to Nichiren Daishonin, what sort of belief constitutes an inferior teaching?

- (A) That we have unlimited potential within ourselves.
(B) That the Law, or Myoho-enge-kyo, is our life itself.
(C) That we can make our lives what we want with sincere prayers.
(D) That we are the creators of our own dreams and futures.
(E) That we must appeal to a power separate from and higher than ourselves.

Q15. According to this letter, what is "the direct path to enlightenment"?

- (A) Chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with a realization that our lives are the Mystic Law itself.
(B) Mastering all the Buddhist scriptures and copying them for future generations.
(C) Accumulating wealth.
(D) Attracting caring people to us.
(E) Practicing whatever religion or philosophy that suits our personality.

Part 3: "The Real Aspect of the Gohonzon"

Question 16 is based on the following passage:
"Never seek this Gohonzon outside yourself. The Gohonzon exists only within the mortal flesh of us ordinary people who embrace the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. The body is the palace of the ninth consciousness, the unchanging reality which reigns over all life's functions.... The Gohonzon is found in faith alone. As the sutra states, 'Only with faith can one enter Buddhahood'" (MW-1, 213).

Q16. No one has unwavering faith from the outset. How can we define faith at the beginning of our practice?

- (A) Absolute belief that priests alone possess a supreme power that enables people to attain Buddhahood.
(B) Our refusal to ask questions.
(C) Having doubts.
(D) Refusal to read anything but the *World Tribune*.
(E) An expectation that our life will become happier as a result of Buddhist practice.

Q17. When we chant daimoku to the Go-

EXAM, FROM PAGE 14

honzon, we experience the interaction of the four powers. Two of the four powers are 1) the power of the Buddha and 2) the power of the Law. How can we activate the power of the Buddha and the power of the Law in our own lives?

- (A) By asking others to chant for us.
- (B) Through the power of skepticism.
- (C) By resolving to chant when we have more time.
- (D) By really believing in the Gohonzon to the point we do not need to chant.
- (E) Through our own powers of faith and practice.

Q18. Shakyamuni's disciple Shariputra was considered to be the "foremost in wisdom," yet even he could not attain enlightenment through his wisdom. How did he attain enlightenment?

- (A) Through faith in the Buddha's teachings.
- (B) Through meditation on the true nature of life.
- (C) By practicing Buddhist austerities for many lifetimes.
- (D) By giving up his study of Buddhism and becoming simple-minded.
- (E) By giving away his eye to an evil Brahman.

Q19. According to Nichiren Daishonin, what two actions arise from faith?

- (A) Practice for ourselves and for others, and study.
- (B) Chanting for our personal wants and needs each morning and evening.
- (C) Going to meetings at least once a week and reading books about Buddhism to deepen our theoretical understanding of it.
- (D) Chanting during the day, and begging for alms in the evening.
- (E) Studying Buddhism and teaching others to practice it; if we do those two things, there's no need to chant — that's only for beginners.

Q20. Down the center of the Gohonzon, inscribed in Chinese characters, are the words "Nam-myoho-rence-kyo — Nichiren." What Buddhist principle does this indicate?

- (A) Whatever we will it to mean.
- (B) The oneness of life and its environment.
- (C) The oneness of the Law and the Person.
- (D) The oneness of body and mind.
- (E) The oneness of the Law and the Land.

Part 4: "Happiness in This World"

Q21. Why is it important to elevate our inner life-condition?

- (A) Because we are already Buddhas, we are essentially already at the highest level and need not elevate our inner life-condition.
- (B) Because fame, wealth and social status are superficial and easily subject to change, while inner happiness arising from our life itself is absolute and indestructible.
- (C) Because the higher the life-condition, the greater the social status.
- (D) Because without a high life-condition,

people will just look down on us. When our life-condition is high, we are in a position to look down on them.

- (E) Because without elevating our life-condition, we will never understand how bad our life really is.

Q22. Why does Nichiren Daishonin state that "There is no greater happiness for human beings than chanting Nam-myoho-rence-kyo"?

- (A) When we chant, other people do our work for us.
- (B) When we chant, others realize that we are right and they are wrong, which makes for a much more peaceful world.
- (C) When we chant, we realize that we don't need to concern ourselves with others, saving ourselves lots of time and energy.
- (D) When we chant, our problems disappear like dew in the morning sunlight.
- (E) When we chant daimoku, our lives become one with the Law, enabling us to draw forth inexhaustible strength, wisdom, joy and hope.

Q23. How is "joy derived from the Law" different from the "joy derived from desires"?

- (A) "Joy derived from the Law" is legal pleasure; "joy derived from desires" is illegal pleasure.
- (B) "Joy derived from the Law" is described in theory in the Goshō; "joy derived from desires" is the real experience of it.
- (C) "Joy derived from the Law" is the happiness and protection we receive from living according to society's norms; "joy derived from desires" is more intensely pleasurable because it is "forbidden fruit."
- (D) "Joy derived from the Law" is dependent on others; "joy derived from desires" is dependent on the Law.
- (E) "Joy derived from the Law" is based on the eternally unchanging Mystic Law; "joy derived from desires" is temporary and soon gives rise to unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

Q24. Why is attributing the cause of our happiness or unhappiness to someone else contradictory to the teaching of the Lotus Sutra?

- (A) The Lotus Sutra teaches that happiness is found in good circumstance and good people; without them we cannot be happy.
- (B) The Lotus Sutra teaches that other people are the foundation of our happiness.
- (C) The Lotus Sutra teaches that heredity determines the people around us; that happiness is inherited.
- (D) The Lotus Sutra teaches that the state of life of others can create or destroy our happiness; hence the importance of praying to find good friends.
- (E) The Lotus Sutra teaches that our happiness does not depend on others, because only through our own efforts based upon faith can we become happy.

Q25. Ultimately, to what does being a Buddha of absolute freedom refer?

- (A) It refers to those striving to achieve kosen-rufu who have a direct connection with the Law through faith and practice.
- (B) It refers only to Nichiren Daishonin.
- (C) It refers to priests.

(D) It refers only to Nikko Shonin and the successive high priests.

- (E) It refers to the extent we can be absolutely free to do whatever we like even if we don't legally enjoy such freedoms.

Q26. Why does Nichiren Daishonin tell Shijo Kingo to "strengthen your faith more than ever"?

- (A) Those with weak faith in the past have no possibility of victory in the present and future.
- (B) Having weak faith in the past is unimportant; if one's faith is strong from this moment forward, it is the greatest power people have.
- (C) Shijo Kingo had weak faith, and the Daishonin did not trust his faith much.
- (D) Shijo Kingo was a coward; only those courageous in faith can wield the sharp sword of the Mystic Law.
- (E) Weak faith is uncommon in this Buddhism.

Q27. What is the purpose of our practice of faith?

- (A) We practice faith to fully enjoy life, to lead the happiest possible existence.
- (B) We practice faith to serve the priests.
- (C) We practice faith to believe in the mystical; what we cannot imagine, hear or observe.
- (D) We practice faith only to learn how to accept our sufferings and problems.
- (E) We practice faith to learn why other people are making us unhappy and what we can do about it.

Part 5: Questions and Answers on the Temple Issue

Q28. How does Buddhism characterize opposition by authority?

- (A) A sign of the authority's wisdom.
- (B) A sign that we should stop spreading this Buddhism until the time is ripe so that we won't meet any persecutions.
- (C) A sign that we are practicing correctly.
- (D) A sign of the authority's limitless concern for our happiness.
- (E) A sign that we are not practicing correctly.

Q29. What is the meaning of obstacles to our Buddhist movement?

- (A) We're on the wrong path.
- (B) We're on the right path, but we're practicing too hard.
- (C) We should stop propagating Buddhism to preserve freedom of religion.
- (D) We're experiencing the natural consequences of our efforts to propagate Buddhism.
- (E) We're practicing incorrectly because only wrong teachings get opposition.

Q30. What does opposition from the priesthood mean to the SGI?

- (A) The priesthood's opposition means that the SGI is wrong.
- (B) The priesthood's opposition means that this is not the time for kosen-rufu.
- (C) The priesthood's opposition means that we have liberated ourselves from its au-

thoritarianism and can now widely spread this Buddhism exactly as the Daishonin taught.

- (D) The priesthood's opposition means that we SGI members are not Bodhisattvas of the Earth.
- (E) The priesthood's opposition means that SGI should apologize for our mistakes and protect the temple no matter what as the Goshō teaches us.

Q31. What is meant by "correct faith"?

- (A) To practice as Nichiren Daishonin taught, share his convictions and develop our lives in accord with that understanding.
- (B) To practice in accord with the 700-year traditions established by the priesthood.
- (C) To practice in our own way, with complete freedom.
- (D) To practice as an individual without influence from other believers.
- (E) To practice in accord with what those in positions of authority say is right.

Q32. What is Nichiren Shoshu's position on the equality between lay members and priests?

- (A) Nichiren Shoshu advocates democratic equality of priests and lay believers.
- (B) Nichiren Shoshu advocates the superiority of lay believers to priests.
- (C) Nichiren Shoshu says that only some priests are superior to lay believers.
- (D) Nichiren Shoshu says it is a "sin" to even speak of the equality of priests and lay practitioners.
- (E) Nichiren Shoshu says that lay believers are equal to priests and can freely offer constructive criticism.

Q33. Nichiren Shoshu's view of the Gohonzon contradicts Nichiren Daishonin's view. Which of the following does not reflect the Daishonin's view of the Gohonzon?

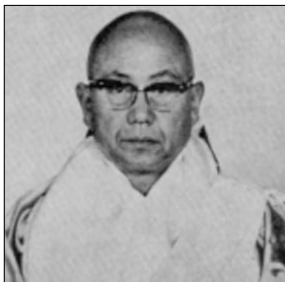
- (A) The Gohonzon is a manifestation of the Daishonin's life as an enlightened human being.
- (B) The Gohonzon is no different from the enlightened potential within all ordinary people.
- (C) The Gohonzon is the embodiment of the Buddha's wisdom and compassion.
- (D) The sanctioning of the object of worship by the high priest, who is the only person to be bequeathed the Daishonin's Buddhism, is what makes the attainment of Buddhahood possible.
- (E) Our power of faith and our practice to the Gohonzon enables us to tap the powers of the Law and the Buddha.
- (F) Never seek this Gohonzon outside yourself. The Gohonzon exists only within the mortal flesh of us ordinary people who embrace the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myoho-rence-kyo.
- (G) The Daishonin never mentions in his writings the necessity of a special ceremony conducted by a priest to empower the Gohonzon.

Answers: 1) C, 2) D, 3) D, 4) E, 5) A, 6) E, 7) C, 8) D, 9) C, 10) C, 11) B, 12) E, 13) D, 14) E, 15) A, 16) E, 17) E, 18) A, 19) A, 20) C, 21) B, 22) E, 23) E, 24) E, 25) A, 26) B, 27) A, 28) C, 29) D, 30) C, 31) A, 32) D, 33) D.

To Nikken Abe, High Priest of Nichiren Shoshu

We protest your planned destruction of the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo), which was designed and built through the contributions of 8 million Soka Gakkai members worldwide. The Grand Main Temple is a religious edifice, like Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris or London's Westminster Abbey, that has served as the high sanctuary of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism since 1972. It was intended for public use over hundreds of years, not to be claimed by a single man or group of men as private property.

You've stated that the Grand Main Temple was built by slanderers and therefore must fall. Using this skewed reasoning, you could slate for demolition any of the hundreds of other temples donated to Nichiren



Shoshu by the SGI. Anything built by anyone you deem a slanderer must come down. Clearly, your reasoning is anything but reasonable and is based solely on your personal animosity toward the SGI.

Your destruction of this internationally acclaimed architectural landmark would be an unprecedented outrage and an insult to the human spirit. Because we know you may not listen to us, we urge your followers to stand up and not allow your demolition plans to continue, thus preserving this beautiful, inspired, finely crafted building for the sake of future generations — for all humanity.

— Fred Zaitzu, publisher,
and the editors and staff of the 'World Tribune'



Grand Main Temple Facts

- Six major construction companies cooperated in building the Main Temple, setting new standards for reinforced concrete construction. A total of 118,000 tons of concrete were poured.
- The design of the building is striking, especially the semi-rigid suspension roof, weighing 20,000 metric tons and designed to simulate the shape of a crane in flight. The Main Temple's structure was engineered by Shigeru Aoki, one of Japan's leading authorities on structural engineering.
- The main auditorium seats 6,000. At the time of completion in 1972, it was the world's biggest one-floor auditorium.
- Meticulous care was taken during the construction to ensure that all materials used were of the highest quality, with stringent monitoring at all stages. The building was designed and constructed to last at least 500 years, and is fully reinforced to withstand earthquakes.
- Preparations for the Main Temple's destruction are now well under way. It has been estimated that the demolition will cost approximately \$35 million.
- All construction companies that participated in building the Main Temple have refused the priesthood's offers to demolish the building.
- Designers, architects and construction workers involved in the Main Temple's construction have protested the building's demolition.
- Architecture professionals around the world have protested the demolition of this masterpiece of engineering.

Letter Writing Campaign

The SGI-USA is collecting all open letters of protest, petitions or group statements for an en masse submission to Nichiren Shoshu and for possible publication. Members wishing their letters to be considered for inclusion are asked to send them to: Sho Hondo Letters, c/o Ian McIlraith, SGI-USA, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401; e-mail: shohondoletters@sgi-usa.org.

You may also send them directly to Japan to the following address:

High Priest Nikken Abe
Nichiren Shoshu, Taiseki-ji 2057 Kamijo
Fujinomiya-shi, Shizuoka-ken, Japan

fax (dialing from the United States):
011-81-544-58-0838