

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION
A NOVELIZED HISTORY OF THE SOKA GAKKAI
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'We are still in our movement's pioneering days,' President Yamamoto encourages the members at the America West General Meeting. 'There are bound to be many difficulties on the road ahead. Yet the only way to ensure a truly happy, prosperous future for America is to spread this Buddhist philosophy of peace and human rights, of compassion and the sanctity of life, by sharing it with each person.'

Smiling, Shin'ichi Yamamoto continued: "Until now Gakkai songs have been written in Japan, and all of you have been singing those songs here as well. But there's no need for you to continue doing that from here on.

"If you feel the songs you've sung up to now are not quite appropriate or don't match the musical tastes of people here, you can go ahead and write some new Gakkai songs," he said. "And if those songs capture people's imaginations, then they'll come to be sung by members in Japan as well — and perhaps in many countries throughout the world. I have no doubt that the time will come when Gakkai songs with music and lyrics composed by English-speaking members will also be sung in Japan."

Among the questions there was also a request made for more English translations of Nichiren Daishonin's writings and of the Soka Gakkai's faith-related guidance as well as the publication of an English-language paper like the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper in Japan. These requests underscored how seriously the members were thinking about the future of the kosen-rufu movement in America. Shin'ichi was encouraged by their earnest spirit.

After having fielded about 10 questions, he brought the session to a close, saying: "All of you have stood up bravely for your beloved America and the happiness of your friends, embarking on a struggle to which you have pledged to dedicate your lives. You have persevered despite language or cultural barriers and endured countless hardships and obstacles with tenacity and fortitude. I have not the slightest doubt that all your efforts will adorn your lives with immense benefit and good fortune. We shine only to the extent that we take action and work hard ourselves. This is a principle of Buddhism.

"The present development of the organization for American kosen-rufu has been achieved through your admirable efforts," he went on. "But we are still in our movement's pioneering days. There are bound to be many difficulties on the road ahead. Yet the only way to ensure a truly happy, prosperous future for America is to spread this Buddhist philosophy of peace and human rights, of compassion and the sanctity of life, by sharing it with each person.

"So together let's continue to sow the seeds of the Mystic Law in the soil of America," he concluded, "and through our own efforts write a history of kosen-rufu's magnificent triumph! Let's adorn our lives with victory as well!"

Loud applause followed. The members' faces were filled with passionate resolve. Fresh, green shoots of kosen-rufu had begun to appear in America, heralding the dawn of a new day, the arrival of a new spring.

When the West General Meeting was over, Shin'ichi went to one of the small rooms in the hall. Within a short time, a steady stream of leaders poured in to see him. They all

looked happy and excited. Shin'ichi greeted each person with a smile and warm congratulations on this fresh start for the American organization.

Shin'ichi took time to encourage the members who came by to see him, presenting each with a small gift he had brought from Japan. These included books, *fukusa* (square cloths for wrapping prayer beads) and commemorative medals marking the Gakkai's achievement of a membership of 3 million households the previous November.

Masako Clarke also stopped by to see Shin'ichi. He invited her to sit in the chair beside his and said to her: "That was a wonderful experience you shared! I was deeply moved by it.

"I'm sure there will be many hardships and challenges ahead," he went on, "but please don't let them defeat you. You and your family living happily will serve as proof of your husband's attainment of Buddhahood. So please become so happy that you'll be the envy of all around you. I know that this will definitely happen.

"Raise your two children to be fine young people who can contribute to kosen-rufu," he said. "That's how you can show your love for your husband."

Shin'ichi then brought out a Soka Gakkai gold lapel pin, which was usually conferred on top leaders, and said: "I want to give this to your newborn son. When he grows up, please let him wear it when he does Gakkai activities."

He continued: "I know you'll hang in there. No matter what happens, never lose heart."

After handing Mrs. Clarke the pin, he shook her hand. Tears glistening in her eyes, she replied resolutely, "I'll do my best."

Shin'ichi gave all his energy to encouraging the members. Each day was singular; it would never come again. A few words of encouragement can help people make tremendous breakthroughs and strides in faith. But this can only happen when we seize every opportunity that presents itself.

When Shin'ichi returned to the hotel, he reviewed the organizational structure for each region of the United States with the leaders from Japan and the new America General Chapter leaders, Emiko Haruyama and Nagayasu Masaki. They would only be together until New York, where they were headed the next day. After New York, Shin'ichi would travel to Europe with Kiyoshi Jujo and Nagayasu. The other leaders would travel to different parts of the United States to establish new chapters and districts.

In New York, they also planned to form a chapter. Looking over the draft of proposed leadership appointments, Shin'ichi saw Emiko's husband, Tomio, listed as a candidate for chapter leader.

"Yes, Tomio might be a good choice, I think, for chapter leader," Shin'ichi remarked. Then, to the general chapter women's leader, he asked, "Mrs. Haruyama, would you mind asking your husband to come to the airport in New York tomorrow?"

They would be leaving Los Angeles the following morning and arriving in New York late in the afternoon. The America East General Meeting, which would also be the inaugural meeting for New York Chapter, was to be held that evening. Shin'ichi wanted to meet Tomio to interview him for the position of chapter leader.

To be continued