

World Tribune

No. 3197

THE YEAR OF VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE FOR THE NEW CENTURY

JUNE 26, 1998

INSIDE THIS WEEK

VIEWPOINT

A peaceful world — it's not just a dream.

PERSPECTIVE

A father's letter to his children.

NEWS

West Covina, Calif., members show their civic pride.

STUDY

Welcoming the 'Century of Anyone.'

THIRD STAGE

Overcoming the three types of pride: youth, health and life.

KOREAN PAGES

SGI President Ikeda's visit to South Korea.

WORLDVIEW

Carving a mountain into a monument to Crazy Horse.

'SEIZE THE DAY' PULLOUT INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVER BY ISSUE DATE

From the Desk of Fred M. Zaitzu

To My Dear Fellow SGI-USA Members:

I'm happy to report that the May Commemorative Contribution was another grand success. My most profound thanks for your support of our precious organization, as well as your efforts to explain to others the importance that offerings have in Buddhist practice. The results show a significant increase not only in the amount of funds collected but, more important, in the number of people who joyfully gave. These increases, I believe, show how our organization is steadily expanding in American society.

Today, only the SGI-USA is spreading the hope-filled philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in the United States. With the Daishonin's spirit both to strictly adhere to the Law and to cherish the people, we are working together to build an organization that can most effectively support the Buddha's work.

General Director Zaitzu thanks SGI-USA members for another successful May Commemorative Contribution.

All our sincere efforts to support this organization — from our prayers to our activities to our donations — result in immeasurable fortune for ourselves and our families. As the Daishonin writes, "One who makes offerings to the votary of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Day of the Law for even a single day will gain incomparably greater fortune than he would by offering countless treasures to the Buddha for one hundred thousand aeons" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 263).

One of our visions for our organization in the next few years, announced last December, is that we strengthen our financial foundation. When we recently reported our contribution results to SGI President Ikeda, he reminded us of this important goal and urged us to be very careful with the members' money and to look for ways to conserve.

As always, your contributions will be used to support your various activities and community centers across the country. Expenditures fall within the general categories of operations (including community center leases and insurance payments), asset acquisition (including property purchases and building improvements), administrative costs (including salaries and legal and accounting costs), and bookstore operations (including distribution and warehousing costs). Occasionally, the SGI-USA donates to disaster relief or community projects. None of our funds are given to the Soka Gakkai in Japan or Soka University of America.

With prayers for your happiness, health, safety and prosperity, I once again thank you for your generous contributions. Together we will make a great SGI-USA and contribute to a great America.

Sincerely,

SGI President On New York, Miami Radio

Values and Visions: Portraits of Global Citizens, an English-language radio series based on SGI President Ikeda's recollections of world figures he has met, began airing on June 20 in the New York metro area (which includes portions of New Jersey, Connecticut and Rhode Island) and

in the Miami area. The 19-week series, on radio station WMCA (AM 570) in New York and WAXY (AM 790) in Miami, can be heard Saturdays 9:00-9:15 p.m.

The series, already heard in the west, comprises readings of Mr. Ikeda's "My Recollections" series, parts of which have been

printed in the *World Tribune* and *Living Buddhism*.

The show is produced by Keiko Kimura, whose idea for the series arose from her desire to bring Mr. Ikeda's humanitarian ideals to a wider audience. "I want to introduce Daisaku Ikeda as the great world citizen he is," she says.

ESSAY

Publication of the Daishonin's Writings

In the early 1950s, the Soka Gakkai decided to publish a complete edition of Nichiren Daishonin's writings. Nichiren Shoshu rejected the idea out of hand, but the Soka Gakkai went ahead.

By HO GOKU

PEN NAME OF SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

As an organization directly connected to Nichiren Daishonin, the Soka Gakkai's unchanging basis will always be his writings, the Goshu.

Immediately after becoming second president of the Soka Gakkai, my mentor, Josei Toda, decided to publish the Daishonin's complete writings. He announced this project in June 1951, during celebrations for the 700th anniversary of the Daishonin's establishment of his teaching, which would come April 28 the following year. That left only 10 months to bring this ambitious undertaking to completion. Compilation and proofreading continued day after day, late into the night.

Mr. Toda always said with great conviction that the reason so many Soka Gakkai leaders recanted their beliefs when persecuted by the authorities during the war was that they did not have a deep understanding of the Daishonin's teachings, a firm foundation in Buddhist study. He concluded that the only way to successfully carry out kosen-rufu was for each and every member to engrave the teachings of the Daishonin's writings in his or her life and thus estab-

PLEASE SEE ESSAY, 5



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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The Deeper Meaning

PERSPECTIVE

By DIXON HAMBY, BELLEVUE, WASH.

You play with my world like it's your own little toy. — Bob Dylan

I had that dream again. The one where all the nuclear weapons are fired, and we are thrown into hell. The beautiful blue sky is replaced by a deathlike gray. All the Earth's beautiful colors are muted.

Immediately I start planning: Where to get more water? I envision stores full of panicked people. What about gasoline? Where can I grow food?

You've thrown the worst fear that can ever be hurled / The fear to bring children into this world.

The dream started when I was a small boy. At school, the teachers told us that we had to get under our desks when the siren went off. That meant the Russians were going to bomb us. When I was outside playing and a plane flew overhead, my whole body froze. Was this the plane that spewed its poison? Well, the dream hasn't gone away. The bombs are still there, but we don't talk about them much anymore. Maybe we should.

A world war can be won /

You want us to believe.

Who are these people that build the bombs? Some of them are our neighbors. Don't they know that we are all connected? You can't hurt someone else without hurting yourself. This country will pay dearly for building these weapons, and it has already started. In Washington state we have Hanford, where nuclear waste is leaking into the Columbia River. And, thanks to the Ban-

of the Soka Gakkai, called those who used nuclear weapons devils. I feel the same. I am enraged to be disturbed by dreams of nuclear destruction. I am tormented that my taxes feed a war machine. I am in grief when memories of the dead wash over me.

My dream reminded me why I practice this Buddhism. It is because as a small boy my soul was shaken to its core by threats of destruction, and as a young man I was told to go to war.

All the money you earn will never buy back your soul.

What did presidents Makiguchi and Toda fight so hard for? It wasn't for personal gain. It was to stop war. Forever.

When I was younger, every day was a battle. Now I have achieved some success in life, but at times I feel that I am not really making a difference. Fortunately, I have enough trust in this practice to know that I am exactly where I need to be. I want to help make a world where children no longer grow up in fear. It is possible. It's not some dream.

And the step to take is to follow the most important guideline in Buddhism: "The real meaning of the Lord Shakyamuni Buddha's appearance in this world lay in his behavior as a human being. How profound" (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 240). Yes, how profound.



Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

I want to help make a world where children no longer grow up in fear. It is possible!

gor submarine base, our state has more nuclear weapons than almost any country in the world.

Even Jesus would never forgive what you do.

Josei Toda, second president

Correction:

In the "Wow!" article (June 5 World Tribune, p. 5) the Goshō Zenshu attribution was incorrect. It should have indicated page 1567. We apologize for the mistake. (Thank you to Katsumi Sohma of Allston, Mass., for bringing this to our attention.)

World Tribune

(ISSN-0049-8165)

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

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

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

Printed on 100% recycled paper

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WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Protesting Nuclear Testing

This is with reference to your editorial in the May 22 *World Tribune*. I absolutely agree that under the leadership of the new prime minister of India the nuclear bomb testing was celebrated by some Indians. But I would like you to know that there are many Indians that have opposed, protested and criticized the same. They have marched with slogans "No Wars," "No Nuclear Weapons." They have put skeleton masks on their faces expressing the consequences of a nuclear explosion.

I personally do not appreciate the nuclear testings because I believe that India was strong and powerful even without any sort of weapons. Non-violence, tolerance and perseverance are the qualities we inherited from our ancestors, and the same are still in the hearts of all those Indians who have protested and are protesting against nuclear bombs, tests and wars.

— JYOTI RUPRELL, via e-mail

Worthy of Sacrifice

For those people who haven't forgotten the infamous article you printed on vegetarianism, I came across a comment by SGI President Ikeda in his dialogue with Rene Huyghe in *Dawn After Dark* that I feel beautifully expresses the thought one might have before biting into his or her next hamburger. To quote: "Human nutritional needs require sacrificing other beings for the maintenance of life. Nonetheless, if love is given precedence at all times, meaningless killing can be avoided; and we will feel profoundly grateful for lives that must be sacrificed for our food. Moreover, realizing the precious price that must be made for our sustenance, we will strive to live so as to be worthy of the sacrifice."

— LAURA AVED, West Hollywood, Calif.

No Weaseling

This is just a note to commend your staff writer, Lisa Jones, for thought-provoking articles. As a new reader of your paper, I have found her stories to be full of information yet clearly written. On complex issues, like her recent article regarding religious belief and practice, Lisa does not weasel out of difficult questions. Her even-handed treatment of the vegetarian issue was fascinating. Keep up the good work.

— KIKI McGRATH, Washington, D.C.

At 83

Though I am basically shy, I will not hesitate to say that the Soka Gakkai way is as brightening as a supernova! I also am intuitive. Thus I instantly saw the mystical power of chanting. I have no need to break it all down via mathematics or the scientists' way of evaluation. I feel it all in laughter and tears! My heart tells me what I need to know. Yes, it is fearfully difficult to remain on an even keel where one's emotions are concerned. Though the boat rocks in turbulent seas, I ever try to see horizons. At 83, I remain in love with this philosophy. It is the universe.

— JOSEPH KRENGEL, Santa Monica, Calif.

Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SGI-USA or the World Tribune.

In the "Mailbox," we will publish members' comments, suggestions or questions as they pertain to the World Tribune. Because of volume, not all letters can be printed, but they are all read. All letters are subject to condensation.

A Letter to My Daughters

PERSPECTIVE

By MICHAEL LISAGOR
VIENNA, VA.

Two words I would never associate with my childhood are *compassion* and *encouragement*. For quite a few years, I've successfully used my Buddhist practice and the organization as, in a sense, a source of substitute parenting to compensate for the almost total lack of guidance and attention that I received as a child.

Last year, I began seeing a professional therapist to help me understand and modify some behavior patterns I no longer wanted to manifest in my life. During that time, I wrote a letter that expresses the guidance and love I wish I could have received from my parents. (They passed away several years ago.) The act of writing the letter was a very healing process.

Fortunately, I have a much healthier, loving relationship with my two daughters. My youngest is just finishing high school and preparing to go off to college. They both have become remarkable young adults.

I decided to write them a letter as a reminder of some of life's important lessons, as well as a way to tell them one more time that no matter what may happen in their lives, they are truly loved. This, I believe, is the greatest gift a parent has to give.

Dear Megan and Jamie:

Here are some guidelines... Rules of the road... I want to share with the two most wonderful daughters in the world.

Never forget that you are always loved. No matter what you do or where you go or what mistakes you make, Mom and I will always love you. Follow your heart and do what you want to with your life, not what other people think you should do.

Learn to accept your joys and your sorrows. Through your sorrows you will grow and learn valuable lessons about life and yourself. Your joys will cause you to reflect on the mystery and beauty of life. Sorrows make the joys even sweeter.

It's OK to be sad sometimes. No one will think less of you. Don't hide your sadness — you

might not be able to find it when you need to. It's OK to let another person comfort you. Going through your own hardships will then enable you to comfort others.

Face your fears. When you're afraid, find someone you can talk to and trust. Some of your fears are justified and serve to protect you from real harm. But most of them will prevent you from expanding your life. More often than not, your greatest fears are in your imagination and not reality. Recognize your nightmares as just fears in Technicolor. Observe them as you would a horror movie. Be scared, but don't let your fear paralyze you.

If all else fails, come to me for a hug. Even if it's in the middle of the night, I'll always have time for you.

Don't be afraid to dream big. The sky's the limit. You won't be able to do everything in life, so don't limit yourself while you're still young — there's plenty of other people willing to do that for you. You can accomplish anything if you set your mind to it. Realize that major victories are the result of many small efforts.

Work hard every day. Be diligent in your studies. These are two things that great accomplishments are made of.

Sometimes you'll succeed, and sometimes you'll fail. Don't let this fact slow you down. There is usually a degree of pain associated with going outside your comfort zone. You'll get stuck if you don't accept some risk. I hope that you continue to expand your lives in new, exciting directions.

Communicate. So much of our unhappiness arises from our unwillingness to engage in honest dialogue with others. When talking about something is most difficult, you probably need to do it the most. I will always be here for you when you need to talk. Don't be reluctant to seek out help when you need it. No

one said we have to do it all alone.

Be nice to others. Have compassion for their sufferings. Avoid gossip. Your friends' feelings can be hurt just as easily as yours can. On the other hand, speak out against injustice. Do not tolerate abuse.

There are many ways to define a successful life. Ask yourself what you want people to say about you when you are old. How do you want to feel about yourself? Then, let that guide



(L-r) Jamie, Michael and Megan.

your decisions and actions.

Be a person of integrity. Honor your commitments whenever possible — especially your commitments to yourself. But also learn to forgive yourself. Perfection is a futile goal.

Finally, and perhaps most important, make your spiritual development a lifetime journey. Some truths are universal...some might apply to you alone. Seek them out and try to let your actions be guided by them. Find ways and take the time to return to your center...to that place where you are filled with wisdom and compassion for yourself and others.

Add your uniqueness to the tapestry of human life. And respect others' uniqueness as they go about their journeys. In this way, you will make the most of each precious moment.

Always know that you have a father who loves you more than life itself. WTT

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NEWS BRIEFS

Russia–Japan Society Honors SGI President

The Russia–Japan Society, headquartered in Moscow, has commended SGI President Ikeda for his efforts to strengthen friendship between the two countries. At a ceremony on June 5 marking its 40th anniversary, society president Viktor Zabelin presented the certificate of appreciation to Soka University President Kinoshige Komuro, who accepted on the SGI leader's behalf.

Mr. Komuro read a message from President Ikeda in which he stressed the importance of building lasting bonds of peace and also voiced his hope that a soft power diplomacy based on nongovernmental exchange would develop further.

The Russia-Japan Society has more than 60 branches throughout Russia actively working to develop educational, cultural and economic exchange with Japan. The Russia-Japan Society and the Soka Gakkai have been cooperating in exchange activities for more than two decades. Congratulatory messages were sent by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov.

— Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER

Netherlands University Commends SGI President

The Peace Research Center of the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands conferred a Certificate of Commendation upon SGI President Ikeda in recognition of the SGI's efforts to increase awareness regarding peace and human rights. SGI of the Netherlands General Director Shozo Kotera and SGI of Europe Vice Chairperson Hideaki Takahashi received the certificate on Mr. Ikeda's behalf on June 3.

The Peace Research Center, established in 1965, has been a great supporter of the SGI-organized exhibition "Toward the Century of Humanity — Human Rights in Today's World," which was displayed in The Hague's city hall through June 13.

Dr. Leon Wecke, former director of the peace center, was among the officials on hand for the presentation. For the past four years Dr. Wecke has delivered a series of lectures on peace and human rights at seminars sponsored by the SGIN youth division, and he served as an advisor on the steering committee of The Hague showing of the SGI's human rights exhibition. He commented that peace cannot be achieved by means of politics and economics, but only through each individual fostering an indestructible conviction to realize it.

— Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER

Australian Buddhists Hold Public Meeting

The fledgling Sunshine Coast District of fewer than 10 members in Queensland, Australia, held a public information meeting on April 18 at the beautiful Tanderra Guesthouse in Flaxton — part of the scenic Blackall Mountain Range. It was a well-organized team effort that began with research into which of the local media would publish our news releases and provide space on their community notice boards.

More than 30 people attended the meeting, including General Director Hans van der Bent, who traveled from Sydney and responded to nearly an hour of questions.

Much one-to-one discussion continued through almost an hour of refreshments. One result is that more than 20 persons continue to receive information about this Buddhism. Several are attending our weekly study groups. Three of them recently became members. We plan to hold another public information meeting in the future.

— ALICE TAYLOR, Australia Correspondent



SGI-USA clowns — (l-r) Kelly Morson, Jacob Levine and Katie Morson — add humor to the SGI-USA's performances at the three-day festival. SGI-USA groups made up about 70 percent of the performers. (Below) A community Korean dance group entertains the crowd.

SGI MAKES IT 'SPECTACULAR'

City Marks Diamond Jubilee

By GINA JONES
L.A. # 4 REGION BUREAU CHIEF
West Covina, Calif., June 12-14

"I never thought our celebration would be this spectacular!" said West Covina Mayor Richard Melendez.

"This was my vision, but I never thought we'd be able to achieve it. We were, with the help of the SGI," he said, as the city's 75th anniversary celebration came to a close, a celebration made possible in large part because of the SGI-USA. Held throughout the weekend at West Covina High School, the event attracted nearly 5,000 people.

"Initially our goal was to get together with the community and be a part of the celebration," said Bill Roe, a vice area leader and coordinator of the L.A. #4 Region Public Relations Committee. But in the end, the SGI-USA's involvement became extensive, with more than 100 event staff comprised of local youth division members, and SGI or SGI-related performing groups making up almost 70 percent of the weekend's entertainment. SGI-USA stage crew members spent weeks constructing the stage and sets for the event, which the City of West Covina has requested to use again for their 4th of July festivities.

"Our youth division members consistently displayed such humanistic behavior throughout this event, particularly during crucial moments — so patient and compassionate," shared regional young women's division leader, Renu Jiandani. "I was particularly impressed by the men and women working behind the



scenes — always pushing the youth to the forefront, allowing them to shine."

As part of the festivities, an unprecedented Interfaith Ceremony was held on Sunday, with 12 faiths represented. "One thing we found out," said Mr. Roe, "is that getting religious groups together is very difficult. There has to be a common theme. There's no need for us to get together to argue about doctrine." Because the date of the ceremony also fell on Flag Day, "it became the perfect opportunity," continued Mr. Roe, "to unite around the one thing we all had in common — we're all Americans."

The weekend's activities culminated Tuesday night, June 16, at a local city council meeting, with more than 50 SGI members in attendance. General Director Zaitzu accepted an honorary citizenship on behalf of SGI President Ikeda. The city also proclaimed July 3 SGI Day — Victory of Youth.

Mayor Melendez went on to praise President Ikeda and the



Renu Jiandani (r) and other youth division members play crucial roles in front of and behind the scenes.

SGI's tradition of nurturing youth, while Mr. Zaitzu expressed his gratitude to the city and pledged on behalf of the local SGI-USA members to continue to work for the betterment of the city.

Photos by Gregory Nakasuji, Lisa Hollis, Byron Cohen and Ken O'Ferrall

ESSAY, FROM PAGE 1

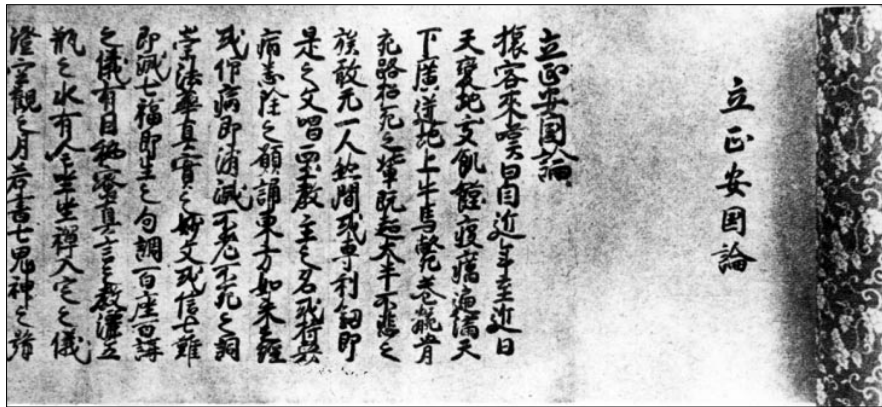
lish unwavering faith.

At around the same time, the Minobu school was also compiling the Daishonin's writings for publication. Nichiren Shoshu, however, was pursuing plans to commemorate the 700th anniversary by publishing a new edition of sacred texts, but it would only be selected passages from the Lotus Sutra and the Daishonin's 10 major writings.

When Mr. Toda heard that, he said, "Nichiren Shoshu is going to let Minobu best them once again!" At the time, Nichiren Shoshu did not have its own complete set of the Daishonin's writings, and Soka Gakkai members were forced to study using compilations published by other Nichiren schools. But those compilations did not contain a number of significant texts written by the Daishonin and entrusted directly to his legitimate heir and successor, Nikko Shonin. So they did not communicate the Daishonin's true message accurately and completely.

Nevertheless, when Mr. Toda proposed that Nichiren Shoshu publish a volume containing the Daishonin's complete writings, it rejected the idea out of hand. The head temple did permit the Soka Gakkai to go ahead with such a publication, but it wasn't prepared to help with the project.

Mr. Toda later shared his feelings: "I knew that trying to publish the Daishonin's complete writings would be an enormous undertaking, yet when the priest-



The scroll, in Nichiren Daishonin's handwriting, of the 'Rissho Ankoku Ron.'

hood announced that it wouldn't assist us, I felt an irrepressible surge of anger..." At the time, the priesthood was most interested in casting a new bell for Taiseki-ji. Not only had Nichiren Shoshu prohibited the printing of the Daishonin's writings during the war, out of fear of government persecution, but it had cooperated in the war effort, offering the head temple's bell to the military authorities to be melted for materiel. Now the priests were intent on collecting donations from lay believers to cast a new bell in time for the 700th anniversary.

The Soka Gakkai, on the one hand, was determined to publish a complete edition of the Daishonin's writings in order to communicate his spirit faithfully and accurately to others and advance the cause of kosen-rufu. The priesthood, on the other hand, gave top priority to increasing the physical grandeur and authority of their head temple.

Mr. Toda sternly reprimanded this distortion of faith in his *Seikyo Shimbun* column. "Epigrams": "The priests in their

mountain retreat are more devoted to producing *goshu* [Japanese sake] than publishing Goshu."

The laborious work of compiling the new, comprehensive edition of the Daishonin's writings was ultimately taken on by the former high priest Hori Nichiko, who had retired to Hatake in Izu. All the other tasks, such as proofreading and raising the ¥9 million to print the new edition, were assumed by the Soka Gakkai.

Though Mr. Toda's business had passed the crisis stage, it was far from fully recovered. He wasn't sure how he'd raise the money to see the work through to publication. I supported the project behind the scenes by spending all my time and energy to get Mr. Toda's business back on its feet. Only Mr. Toda knew how hard I struggled.

Finally, on April 28, 1952, the new Soka Gakkai edition of the Daishonin's writings was complete. It was a tremendous

achievement, an impossible dream come true. The first printing consisted of 6,000 copies. In that same month, Mr. Toda composed this poem for me:

*Filled with the strength
To surmount towering
obstacles
Spur your youthful self on
To fight bravely
On the path of the Mystic
Law*

Study of the Daishonin's writings by Soka Gakkai members resulted in tremendous progress in introducing others to the teachings, and that in turn produced a huge increase in the demand for the volume. In November 1953, Mr. Toda decided to reprint.

On that occasion, as a Study Department representative, I helped proofread. After work and after attending Soka Gakkai meetings, I would rush to the printing plant to help with the proofreading until late into the night.

It was a noble, important task.

Wishing to produce a perfect edition for later generations, we were determined that there would not be a single misprint or mistake in the entire edition.

In his preface to the volume, Mr. Toda proclaims, "It is my unceasing wish that this precious sacred text will spread throughout Asia, throughout the entire world." I have devoted every ounce of my being to realizing my mentor's dream, and I have succeeded. The Daishonin writes, "Those who call themselves my disciples and practice the Lotus Sutra should all practice as I do" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 298).

The Soka Gakkai is the only organization that faithfully accords with the Buddha's will and decree, the sole body of believers that has based itself entirely on the Daishonin's writings. Directly connected to the Daishonin, it is advancing the cause of kosen-rufu just as he did.

The Soka Gakkai has inherited the lifeblood of faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism and the true noble cause of upholding the Law. The Soka Gakkai is also the direct path to immeasurable benefit and the goal of Buddhahood in this life. 卍

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*.

From SGI President Ikeda:

*On what do we of the Soka Gakkai base ourselves? On the Goshu, the collection of writings that embody the teachings of the original Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law, Nichiren Daishonin — the original Buddha who practiced the Lotus Sutra with his life. We certainly do not rely on the irresponsible claims of self-appointed critics or disparaging articles in sensationalist weeklies. Our fundamental guide in life and faith is, and always will be, the Goshu's teachings. I proclaim that the Goshu is the eternal foundation of the Soka Gakkai and of our Buddhist practice. (Aug. 29, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 7)

*I hope each of you will strive to read with your life even one passage of the Goshu by actively putting it into practice. If you do so, it is the same as reading all the Dai-

**WORDS
TO THE WISE**

STUDY

Exert yourself in the two ways of practice and study. Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism. You must not only persevere yourself; you must also teach others. Both practice and study arise from faith. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 95)

shonin's teachings. (Aug. 15, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 7)

*The Goshu is filled with illumination. When we open its pages, we are bathed in the sun of life and its rays of philosophy.

The Goshu is Nichiren Daishonin's voice. It is the collection of his golden words and teachings. So it's important to have the spirit to study the Goshu, to open it up. Even if you forget what you've read, something profound will be engraved in the

depths of your life... Only through strong faith, seamlessly fused with Goshu study, can we truly be enlightened and accomplish our human revolution. (July 11, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 13)

*When we read the Goshu, we should do so with the profound conviction that we are reading the truth, the absolute truth — that this is exactly how it is. In other words, we should read with faith, seek with faith and understand with faith. (Dec. 12, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 6)

*We must read in a way that nourishes and cultivates us. Food will not nourish us or contribute to healthy bone and muscle growth if it is not digested and absorbed properly. In the same way, digesting what we read requires serious reflection and contemplation. (Nov. 14, 1997, *World Tribune*, p. 13)

THE ONENESS OF LIFE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT ('ESHO FUNI')

Not About Self-Blame

SIGN POSTS

APPLYING NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S WRITINGS TO DAILY LIFE

The Deepest and Darkest

By MALINA MOORE

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

"The ocean rids itself of corpses" means that through the Lotus Sutra one can free himself for all eternity from the offense of slandering the Law or having incorrigible disbelief. ("The Universal Salty Taste," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, p. 4)


In this passage, Nichiren Daishonin is relaying the depth and profundity of the Lotus Sutra, which he compares to the ocean. Essentially he is saying that we can overcome any kind of negative karma — even the deepest and darkest!

On July 3, 1997, a doctor ordered me to have an MRI done of my brain, and I was subsequently diagnosed as having a small tumor in my pituitary gland. Learning this was at first scary for both myself and my family, but, on the other hand, I felt so relieved to finally learn what had caused a myriad of symptoms I had been struggling with for more than a year.

Although this tumor is not life-threatening, it has caused me to take stock of every aspect of my life. Through my experiences of dealing with this condition, whether it's pushing myself to keep going back to the doctors, asserting and re-asserting myself, or maintaining the stamina to navigate my way through the often aggravating and discouraging world of medical bureaucracy, I have come to realize that this is not an obstacle of physical disability but an opportunity to change my fundamental negative tendency to not value myself.

My "incorrigible disbelief" has been that somehow...maybe...I am not a Buddha.

It was only after this was so shockingly brought to my attention by a leader whom I deeply respect and admire that I have been able to chant renewed and honest daimoku and feel an inner joy at my self-development in the midst of something that was at first very scary and oppressive.

I'm armed with the knowledge that whatever new obstacles I may face, my ever-expanding "ocean" of faith is ridding my life of the "corpses" of negativity. 

WHAT A CONCEPT

ON THE BASIC IDEAS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM

By LISA JONES

STAFF WRITER

Buddhism teaches that the self (or life) and its environment are two but not two; that is, two in phenomena but one in essence. From the standpoint of what our five senses tell us, self and other are two separate things — at one level, this is true: The world is "out there," external to us, relevant to us only insofar as it affects our immediate experience.

But on a deeper level, Buddhism teaches that we're connected to others in a complex web of interrelatedness. Ultimately, we're one with all things — including sunlight, water, rocks and sky. As Nichiren Daishonin wrote: "Since the Law is supreme, the Person is worthy of respect; since the Person is worthy of respect, the Land is sacred" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 264).

Although self and environment — or subject and object — are two integral expressions of the same ultimate reality, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, this oneness does not imply stagnancy. Rather, there's a constant interplay between self and environ-

ment. And this interplay could be called the creative dynamism of life.

SGI President Ikeda explains: "The oneness of life and its environment means that even though life is shaped by the environment, and the influence of the environment on life must be reckoned with, it is life, in particular human life, that is the transforming protagonist without which the environment could not exist. The role of human will is thus central to this dynamic relationship."

Although we are powerfully affected by our environment, our power to affect our environment is greater still. Buddhist practice allows us to perceive, cultivate and limitlessly expand our inherent, transformative power.

In the past, some of us may have interpreted *oneness* thus: "All the bad stuff that's happening to me or around me is a reflection of all the bad stuff inside me. Unless I get rid of my negativity, my environment will never change." This oneness is not about self-blame, though. Nor is it a rationalization for inertia (e.g., "since my lousy job is a reflection of me, I'll simply chant to change my karma rather than look for a better job or gain more skills").

Granted, our inner life *is* mirrored in our

environment. But more significant is our ability to choose what we assimilate from our environment and what we boldly oppose in it. It's probably safe to say that most of us want a mutually beneficial relationship with others and our environment — to gain maximum benefit as well as to give it. External victory in this regard, though, is determined by our inner resolve to strike a balance between a strong, responsible will to transformation and a

warm, loving embrace of others.

In our personal relationships, a *warm, loving embrace* means seeing and respecting the Buddha nature in others and taking compassionate action on their behalf. And *will to transformation* means taking action for value creation, doing what needs to be done, saying what needs to be said — based on wisdom, of course, which is ultimately inseparable from compassion and the Mystic Law.

In a sense, the practical application of the oneness of life and its environment is this: determinedly living with appreciation for ourselves and our world while actively transforming ourselves and our world for the better.

Twelve in a series

[It means] living with appreciation while actively transforming ourselves and our world for the better.

The Century of Anyone

STANDS TO REASON

LESSONS FOR TODAY FROM THE WRITINGS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN

By JEFF FARR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Buddha surely considers anyone in this world who embraces the Lotus Sutra, whether man or woman, monk or nun, to be the lord of all living beings.... ("The Unity of Husband and Wife," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 156)

A letter full of promises — in 1275, at Mount Minobu, Nichiren Daishonin wrote Nichigen-nyo that she would definitely become happy, that she was without question a Buddha. Nichigen-nyo, Shijo Kingo's wife, had written to the Daishonin to report her turning 33, which was considered an unlucky age for women in Japan. And he had written back that "the bad luck of your thirty-third year will turn into the happiness of your

thirty-third year" (MW-5, 158).

When the Daishonin wrote letters to the women among his believers, he was often going up against the formidable pre-Lotus Sutra teaching, ingrained in Japanese society, that women could never attain enlightenment. This deeply influenced people's view of women, including, obviously, women's view of themselves. So, it wasn't just that turning 33 was thought unlucky for women — to be a woman at all was thought *very* unlucky.

The Daishonin asserted to Nichigen-nyo, though, that anyone can become a Buddha, "man or woman, monk or nun." Anyone who embraces the Lotus Sutra. There are no "nobodies" in this teaching; anybody can become a "somebody."

Before the temple issue began in 1990, many SGI-USA members, especially women, commented on the lack of women (not to mention non-Japanese) in the priesthood. In the SGI-USA, they saw a diversity of women taking leadership for the movement — but in the priesthood? It was the good ol' boys from Japan.

Though there were certainly equality issues to be worked out within the SGI-USA, over the years we've seen real change, which continues to occur. The priesthood has remained hopelessly out

of step with an age of women's rights, however. It has thus discounted everything that the Daishonin wrote about human equality, not to mention the history of Buddhist nuns in Shakyamuni's time and the Daishonin's time.

Whatever has happened to "man or woman, monk or nun" in the priesthood? Where has the "anyone" of this passage gone?

In the SGI, we still maintain that anyone can become a Buddha. That's why we keep sharing this Buddhism with old and new friends, believing each of them to be "anyone." And that's why we keep talking to our friends in the temple organization, who have been confused by Nikken but can still benefit from hearing the truth.

The 21st century will be the Century of Women, SGI President Ikeda has often said. It will also be the Century of Anyone — an era of the people; an era in which we will treat each other right, respecting one another as the "lords of all living beings" that the Daishonin said we are.

And we can't wait.

Twelve in a series

THE
Third Stage
OF
LIFE

Be Open To Possibilities

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

This is the seventh installment in this series. Participants in this installment are SGI President Ikeda, Seikyo Shimbun General Editorial Bureau Senior Director Osamu Matsuoka and Vice Director Katsusuke Sasaki.

IKEDA: There is a Buddhist scripture in which Shakyamuni speaks of conquering the three forms of pride — that of youth, that of health, that of life — in relation to the universal sufferings of aging, sickness and death.

The Buddha points out that, drunk with the pride of youth, people have an aversion to those bent with old age. Drunk with the pride of health, people have an aversion to those suffering from illness or disease. And drunk with the pride of life, people have an aversion to the dead.

Reminiscing about his youth, an elderly Shakyamuni says that he shed these three forms of pride. This is related to the famous four meetings and was a reason for his leaving home to seek enlightenment.

The four meetings is a story appearing in many sutras about Shakyamuni's motives for renouncing the secular world. As the young Prince Siddhartha, he lived a sheltered and pampered existence in the royal palace. Then, one day, he is said to have ventured out of the four palace gates and encountered first an elderly person, then a sick person, then a corpse, then a religious mendicant — one at each gate. These were his first disturbing encounters with the inescapable realities of aging, sickness and death. Finally, inspired by the serene dignity of the mendicant, he resolved to embark on a religious life and attain enlightenment.

SASAKI: It's amazing that Shakyamuni rid himself of these three forms of pride when he still enjoyed the privileged life of a prince.

IKEDA: Yes, what sets him apart

'The rich kind of life-experience that an older person has is a precious and irreplaceable resource...for that individual [and] for society at large.'



is that he turned his thoughts to the aging, the ill and the dying at a time when he was at the peak of his youth. He was in vigorous health and filled with the joy of living.

We should remember that these three forms of pride are not just relics that have no relevance to the present. Today, in Japan in particular, we are facing the reality of a rapidly aging society. And there is much discussion of the changes we must make in terms of our social systems and institutions to respond to this new situation. Such discussions are of course important, but I believe we must also focus on the more essential issue of the pride or arrogance that has taken root in people's hearts and try to change human beings themselves.

MATSUOKA: That's so true.

IKEDA: All too often people despise what is different from them. In my 1993 lecture at Harvard University, I called this "an unreasoning emphasis on

difference." Shakyamuni described this as "a single, invisible arrow piercing the hearts of the people."

By placing an unreasonable emphasis on difference, we set boundaries to our lives and block ourselves off from wider possibilities. By fearing and rejecting what is different, we restrict ourselves to what we are now and shut the door to further growth and spiritual enrichment.

As long as people continue to avert their gaze from the realities of aging, sickness and death, they are denying their own future. They are rejecting their inevitable fate. All of us, without exception, will experience these things.

MATSUOKA: People seem to regard aging as a negative thing, but I think there are many wonderful, beautiful and positive things about growing old.

IKEDA: We need to change our values, the way we look at aging. The rich kind of life-experience that an older person has is a pre-

vious and irreplaceable resource, not only for that individual but those around him or her. And for society at large.

In one of his writings, Nichiren Daishonin recounts how King Wen of the Chou dynasty in ancient China valued the elderly, respecting their wisdom (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 274). He goes on to say that the Chou dynasty lasted 800 years because of King Wen's wise policies.

In Japan, Sept. 15 is Respect-for-the-Aged Day. Please make time to share a few warm, heartfelt words with the elderly people in your life. Let's work to promote concern and respect for the aged.

SASAKI: Yes. And as in all things, it starts with our own actions.

IKEDA: Many times, the words of older people, based on their long, abundant experience, possess a wisdom and weight that can take your breath away. I know countless elderly people

whose lives shine beautifully.

People who have built indestructible selves through their work for kosen-rufu literally sparkle.

The secret is to live with dignity and confidence.

MATSUOKA: I recently met someone who's a perfect example of that: Mrs. Yoshi Takahashi, whom you introduced in your *Ode to Mothers* [a recently published book of President Ikeda's poems and essays dedicated to mothers, available only in Japanese]. She's 103 years old.

The day I visited her at her home in Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture, just happened to be her birthday. Her house was filled with flowers she had received from her grandchildren, neighbors and friends, and she was as hale and hearty as ever.

IKEDA: Yes, I know her well. At age 98, she became a special lec-

POSSIBILITIES, FROM PAGE 7

turer at an academy for training fashion coordinators! Until last year — that is, for five years, until she was 102 — she lectured the young students at the school. And she was popular. She made appearances on television, radio and the lecture circuit, where she delivered wonderful speeches and was interviewed. I am so happy to know that she has remained active all these years.

SASAKI: I remember seeing her by chance on a TV show last year. The interviewer was moved to tears by Mrs. Takahashi's accounts of her life. Mrs. Takahashi emphasized the importance of courage, perseverance and effort, and she said that she intended to keep going and to live to see a peaceful 21st century. She spoke with impressive force and clarity.

IKEDA: That's wonderful. I pray every day that the members who have been with us since the early days of our movement will live long, healthy lives, enjoying a fulfilling third stage of life.

MATSUOKA: Mrs. Takahashi gets up at 5:00 a.m. every day and starts the day off with gongyo and an hour of daimoku. She says that every day she prays for the good health and longevity of you and Mrs. Ikeda, and for you, President Ikeda, to continue encouraging members around the world.

She has every intention of ushering in the 21st century together with you. Mrs. Takahashi said that since she had the fortune to be born a human being, it is her mission to work for the happiness and welfare of people in society.

IKEDA: I have heard that she really looks forward to attending the monthly discussion meetings with members of her local organization, and that she writes a short poem for each meeting.

MATSUOKA: Yes. For the May meeting this year [1997], she wrote:

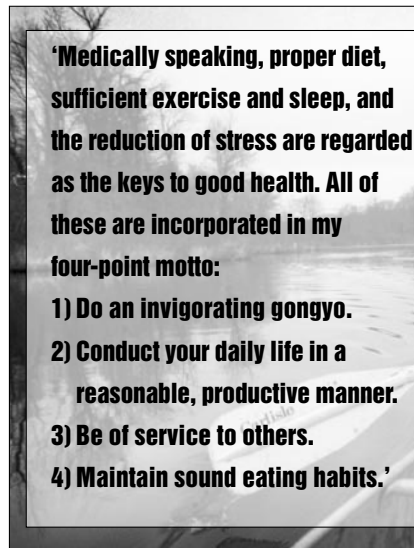
*How happy I am
To celebrate May 3!
At 103,
Still healthy,
Following the path of
mentor and disciple.*

Mrs. Takahashi also talks to the plants in her garden as she tends them and sometimes those words take shape as poems. For example:

*As I speak
To these silent
Flowers
I count the buds
Of tomorrow's blossoms.*

Mrs. Takahashi also reads the *Seikyo Shimbun* every day, using a magnifying glass.

IKEDA: What an excellent example for us all! It is women like Mrs. Takahashi who have supported the Soka Gakkai and, indeed, society, over the years.



'Medically speaking, proper diet, sufficient exercise and sleep, and the reduction of stress are regarded as the keys to good health. All of these are incorporated in my four-point motto:

- 1) Do an invigorating gongyo.**
- 2) Conduct your daily life in a reasonable, productive manner.**
- 3) Be of service to others.**
- 4) Maintain sound eating habits.'**

SASAKI: A week after joining the Soka Gakkai, Mrs. Takahashi was in the audience at Yokohama's Mitsuzawa Stadium when Mr. Toda delivered his 1957 declaration for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. Her life has spanned the 20th century. As one who remembers the songs that were popular during the time of the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War and World War II, she states unequivocally, in a firm, resounding voice: "In war, so many bright young people are sacrificed in their prime. It is a terrible waste of life. Nothing is more terrible than war."

IKEDA: Mrs. Takahashi was over 60 when she found faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism and joined the Soka Gakkai, wasn't she?

MATSUOKA: Yes, she was 63. At the time, she wasn't feeling well. Her heart was weak, and she frequently had dizzy spells and fainted. She joined because she wanted to improve her health. She now finds it amazing that her wish was so completely realized, and that she's lived to over 100.

IKEDA: It's the principle of faith extending life. I once presented her a cane along with a message that I was praying for her to continue enjoying a long, fulfilling life.

SASAKI: Yes. She regards that cane as a precious treasure. When she picks it up each morning, she says that she feels like she is starting the day with a handshake from you.

IKEDA: I think the secret to long life can be found in Mrs. Takahashi's words: "There's nothing

thousand years old!

IKEDA: Actually, I think his sharp wit is the secret to his long life.

MATSUOKA: Many people get sick when summer turns to autumn, in other words, when the seasons change. Let's talk a while about things that elderly people should look out for at such times.

IKEDA: One of the most important things is overexertion. Exhaustion is the cause of many,

quire manual dexterity stimulates the brain cells.

When we perform morning and evening gongyo, we join our palms together in prayer. The very act of joining our palms creates a moderate tension in the muscles of our hands and fingers, which is said to provide the brain excellent stimulation.

MATSUOKA: Mrs. Takahashi says that she still enjoys working in the kitchen and preparing food. At 103, she's still using her hands. She showed them to me, as a matter of fact, and they are pretty hands, smooth and soft.

SASAKI: Walking is another great way to prevent senility.

IKEDA: That's right. Using one's voice, as in singing, and doing moderate exercise are also crucial in preventing it. It's important to keep in mind that elderly people tend to be susceptible to sudden changes in their environment and to stress, often with adverse consequences for their health and well-being. We should strive to create environments for them in which they feel at ease.

SASAKI: Apparently, people with the following characteristics run a higher risk of becoming senile: stubborn and selfish people, short-tempered people, people with few friends, people without a sense of humor, people who are obsessed with money and possessions, and people who don't trust others.

IKEDA: We should all watch out for those traits in ourselves.

It's been said, too, that people with a strong sense of purpose, a sense of responsibility, who work hard to achieve a goal, are less likely to become senile.

SASAKI: In the health discussion series, you suggested four mottoes for a healthy life, didn't you?

IKEDA: Medically speaking, proper diet, sufficient exercise and sleep, and the reduction of stress are regarded as the keys to good health.

All of these are incorporated in my four-point motto:

- 1) Do an invigorating gongyo.
- 2) Conduct your daily life in a reasonable, productive manner.
- 3) Be of service to others.
- 4) Maintain sound eating habits.

I am always praying for the health and long life of our members, who work so hard day and night for kosen-rufu. 卍

PHILADELPHIA ENQUIRER/JONATHAN WILSON

to fret or worry about. Brooding over problems serves no purpose. You mustn't keep looking back and making comparisons with what happened in the past, letting it stop you from moving forward. You'll live a long time if you keep looking ahead and advancing with a positive attitude. You need to keep a positive outlook. Never grumble and gripe." This is an excellent attitude.

Does Mrs. Takahashi come from a long-lived family, by the way?

SASAKI: Actually, her father died at 33. And her mother only lived to be 54. So we can't say that she comes from a particularly long-lived family. I think this shows, however, that attitude and lifestyle are important factors in achieving a long life.

IKEDA: Dr. Hsian Dogramaci, the famous Turkish pediatrician and educator with whom I conducted a dialogue in 1992, said that he believes the secret to a long life is a peaceful heart.

MATSUOKA: Yes. I still remember him declaring that with a peaceful heart such as yours, you should live to more than a

many illnesses. If you want to live long, it's important to get enough rest. Attention should also be paid to your diet, with care being taken to ensure that your meals are nutritionally well-balanced and to refrain from eating late at night.

There is a saying "Laughter makes young; anger makes old." Laughter, a sense of humor, plays an important part in staying in good health. If you look on the bright side of things and act positively, you'll have a cheerful, happy life. A happy life is a healthy life.

SASAKI: In the series "A New Century of Health: Buddhism and the Art of Medicine," you spoke with various experts — representatives of the Soka Gakkai doctors division and nurses group — about ways to prevent senility. Would you sum up the key points again for our readers?

IKEDA: Certainly. The best ways to stimulate the brain, and thus prevent senility's onset, it seems, are to use our hands and feet, and to interact with others. Some even call our hands a second brain. Writing letters or performing other activities that re-

法華經의 지혜

제26회 테마: 여래수량품 ①

이번회부터 법화경의 중심인 여래 수량품(제16장)을 신습니다.
지면관계로 일부를 발췌합니다. (리빙 부디즘 98년 2월)

사이토(齊藤) 교학부장: 최근 '죽음을 준비하는 교육(death education)'이 매우 강하게 주목받고 있습니다.

예를들어 "당신은 앞으로 반년밖에 살 수 없다"고 가정하고 그 반년동안 무엇을 하겠습니까" 하는 과제를 내어 생각하게 하는 것입니다.

또 "인생에서 당신이 소중히 하는 것"을 순서대로 세 가지 쓰십시오"라든가 하여 「사(死)」를 생각하는 가운데 「생(生)」을 다시금 주시하는 것입니다.

엔도(遠藤) 과교학부장: 유럽, 미국에서는 「죽음을 준비하는 교육」을 학교에서 가르치는 곳도 많은 듯합니다. 초등학교용 프로그램도 있습니다.

이케다(池田) SGI 회장: 인생에서 확실한 것은 무엇일까요. 「언젠가는 반드시 죽는」 것만큼 확실한 것은 없습니다. 그밖의 모든 것이 「불확실함」으로 변화, 변화하는 시대에 이것만은 영원히 「확실한」 사실입니다.

그런데 가장 확실한 「죽음」을 인간은 외면하려 합니다.

분명히 「태양과 죽음은 직시할 수 없는」 측면이 있을지도 모르나 확고한 생사관을 갖지 않는 인생은 뿌리없는 풀과 같은 것입니다. 그대로는 확실한 인생을 걸을 수 없는 것이 당연하지요.

스다(須田): 「죽음」을 외면함은 「참된자기」를 외면하는 것과 통합니다.

요즘엔 자기의 전세(前世)를 알고 싶어하는 젊은이가 늘고 있습니다.

SGI 회장: 그럴지도 모르지요. 표면적으로 보면 일시적인 유행으로도 생각되나 근처에는 확고한 의치를 구하는 마음의 신음소리가 있는 것이 아닐까요.

현대문명은 「죽음을 금기시하는 (언급해서는 안 되는 것으로 보는) 문명」으로 지적되어 왔습니다. 그러나 「죽음을 준비하는 교육」이라고 하여 지금 세계적으로 그것이 급속하게 바뀌고 있습니다. 사람들은 확고한 생사관을 열심히 찾고 있습니다. 생명탐구에 대한 열띤 고동을 나는 느낌입니다.

스다: 바로 「생명의 세기」-21세기에 대한 도움단기가 시작된 것으로 느껴집니다.

SGI 회장: 인생은 깃니다. 개인 날만 있는 것은 아닙니다. 비가 오는 날도 열풍이 부는 날도 있습니다. 그러나 어떤 일이 일어나건 신심이 있다면 최후는 전부 공덕으로 바뀝니다.

도다 선생님은 말씀하셨습니다. 「신심만 있다면 모두 공덕인 겁니다. 신심이 없이 의심하면 모두 벌이지요」라고.

「영원한 생명」을 믿고 이 인생을 살고 또 살아가는 것입니다. 이 일생이 승리하여 그 모습으로써 「영원한 생명」을 증명하는 것입니다.

그것이 법화경입니다. 수량품입니다.

무슨 일이 있든 살고 사는 것이 「수량품의 마음」입니다.

사이토: 수량품의 마음이란 말뿐인 「영원한 생명」이 아니군요.

SGI 회장: 대생명력으로 살아내는 것입니다.

영원하고 우주대의 「크나큰 생명」의 실재를 밝힌 것이 수량품입니다. 그 「크나큰 생명」을 현실의 내 몸에 현현하는 것이 수량품의 실천입니다.

여래수량이란 「여래의 수명을 가늠한다」는 의미입니다. 여래의 영원한 수명-그 대생명력을 내 몸위에 융현하는 것입니다.

수량품이 설하는 「영원한 생명」-그것은 무한한 생명력, 무한한 지혜, 무한한 자비를 갖추고 살아 있는 모든 것을 뒷받침 해주는 우주 생명 자체입니다.

그것이 바로 석존의 본지이며 온갖 부처의 본체임을 밝힌 것이 수량품입니다. 「부처란 생명이니라」고 도다 선생님이 깨달으셨던 그대로입니다.

이 「영원한 생명」이 묘법이며 여래이며 법성이며 실상입니다. 심계삼천의 제법을

깨닫는 우주 근원의 법이며 대성인은 이것을 「南無妙法蓮華經」라고 이름하셨던 것입니다.

생과 사도 이 「영원한 생명」의 불가사의한 작용이며 본연의 리듬입니다.

스다: 네. 용출품에서 사바세계의 대지에서 무수하게 훌륭한 보살들이 출현합니다. 이 지용의 보살들을 「석존은 도대체 언제 어디서 교화해 왔는가」라고 미륵이 질문합니다.

이 물음을 받고 수량품의 설법이 시작됩니다.

엔도: 석존이 보리수 밑에서 깨달음을 얻지 십수년밖에 지나지 않았고. 도저히 그만한 숫자의 보살들을 부처와 같이 훌륭해질 정도로 교화할 수 있었을리가 없다. 이것이 미륵의 의문이지요.

SGI 회장: 제자들의 훌륭함을 보고 「스승인 석존이란 도대체 어떠한 존재인가? 지금까지 생각했던 것 이상의 존재는 아닌가?」라고 생각했지요.

사이토: 네. 그 답이 수량품 서두에서 설해지는 「구원실성」입니다.

그때까지의 이전 적문에서는 「석존은 금세에 비로소 성불했다」고 설해져 왔습니다. 이른바 「시성정각(始成正覺): 처음으로 정각을 이루다」입니다.

이것을 백팔십도로 돌려서 「나는 실로 성불하고 나서 무량무변한 시간(무량무변백천만억나유타겁)을 거치고 있는 것이다」라고 밝힙니다. 이것이 「구원실성」입니다.

SGI 회장: 금세에 처음 부처가 된 것은 아니다. 본디 부처였다는 것이군요.

엔도: 모두 놀랐겠지요. 지금

까지와는 정반대의 것을 설했기에.

스다: 「지금까지 속았던 말인가?」 생각하는 사람도 있었을 테지요(웃음)

사이토: 시성정각이라는 임시의 모습(迹)을 나타냈으므로 이것을 발적현본(發迹顯本)이라고 하는데 그 의의에 대해서는 다시 논하고 싶습니다.

엔도: 이전경에서는 「사바세계는 번뇌로 더럽혀진 예토이며 부처가 사는 국토는 그 이외의 정토에 있다」고 설해져 왔습니다. 서방의 극락정토나 동방의 정유리(淨琉璃) 세계등이 잘 알려지고 있습니다.

그런데 수량품에서는 「이 사바세계가 구원실성의 부처가 상주하는 정토」가 됩니다. 정도란 적광토라고도 합니다. 이 「사바적광」의 법리도 수량품의 획기적인 가르침입니다.

사이토: 천태는 이것은 「본국토묘(本國土妙)」라고 했습니다.

스다: 더욱 불가사의한 것은 사바세계뿐만 아니라 다른 무수한 국토에서도 중생을 이끌어 왔음이 설해지는 것입니다.

엔도: 구원실성의 부처는 우주에 편만하다고 밖에 생각될 수 없겠군요.

SGI 회장: 그렇지요. 전우주, 「어디에나 상주하고」 중생을 구제하기 위해서라면 「어디에나 출현하는」 부처라고 생각됩니다.

그렇기에 「지금」 「여기」- 즉 사바세계가 「구원의 부처」가 상주하는 정도라고 할 수 있는 것입니다.

스다: 불가사의한 설법은 더

욱 이어집니다. 구원실성의 부처는 과거에 이름도 수명도 서로 다른 다양한 부처를 설해 나타내 왔다고 합니다. 그것은 사람들을 구제하기 위한 방편으로서 설해 왔던 것입니다.

엔도: 석존이전에 실재했다는 다양한 과거불도 원래는 구원실성의 석존이 방편으로서 설한 부처이군요. 이른바 적불(迹佛)입니다.

SGI 회장: 이에 수량품의 목적인 석존만이 아니라 일체 중생이 실은 구원의 옛날부터 부처였음을 가르치고 그것을 「자각」시키는데 있습니다.

「영원한 대생명」을 깨닫게 하는 것입니다. 니치렌 대성인의 「문저(文底)의 법화경」이 그것을 가능케 합니다.

도다 선생님은 말씀하셨습니다.

「대성인불법의 구극의 목적은 영원한 생명을 깨닫는 것입니다. 생명의 영원함을 내 몸으로 체득하는 것입니다. 이것을 절대적 행복이라고 합니다. 이 행복은 영원히 계속되며 무너지는 법이 결코 없습니다. 그것을 확립하기 위하여 신심하는 것입니다」.

「나의 몸으로 체득하는」일이 중요합니다. 그를 위해서는 신심밖에 없습니다. 신심을 단련하여 깊이 해가는 길밖에 없는 것입니다. 도다 선생님은 자주 말씀하시고 계셨습니다. 「이론으로 아는 것은 간단하다. 그러나 신심으로 안다는 것은 전혀 다르다」 영원한 생명도 마찬가지입니다.

수량품에 「갱사수명(更賜壽命: 더욱 수명을 받다)」이 있습니다. 수명이란 생명력입니다.

어본존께 더욱 위대한 생명력을 하사받아 살고 살며 또 살아내는 것입니다. 그것이 수량품입니다. 목숨을 짧게 하는 비법입니다.

엔도: 수량품의 대강으로 구원의 석존의 「과거의 상주」가 설해진 부분까지 언급했습니다. 수량품에서는 다음에 부처가 「미래에도 상주할」 것이 밝혀집니다.

즉 「내가 본디 보살도를 실천하여 성취한 수명은 지금도 다하지 않는다. 더욱 오백전점점에 배(倍)하여 계속될 것이다」라고 언급됩니다.

SGI 회장 이케다 한국 방문

100만 SGI 한국회원의 숙원 드디어 35년 만에 결실을 보다



처음으로 SGI-KOREA 본부를 방문하시는 이케다 회장을 환영하는 한국회원들

윤신하씨는 일련정총벌법을 1963년경부터 수행하기 시작했습니다. 2년후 그는 신앙생활을 이유로 체포되어 58일간 감옥에서 보냈지만 결코 굴복하지 않았습니다. 그 당시 한국에서는 참가학회 회원들을 탄압하는 일이 다반사였습니다. 회합은 감시하에서 개최되었고 가끔 경찰에 의하여 강제로 해산당하곤 했습니다. 회원들은 일본종교를 수지한 것에 대하여 심문 받았고 경찰은 불단을 뒤엎고 회원들을 반정부 활동을 한다는 명목 아래 체포했습니다. 한국회원들은 그들의 가정에서조차도 본존님을 자유롭게 안치하지도 제목을 올릴수도 없었고, 찬장이나 벽 속에 본존님을 숨겨야 했습니다. 그들은 심지어 이웃이나 직장 동료들로부터도 따돌림 또는 괴롭힘을 당했습니다. 이러한 탄압은 80년대까지도 계속 되었습니다. 참가학회와 신도들에 대한 적대감은 일본을 중오하는 한국 국민의 정서에서 비롯되며 오늘날까지도 한국은 교육용도가 아닌 일본의 영화, 비디오, 음악 그리고 만화까지

도 수입을 금지하고 있습니다. 최근의 여론조사에서 나타나듯이 한국 국민의 80퍼센트 이상이 일본과의 문화교류를 반대합니다. 그러한 상황에서 1990년에 있는 SGI 이케다 회장의 방한(호암 갤러리)은 보다 방문목적이 분명해집니다. 그 이후로부터 줄

곧 한국불교회는 사회사업의 일환으로 환경정화 운동을 추진해 왔습니다. 그 결과, 작년에는 SGI 회장과 한국 불교회는 여러차례에 걸쳐 지방단체부터 현장을 받았습니다. 이케다 회장의 이번 방문동안에도 현장은 계속되었습니다. 이번 방한기간 중 있었던 주

요행사를 말씀드리면: 참가 대학의 창립자이기도 한 이케다 회장은 5월 14일에 서울에 도착하셨고 다음날인 5월 15일에는 한국의 명문대학인 경희 대학으로부터 한일 우호 관계에 막대한 기여를 하였고 세계평화를 위하여 헌신적으로 노력하신 공로로 명예 철

학박사를 수여 받았습니다. 5월 16일에 미세스 이케다이신 카네코 이케다께서는 세계 밝은 사회클럽(GCS)으로부터 보다 나은 사회를 만들기 위하여 헌신하신 공로로 에머랄드상을 수상하셨습니다. 세계 밝은 사회클럽(GCS)은 문화와 인도주의를 위한 비정부 단체이며 현재 30개국에서 활동중입니다. 5월 18일에 SGI 이케다 회장께서는 처음으로 SGI 한국본부를 방문하셔서 각지의 대표간부들과 함께 근행을 올리셨고 일본문화의 대인인 나라-한국의 영원한 번영과 한국 벗들의 행복을 위하여 기원을 하였고 회원들을 격려하여 주셨습니다. 그리고 규슈 후쿠오카 연수도장에서 한일 우호의 비석과 제주도에 건설예정인 연수도장의 이름을 한일우호 연수도장으로 하자고 제안하셨습니다. 이케다 회차일행은 성공적으로 한국방문을 끝마치시고 5월 18일 일본으로 귀국하셨습니다.(W/T 5월 29일자)

사이트: 구원의 석존의 성불에는 「성불한 본인(本因)」이 있었다는 겁니다. 이곳을 깊이 탐구하면 대성인의 문져 불법으로 들어옵니다.

SGI 회장: 그렇지요. 「영원한 대생명」을 자각한 부처의 불가사의한 경지를 천태는 「일념삼천」으로 표현했습니다. 그 일념삼천도 수량품을 혼으로 삼습니다.

사이트: 여하튼 수량품은 일체경의 혼입니다. 불법이란 무엇인가, 무엇을 실했는가. 그 답이 수량품에 있습니다.

SGI 회장: 그렇지요. 니치렌 대성인은 "일체경 중에 이 수량품이 계시지 않았더라면 천에 일월이, 나라에 대왕이, 산하에 주옥이, 사람에게 혼이 없음과 같거늘" (어서 214 쪽)이라고 말씀하십니다.

수량품을 배운다는 것은 부처의 진수를 배우는 것이며 생명의 진수를 배우는 것이며 자신의 「진실된 모습」을 배우는 것입니다.

그것을 알지 못하면 무엇을 해도 근본은 무명입니다. 미혹이며 괴로움입니다. 바로 「하늘에 태양과 달이 없는 암흑의 세계입니다. 거기에

「희망의 태양」을 떠오르게 하는 것이 수량품입니다. 그것을 「인간혁명」이라고 합니다.

스다: 아 그렇게 되는군요. 서두에서 이야기가 나온 큐브라 로스 여사가 이렇게 썼습니다.

"자신을 치유하지 않는 한 세상을 치유할 수 없습니다." "늦어지기 전에 이 세계를 치유해야만 합니다. 아무조룩 이것을 가슴에 새겨주세요." (앞책)

SGI 회장: 그말대로입니다. 세계를 바꾸기 위해서는 자

신이 바뀌어야 합니다. 그 「바뀌어」야하는 근본은 생명관에 있다. 생사관에 있다. 자기관에 있다.

이 생사라는 문제에 근본지침을 부여하는 것이 범화경의 수량품입니다. 이 생사라는 문제에 근본지침을 부여하는 것이 범화경의 수량품입니다. 우치무라 간조였던가. "나는 건전한 내세관만큼 사람을 위대하게 하는것은 없다고 생각합니다."라고 말했다. <「기독교문답」> 그렇지요.

「인생은 이 세상이 끝」이라고 생각하면 참되게 깊은

인생을 살 수 없는 것이 아닐까요. 영원성을 알지 못하면 근거가 잘나적으로 된다.

지금 사람들은 드디어 「생과 사」를 주시하기 시작했다. 「인간」을 주시하기 시작했다. 21세기를 향한 태동입니다. 「생명의 세기」란 「인간혁명의 세기」입니다. 수량품의 「영원한 생명」을 근거로 한 대문명이 꽃피는 세기입니다. (리빙 부디즘 98년 2월)

21세기 佛法르네상스는 한국에서

길고 긴 겨울이었다. 지금 드디어 봄이 시작되었다. 작년부터 금년에 걸쳐 한국 SGI와 이케다 SGI회장에 대한 현창이 잇달았다.

그리고 지난 15일에는 SGI회장에게 한국의 명문 경희대학으로부터 명예철학박사 학위가 수여되었다.

그리고 이날의 본부 문화회관을 방문, 어느 벗은 그 실감을 이렇게 말하고 있었다.

「비디오로 밖에 볼 수 없었던 이케다 선생님이 지금 여기에 계십니다. 도저히 믿을 수가 없어 몇 번이고 눈을 비비고 있습니다.」

SGI회장이 호소했다. 「여러분들이 계신다면 일체를 승리로 이끌어 갈 수 있다는 것이 엄연히 증명되었습니다. 여러분은 승리했습니다.」

「사회에 봉사하고 인간성을 넓혀간다. 21세기 불법 르네상스는 한국에서 시작되고 있습니다. 나는 기쁩니다. 전 세계가 여러분을 찬탄하고 있습니다!」

이날 세계 83개국의 벗들에게서 축복의 메시지도 왔다.

SGI회장은 제안했다.

「존귀한 여러분의 이름을 영원히 후세에 전하기 위해 2000년에 완공예정인 미국 소카(創價)대학(오렌지군 캠퍼스)에 남겨 드리겠습니다. 찬성해 주시겠습니까?」

터질듯한 웃음을 온 얼굴에 가득 띄운 채 전원이 찬성하는 손을 들었다. 「임시회장인 윤씨에게도 「좋습니까?」라고 말하며 미소짓는 SGI회장.

제안은 다시 이어졌다.

「귀국과 인연이 깊은 규슈의 후쿠오카 연수도장에 「한일 우호의 비(碑)」를 건립하고 싶다.」

「도쿄에 세워지는 「창가세계여성회관」의 기저부에 한국의 부인부·여자부 회담자 전원의 이름을 거두어 현창해 드리고 싶다.」

「일본인이 동경하는 땅인 한국의 제주도엔 연수도장이 건립될 때는 이것을 「한일우호연수도장」으로 하면 어떻겠습니까?」

하나하나의 제안에 우리와 같은 환희의 박수가 장내에 울려 퍼졌다.

그리고 최후의 제안. 「여성을 소중히 하는 운동」을 일본에서도, 귀국에서도 펼치고 싶습니다. 여성을 함부로 꾸짖는 남성은 모두 결의로 「추방」하면 어떻까요.」

목소를 터뜨리면서 벗들은 모두 SGI회장의 따뜻한 마음에 가슴이 뜨거워지고 있었다. 「가장 노고해 왔는가. 모두가 어떤 생각을 하면서 끝까지 살아왔는가. 누구보다도 잘 알고 있는 사람이 여기 있다.」

박제일 이사장의 목소리도 신바람이 나 있었다. 「정말로 기쁩니다. 이 기쁨은 말로써 표현할 수 없습니다.」

73년에 입신. 86년 나가노 연수도장에서 처음으로 이케다 SGI회장을 만났다.

「당시 저는 권태 남자부장이었습니다.」

회장은 한국의 청년들에게 「선시초」에 「백계국에서 일체경과 교주석존의 목상 및 승니들이 일본국에 건너왔는데」(어서 263쪽)라는 어문을 배독하며 한국이 불교전래의 대은인의 나라임을 이야기했다. 그리고 한 사람 한 사람에게 전혼을 담아 격려했다.

「양친을 잃고 방랑하고 있던 자식이 자부(慈父)를 만난 것 같은 마음이었습니다. 그 다정함, 자애에 너무도 감동했습니다.」

귀국후, 청년이 한국에 새로운 파동을 일으켜 12년 후 마침내 이 날을 맞이했던 것이다. 「저희들의 선배들은 30년전부터 이 날이 오기를 기원해 왔습니다.」

우중회 전국부인부장은 81년, 전국여자부장이었을 때, 간사이에서 처음으로 이케다SGI회장과 만났다고 있었다.

그 2년 후 홋카이도의 사포르 미야노모리 가든에서 한국의 청년부 대표와 이케다 SGI회장이 만났다. 「여러분에게 대해서는 모두 듣고 있습니다. 장래의 대한국을 담당할 여러분들이기 때문에 마음껏 노고하고 제목을 올려 성장해 주십시오.」라고.

「저희 나라에는 반일감정이 강하기 때문에 오늘날까지 온갖 노고가 있었던게 사실입니다. 그러나 마키구치 선생님, 도다선생님은 군국주

의와 정면에서 싸우셨습니다. 이케다 선생님은 저희 나라를 가장 사랑하시고 인류의 평화를 위해 전진하고 계십니다. 이 사실이 자연히 널리 알려지게 된 것입니다. 진실은 반드시 이깁니다.」

김병호 청년부장은 말한 다.

「한일우호와 세계평화라는 이케다 선생님의 구상을 실현시키려면 아무리 곤란한 일이라도 조금도 힘들지 않습니다.」

목숨을 걸고 길을 열어주신 선생님께 목숨을 걸고 이어가야만 한국의 청년부입니다. 이케다 선생님은 타고르를 인용하시면서 한국을 「동방의 동불」이라고 말씀해 주셨습니다. 저희 스스로가 동불이 되어 사회를 밝히고 세계에 평화의 빛을 넓히고 싶습니다.

저희들이 성장한만큼 사회의 신뢰를 받게 됩니다. 사회에서 신뢰받는만큼 불법의 평화사상도 넓혀집니다. 한일우호도 진전됩니다. 이렇게 기쁜 일은 없기 때문입니다.」

이날 이케다 회장은 도착하자마자 본부 문화회관의 정원에 한국의 나라꽃인 무궁화를 식수했다.

무궁화는 말라붙은 대지 위에서 한여름의 작열하는 햇빛을 내리받으며 피기 시작한다. 아침에 꽃을 피워 저녁무렵에 꽃이 떨어지는 한송이 꽃. 그러나 매일 새로운 꽃봉오리를 계속 피우며 연속적으로 1백일이 넘도록 꽃을 피운다. 이 강인한 생명력이야말로 한국 회원들의 불굴의 혼을 상징한다.

「만나볼 수 없었던 분들에게 부디 안부 잘 전해주세요. 삼가 여러분에게 최대의 경의를 포함합니다. 아무쪼록 「즐거운 인생을!」 「위대한 인생을!」 「승리의 인생을!」

21세기를 향해 무궁화와 같이 한국의 벗의 「연속승리의 행진」이 이날 시작되었다.

이케다 SGI회장은 한국에서의 모든 일정을 마치고 18일 귀국했다. (화광신문 5월 22일)

池田SGI회장 KSGI 첫 방문 이모저모

지난 18일 이케다(池田) SGI회장의 SGI한국 불교회 첫 방문으로 1백만 회원들의 염원과 기원이 이루어졌다.

한국 광포사에 영연히 저워지지 않을 새로운 역사가 이뤄진 것이다. SGI회장은 「21세기를 향해 불법의 르네상스가 한국에서 열려간다.」며 한국에 큰 기대를 보였다.

○...SGI회장은 광선회관에 들어서며 「만나서 무척 반갑습니다. 아주 훌륭한 회관입니다.」라고 칭찬했다. 특히 광선회관 로비에 꾸며진 각종 꽃들을 보며 긴 감탄사를 연 발했다. 이 꽃들은 부인부와 여자부 30명으로 구성된 꽃꽃이 그룹에서 3일동안 꼬박 준비한 것. 빨강, 보라, 노랑, 자주 등 갖가지 색들의 꽃들은 꽃바람회장을 방불케 했기 등 꽃내음이 회관 여기저기에 스며들어 참석자들은 싱그러운 꽃향기를 맡으며 스승과의 지워지지 않을 역사의 한때를 맞이할 수 있었다. 회관 입구에 들어서자마자 눈에 띄는 것은 빨간 꽃바탕에 수놓아진 노란 꽃. 그것은 일본어로 「선생님! 환영합니다. 어서오세요.」라는 메시지.

○...SGI회장의 한국방문 기념 근행회가 거행됐던 광선회관 왼쪽에는 SGI회장 부부의 모습을 생생히 담은 대형 그림이 걸려 있었다.

SGI회장은 그림을 향해 손을 들고 미소 지었다. 또 그림에 대해 「대단히 감사합니다. 훌륭한 그림입니다.」라고 말했다.

이 그림은 신천권의 안남숙 지구담과 남편 장천우 지구담이 하나된 기원으로 완성한 것. 안 지구담은 지난 7일부터 작업에 착수, 꼬박 일주일째 걸쳐 가로 10미터 세로 5미터의 혼을 불어넣은 대작을 완성했다. 안 지구담은 경북대에서 강의를 하고 화실을 운영하는 바쁜 일정속에서 새벽 4~5시까지 작

업을 계속했고 하루 수면시간은 고작 3~4시간이었다. 안 지구담은 「선생님의 가장 좋은 모습을 담아 내겠다.」며 작업 내내 마음속으로 제목을 부르며 대작업에 도전했다. 남편 장씨도 안 지구담의 매니저로서 아이디어에서부터 작업 뒷일을 도맡았으며 하루 10시간씩의 창제로 아내를 지원했다. 그림은 한복을 차려입은 SGI회장 부부가 미소짓고 있는 가운데 심장생, 무궁화, 삼색 무지개, 전통 안방문의 문늪 등이 상징적으로 들어가 있다. 심장생은 SGI회장 부부의 장수와 체천선신을, 무궁화는 SGI한국불교회 멤버를, 안방문은 귀한 손님을 대환영한다는 의미. 「모두가 스승의 일념을 느끼고 스승의 마음을 기쁘게 할 수 있으면 안의 지구담은 「앞으로 선생님을 만난 유명한 식사의 그림도 그리고 싶다.」면서 「올해 대한민국 미술대전을 비롯한 각 공모전에서 대상을 차지해 스승의 은혜에 보답하겠다.」고 밝혔다.

○...SGI회장의 첫 SGI한국 불교회 방문을 경축하는 기념식수로 무궁화 한 그루가 심어졌다. 이 무궁화는 종로권 신대길 지부장이 기증한 것. 신 지부장은 우연히 형의 농장에 갔다가 새순처럼 신선한 돌과수령 20여년된 한 그루의 무궁화를 발견했다. 신 지부장은 「꼭 불교회에 공양하고 싶다.」는 마음으로 지원해서 기증해 역사적인 기념식수가 이루어진 것이다.

○...SGI회장이 불교회를 처음으로 방문한 자애의 발자취는 방명록에도 잘 나타나 있다. SGI회장은 방명록에 「문화 대은인의 나라 대문화의 스승의 나라에 영광 있으라! 나의 한국의 사자(佛師子)에게 행복있으라!」고 적었다. (화광신문, 5월 22일)

A HEAD ABOVE

By WALTER AND KELLY ROGERS
SOUTH DAKOTA

The annual Volksmarch at the Crazy Horse Memorial drew 14,804 people to South Dakota's Black Hills June 5-7. Just a few days earlier, nearly 500 tons of rock were blasted off the mountain, marking the end to 50 years of work on the memorial, and giving participants a stunning view of its completed face.

Fifty years after the son of Polish immigrants began work in South Dakota's Black Hills, the world's largest sculpture is finally completed — a tribute to the ideals of a great Native American leader and the perseverance of a dream.

Korczak Ziolkowski endured a cruel childhood. He was a self-taught artist and had a successful career. Ziolkowski was a prize-winning sculptor by 1939, the year he began assisting sculptor Gutzon Borglum on his cre-

The perseverance of the Volksmarchers — participants in an annual, non-competitive hike — emulates those of both the subject, Lakota Chief Crazy Horse, and the original sculptor of this inspirational endeavor, Korczak Ziolkowski (pronounced "jewel-KUFF-skee").

In 1948, Lakota Chief Henry Standing Bear announced, "My fellow chiefs and I would like the white man to know the red man has great heroes, too."

Chief Crazy Horse was chosen as the subject for a monument in the sacred Black Hills. Crazy Horse, considered a great Lakota leader who was always concerned about the welfare of every individual within his following, lived at a time when his ancient ways were changing, in drastic and often tragic ways.

He was dedicated to protecting his people and had no equal as warrior or chief. He was a deeply spiritual man and wanted only peace for his people.

Crazy Horse died under grievous and deceitful circumstances at age 37, but his memory and his spirit live on in the hearts and minds of Native Americans.

Born of Polish immigrants in 1908 and orphaned at age 1,



Workers put finishing touches on the nose of a sculpture of Crazy Horse taking shape on a mountain ridge in the Black Hills near Custer, S.D. The sculpture, larger than all four faces of nearby Mount Rushmore, was dedicated on June 3, 50 years to the day after Korczak Ziolkowski began carving it. The face itself is nine stories tall.

ation at Mount Rushmore.

At age 34, Ziolkowski volunteered for World War II and was among those landing on Omaha Beach.

After the war, he accepted an invitation from Native Americans and dedicated the rest of his life to the Crazy Horse Memorial, destined to be the world's largest sculpture.

Ziolkowski worked on Crazy Horse without salary. Despite decades of financial hardship and racial prejudice, he devoted the rest of his life to creating this Indian memorial in the Black Hills until his death in 1982 at age 74. He was buried

in a tomb near his sculpture.

The completion of his dream was left to family and followers.

Both Korczak Ziolkowski and Crazy Horse gave themselves totally for causes in which they believed.

They both struggled and overcame great obstacles, faced their enemies head on, and refused to back down.

Because of their courage and dedication, both Korczak Ziolkowski and Crazy Horse serve as inspirations for us today and for generations to come.

WT

COMING NEXT WEEK:

The Boys and Girls Group's 'Friends for Peace'

GET REAL

"Get Real" is a new series by Jeannie Olander and Colleen Bachman about real problems that teens face today. In the coming months, Jeannie and Colleen, who are the SGI-USA junior high and high school division leaders respectively, will tackle everything from peer pressure to family problems — all the concerns that have been brought up to them by teens from across the country. The first installment is about graduating from high school and entering the "real" world.



DON'T PANIC

ON GRADUATION DAY

By JEANNIE OLANDER Junior High School Division Leader

Do you experience anxiety about your future? Do you break into a cold sweat about the possibilities waiting out there in the big world? Whether we are in junior high school, high school or now graduating from high school, the thought of future goals and future responsibilities gnaws at us at some level. Graduating from high school is the big point at which we become very aware of something that we are forced to do: making life decisions. I remember feeling as though nothing in my

educational experiences had really prepared me for being an adult. I had been busy rebelling against adults, and then, suddenly, without any warning, I was supposed to be an adult. There are many levels of responsibility of being 18 and older: financial, academic, emotional.... There is a question that you will be asked from this point forward: "What are you going to do?" It will be asked in many different ways: "What's your major?" "What do you want to be when you grow up?" "Don't you have a job yet?"

I am now 32, have a bachelor's degree and have had a very, very diverse assortment of jobs. I also have had many goals, some that I have fulfilled, some that I have chosen not to fulfill and some that I have continued to work earnestly toward. From the age of 18 to now, I have realized a very profound secret, which I hope can help you. It's perception. Our perception about ourselves can either be deluded or enlightened. It's important to perceive and moreover seek to perceive the truth about your life. Nichiren

Daishonin says to not seek the Mystic Law outside yourself. I have realized recently in my TV production career that if I believe I am unworthy of my dreams, then I torture myself. However, if I chant to evoke the truth of my life, the truth that I am a Buddha, that I have enormous potential, then I am in the mode of confidence. And having this confidence in my life is my mission.

It's funny, but I have found that because I practice, all my life ambitions have become a means rather than an end. In other words, I see that I am on an incredible journey of life rather than a career track. My career goals have been the challenges that helped me to become self-aware. I see my weakness. I challenge my preconceived delusions. And I expand my life.

Growing up in this society as a girl, I felt very limited as to what I could accomplish. I always thought someone bigger and better would be the boss, run the show. But I now know that this way of thinking was false, and that I am responsible for changing my way of thinking. Amazing historical figures are people who did not limit themselves. SGI President Ikeda is constantly trying to teach us this.

So, don't panic. You have Buddhahood inherent in your life, and you have the tool of chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo to bring it out. The causes that you make today will accumulate and shape your future. There is a way to realize your dreams. The real challenge is to be in the habit of chanting. Learn to challenge your limited ways of thinking with chanting and open the gate to a world of unlimited possibilities.

Congratulations to all the graduating seniors out there! We are all excited to watch you embark on your wonderful journey of life.

One in a series

What a
WONDERFUL WORLD!

Read the *World Tribune* weekly to find out the latest goings-on in the SGI and learn more about this Buddhism. Our regular features include:

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- "Discussions on Youth," a dialogue among the SGI president and young leaders on topics of interest to youth.
- *The New Human Revolution*, the SGI president's serialized history of the SGI.
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Breakfast at Nikken's



EXPERIENCE In the late 1980s, the Nichiren Shoshu head temple, as seen through the eyes of an American teenager, was not a happy place. In light of the history that has unfolded — the excommunication of SGI members by the head temple, the priesthood's demolition of donated buildings — Craig DeRousse goes back to that pre-temple-issue time and remembers how it felt to be at the head temple then. A family in the priesthood had "adopted" him as their own. He was on the "inside," and this is what he witnessed....

By CRAIG DeROUSSE
Los Angeles

Having breakfast with Nikken Abe, high priest of Nichiren Shoshu, was not exactly what I had expected.

The year was 1989. I was 19 years old and living in Tokyo.

Two years earlier, while visiting Nichiren Shoshu's head temple, Taiseki-ji, for the first time at age 17, I decided to move to Japan after graduating from high school. I wanted to learn Japanese, so that I could hear what SGI President Ikeda and Nikken had to say without interpreters.

Foreign languages have always been my forte. I understood French by the end of elementary school, Spanish by the end of high school, and Japanese, by college, had become the easiest and most natural foreign language for me. By 20, I passed the highest level Japanese language proficiency test administered by the Japanese government.

Throughout my first year in Japan, 1988, I visited Taiseki-ji about once a month. After several monthly trips, I began making

friends with people living in and around the head temple. One young priest's family in particular adopted me as their "American son."

Thanks in part to my new friends in the priesthood, by late 1988 I could visit Taiseki-ji as often as I liked. I would journey to Taiseki-ji from Tokyo about twice a month, usually staying for two or three days at a time. I tried to visit on days without major pilgrimages so that I could walk around alone, stopping here and there, wherever I wished, to chant to my heart's content.

Sometimes, I literally chanted all day long. I would walk around every part of the temple grounds, chanting in every temple building that I could or among the trees or next to a stream.

As time passed, however, I real-

lead priest would skip whole prayers or jump from one part of the book to another. The enunciation was so bad at times that I couldn't even follow along. Neither could anyone else. Ushitora gongyo was even worse.

When I asked my priesthood family why the priests showed up late for gongyo and then rushed through it incomprehensibly fast, they said it had been like that for as long as they could remember.

I noticed that the priests' performances did improve dramatically, however, when Soka Gakkai pilgrimage groups arrived. The difference I saw between priests' behavior when members were and were not around was huge. I was confused and disillusioned by this gap. But I convinced myself it wasn't

physically, on a regular basis. Some boys were afraid to tell me about their lives at Taiseki-ji for fear of being punished. Others were afraid to be seen speaking with me at all. All of them were hesitant to express their sadness.

I couldn't believe it. I went into denial. I convinced myself it must be like summer camp; I imagined that the boys were simply homesick for their families, and that they would either get over it or get used to it. Although I hoped they were exaggerating, I feared they were probably downplaying the situation, as is Japanese nature.

I continued to visit Taiseki-ji with the same sincerity and frequency, although I reduced my interaction with many of the unhappy people I had met. Besides the tormented acolytes and negligent priests, I also met my share of rude administrators and arrogant families.

As a sincere but struggling student, I always brought with me to Taiseki-ji at least \$20 or \$30 to give as a contribution. One evening, just before I was about to begin evening gongyo with all the priests and acolytes, I explained to an administrator priest that it was the second anniversary of my father's death. I asked him if I could offer special incense during gongyo in my father's memory.

He said that they would be happy to put my father's name on a plaque, give him a Buddha name and offer special prayers for him during evening gongyo — for \$30.

I said, "Excuse me?"

He said, "So that your father might attain enlightenment, please show your sincerity by offering a contribution of \$30."

Feeling both a little hurt and indignant, I said: "Well, I contributed

\$50 yesterday, when I arrived. Tonight, I'm going back to Tokyo, and I have only enough money for the train ride home."

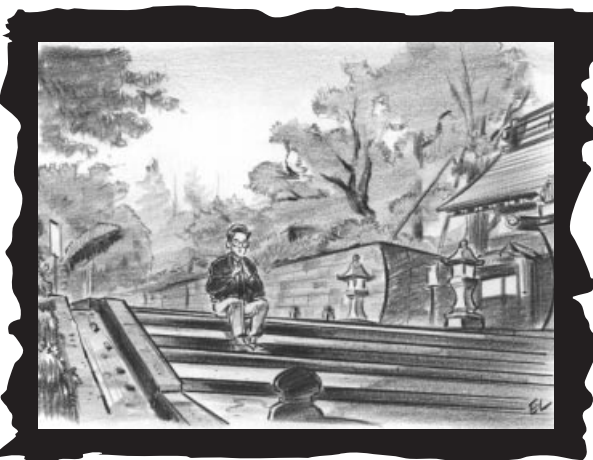
To this, he abruptly replied: "No, no, no! That money you gave yesterday was a *general* contribution. It's not the same. If you don't have \$30 today, then bring it next time, and we'll pray for your father then."

I'm standing in the middle of what's supposed to be the head temple of true Buddhism, and I'm bargaining for my deceased father's enlightenment? I felt emotionally violated. Did anyone else know about this kind of immoral behavior among the priests? Could I be the only one? I thought not. But I didn't know in whom I could confide.

To compound my dilemma, around the same time, I met several families living around Taiseki-ji who claimed to be related to earlier high priests, some dating back hundreds of years. They had "original" Gohonzon inscribed by people like Nikko Shonin and Nichimoku Shonin. One family even had a Gohonzon they said was inscribed by the Daishonin himself.

Some of them kept these Gohonzon in closets, bringing them down only to show guests. They treated them not as Gohonzon but more like trophies. The few Gohonzon that were properly enshrined in altars were dusty and unkempt. I never saw anyone chant to them. No one ever even mentioned chanting.

Since I was chanting at least a couple of hours a day back then, I talked about my experiences and asked about theirs. They said that they really didn't need to chant.



ized that, outside of morning and evening gongyo, I really was alone in my chanting. Wherever I went, whenever I went, all around Taiseki-ji, I was the *only* one chanting. Besides the obligatory ceremonies and gongyos, I never encountered anyone reading Nichiren Daishonin's writings, talking about Buddhism or chanting daimoku.

I was also dismayed by the poor quality of gongyo performed at Taiseki-ji. The priests' gongyos were sloppy and rushed compared to the gongyos I did with Soka Gakkai members in Tokyo. Sometimes the

as bad as it seemed, and that the priests (and their families) just needed to do a little more human revolution.

That thought would soon become a huge understatement. As time passed, I discovered that many of the acolytes were a disturbingly unhappy group of young men and boys. Most of the acolytes I met were utterly miserable.

Some of the younger acolytes told me that priests and older acolytes abused them, both emotionally and

The lineage of their families and the possession of such special Gohonzon was enough to bring them great fortune.

In January 1989, after attending New Year's celebrations at the head temple, I received word that my priesthood family had obtained special permission for me to participate in Coming of Age Day celebrations with High Priest Nikken. Coming of Age in Japan is traditionally commemorated the year in which you turn 20.

Since my friends at Taiseki-ji considered me their son, they had asked permission to bring me to the events. Besides the special gongyos and chanting before the Dai-Gohonzon, I would have the chance to meet Nikken and have breakfast with him. Only the children of priests and their families were invited to attend.

There were just a handful of us at breakfast that day — about 10 participants plus parents and siblings, less than 30 total. Despite the small number of attendees, there were many imposing security guards; big men in dark suits standing around this half-empty room in the middle of Taiseki-ji with us.

It was freezing cold, pre-dawn, in the middle of January. The room was frigid and dreary. Four walls and a floor of barren concrete, harshly lit with a few exposed neon lights. Cafeteria-style aluminum benches and tables occupied half of the room; the other half was empty and dark. The only two windows at the far side of the room were still black, as the sun had yet to rise.

After we took our seats on the cold metal benches, we waited in silence. When Nikken failed to appear, I started whispering to one of my friends: "Where's the high priest?" "Why isn't anyone talking?" "What's the deal with the temperature in here?" The stone-faced guard nearest me was not amused. If his gloomy looks could have killed, I'd have been dead.

My friend whispered to me to "just be quiet and wait."

After a while, our breakfast was methodically and silently distributed by a couple of gaunt women who appeared from another room.

They served us very cold little bowls of sticky, sweet bean porridge — not exactly what I had in mind.

As I reluctantly began to taste mine, I was sharply reprimanded and told to wait until the high priest arrived.

And so again we waited. With all this time on my hands, I started pondering the morning's No. 1 mystery. Why the need for one guard for every four attendees? I knew Nikken was high profile, but we weren't in Beirut — we were in the countryside, in the heart of Japan, in the heart of Taiseki-ji, no less. Besides, everyone in the room was either a priest or one of his family.

The whole scene was downright eerie. It felt like some weird movie



come to life — a cross between *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Seven Years in Tibet*.

But, being an open-minded kind of guy, I figured it was probably a cultural misunderstanding on my part. Maybe this was normal for them.

And so again I waited.

At long last, Nikken made his entrance, surrounded by administrators, attendants and even more guards. Most everyone stood and bowed low in silence, although some nearest Nikken fell to their hands and knees, bowing down to the ground. It vaguely reminded me of a childhood audience I had with the Pope in Rome. But Nikken was no John Paul.

Nikken laughed and smirked and laughed some more, without saying anything. He wasn't laughing with these people, he was laughing at these people.

I kept catching myself thinking badly of Nikken and others around him. I would immediately

reprimand myself, thinking: "I can't think this way about priests, let alone the high priest. I must have the wrong attitude. I'll chant about it."

Nikken sat facing the rest of us at a table with some other high-ranking priests. Still, no one else spoke a word. Most of the people had their heads down, eating solemnly from their cold little bowls of porridge. Nikken himself, on the other hand, was loud and boisterous. He laughed a lot, but he always laughed alone. His laughter had a menacing tone — the way a bully laughs after he steals someone's lunch money.

In Japanese, there are distinct forms of speech and levels of politeness that one should use when speaking. Each verb has several

more profound.

To sum it up, Nikken struck me as arrogant, unintelligent and base.

That's when I could hold back my feelings no longer. I stayed at Taiseki-ji one more day, chanting nearly all day long. I talked to my priesthood family, telling them exactly what I thought. To my surprise, they completely agreed with me about Nikken.

Later that year, I began studying at Soka University, where I had the opportunity to meet SGI President Ikeda many times, both in public settings and in private. In sharp contrast to Nikken, he always struck me as a living example of boundless wisdom, strength and graciousness. The first time I met him personally was the first time I understood what a mentor really is. His life-condition exudes the most joyful, permeating vitality I have ever encountered. I felt then, and even more so now, that I must be the most fortunate person in the world to have found a mentor of his caliber.

While a freshman at Soka University, Nichiren Shoshu split from Soka Gakkai and excommunicated the entire SGI. How a person can be excommunicated from his own enlightenment, I will never understand. Nevertheless, I was not surprised by the priesthood's scheme. I knew that the priests had saved up their money for years in advance, planning to attack the Gakkai. I completed my bachelor's degree at Soka University and returned to the United States in 1994, where I have continued to recount my experiences with the priesthood with as many friends as possible.

There is so much more about this issue that I want to share, but suffice it to say, if everyone in the world had experienced what I have experienced, there would be no priesthood issue because there would be no priesthood, at least not as we have ever known it. For, I believe, no one in their right mind could support the existence of such a corrupt, mistaken and dysfunctional group. ♪

Illustrations by Ed Lee

SEIZE ^{the} DAY

Their hearts aflame with a sense of justice, youth should never fail to seize the moment, to stand up....

— SGI President Ikeda, Aug. 17, 1997

"Seize the Day," the SGI-USA youth division pullout, is published as a service for *World Tribune* readers, appearing in the fourth issue of the *World Tribune* each month. To subscribe to the *World Tribune*, please call us at (800) 835-4558 or e-mail us at SGISubs@aol.com.

The SGI-USA (Soka Gakkai International-USA) has a strong commitment to youth — hence the SGI-USA youth division. This division supports young people in practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, in developing their lives and in contributing to society. Within the division are concentrated groups like the junior high and high school divisions, the student division (college students), musical performing groups, the young men's and women's divisions and service groups. To find out about youth activities in your area, please contact the SGI-USA community center nearest you or call our national headquarters at (310) 451-8811.

We want to know what you think of "Seize the Day" and need your ideas. Send your letters to the *World Tribune*, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA, 90401. By fax to (310) 260-8910. Or by e-mail to seize@sgi-usa.org.

Special thanks for this issue to Ed Feasel (youth division leader), Ellen Brown (design & layout), and Amir Kaspi and Bobbie Stemple (communicators). ♪

THE SUMMER OF YOUTH

AT THE FLORIDA NATURE AND CULTURE CENTER

The summer of youth had come. The golden sun rose in the sky, casting off the rainy season's gray. Bright, fluffy white clouds floated in the blue sky, and the fresh green of the trees glistened luxuriant in the sunlight.

— *SGJ President Ikeda*
The New Human Revolution, Volume 6

The youth division invites you to attend one of our five great conferences this summer at the FNCC. Refresh your faith over a long weekend at the beautiful FNCC campus right in the Everglades.

Spaces are going very fast! Interested members, please contact your appropriate regional youth leaders as soon as possible.

Young Men's Division Conference

Ensuring Victory: The 2nd YMD Leadership Conference
Thursday–Sunday, July 9–12
Contact your local YMD leaders

Young Women's Division Conference

Seize the Day: The 2nd YWD Conference
Thursday–Sunday, July 16–19
Contact your local YWD leaders

Junior High and High School Division Conference

The 3rd Junior High and High School Division Leadership Conference
Thursday–Sunday, July 23–26
Contact your local junior high and high school division leaders

Student Division Conference

Student Fest '98: Dreams Into Reality
Thursday–Sunday, Aug. 6–9
Contact your local student or youth division leaders

Youth Music Groups Conference

Vanguards of Kosen-rufu: The 3rd Nationwide Music Groups Conference
Thursday–Sunday, Aug. 13–16
Contact your local Fife and Drum Corps, Music Corps and Youth Band leaders



The land package price for each conference is \$375 (airfare not included). This covers sleeping accommodations for three nights (with assigned roommate); all meals from Thursday dinner through Sunday lunch; ground transportation to and from the Fort Lauderdale and Miami International airports (within a specified time frame); bus tour (admission fees not included); and conference instructional and study materials. Payment must be made at least two weeks prior to each conference start date.

AND DON'T FORGET! Coming this November — the Youth Support Groups Conference (Nov. 19–22). Contact your local Byakuren, Soka Group and Gajokai leaders for more information.