

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MAY 17 SPEECH NO BORDERS NECESSARY

In his speech at a dinner held by South Korea's prestigious Cheju National University, SGI President Ikeda encourages us to strive for a borderless world.

Cheju has, from the distant past, been a place where brave women have shone. During a famine two centuries ago, a noble woman of Cheju, Kim Man Deog, used her wealth to purchase grain and distribute it without delay among the starving populace, thus saving large numbers from death. The story of her kind deed is famous.

My wife and I dedicate the very significant honors we have received today to the mothers of Korea and the world, who are courageously working to contribute to society and improve our future.

President Makiguchi's martyrdom is the eternal foundation of Soka University.

In the struggle for peace, my wife's mother fought bravely alongside first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, undaunted by the oppression of the Japanese military authorities. My wife was a fourth-grade elementary school student when her mother first took her to meet Mr. Makiguchi.

From early on, Mr. Makiguchi emphasized the great cultural debt Japan owes to Korea. He was enraged by the arrogant abuses of Japanese militarism that ignored this obligation, and he refused to remain silent about it. Mr. Makiguchi's martyrdom for the cause of peace remains the eternal foundation of Soka University.

One of the students of the first class of Soka University, 28 years ago, was a bright, praiseworthy young woman who is a Korean resident in Japan. I recall eating a bowl of noodles with her on the campus that first spring while cherry blossoms and forsythia bloomed.

I wanted to encourage this fine young woman, who bravely challenged the despicable prejudices of Japanese society, so I wrote an inscription on the back of a photograph of the university, which I happened to have with me: "Originally there were no borders dividing us into nations. Only later did humankind create these artificial boundaries. Therefore, we must always remember to strive for and create a world in which we can live in beautiful human solidarity, transcending national borders."

This young woman went on to become the first Soka University graduate to qualify as a licensed tax accountant, offering an inspiring example and blazing the way for the students of subsequent graduating classes. Today, she is a mother of two and a women's leader in her local area. She is also very proud of her Korean heritage and works hard to promote friendly Korea-Japan relations.

Poets should fight for youth, for the people, for all humanity.

I hope I am not presumptuous when I say that I am a man of action. I believe that *poet* is just another name for a fighter who stands at the forefront of the struggle for the interests of youth, of the people, of all humanity.

Title: No Borders Necessary

Subject: World Tribune 06/11/99 n.3246 p.8 WT990611p08 Cheju City, South Korea 05/17/99

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: 05/17/99 Borders Cheju City Daisaku Globalization Ikeda Korea Necessary South Speech

Today, your faculty expressed their trust in me by bestowing an honorary doctorate upon me, the first time this honor has been presented to a non-Korean. I am determined to reciprocate this trust by keeping up my fight for peace, education and culture as long as I live.

I pray with all my heart for the health of the entire faculty and the eternal prosperity and development of your wonderful university and Cheju Island.

President Ikeda's speech at a dinner hosted by Cheju National University in Cheju City, South Korea, May 17. See last week's issue for more on his visit to Cheju.