



## EXPERIENCE

Sarah Jones completely changes her life through visiting and encouraging other members.

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## YOUTH

'Discussions on Youth' continues with the topic of friendship.

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Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

## The Greatest Challenge of All: Arrogance

Our greatest challenge is to never become arrogant, the SGI president says in this speech commemorating SGI Day, Jan. 26. 'Human society is a seething pool of pride and jealousy,' he states. 'We must not allow ourselves to be swallowed up by its murky, swirling waters and, as a result, lose our faith.'

There was a woman of no particular name or repute. Nichiren Daishonin took up his brush specially for her and wrote her the following letter of encouragement: "In this turbulent world [rampant with persecution], evocative of howling winds buffeting the grasses and lightning striking terror in people's hearts, it is most wondrous that you have maintained your trust in me.

"It is said that if the roots are deep, the leaves will not wither," he went on, "and if there is a gem in a spring, the water will never be exhausted. Likewise, your faith is always fresh and resolute, probably because the roots of your faith are deep, and the gem of courageous faith shines in your heart. How respectable and admirable this is!" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1479).

All of you attending this conference, held in commemoration of SGI Day, are connected with one another by profound karmic ties and possess a sublime mission.

Representatives of the women's division, repre-

sentatives of our SGI interpreters and translation staff, and representatives of the nurses groups and doctors division: I have quoted this passage from the Daishonin's writings as an expression of my deepest admiration and appreciation for your sincere efforts.

A new biography [in Japanese] of China's "Mother of the People," Madame Deng Yingchao, is due for release soon by Ushio Publishing. The title is *Deng Yingchao — As a Wife, As a Comrade*. The author, Kazuteru Saionji, sent me a copy just from the printers, and I immediately sat down and read it. I found it most impressive.

I am deeply honored that in the prologue he has mentioned my meeting with Premier Zhou [in 1974] and the story behind the planting of the Zhou Enlai Cherry Tree at Soka University. He has done so with particular warmth and insight.

Mr. Saionji shared a deep friendship with Premier Zhou and Madame Deng. More than 40 years ago, the

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## Coming Soon: Nationwide Youth Culture Festival!

After the youth division holds a series of introductory meetings across the country next month, planning will begin for the 1st SGI-USA Youth Grand Culture Festival. To be held later this year in Los Angeles, this will be the first culture festival with nationwide participation since the January 1995 World Peace Youth Culture Festival in Hawaii.

The theme for this year's festival has recently been decided on: "Sound to the World! A Fanfare of Life and Peace!" It will commemorate 10 years of "the new SGI-USA," which began in February 1990, and the upcoming 40th anniversary, in 2000, of SGI President Ikeda's first trip to the United States.

SGI-USA Youth Division Leader Ed Feasel explains how the theme for the conference was decided on: "President Ikeda has often mentioned that the 21st century will be a century of life, a century of peace. Wanting to express that through the festival, we decided on the theme after several interactions with President Ikeda about it.

"We also want the culture festival to express our pledge as successors for the 21st century," Ed adds, "so we decided on this subtheme: 'A Vibrant Dance of Successors Expressing Our Pledge for the 21st Century.' I believe that it is our greatest fortune that we will usher in the new century with the holding of

this Youth Grand Culture Festival. I believe that the whole theme reflects President Ikeda's great expectations for all the youth of America."

Heading up the Festival Executive Advisory Committee will be SGI-USA Senior Vice General Director Danny Nagashima, joined by women's and men's division leaders Naomi Sasaki, Matilda Buck, Gary Murie and Dan Arden. There will also be a Festival Steering Committee, led by Ed, which will include from the youth division Kaz Hatakeyama, Reiko Groshell, James Herrmann, Renu Jiandani, Marion Wheeler and Cory Taylor.

— JEFF FARR

## NEWS

A community health seminar at the L AFC on cancer.

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## ESSAY

Thank you to all the important interpreters who have helped the SGI's movement.

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## FOCAL POINTS

Information on SGI-USA's upcoming special contribution campaign.

pages 10-11

# Celebrating Martin Luther King

SGI-USA Oklahoma members came out to march, signs in hand, for the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade on Jan. 18. The members were proud to get involved in the community. David Vidato, a young men's division member, served as one of the parade coordinators for the Martin Luther King Federal Holiday Coalition, creating many valuable relationships and memories in Oklahoma.

—SYLVIA VIDATO



Photo by DUOANE WILLIAMS



On Jan. 18 at the Jet Stadium in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., an estimated 700 to 800 people participated in a public rally and march celebrating the life and dream of Martin Luther King Jr. Mr. Jessie Baker volunteered the SGI-USA to participate in the rally, and about 30 enthusiastic members from the Gulf Coast Area attended. Members from districts in Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and Mobile, Ala., came out to support the activity.

—ANN ARNOLD

# Community Health Seminar Focuses on Cancer

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



At the LAFC, Dr. Mamdooh Ghoneum discusses his research.

On Jan. 24, good health, positive attitude and proper medical treatment were the focus of the first in a series of community health seminars to be offered at the Los Angeles Friendship Center today. The keynote speaker was Dr. Mamdooh Ghoneum, an accomplished cancer researcher from Drew University and UCLA.

Dr. Ghoneum discussed his research and findings about one of our world's most elusive killers: cancer.

Dr. Mamdooh has found that in many cases, innovative treatment along with chemotherapy, prayer and a positive attitude, the cancer was eliminated from his patients! Even in such difficult cases as brain cancer, this prescription for wellness brought cancerous cells down to a normal (not fatal) level.

Those attending the seminar also learned that other factors that can reduce the risk of cancer are quitting smoking, eating lots of fruits and veg-

etables, working to reduce pollution and eliminating stress from our lives.

We all suffer from some sort of stress. In today's world it almost seems impossible to get through the day without feeling overwhelmed by work, family or something as simple as finding a parking space at the mall. Research shows, however, that prayer and meditation practiced with faith and determination can greatly reduce stress in our lives.

How can reciting gongyo and chanting daimoku actually reduce our risk of cancer? Dr. Ghoneum's research offers documentary proof of the connection between the body and mind. His studies show that chanting or meditation increases alpha brain waves and

decreases beta waves, the optimal condition to stimulate the production of strong white blood cells in our bodies. He found that after prayer, the cancer patients' white blood cells were producing more granules, the tiny yet powerful little bullets that kill cancer.

Demonstrating the healing power of chanting, friends and neighbors from the community listened as Shigeru Morita shared his experience of overcoming cancer through faith in the Gohonzon. Dr. Ghoneum then closed the seminar with a brief question-and-answer session.

The next seminar is scheduled for April and will focus on alternative medicine and the body's ability to heal itself.

—MELEA MEYER

### Correction:

Last week in SGI President Ikeda's essay "Open to All," the very last line of the essay, regarding President Ikeda's hopes for young people, was missing (p. 10). It should have ended, "I am looking forward to them taking their place in the world." We apologize for the mistake.

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The World Tribune welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

Establishing my law career and finding a home in one of the most competitive markets in the nation is just one of the great benefits of my Buddhist practice.

In 1992, I graduated from law school in St. Louis, Mo. I wanted to move to San Francisco and establish a career in law there eventually, but I decided first to take the Illinois State Bar and practice in Chicago for a while. However, problems in my family erupted during the summer after graduation, so I decided to move to San Francisco immediately. I knew moving would be difficult but I wasn't prepared for the challenges that lay ahead of me.

I had lived in San Francisco years earlier and many of my friends were still there. One very good friend said I could camp out in her living room while I searched for a job. I was confident I could find a job quickly, after all, by that time I had been chanting for more than six years, had a law degree and had passed one state's Bar exam.

When I arrived in the Bay Area, I started looking for a job immediately. My friend, whose apartment I was sharing, and I thought this time would be an opportunity to enjoy one another's company because it wouldn't be long before I'd be working and on my way. Little did we realize that we were both very wrong. Seven months later, I was still sleeping on her couch.

By then, I had decided to take any job just to make money. I was working part time in a women's clothing store and doing contract legal work where and when I could. To make matters worse, my family was again in upheaval; I was speaking to only one sibling out of a family of 12. By that time, after seven years of practice, I was struggling to believe my life would ever change.

At one point, after receiving encouragement in faith, I mailed out 300 resumes, only to receive about 100 rejection letters and no response at all from the rest. Despite my efforts to stay current with my bills, it was around this time that my car was repossessed. I was devastated. I couldn't believe what was happening to me. I constantly sought advice, wondering if I should even work in the legal field or remain in the Bay Area.

By this time I was staying in the home of someone who didn't

EXPERIENCE — SARAH J. M. JONES, SAN FRANCISCO

## My Life Has Come Full Circle



Photo by KINGMOND YOUNG

Sarah Jones started to change her life though helping other people change theirs.

chant so I had not set up my altar; if I wanted to chant in front of the Gohonzon, I had to go to the San Francisco Culture Center or to another member's home. The good news is that I had plenty of free time to travel around the city by bus.

I was seeking lots of encouragement from seniors in faith. One woman told me that to truly change my situation, I should find one person who was suffering and help that person become happy through this Buddhism; then I, too, would become happy. I couldn't believe my ears. I had just told her that I didn't have a job, didn't have my own apartment and my relationship with my family was at an all-time low. How was I supposed to tell someone else about the greatness of this practice? I left feeling angry and incredulous.

But after chanting about the guidance, I decided to put it to the test. I began to focus all of my efforts helping revitalize the practice of a young woman in my district who was having difficulty. I would take the BART train, a bus, then walk to her house. I chanted for her at every opportunity. We went to meetings together and I did everything I could to support her practice. This enabled me to really develop a selfless heart for others and experience deep com-

passion for their circumstances.

Amazingly, little by little, my own circumstances began to change as I continued to take action. I found a full-time job in a law office, which allowed me to move into my own small apartment that came fully furnished. I also began to do legal work at the federal level in immigration law.

In 1995, I was asked to be the San Francisco Byakuren leader. I would be responsible for the training and encouragement of young women from Sacramento to San Jose, which covers a distance of about 150 miles. I was determined to continue implementing and even expand on the guidance I had received; I decided to visit many Byakuren members to help them become the happiest young women in the world. I visited young women in Fresno, Sacramento, throughout the East Bay, in Marin, and all over San Francisco. Many times I would go straight from federal court to a Byakuren member's home.

Although this was very difficult, I saw the results in the lives of the young women and in my own life. I encountered another immigration attorney who became my mentor. She taught me the nuts and bolts of running a law office and encouraged me to start a law practice of my own. She was always

available to answer any questions I had about difficult cases. This I feel was a direct result of my efforts to protect and support others. I've really learned that in this Buddhist practice, when we

concentrate on others' happiness as well as on our own, our lives change and grow.

In February 1997, I opened my own immigration law office in San Francisco. I have four full-time assistants and my practice has grown quickly. In less than two years, I have well over 400 clients. My increasing good fortune has enabled me to purchase a new car and a home.

Through challenging my weaknesses as I carried out my activities in the SGI-USA, I developed deeper levels of patience, compassion and selflessness. Because of this I saw changes taking place in my relationships with my family. Last January I was able to host a birthday party for my oldest brother, the first birthday party he's ever had; and I've visited two of my sisters and a brother in San Diego with whom I hadn't spoken in years. Following that visit, my oldest sister came out to visit me.

I feel that my life has come full circle, from those days when I was wondering if this practice works at all, to the determination I now have to continue devoting my efforts toward the happiness of others while striving for my own individual happiness. ❏

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# the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

## 'FRESH GROWTH'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 29-30

**Shin'ichi Yamamoto arrives in New York on his second visit there. He convinces the reluctant Tomio Haruyama to become the New York Chapter leader by saying: 'I have every confidence that you can do the job. We're not expecting anyone to be perfect to begin with.... We're asking you to accept a leadership position based on your potential for the future. Essentially, it all comes down to your resolve to give it your best.'**

Emiko Haruyama said: "President Yamamoto, I don't think my husband is capable of doing the job of chapter leader. He's extremely busy with work, and he's never even held a leadership position in the Gakkai before.

"Besides," she added, "he's just barely doing gongyo. There are some really great people among the other candidates for the position who are much more qualified...."

She didn't mention her strongest misgiving — that her husband was unlikely to accept the position of chapter leader if asked.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto had met Tomio Haruyama a couple times. When Emiko and Tomio decided to get married, Shin'ichi and his wife, Mineko, had invited them out to dinner, and the four of them had talked and gotten to know each other.

From this and the few other occasions they had met, Shin'ichi had gotten a good feel for Tomio's character and potential.

Shin'ichi said: "I'm thinking of asking your husband to take on not only the chapter responsibility but also the position of young men's division North America General Corps leader. Being his wife, you may think you know your husband best. But just living with someone doesn't necessarily mean that you can see your partner's true potential. I have no doubt that once Tomio awakens fully to his mission for kosen-rufu, he will go on to achieve great things for our movement."

Despite Shin'ichi's words, Emiko was still concerned.

After they finished discussing leadership appointments for New York, they moved on to the Seattle organization, where they also planned to form a chapter. There were no suitable men's division candidates for chapter leader, and Masako Clarke, who had given such a moving experience earlier, was listed as a leading candidate for that position.

"What do you think?" Kiyoshi Jujo asked Shin'ichi.

"Mrs. Clarke has done a great job as Seattle District chief, taking responsibility for activities in that area," Shin'ichi responded. "I know it'll be a challenge for her, since she's just lost her husband and has two small children to look after. But I'm sure she'll be fine in the position of chapter leader. Seeing how seriously she's been working for kosen-rufu, I'm certain she'll create a wonderful Seattle Chapter. The responsibility of chapter leader will also give her a greater sense of purpose, and I think that will be good for her, too."

They continued discussing the details of each organization, the light in the hotel room burning on long into the night.

Early the next day, Jan. 13, they flew from Los Angeles to New York.

Kosen-rufu is a continual departure toward new, hope-filled horizons.

Although the flight across America took only five to six hours, due to the time difference it was close to nightfall when they arrived in New York.

On their arrival at the airport, about 50 members enthusiastically greeted them. Among them was Tomio.

After thanking everyone for their warm welcome, Shin'ichi turned to Tomio and said: "Mr. Haruyama,

today we're going to form a New York Chapter, and we'd very much like to have you take on the position of chapter leader. We'd also like you to serve as the young men's division North America General Corps leader."

Startled, Tomio raised a hand to adjust his black-rimmed glasses and gazed intently at Shin'ichi, as if to make sure he was hearing correctly. Tomio then firmly said: "I'm sorry, but I couldn't possibly accept. That kind of responsibility is way beyond me."

Emiko stood next to her husband, hoping rather anxiously that he wouldn't be rude to Shin'ichi.

"I don't think so," Shin'ichi said. "I have every confidence that you can do the job. We're not expecting anyone to be perfect to begin with. For instance, Mr. Ishibashi, the head of Los Angeles Chapter, didn't have any experience either. But by staying in close contact with the Gakkai Headquarters in Japan and gradually learning what he needed to do as he went along, he has developed into a fine chapter leader.

"We're asking you to accept a leadership position based on your potential for the future," he added. "Essentially, it all comes down to your resolve to give it your best."

Looking perplexed, Tomio asked, "What exactly would I have to do?"

"Well, let's see...you could start by driving your wife to meetings and joining her in Gakkai activities on the weekends," Shin'ichi answered. "She'll be having a baby soon, and it'll be difficult for her to get around."

"Ah, so I'll be a driver?" Tomio asked. "I'll be a chauffeur-chapter leader, right?"

Shin'ichi laughed loudly. "Yes, that's perfectly fine for a start," he answered.

"Well, I think I could manage that," said Tomio.

"Good, it's settled then!"

Shin'ichi declared, while the other leaders from Japan still looked at Tomio with apprehensive expressions.

A short meeting to finalize the program and other details for that evening's chapter inauguration was to take place at the home of Koichi Yabe, a men's division member. Yabe, one of the well-wishers at the airport, drove Shin'ichi.

Yabe was 53 and had joined the Soka Gakkai in 1953. The Japanese shipping company he worked for had sent him to the States to head its New York office. He was of a gentlemanly demeanor and was well liked and trusted for his honesty and integrity.

*To be continued*

**Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1963. Illustration by Ken'ichiro Uchida.**

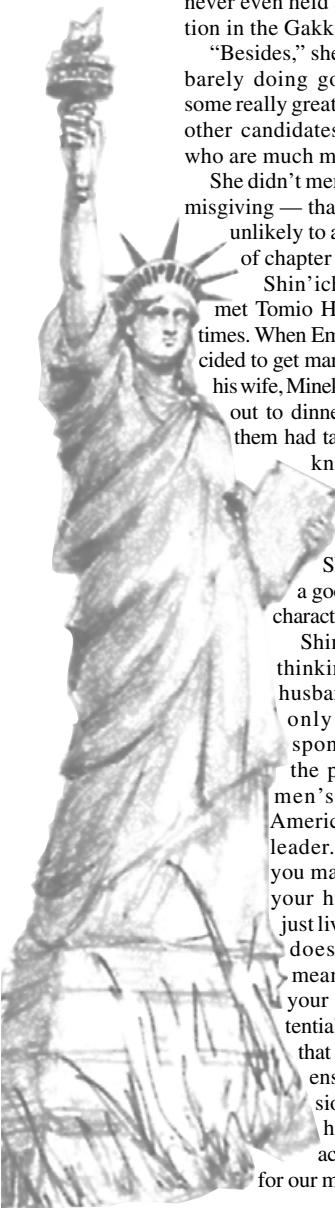
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AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA



# CONVEYING THE SPIRIT

*In this essay praising all the interpreters who have helped the SGI movement, President Ikeda says that 'the secret to successful interpreting — and the quintessence of communication among people — is not simply the transmission of words. It is conveying the spirit, the essence. It is linking one heart to another.'*

The mission of interpreters is indispensable in our long journey toward achieving world peace. Interpreters are bridges linking people through language. They are also consummate diplomats, expanding circles of understanding and friendship around the world. You could say that they are the lifelines of true cultural exchange.

For 40 years, I have striven to spread the philosophy and ideals of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism for the sake of human happiness and lasting peace. I have been greatly assisted by many capable interpreters in my efforts to infuse people's lives with deep spiritual joy. I remember each of them with great fondness.

Quite a few have not been Soka Gakkai members — for example, Leon Strijak, associate professor of Russia's Moscow State University, and Lin Liyun, who was the interpreter for my meeting with Premier Zhou Enlai of China. Their faces shine in my mind like the silver rays of the morning star.

•••••

Vladimir Kanef, who interpreted for me during my 1981 visit to Bulgaria, also made a deep impression on me. Then a young man of about 30, specializing in physics, he was apparently called in to interpret as a last-minute substitute. Having studied in Japan and made friends with some Soka Gakkai members, however, he was well acquainted with me and my activities.

I had an extremely busy itinerary during my stay in Bulgaria, yet, throughout, Mr. Kanef kept his friendly smile. His voice resonated with brightness and warmth as he interpreted my words. I shook his hand with deep gratitude many times, and shortly before my departure, I presented him with my fountain pen as a token of my appreciation.

I was told that he shyly said to one of our members: "The weight of this pen is very heavy. The responsibility that comes with it is immense." What precious words — like the glittering sparkle of a hidden star!

When I visited Brazil in



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

Vladimir Kanef (top, third from left) interprets for SGI President Ikeda in Bulgaria, 1981.

February 1984, for the first time in 18 years, I met with President João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo in the nation's capital, Brasília. My interpreter was actually only decided upon during my flight to Brazil. A Japanese gentleman working for the airline accompanied us on the flight, and as we engaged in friendly conversation, I asked him, having no interpreter lined up, if he would interpret for me during my meeting with the Brazilian president. He said that it would be a tremendous responsibility, but he gladly accepted.

•••••

The compassionate desire to widely convey the Daishonin's teachings inevitably carries us out into the world. This has naturally presented us with the vital need for many skilled interpreters.

My dialogues tend to be

We of the SGI, too, in our task of propagating the Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the globe, have had to use our wisdom to find the best way to proceed.

I realized that I would need interpreters to help me in my work. I would find, train and produce a steady stream of them. I began to pray for this with a deep, powerful pledge.

One by one, I discovered wonderfully talented individuals, encouraged them and nurtured them. Today, the SGI has a fine team of interpreters of all languages.

•••••

Twenty-five years ago, I carried on a dialogue with Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee, the eminent historian. Great intellectuals tend to have little pa-



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

Rosa Kishimoto interprets for the SGI president's March 1984 meeting with Peruvian President Fernando Belaúnde Terry.

philosophical and intellectual in nature. It is thus difficult sometimes for interpreters without a deep understanding of Buddhism to communicate my true meaning and intent.

In becoming a world religion, Christianity produced countless gifted interpreters.

tience with inexperienced interpreters.

Time and time again, I broke out in a cold sweat as our interpreters couldn't keep up with our speed and the high level of what we were discussing. They still remember the pain and frustration they felt at their limited

ability.

The existence of talented interpreters is directly linked to the progress of worldwide kosen-rufu. And many have heaped praises on our interpreters for their refinement and their knowledge of a wide variety of subjects.

•••••

I will never forget my third trip to Peru, which was in February and March 1984. On the last day of my visit, I attended a luncheon with Peruvian President Fernando Belaúnde Terry. My interpreter was Rosa Kishimoto, who is now the SGI-Peru women's division guidance leader. A venerable pioneer member, Mrs. Kishimoto helped establish the SGI's foundation in Peru with her late husband, Víctor.

She was asked to interpret shortly before the event took place. The luncheon was an important public occasion; it would be attended by the president and first lady, the prime minister and his wife, members of the cabinet and leading cultural figures. Even the indomitable Mrs. Kishimoto was a bit tense — so much so, I told her to relax.

But once the luncheon began, she performed with perfect composure and dignity. The conversation touched on many subjects, from the president's visit to Japan to academic and cultural exchange between the two nations.

Mrs. Kishimoto did a sterling job. Her voice was refined and confident. The president's secretary-general expressed his appreciation for her superior interpreting skills, I was told. Her smile sparkled with relief and satisfaction, when I praised her, saying: "A fine job! Many thanks!"

•••••

Mrs. Kishimoto is a second-generation Japanese born in Peru. Because of straitened conditions inflicted on her family by the out-

break of World War II, she only graduated from elementary school. She never received specialized training as an interpreter. However, for many years, she read first-rate international magazines and in the

PLEASE SEE ESSAY, 9

## DISCUSSIONS ON YOUTH

# Surrounded by Good Friends

How do you get more good friends? SGI President Ikeda says in this discussion that the first step is becoming a good friend yourself. 'For example, when you notice someone is worried about something, offer a kind word...,' he explains. 'When you make a promise, always keep it, no matter what. If you try to be that kind of person, you'll soon come to find yourself surrounded by good friends.'

**YOSHIKO UEDA:** One of the biggest areas of difficulty for high school students is their relationships — especially with their friends.

**SATORU MIURA:** Yes, many of our readers have asked if you could discuss friendship once again. [See *Discussions on Youth*, vol. 1, pp. 76–112.]

Of all the different relationships we have — with our teachers, our parents, our seniors and juniors, our supervisors at part-time jobs and so on — those with our friends are an especially big part of our lives.

## Relationship problems are an inevitable part of human life.

**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA:** That's true. In Japanese, we write the word for human being, *ningen*, with two Chinese characters that mean person (*nin*) and between (*gen*). This expresses the idea that human beings only fully exist in their relationships *between* people. None of us can live alone. Because of that, experiencing relationship problems of some sort or other is an inevitable part of life.

Sometimes our relationships with others get so bothersome that we want to shout, "I wish I could live somewhere where there are no people!" But that's impossible, unless we become hermits.

So, where does that leave us? Basically, we have to make an effort to cultivate good relationships with others. We have to become people who can develop such relationships. That's all there is to it.

Relationship problems are opportunities for you to grow and mature. Such problems can be character building, if you don't let them defeat you. That's why it's important not to isolate yourself. No one can exist apart from others. Remaining aloof from others only cultivates selfishness, and that accomplishes nothing.

**MIURA:** One of the high school students says: "I think human



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

'The encouragement and stimulation of friends spur us toward self-improvement. We are inspired to lead fulfilling lives and to create a better world....'

relationships have grown rather shallow and superficial. It's rare these days for people to sit down and really share their thoughts and feelings with others. It seems like they don't really want to forge deep bonds of friendship.'

## When we encounter an obstacle, good friends give us the strength to keep moving forward.

**IKEDA:** It's up to each individual how to live his or her life. That, however, doesn't change the fact that having close friends can be tremendously rewarding. There's a Mongolian proverb "A hundred friends are more precious than a hundred pieces of gold." People who have friends are rich.

Quite often, the encouragement and stimulation of friends spur us toward self-improvement. We are inspired to lead fulfilling lives and to create a better world — to work together with our friends toward that goal.

Having good friends is like being equipped with a powerful auxiliary engine. When we encounter a steep hill or an obstacle, we can encourage each other and find the strength to keep pressing vigorously forward.

## If someone is hurting others, we can help him or her move in a positive direction by pointing out what's going on.

**MIURA:** Good friends are a real treasure.

But there are also bad friends, who can exert a negative influence. Several students wrote about this, saying things like "One of my friends has a side I really dislike. He is always bullying others around and getting them to buy things for him." "There is a student who is constantly borrowing money but never returns it. He orders his friends to tag along with him, and he won't take no for an answer. He couldn't care less about what others want. I don't think he's a real friend at all."

**IKEDA:** Buddhism teaches that we should associate with good companions (The *Lotus Sutra*, p. 78), meaning that we should be careful to choose good people as our friends and role models. It also instructs that we should distance ourselves from bad company.

A Buddhist scripture states that even a good person who associates with evil people will, in two, three, or even five cases out of 10 be tainted by that evil (*The*

*Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 7, p. 22). We should therefore have the attitude, it says, to rebuke wrong, to rebuke destructive behavior.

By pointing out to someone that their actions are inflicting suffering and hurt on others, we can urge them to move in a more positive direction. Our honesty, in fact, can open the way to forging deep bonds of genuine friendship with that person.

In other words, it's quite possible for a "bad" friend to become a good friend.

There are also cases in which friendship starts out as a casual thing, with two people just sitting around talking. Then one day, something happens that inspires them both to try to achieve some goal. They then become good friends, who have a positive influence on each other.

**UEDA:** We asked the high school students what they thought made friends good or bad. Most of them described a good friend as someone they can talk to about anything; someone who understands them; someone who is there for them, whom they can consult when facing a serious problem.

Bad friends, on the other hand, were described as selfish, those who gossip maliciously

about people behind their backs, tell lies, let people down, broadcast others' confidences and secrets, break promises or cruelly ignore people out of spite. All the latter traits have one thing in common: an utter disregard for others' feelings.

## The quality of our friendships is based on what kind of character we can develop.

**IKEDA:** Character and integrity are very important. A spirit of mutual respect and trust is a vital basis for real friendship.

That said, there naturally might be times when you have arguments and disagreements with your friends. But there should always be an underlying spirit of respect and consideration for each other, no matter how close you are. In friendship, you mustn't think only of yourself.

Bad friends cause people trouble and grief through delinquent behavior. Good friends, by contrast, warmly encourage others, give them hope and inspire them to self-improvement.

**MIURA:** We are very fortunate if we have such good friends.

**IKEDA:** Yes, and to have friends like that, the first thing you must do is become that kind of person yourself. For example, when you notice someone is worried about something, offer a kind word. You could say, for instance: "You look down. What's wrong?" When you make a promise, always keep it, no matter what. If you try to be that kind of person, you'll soon come to find yourself surrounded by good friends.

## Really cultivate your character — then, even if you lose a friendship, an even better one always awaits you.

**MIURA:** One student writes: "I have a hard time making friends. There was a time in the past when everyone used to gang up on me and bully me. I was really hurt by that treatment, and now I'm afraid of people."

**IKEDA:** There's no need to worry or be overly anxious, if you can't immediately make the ideal friendships for which you wish. Life is long, and you will have many opportunities to make friends. Just be

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**DIALOGUE, FROM PAGE 6**

patient, and don't give up.

When you are young, you go through many changes, and so do your peers. The most important thing is to forge a strong self. Find your dream — the way that's right for you — and work to make it come true.

Sometimes friendship just happens. Sometimes you have to seek it out. Sometimes it develops from sharing similar likes and dislikes. However it starts, friendship is friendship.

**UEDA:** Yes, our interests, our likes and dislikes, play a big role in friendship, don't they?

**IKEDA:** We all have likes and dislikes, and in some cases they may mean that we cannot become friends with a certain person. Or they may even destroy a friendship.

But what's important is to cultivate the kind of character that makes you a good friend. Such a person may lose a friendship, but the sprout of an even better friendship always

awaits them.

**A real friend won't tell you to do things that are just plain wrong.**

**UEDA:** I've seen that no matter how they may appear on the surface, most of the high school division members are essentially good, decent kids. And that's what makes them particularly sensitive to lies and deceit. If they find that a friend has deceived them — even just a little — they feel that they can no longer be friends with that person, because their trust has been destroyed.

**MIURA:** Another student writes: "I can't help it, but I just don't like myself. Everyone else seems better off than I am, and I feel jealous."

**IKEDA:** Yes, you may feel that way sometimes. But you are all still young. Each of you is a work in progress, still developing. And that's perfectly normal.

To still be growing, to still be improving, is a wonderful thing.

Just continue to press on tenaciously to find your way forward — despite the suffering and pain that is part of youth and growing up. Indeed, that's the only way to grow.

No matter what happens, please don't arrogantly jump to the conclusion that "People are all the same!" It's not as simple as that. All people have their less than attractive sides, but they also have sides that are beautiful and noble.

It all comes down to what you do, not what anyone else does. If someone should betray your trust, vow that you'll never, ever do the same thing to anyone else. Be determined to keep your promises to others. Take an interest in others' problems as your own, and work to help them overcome them. This kind of strong resolve is important.

Mr. Toda always urged the youth to be people of integrity.

**UEDA:** I read about your meeting with Russian physicist Dr. Anatoli Logunov and his 14-year-old granddaughter Anna [April 2, 1998]. Anna asked you

why it was that some people make great progress, while others don't. She wanted to know what it was that set them apart.

You replied that environment was a crucial factor: Even if different people made the same amount of effort, what they achieved tended to vary depending on their environment. One environmental factor, you stressed, was having good friends who keep you moving in a positive direction.

**IKEDA:** There are all kinds of environmental factors that foster growth and self-improvement. Compared to love relationships or parent-child relationships, our relationships with our friends are a far more universal, broad-ranging influence.

The relationship between mentor and disciple, of course, exists on a much more solemn, profound dimension. Our friendships, nevertheless, are a close, everyday part of us.

Having good friends is a great blessing. A relationship based on selfish motives or that is

spoiled by unpleasantness over money cannot be considered a good friendship. Similarly, relationships that everyone disapproves of, because you're hanging out with people who don't know right from wrong and engage in delinquent behavior, are clearly bad.

A real friend will not demand money from you or encourage you to do things that are wrong. That is just evil disguised as friendship. You must speak out against it and avoid getting involved in it.

Don't prolong an association with bad friends. I even think it's fine to sometimes run away from such company. Discuss your situation with someone you trust. Don't just fret silently over it by yourself.

*Part one of a discussion on the importance of friendship among SGI President Ikeda and Soka Gakkai high school division leaders Satoru Miura (young men's chief secretary) and Yoshiko Ueda (young women's leader). Part two will appear in an upcoming issue.*

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES



'It is said that if the roots are deep, the leaves will not wither.... Likewise, your faith is always fresh and resolute, probably because the roots of your faith are deep.... How respectable and admirable this is!' — Nichiren Daishonin

#### SPEECH, FROM PAGE 1

couple extended a warm welcome to his family, just having moved to Beijing. Mr. Saionji was then a junior high school student.

The first time he visited the Chinese prime minister's residence, a woman with bobbed hair served him some tea. He fully assumed that she was the maid, until Premier Zhou came out and introduced her as his wife. Mr. Saionji was very surprised. That's because, he said, Madame Deng was so normal and down-to-earth: She was plainly dressed, and there was nothing self-pretentious or haughty about her. In fact, he went on, she looked just like any other ordinary, middle-aged woman you could find anywhere.

This was one of the great things about Madame Deng. There is always something refreshing about genuine character.

Nobody is better than anyone else. Arrogant individuals, who think they are special, have lost their integrity. They are degenerate and corrupt.

#### **We must always have the desire to improve ourselves, never coming to a standstill, never stagnating.**

What was one thing that Madame Deng continued to call for, with unremitting passion, in the last years of her long, heroic life? It was this: Leaders, conquer your pride! She took every opportunity to strictly teach the young leaders of the future the correct path of leadership.

Allow me to share some of her words: "The contribution of a revolutionary must be unlimited." "You must be modest and humble. You must do your work well, without haughtiness or impatience." "The task of opposing privilege must be led by our comrades. For this purpose, a revolutionary spirit is necessary." "The people are the protagonists; the people are our teachers. We must never harbor even the slightest sense of superiority toward the people." "To

connect closely with the people, to base ourselves on the people, to unite with all whom it is possible to unite with — this is our struggle's starting point."

Madame Deng battled tenaciously to prevent leaders from becoming proud and boastful.

In Buddhism, a person's greatest enemies are pride and arrogance. Today I will quote from the Daishonin's writings to warn against these traits.

The Daishonin says about the world of the Latter Day of the Law, "We are now living in the latter age when people are shallow in wisdom and puffed up with pride" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 254). He also describes it as an age where people's thoughts are "filled with jealousy" (MW-6, 177).

Just as these passages state, in this Latter Day in which we dwell, human society is a seething pool of pride and jealousy. We must not allow ourselves to be swallowed up by its murky, swirling waters and, as a result, lose our faith.

The Daishonin stresses this repeatedly. For example, he says, "On the path of attaining Buddhahood, [you should] chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo without arrogance or attachment to biased views" (MW-6, 208).

It is important that we always maintain a seeking spirit toward Buddhism. We must always have the desire to improve ourselves, never coming to a standstill and stagnating in our present situation.

It is also essential that we combat evil people who are driven by envy and arrogance.

In the past, there have, unfortunately, been people in our organization who grew conceited or jealous over such things as intellectual ability, organizational position, profession, academic background, power or wealth. As a result, they lost their faith.

There have also been traitors, who not only abandoned their faith but sought to destroy the pure world of faith of the SGI. Intoxicated by the puniest "treasures of the body" and "treasures of the storehouse," they forgot all about the foremost "treasure of the heart" — faith itself.

That is why it became impossible for them to respect members of pure-hearted faith

and to remain in the SGI, a realm of earnest, wholehearted devotion to spreading the Daishonin's teachings. It is vital that we see these individuals for what they are.

#### **The hearts of arrogant people are paralyzed and twisted by conceit.**

The Lotus Sutra clearly details the kinds of people who persecute and oppress its practitioners. These are the three powerful enemies in the "Encouraging Devotion" chapter and the four kinds of believers of overbearing arrogance in the "Bodhisattva Never Disparaging" chapter. All of them are described as "arrogant."

*The three powerful enemies are lay people ignorant of Buddhism, cunning priests and false saints in league with corrupt secular authorities. The four kinds of believers of overbearing arrogance include monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.*

Conceit invariably lies at the root of these persecutors' actions. The sutra says that they "suppose they have attained what they have not attained" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 193) — in other words, they mistakenly believe that they have already attained the highest state of enlightenment. It also describes them as "proud and boastful in heart" (p. 193).

The third of the three powerful enemies are false saints — people who present themselves as paragons of virtue while in reality having no commendable qualities at all. They look down on the people and regard with enmity the votaries of the Lotus Sutra, who fight on the side of the people.

They are ruled by conceit. And it is also conceit that turns backsliders into faith destroyers.

The hearts of false saints are base, yet they pretend to be of the utmost integrity. They don't do gongyo seriously, yet they pretend to have faith. They don't put the Daishonin's teachings into practice yet stridently urge others to do so. They have no ability, yet they use their positions to strut around self-importantly. They only care about looking good and have no respect for others.

In short, the hearts of arrogant people are paralyzed and twisted by conceit. The arrogant

are unable to look honestly at themselves or reflect upon their behavior. They are utterly without shame.

#### **Arrogant people look down on others because their own hearts are ugly.**

Another characteristic of false saints is "despising and looking down on all humankind" (p. 193). In other words, it's contempt for others.

False saints look down on people because their own hearts are ugly: Their own inner ugliness prevents them from respecting others. No matter what fine words they may spout, in their hearts they don't believe the Lotus Sutra's teaching that all people can attain enlightenment.

It is, therefore, even more unlikely that they can comprehend the hearts of people earnestly striving to spread the philosophy of the Daishonin's Buddhism for the happiness of themselves and others. All that such arrogant individuals believe in is worldly honor and gain. To them, religion and people are just tools.

The Lotus Sutra warns of false saints, saying: "Greedy for profit and support, / they will preach the Law to white-robed laymen / and will be respected and revered by the world / as though they were arhats who possess the six transcendental powers" (pp. 193-94).

#### **Arrogant people lie.**

Another characteristic of conceited people is a tendency to tell lies. In the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings," the Daishonin cites the Great Teacher Miao-lo: "Concealing shortcomings and boasting of virtues define arrogance" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 718).

People consumed by pride lie brazenly in hiding their flaws and in broadcasting as their own virtues they don't in fact possess. They are vain and hypocritical. What's more, they are not even ashamed of their deceit, feeling not the slightest compunction or remorse.

Arrogant people are masters at the art of twisting the truth. People of this kind lay their own faults at the door of the votaries of the

**SPEECH, FROM PAGE 8**

Lotus Sutra. For example, false priests exploit religion and covet personal recognition and profit.

Instead of reflecting on their baseness, they criticize the activities of the practitioners of the Law as “motivated by a desire for fame and wealth” — the very thing of which they are guilty. And they repeat their evil slander to many people, including high authorities and government officials.

Unable to look hard at their own flawed characters, they instead attack others. Unable to destroy the evil within their hearts, they instead try to destroy others. This is the nature of arrogant people.

It is vital that we do not allow these destructive devilish forces to run rampant. We have to fight rigorously against them and defeat them.

Should we compromise with them even a little, the foundation of kosen-rufu will crumble. And if that happens, there will be no bright hope for the future of humanity. We must completely fight against evil. That is Buddhism. That is faith.

Only if we practice Buddhism with the determination to wage an all-out struggle against evil can we ensure the eternal development of the kosen-rufu movement.

**Arrogant people always want to be better than others.**

In terms of the Ten Worlds, the life-state of arrogant people corresponds to the world of Anger [which *ashura*, contentious demons of Indian mythology, typify]. Arrogant individuals are driven by a desire to be better than others. They have

a perverse desire to outdo others at all costs, to feel superior to them.

Regarding the world of Anger, the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai writes in *Great Concentration and Insight*: “Since the mind of a person in the world of Anger desires in every moment to be superior to everyone else and cannot bear to be inferior to anyone, he belittles and despises others and exalts himself, just as a kite [a small hawk] flies high and looks down. Moreover, he outwardly displays benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and good faith, and develops minor goodness of the mind yet puts into practice the way of *ashura*” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 430).

Arrogant people are controlled by the desire to win against others. They fail to pursue the spiritual struggle of trying to win against themselves and their weaknesses.

Hence, there is no improvement in their life-condition. The more they plot and scheme to outdo others, the further their lives plummet.

Arrogant people are extremely busy in their disreputable pursuits: telling bald-faced lies, falsely advertising themselves as people of virtue, concocting schemes to persecute the votaries of the Lotus Sutra...and the list goes on. They put a huge amount of energy into these activities.

But in the end, all their efforts are in vain. These people fail to transform their life-condition, they hurt others, and they fall into a state of hell. All those whom they have duped into believing their lies and charades fall down with them.

We must absolutely not be deceived by such people. We must not be taken in.

Also, cowardice is the true nature of the arrogant. Because they

are puffed up with pride, they perceive themselves as gargantuan. *Ashuras* have been described as 84,000 *yojanas* tall, with the waters of the four great oceans not even reaching past their knees. [A *yojana* was a unit of measurement in ancient India, equal to the distance that the royal army was thought to march in a day.]

However, in the Daishonin’s writings we see an *ashura* who, when confronted with the possibility of battling a superior opponent — the great Taishaku, one of Buddhism’s tutelary gods — shrinks to an infinitely small size, hiding in a lotus flower in a nearby pond. That tiny self is the reality of all *ashuras*.

The Daishonin declares that arrogant individuals will always tremble when they meet a powerful foe.

*The Daishonin writes, “An arrogant man will be overcome with fear when he meets a strong enemy, just like the haughty ashura who shrank and hid himself in a lotus flower blossoming in Munetchi Lake when reproached by Taishaku” (MW-1, 35).*

When a genuine votary of the Lotus Sutra appears on the scene, arrogant people fear having their true colors exposed. They are terrified of having their careful mask of sainthood, integrity and pious devotion to faith torn away. That is why they turn on the votary of the Lotus Sutra with hostility and seek to destroy him or her.

**Only those who fight with the heart of the lion king can attain enlightenment.**

The world today is full of

such people. But in the end, justice will definitely prevail.

The Daishonin clearly states, “The rulers and people who despised the votaries of the Lotus Sutra seemed to be free from punishment at first, but eventually they were all doomed to fall” (MW-1, 241). This is the Daishonin’s declaration that arrogant, evil-hearted people, those who despise the votaries of the Lotus Sutra and seek to destroy kosen-rufu, will definitely come to ruin. That these words are true is clear when we look at the fate of those who have attempted to destroy the SGI.

Only with the heart of the lion king can justice and truth triumph. Only those who fight with the heart of the lion king can attain enlightenment. Those who don’t will find true enlightenment eluding them, irrespective of how long they’ve practiced Buddhism. The Daishonin states that those who actually attain Buddhahood are “fewer than the number of dust particles one can place on a fingernail” (MW-3, 251).

**If you establish a noble state of being in this lifetime, you will enjoy eternal freedom.**

Returning to Mr. Saionji’s biography of Madame Deng Yingchao, I want to share an anecdote that appears in it: A young Zhou Enlai says to Deng Yingchao, who was known by her friends as Comrade Xiaochao (Little Chao): “Everyone wants to know how you

manage to stay so bright and cheerful all the time. They wonder how you do it.”

Deng Yingchao responds gaily: “I’m an optimist at heart. Besides, if we look gloomy, it’ll infect everyone else. These are really hard times, but I believe we must show through our attitude that our revolution will lead to a bright future. I want everyone to have confidence in our victory.”

Zhou Enlai and Deng Yingchao always thought of the welfare of all. They always strove to inspire and encourage others.

The motto of this selfless couple was “Even if just a foot soldier, I will do my best where I am at this moment.” I pray that all of you will also carry through with this noble spirit in your local communities. I hope you will work cheerfully and vigorously for the victory of your comrades in faith.

Please establish a noble state of being in this lifetime, so that you may enjoy the path of eternity, happiness, true self and purity throughout the three existences.

Once you attain Buddhahood, you will be able, in lifetime after lifetime, to freely be reborn wherever you wish and there pursue the mission of your heart’s desire. Strongly proclaiming this, I close my speech today.

Thank you very much for traveling from far away, in this cold weather, to attend this gathering.

*SGI President Ikeda’s speech at a representatives conference commemorating SGI Day, Jan. 26, held in Shinjuku, Tokyo.*

**ESSAY, FROM PAGE 5**

process acquired a broad education.

In addition to her linguistic abilities, she truly understands the hearts of the Peruvian people. She continuously thinks about the best way to transmit the Daishonin’s spirit to them.

The secret to successful interpreting — and the quintessence of communication among people — is not simply the transmission of words. It is conveying the spirit, the essence. It is linking one heart to another.

The great Leo Tolstoy writes, “For humanity, good and beauty is what unites human beings.”

Today, the SGI’s mission of linking all humanity through the luminous beauty of peace and culture is shining brighter than ever before. I am moved by deep appreciation for our splendid interpreters.

This series is published as “Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*” in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.



**SUA Announcement**

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February 19, 1999

**Spirit of Contribution**

from General Director Zaitso



Fred Zaitso

I extend my best regards to all the readers of the *World Tribune*. Thank you for your sincere efforts for world peace by striving to win in your daily lives while encouraging those around you. Your support and dedication to American kosen-rufu is appreciated.

Recently, I attended the opening of the New England Culture Center in Waltham, Mass., outside Boston. It was inspiring to see how a large, dark and awkward building, was transformed into a bright, warm and beautiful castle for kosen-rufu through the effort and dedication of the New England membership. The members' pride and joy permeated the entire building, revealing their desire to produce an edifice suitable for spreading the Law.

President Ikeda says it is the ordinary SGI members who have developed kosen-rufu until today. As children of the Buddha, they are most respectable. When we cherish each member, the kosen-rufu movement will continue to advance and flourish.

Watching this building's transformation confirmed my conviction that when members' dedicated actions for kosen-rufu couple with financial contributions, magnificent results can be achieved.

I deeply appreciate the SGI-USA members' sincere financial support. Of course, this New England Culture Center is just one example of how everyone's contributions beautifully flourish throughout the organization. We currently have 70 community centers and culture centers throughout the United States. As the American kosen-rufu movement develops, I am sure that the number of facilities for kosen-rufu will continuously increase.

Nichiren Daishonin sincerely praises and appreciates his believers' heartfelt monetary and material offerings to the Buddha and for the sake of the Law. In one letter he states, "Whether you chant the Buddha's name, recite the sutra or merely offer flowers and incense, all your virtuous acts will impart benefits and good fortune in your life" (MW-1, 4).

From this, we are able to understand the spirit of offering that is totally dedicated to protecting the Law and Nichiren Daishonin. There is not a hint of expectation that material reward or benefit will result. Yet, Nichiren Daishonin consistently assures us that such sincerity is the source of great good fortune.

Spring is fast approaching and once again, we will have the opportunity to participate in our annual commemorative contribution, beginning on April 28 and continuing throughout the month of May. This is to celebrate the establishment of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism on April 28, as well as May 3, Soka Gakkai Day. Especially in recent years, this occasion has become an increasingly joyous tradition in which the entire membership is able to support the important future development of American kosen-rufu.

I feel that this year, 1999, is crucial for solidifying the foundation for the coming century and the beginning of a new millennium. In this way, I encourage everyone to find great significance in this upcoming commemorative contribution. I hope as many members as possible can participate and share in the great joy and realization that each person is the main, driving force for American kosen-rufu. I am praying for everyone's continued good health and fortune. Once again, thank you very much!

**THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF QUARTERLY FEATURES ON THE SGI-USA'S GOALS**

*Lessons from 'The New Human Revolution'*  
**'Triumph'**

The following is excerpted from *The New Human Revolution*, volume 4, pp. 112-16. Shin'ichi Yamamoto discusses the spirit of making financial contributions within the Soka Gakkai organization. He clarifies that the offerings made are for the purpose of carrying out Nichiren Daishonin's will to propagate the Mystic Law and are equivalent to making offerings to the original Buddha. There is no greater fortune, or benefit as SGI members, than to have the opportunity to do so.

Shin'ichi opened the Goshō. He wanted to thoroughly study again the true meaning of Buddhist offerings in light of the Daishonin's teachings. He first read "The Gift of Rice," a letter Nichiren Daishonin had written in response to an offering of rice and other items sent to him at Mount Minobu.

Praising the person's sincerity, the Daishonin says, "Even common mortals can attain Buddhahood if they cherish one thing: earnest faith" (MW-1, 268). He thus indicates that earnest faith, a sincere seeking spirit toward Buddhism, is the key to attaining Buddhahood.

In "The Gift of Rice," Nichiren Daishonin praises the sincerity of someone who offered him food, which is needed to sustain life. He writes that the benefit of this offering is comparable to benefit received by such saints and sages of the past as Sessen Doji, Bodhisattva Yakuo or Prince Shotoku, who offered their lives for Buddhism.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto then opened to another page in the Goshō — this time to "The Wealthy Man Sudatta" (MW-5, 307), a letter sent to Nanjo Tokimitsu on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar in the year 1280 (Dec. 27).

At the time, Tokimitsu was in dire financial straits. Because he supported the Daishonin's followers during the Atsuhara Persecution, the authorities forced him to pay heavy taxes and supply workers for unpaid labor to the government. Though he could no longer maintain a horse for himself and lacked adequate food and clothing for his wife and children, he offered the Daishonin one *kan* of coins out of his sincere concern for the Daishonin's well-being in the winter cold of Mount Minobu. This was the letter the Daishonin had written in response.

Looking at the many letters addressed to Tokimitsu, we find that his offerings to the Daishonin normally consisted of food and other

provisions. That on this occasion Tokimitsu had instead sent money suggests that he no longer had anything in the way of practical items to offer the Daishonin. It may well be that the string of coins he sent was money he had set aside for an emergency.

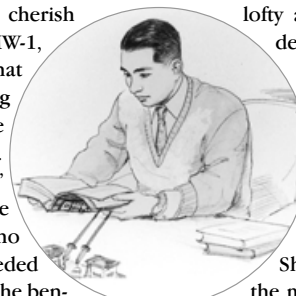
The Daishonin expressed his deep respect and praised Tokimitsu's sincerity. Although Tokimitsu was almost destitute, his spirit was lofty and heroic. Offerings must always derive from a sincere spirit of faith.

In a letter addressed to Lord Matsuno (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1380), Nichiren Daishonin describes how a child named Tokusho Doji was reborn as King Ashoka and eventually attained Buddhahood because he offered a mudpie to Shakyamuni. For little Tokusho Doji, the mudpie had been the greatest offering he could make. Despite its humble nature, he had presented it to the Buddha with the utmost reverence. This was the cause that led to his being reborn as a great monarch in a future lifetime.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto next turned to the Goshō "The Bodies and Minds of Ordinary Beings." He stopped at a passage near the end of the letter. He read it over and over, sensing its profound meaning:

Though one may perform meritorious deeds, if they are directed toward that which is not true, then they may bring great evil but they will never result in good. On the other hand, though one may be ignorant in mind and his offerings meager, if he presents them to a person who upholds the truth, his merit will be great. How much more so in the case of persons who in all sincerity make offerings to the True Law! (MW-6, 281)

In short, the Daishonin's statement in "The Bodies and Minds of Ordinary Beings" indicates that offerings can bring about either good or evil, depending on to whom or for what cause they are made. **TRIUMPH**, see next page



**TRIUMPH**, from previous page

In light of this Gosho passage, Shin'ichi thought about the offerings made within the Soka Gakkai. The offerings and financial contributions the organization solicited were exclusively to accomplish the Daishonin's mandate to widely propagate the Mystic Law. Offerings made toward this end were equivalent to offerings made to the original Buddha. There was, then, no greater offering, no greater good. Certainly, nothing could bring greater benefit. This thought filled Shin'ichi with a sense of immeasurable good fortune and joy at having had the chance to make such offerings as a Soka Gakkai member.

The Daishonin concludes this writing by praising the spirit of this follower who had sent offerings to him at Mount Minobu: "Surely you are sowing good seeds in a field of fortune. My tears flow when I think of it" (MW-6, 282).

Dedicating oneself to kosen-rufu means "sowing good seeds in a field of fortune" — Shin'ichi had been strongly convinced of this since his youth. He recalled his days of earnestly striving to protect and support Josei Toda, who took leadership to widely propagate the Daishonin's teachings. Back then, Toda's business was experiencing

severe difficulties, and for a long time payment of Shin'ichi's salary was in arrears.

Shin'ichi realized that to support this great lion of a man, who had arisen alone to spread the Law, was the way to protect the Soka Gakkai and to accomplish the goal of kosen-rufu.

He drastically cut his living expenses and made it his creed to use even a little of the money remaining from his pay to support Gakkai activities, to contribute to spreading the Daishonin's Buddhism. To do so was his joy and secret pride. Because of this, he even spent an entire winter without an overcoat. Whenever he received some of his back salary, he would use a sizable portion of it to support Toda's activities to promote kosen-rufu. Shin'ichi was absolutely convinced that the benefit and good fortune he had acquired as a result had enabled him to overcome his illness and today take on the Gakkai's leadership with confidence and composure.

He had not acted to support his mentor or the organization at someone else's behest. He had done so spontaneously, with a spirit of cheerfulness. It was an expression of his sincere faith, a reflection of his profound resolve to dedicate his life to spreading the Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the world.

## What Worked for Us

by David Aoyama, Los Angeles Region #4 Leader

Making financial contributions is an important part of our faith and practice in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Those who do so will certainly gain great fortune. The goal of the May contribution activity is that every member knows about, understands the spirit of and has the opportunity to participate in making contributions for kosen-rufu. Reaching

every member with a correct understanding of the significance and spirit of contribution does not happen without effort on the part of leaders. To accomplish this goal, it is a practical necessity that we need excellent planning and courageous action, both based on abundant daimoku. This is what we did last year:

### PRACTICAL TIPS

**EARLY** preparation. We highly recommend starting the promotion and preparation in March. There is also time to save money so we can participate without hesitation.

**DIFFERENT** strategies by each area. The Area leaders took the initiative and played an active role in planning for the activity, but not because they were told to do so. As a result they felt trusted and more responsible.

**USE** the strength of divisions. Because divisional communication is strong in our area, letting each division come up with its own respective plans also worked very well. In our case, the women led the entire promotion. The men fully supported them. That was our secret strategy. The youth came up with special certificates for those youth who made contributions that were collected at their Sunday youth meetings. We believe that many more youth participated proudly because of this.

*I believe creating a good atmosphere during the activity also enhanced the successful promotion of contributions. We did this by doing the following:*

**REFERRING TO THE MAJOR WRITINGS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN...** Following SGI President Ikeda's guidance, we always used the *Major Writings* for encouragement. We prepared passages for leaders to use to share a correct understanding of the significance of contributions with people.

**CREATING A WARM ATMOSPHERE.** It is important to create a warm atmosphere at collection sites. We decorated the rooms and made sure to welcome and appreciate each person making a contribution.

**SPECIAL CERTIFICATE.** Two areas made special certificates and receipts for those who participated. Many members told us that it was a good idea and that it made them feel very special about contributing during the May Commemorative Contribution.

**COLLECTION** in each district. In one area, which is widespread geographically, the Area leaders decided to visit each district to collect people's contributions. Because the community center is so far away from them, the leaders' efforts were really appreciated; they made it comfortable for the members to participate. For instance, the area leaders did morning gongyo with the local leaders of the district. Afterward several of them stayed to collect contribution or give personal guidance, while others did home visits. The district house was open all day for people to drop in to participate or to have dialogue.

**TAKING CARE OF THE MEMBERS.** Our daily efforts of home visits, personal guidance and care added to members' appreciation of the organization.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The benefit we receive from contributing is not an immediate material benefit but the good fortune we build in our lives by contributing freely for the sake of the kosen-rufu movement. The act of contributing itself is already a great benefit, because it shows the person is manifesting the life state of Bodhisattva.

## The Spirit and Benefit of Offerings

*How rare is the faith that moves one to give alms to a priest who knows the heart of the Lotus Sutra! He will not stray into the evil paths if he does so even once. Still greater are the benefits arising from ten or twenty contributions, or from five years, ten years, or a lifetime of contributions. They are even beyond the measure of the Buddha's wisdom. ... by your frequent offerings to me deep in these mountains you will repay the merciful kindness of both the Lotus Sutra and Shakyamuni Buddha. — "Letter to Niike" (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 254)*



The New England Culture Center.

**Yet even common mortals** can attain Buddhahood if they cherish one thing: earnest faith. In the deepest sense, earnest faith is the will to understand and live up to the spirit, not the words, of the sutras. What does this mean? In one sense, it means that offering one's only robe to the Lotus Sutra is equivalent to tearing off one's own skin, and in a time of famine, offering the Buddha the single bowl of rice on which one's life depends is to dedicate one's life to the Buddha. ... Therefore, saints consecrated themselves by offering their own bodies, whereas common mortals may consecrate themselves by the sincerity with which they give. — "The Gift of Rice" (MW-1, 268)

**As you well know**, one of the sutras tells us the story of Tokusho Doji, who offered a mud pie to the Buddha and was later reborn as King Ashoka who ruled over most of India. Since the Buddha is worthy of respect, the boy was able to receive this great reward even though the pie was only mud. However, Shakyamuni Buddha teaches that 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 Person and the Law" (MW-1, 263-64)

**The Buddha taught that** offering one's little finger for the sutra is more rewarding than covering an entire galaxy with seven kinds of jewels. Sessen Doji offered his life, and Gyobo Bonji ripped off his own skin to seek the truth of Buddhism. Since nothing is more precious than life itself, those who dedicate their lives

to the Buddhist practice are certain to attain Buddhahood. If they are prepared to offer their lives, why should they begrudge any other treasure for the sake of Buddhism? On the other hand, if one is loath to part with his material possessions,

how can he possibly give away his life, which is far more valuable? — "Letter From Sado" (MW-1, 33-34)

**The Buddha is** of course respectworthy, but when compared with the Lotus Sutra, he is like a firefly beside the sun or the moon. The Lotus Sutra is as superior to Shakyamuni Buddha as heaven is higher than the earth. To present offerings to the Buddha produces such great benefits [as to be born a king], yet even greater benefit is obtained by making offerings to the Lotus Sutra. If such a marvelous reward was brought about by the mere offering of a mud pie, how much more will come about as a result of all your various gifts! — "Two Kinds of Faith" (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 249-50)

**Whether you chant** the Buddha's name, recite the sutra or merely offer flowers and incense, all your virtuous acts will implant benefits and good fortune in your life. With this conviction you should put your faith into practice. — "On Attaining Buddhahood" (MW-1, 4)

# New England Culture Center Opens

Joy, appreciation and admiration

were the prevailing feelings Feb. 7 as New England members opened a new facility, recently named the New England Culture Center by SGI President Ikeda. Renovations began in July 1998 on the Waltham, Mass., facility, outside Boston. Hundreds of members offered their time and skills to prepare the building's 20,000 square feet of space.

Everyone was thanked for their sincere efforts by the New England region leaders and SGI-USA General Director Fred Zaitzu, who also relayed a message from President Ikeda: "Congratulations on your new culture center! I sincerely hope that this center will be a beacon of the New American Renaissance, sending many capable people into society with the message of hope and peace. I am praying for your good health and happiness."

The center's auditorium, built to seat 1,100, is constructed like an amphitheater. Here, the results of members' hard work could clearly be seen —

from a new teal curtain framing

the stage's proscenium arch to the gleaming parquet floor, from individually hand-washed tiles to the hand-polished woodwork. One person commented that "50 years of dirt and grime had to be cleared away in six months' time" for the opening.

The culture center has a distinguished history: On Feb. 7, 1929, exactly 70 years before the opening, a charter was approved to establish the Hovey Institute, which led to the Hovey Memorial Hall, the building's former name (completed in 1933). Townspeople came to hear lectures (including a speech by John F. Kennedy, when he was Massachusetts governor), participate in education programs and a variety of civic functions. Now the building has a second life with the New England members.

— FLETCHER DALTON

**Hundreds of members offered their time and skills to prepare the building's 20,000 square feet of space.**

Photo by MARION F. SHAPIRO



Photo by MARION F. SHAPIRO



Photo by JERILYN HUSKINS



# 有東傅才能飛翔

## SGI會長池田大作

第二十九屆本部幹部會與第二十三屆九州總會於十二月八日在東京牧口紀念會館聯合舉行，池田SGI會長、秋谷會長與日本及海外十四國代表一同出席。池田SGI會長在席上所作講話內容如下：

今年，全靠各位在這寶貴的一年來「勇猛精進」的奮鬥和指揮，創價學會輝煌地得勝了。真是辛苦了！

「今年勝利了，明年也要取得勝利！」希望大家這樣互相讚許，互相勉勵，立下新的決意。

如今，創價學會已發展成為超過一千萬民眾的龐大組織。這股廣宣流布的「勢力」，是憑著尊貴各位的奮鬥所造成的。

照覽御聖訓，絕對會生生世世、連子孫後代也受到這功德的福澤，一定會成為永遠昌盛的家族。

我謹在此再向全體同志致以衷心的稱讚和感謝。各位實在十分努力奮鬥。

在現實中推進廣布的人是偉大的。不是看地位，也不是看職稱，有奮鬥的各位才是尊貴、寶貴的人。

### 「拜托九州男兒！」

今天九州總會，恭喜！

戶田先生去世前不久曾說：「拜托你們，九州男兒！」這是託付世界廣宣流布的遺言。

今天，九州蓬勃地發展起來，開創了美好的勝利傳統。我相信戶田先生也在衷心讚嘆各位。

### 「軟能」的時代——開幕

明年的關鍵語是甚麼？電通總合研究所選了「軟能」(Soft Power)這個詞。

七年前我在哈佛大學的第一次演講中也曾論述過「軟能」。(一九九一年九月，「軟能時代與哲學」)

日前訪問日本的印度哲學家錢德拉(Tokesh Chandra)博士曾說過如下的一段話，因為這也包含博士對各位的期待，所以我想原原本本地將之轉述：「如金、和(教育)道」，「軟能」來聯絡世界、締結各國的友誼。」

真正來說，途中就是全部，是「電影」、是「音樂」、是「詩」、是「音樂」。人生也是一樣，怎樣以最後勝利為目標度過「如今」？樂趣是在於「如今」的奮鬥之中。因為在風浪之中奮鬥，所以才有樂趣。

廣宣流布是「偉大的劇場」。印度的大英雄甘地地為甚麼能夠得勝？

他的弟子拉達克里希南(Radhakrishnan)博士(印度甘地紀念館館長)曾說：「那是因為他(甚麼也不畏懼)」。那是因為「無畏」就是最高的幸福。無論發生甚麼也不畏懼，那就是佛的境界。

甘地說：「不要逃避為真理受苦。不要害怕為堅守信念而挺身奮鬥。」

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那是美國第一位眾議院女議員，名字是珍妮特·蘭金(Jeanette Rankin, 1875-1973)。日軍偷襲珍珠港後，美國壓倒性地支持戰爭。

美國國會也異口同聲高呼：「別放過侵略者！」因為是日發動攻擊，說理所當然也是理所當然吧。

當中有「一位疾呼」：「不可戰爭！」的勇士，那就是她。

無論有怎樣的理由，也反對戰爭！

女性是堅強的。男性往往在要緊關頭不爭氣。

創價學會也是這樣。甚至有意見說：「不如改稱為「創價女性學會」。

蘭金女士在議會上宣言：「身為女性，我不能去戰場，所以我拒絕把他人送上戰場。」

多麼正義凜然的雄辯呢！這才是真正的議員。

議會登時為之騷然。旁聽者也紛紛發出讚賞和怒號：「賣國賊！」

辭去議員之職！

受到眾人詆毀、唾罵、粗暴對待，其後也陸續收到寫著：「自殺吧！」

「滾去日本！」等恐嚇字句的信件。

當時她六十一歲，真是勇氣可嘉。

無法謀殺思想

事實上，她在第一次世界大戰時也反對美國參戰。

「當時反對者有五十人」

可是，今次卻是單獨一人「反對參戰」，完全沒有附和者。

傳播媒介也全是戰爭派。原本支持她的當地選民也威脅說：「下次要你落選。」

但她並沒有屈服。

「即使能夠把他人槍斃，卻無法槍斃其思想。互相殘殺是完全與生命對立的東西，也是否定豐盛地開花成長的可能性。」

無論怎麼說，也可以殺人。

別用「愛國」做藉口

的國防才是正確。」

可是，誰也對她不予理解。不斷遭受奚落、非難，周圍是冷漠的偏見。儘管這樣，她仍挺起胸膛前進。

她的正義讓我聯想到各位堂堂地為正義奮鬥的婦人部。

在無比孤獨中，是甚麼支持著她的鬥志？就是甘地的「非暴力」和「抵抗」思想。

因為有思想，所以能夠戰鬥。因為有理想，所以不被邪惡的潮流沖走，能夠貫徹正義。

她深深被甘地的報導吸引，曾多次前往印度。

戰後與尼赫魯(Nehru)總理也有會面。尚未能會晤甘地他已不幸遇害，令她慨嘆不已。

甘地說：「不要逃避為真理受苦。不要害怕為堅守信念而挺身奮鬥。」

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來！一本著現當二世的精神前進吧！奮鬥的人生、朝著理想前進的人生朝氣蓬勃、緊張興奮，生命充滿幹勁。

沒有理想、生命失去幹勁的話，身心也會萎靡不振。

何況是「不老不死」的妙法。信心創造出根本的「生命的青春」，比任何化妝品更有效。通過實踐信心，使生命的內在在美、淨化。

讓我們永遠朝著廣宣流布，朝氣蓬勃地前進吧！

如今屹立的她的榮譽銅像

如今，在她曾受唾罵的聯邦政府大樓裡，屹立著她的銅像。

銅像的台座上刻著她的話：「我不能投票贊成戰爭。」

這是如何單純，卻又是如何有深度、永恆性的一句話呢。

當勇士們誰也不敢疾呼「和平」時，只有一位身材短小的女性貫徹了信念。

唯有「一人立起」。偉大的人間革命劇永遠是由「一個人」展開。

這是戶田先生以身作則顯示的道理，牧口先生豁出生命所證明的哲學，絕對正確。

只要「一個認真的人」奮起，會變成相當於二人、三人、十人、百人的力量。

甘地曾說：「若純粹論體力、女性明顯地不及男性；但若論「道德力量」，女性擁有比男性強無限倍的偉大力量。非暴力若是人類應該遵守的教義，相信女性將確實地接收未來創造者的地位。」

換言之，講力氣的話，女性敵不過男性(也許會有人反對說：「我家剛好相反」)。

但若是關於非暴力的「道德力量」、「精神力量」，女性絕對比男性強。

我也是這樣想。

學性每天勤奮地在埋頭活動。也是各位婦女部。默默耕耘的婦人部尊貴無比，值得男士借鏡。

各位女士在創造「非暴力」和「人道主義」的新世界。就像甘地的見地一樣，我也想讚嘆女性才是「未來的創造者」。

無論在家庭、組織或社會上，女性務必要像蘭金女士那樣，勇敢

地說：「不！」

「正因為有悲慘，所以能夠飛翔」

「正因為有悲慘，所以能夠飛翔」

CHINESE PAGES

今年是甘地殉難五十年。甘地在逝世前三個月留下的詩，可說是他的遺言。

「正因為有束縛，所以我能飛翔。」

「正因為有悲慘，所以我能高飛。」

「正因為有逆境，所以我能奮鬥。」

「正因為有眼淚，所以我能前進。」

好一首意味深長的詩。當中的含義與佛法上的一煩惱即菩提一脈相通。

甘地曾多次被下獄。但每次受到束縛，他都奮力飛躍至更高峰，在心裡吶喊著：「我能飛翔！」

「安樂」指備受考驗

甘地的弟子拉達克里希南博士曾說：「一直都一帆風順的話，一定會養成惰性。創價學會的各位，一直不斷面對考驗，所以持久。接受考驗是愈益成長、愈益堅強起來的證明。那是自然界的法則。」

在艱苦中活過來的人不斷成長。

奸滑取巧、逃避考驗的人，一定會變壞。這種人越爬得高，越變越奢侈、任性、墮落。最後會邁著敗北的人生。

真正偉大的在奮鬥的人。為實踐弘教而受到誹謗、欺侮的人，為廣宣流布疲於奔走的，如今雖然辛苦，但最後會必會勝利。

大聖人說：「必有難來，以安樂意之可也。」（「御書口傳」）

沒有「難」的話，就沒有鍛鍊，也沒有成長，無法建立真正「安樂」的偉大境界。

一切都是因為有「刺激」，所以才有「成長」。

因為用冷水洗臉，所以頓時清醒過來。因為出外吹冷風，所以神經開始活躍。

沒有「刺激」，也沒有「向自己挑戰的精神」，整天呆在家裡看電視，這樣的人生有何意義？絕不會有真正的感動。

雖然忙碌的時候渴望空間，但電視也是在百忙中偷空看一下才覺得有趣吧？

無論如何，要向「考驗」挑戰、正面對抗「苦難」，真正地跨越它們前進。那才是真正的「一人」、「佛法」、「一勝者」。

能夠跨越考驗的「堅強意志」，才是「安樂」。

如今社會上一片蕭條，整天是令人沮喪的消息，少有帶來希望的明朗話題。在這個「灰色的時代」、「精神荒廢」也嚴重。

誰也找不到打開困境的方法。正因為這樣，讓我們這個「太陽」來發出光輝、照耀世界吧！

「法華經兵法勝過一切兵法，須善持之。」（「四條金吾殿御返事」）

沒有勝過法華經的兵法。讓我們奮鬥取勝吧！

在政治上「實踐」釋尊教義。

拉達克里希南博士闡述了重要的事情：

「甘地重演了釋尊的奮鬥。」

「甘地基於釋尊的信息，進行了政治實踐。」

「甘地與釋尊在深層聯繫著。」

博士斷言：「甘地所做的情是釋尊教義的『現代新詮釋』。」

創價學會則是日蓮大聖人教義的『現代新詮釋』和『實踐』，所以偉大。

甘地認為：「佛教是以人為中心的宗教。」

雖然這是理所當然，但甘地是印度教徒而非佛教徒，文化、生活、一切都是立足於印度教之上。儘管如此，他卻讚嘆「佛教是以人為中心的宗教」。

又說：「印度（並非因為接受了釋尊的教義所以沒落，是因為不能實行釋尊的教義所以沒落。」（一九二四年，在孟買釋尊誕生紀念集會上）

此外，甘地對釋尊受當時「失去精神的僧侶」迫害此事一直加以重視。

他慨嘆：「僧侶永遠犧牲（擁有活的精神的）先知。」

「失去精神的利己主義和尚一迫害」持著活的精神的領導人，想將之消滅。如今的日顯宗就是這樣。

「缺乏理想的政治是罪惡」

甘地想在政治上實踐「釋尊的精神」。他堅信著「缺乏理想的政治是罪惡」。

他詞鋒凌厲地說：「缺乏宗教的政治像『死屍』一樣！是失去生命的系統！」

沒有深入的人觀、世界觀、宇宙觀、社會觀的人，一旦擁有權力會幹甚麼？

最後只會變成「盡為自己打算」的利己主義政客，光是在口頭上說：「為民眾著想」等動聽的說詞。

他說這樣的政治不是一活的政府，只會像「死屍」般腐化。

權力的屬性犧牲民眾

許多政治家「想在政治上利用宗教」，許多宗教家「想在宗教上利用政治」。但甘地兩者都不是。

當然，宗教和政治是不同層次的。

雖是這樣，甘地認為，「必須在政治上反映宗教的精神性」。否則的話，由於權力的屬性，政治會犧牲民眾，使社會滅亡。

甘地說：「缺乏宗教的政治是

套在國家脖子上的絞索。不管在任何情況下，政治都應循著宗教所說的真理之道前進。另一方面，避免政治的宗教，甚至不配稱為宗教。」

缺乏宗教的政治將使國家滅亡！

而宗教若是真正想令民眾幸福，就要涉及現實社會！就要涉及政治！

根據甘地的話，也可見學會正在絕對正確的道路上前進。

提出與甘地完全相反論調的人是希特勒（Hitler）。他主張：「宗教別干涉政治！」不准在宗教上利用政治。

說批評話。結果德國向著國家主義之道邁進。

日本的國家主義也是一樣。把抨擊政府的宗教人士下獄，害死他們。牧口先生、戶田先生就是犧牲者。

拉達克里希南博士曾引述十八世紀的英國學者塞繆爾·強森（Samuel Johnson, 1709-84）博士

的話：「國家主義是惡黨最後的避難所」。

如今，壓迫自由的「國家主義」再度抬頭。

「甘地之道」和「希特勒之道」，哪一條路才正確，我想無須贅言吧。

叛逆是「嫉妒」和「虛榮」的醜態

西班牙作家塞萬提斯（Cervantes）曾說：「忘恩是傲慢的私生子。」（《唐吉珂德》）

有位哲學家說：「叛逆是嫉妒和虛榮的醜態。」

讓我們對惡人、惡人一笑置之前進吧！

日蓮大聖人在「開目抄」裡說：「受惡人讚者，方為第一之恥。」

牧口先生說：「受惡人所憎者，方為第一之光榮。」

戶田先生在《青年訓》裡說：「受惡人稱讚是智者的恥辱，

入門考試將於四月舉行

教學部長 Eugene Hirahara

四月二十五日美國創價學會將舉行入門考試。很多人不願意聽到考試這兩個字。過去的考試經驗，被人用分數判斷我們，而且不得不面對不及格的不良後果，使得他們不願意重覆這種經驗。考試往往是衡量一個人在某種學術或技術方面所具備的知識或能力的工具，但學會舉辦的考試的目的是鼓勵我們研習大聖人的佛法，加深我們的信心和修行。在準備過程中，研讀御書，以及從中所擷取的大聖人的精神和智慧，遠比分數重要得多。在百忙中抽出時間教促自己研讀教材，就算信心因此只增進一點，不管考試成績如何，這些會員都是勝利者。

教學課程和考試都是組織的重要的傳統。在最近發表的幾段「新人間革命」中，池田會長提及一九六〇年代初在洛杉磯參加教學考試。他在小說中的化身伸一說：「或許有人會想我們為甚麼要研究這麼艱深的佛理論，唱題和得到功德不就夠了，請記住，正確的信心確實帶來許多功德，但也充滿障礙和困難。除非有穩固的教學基礎，問題出現時，你們就會開始起疑。」

學會的教學精神和傳統當然都是根源於大聖人。在「諸法實相抄」中，他說：「須勤勵於行學二道，行學絕則佛法滅。」大聖人的接班人日與上人也強調學習的重要。「二十六條遺教置文」的第十一條說：「我門流須將御書銘記於心胸，受一理於師傳。」

大聖人終其一生寫了無數的信函給各種情況中的人，探討不同的問題和法理。有些是說明他深奧的教義的論文，有些是充滿慈悲的鼓勵面對生死問題的信徒的信。其中，很多包含了信徒可以應用到日常生活的清楚與具體的指導。所有的御書都表現了他在積極努力地引導人們「最終目的是全人類」脫離不幸。大聖人的御書是活的哲學和充滿人性的偉大著作，並且是一部如何渡過有價值、有勇氣的人生的教科書。大聖人的接班人日與上人持續

他的精神，維護他的著作，讓人們清楚地了解它們包含了大聖人永恆的教導。

可是，隨著時間流逝，僧侶們一再偏離宗祖的精神，不再鼓勵在家信徒研究佛法。在缺乏學習之下，在家信徒自然很難判斷僧侶的方向是否正確。是在實踐佛法。這就是大聖人「絕行學則佛法滅」這句話所警誡的事情之一。

只因學會的出現，以及歷代會長的努力，行學二道的精神才得以重生。結果，大聖人的佛法遍及全球，正如他在他的著述中所說的。

二次世界大戰期間，在家信徒飽受軍事權威的迫害，大多數會員都放棄信心。戶田會長聲稱：「沒有教學，會員不了解信心。他們嚇壞了，而被迫害擊敗。這是非常不幸的事。我下定決心不讓錯誤重現。」

據此意向，戶田會長出版了「日蓮大聖人御書全集」，收集了四百多封書信。自大聖人以來七百多年，第一次出現了這麼一本書。

學會的教學傳統是由教學討論會和考試的方式發展出來。這個使普通人能夠精通佛法深奧的哲學的活動如今已經擴展到全球各地，總計數百萬人。

在最近的「新人間革命隨筆」中，池田會長以三點說明學習大聖人佛法的重要：「第一，佛法教學加深信心；第二，他說，而且「第二，教學是推動廣布的動力」，他的結論是，「第三，教學是建立新人間革命的關鍵。」

我要求每一位負責的領導積極地訪問每一個地區和小組，並且給予參加考試者全面的支援和協助。「學習夥伴」制往往很有效，一個（已參加過考試的）人和一個將參加考試的人或一個小組的人一起學習。

中文模擬試題將刊載於三月份的報紙，真正的試題將以模擬試題為範本。閱讀一部份教材，然後做幾題模擬試題，直到對所有題目完全熟悉，這將有助於準備考試。希望大家鼓勵每一位具備考試資格的會員參加考試，使他們能夠加深對佛法的了解，加強信心，為廣布修行，並且為個人的成長和幸福創造堅固的基礎。

受大聖人稱讚是一生的榮譽。」讓我們本著此教誨前進吧。

正如中國的鄧穎超女士所說一樣：「生命不息，戰鬥不止。」

好比金堅的團結

明年也和睦地以「好比金堅的團結」為廣宣流布絕對徹底戰勝每一仗吧！

不管別人說甚麼，只要如同御書所便行。因為，佛法是永恆的世界，宇宙般廣大的世界。為了取得勝利，我們要堅決奮鬥，以創價的「猛烈攻勢」使謗法和懷著惡意之徒驚詫愕然！

最後，我懷著最大的感謝為每一位高呼「萬歲！」以結束我的講話。

謝謝！祝大家迎接美好的新年。

套在國家脖子上的絞索。不管在任何情況下，政治都應循著宗教所說的真理之道前進。另一方面，避免政治的宗教，甚至不配稱為宗教。」

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니찌렌의 생애

1. 니찌렌의 대성인께서 1253년 4월 28일 선언하신 불법수행은 무엇입니까?
2. 니찌렌 대성인의 내중의 입장에서 다쓰노구찌 법란의 중요성을 설명하십시오.
3. 다쓰노구찌에서 니찌렌 대성인의 처형이 불가능하다는 것이 증명된 후 대성인께서는 흑한으로 사람이 살 수도 없고 살아서 돌아오기도 힘든 곳으로 유배를 가지게 되었습니다. 그곳의 이름은 무엇입니까?
4. 대성인께서는 그가 유배됨으로 해서 실망하고 있던 제자들에게 무엇을 가르쳤습니까?
5. 사도에서 유배되어 계시는 동안 대성인께서는 교학의 이론적인 기초를 완성하셨습니다. 어본존을 도현하시는 틀을 마련하시는 두 가지 어서는 무엇이었습니다?
6. 니찌렌 대성인께서 어서에서 반복해서 말씀하시는 부처란 무엇입니까?
7. 어떤 사건이 벌어진 후 니찌렌 대성인께서는 어본존을 도현하시기 시작했습니까?
8. 어본존에서 "남묘호행계교"와 "니찌렌"의 도현은 어떤 법리를 나타냅니까?
9. 중국 고사에서 현인은 세 번 간혹해서 듣지 않으면 나라를 떠난다는 사례에 따라, 대성인께서는 미노부에 입산하시어 말법의 어본불로서 미래 영겁에 걸친 전 민중을 구제할 법체의 확립을 위해 준비하셨습니다. 미노부의 입산은 단순한 운둔생활이나 인생의 포기는 더욱 아니었습니다. 이때 하신 세 가지 일은 무엇입니까?
10. 대성인께서는 미노부에서 제자들의 신심을 향상시키기 위해 중요한 교학을 통하여 훈련해 가셨습니다. 이 교학들은 무엇에 관한 것이며, 닛고 상인에 의해 기록된 이 교학들은 무엇이라고 부릅니까?
11. 다쓰노구찌와 사도유배 이후에 대성인을 따르던 신도들의 행동과 아쓰하라 법란 이후에 신도들의 행동의 차이는?
12. 대성인을 따르던 신도들의 어떠한 행동이 권력자들로 하여금 그들을 박해하게 했습니까?
13. 니찌렌 대성인으로부터 함법적으로 상승을 받으신 분은 누구입니까?

# SGI-U.S.A.

## 임용시험 예상문제집

금년 4월 25일, 일요일을 기해 미국 전역에서는 임용시험을 치루게 됩니다. 실제 시험은 25-35 문제로 구성됩니다.

14. 왜 6노승 가운데 5노승은 대성인 별세 후 대성인의 가르침을 버렸습니까?
15. 어떤 방법을 5노승은 저질렀습니까?
16. 왜 닛고 상인께서는 미노부산을 떠났으며 후지산(입구)에서 대석사를 창건했습니까?
17. 닛고 상인께서는 "26계 유계치문"을 쓰신 목적은 무엇입니까?

일생 성불초

18. 묘법에 대한 대성인의 가르침과 대부분의 기성종교와의 다른점은 무엇입니까?
19. "자신의 심성을 관한다"란 무슨 뜻입니까?
20. "빈곤한 사람이 일야로 이웃의 재보를 센다"는 비유를 들어 대성인께서는 무엇을 우리에게 가르치시고 계십니까?
21. 어떠한 마음가짐이 불도수행에 있어 우리들에게 무량의 고행처럼 느껴지게 합니까?
22. 불법신자가 아닌 외도의 사람들의 신앙의 자세는?
23. 불법을 수행하는데 있어 필수적인 요소로서 이 어서는 무엇을 강조하고 있습니까?
24. 어떤 태도가 우리들로 하여금 신심의 대환희를 가로막습니까?

**"정명경중에는 증생의 마음이 더러워지면 토도 더러워지고 마음이 깨끗하면 토도 청정하다고 해서 정토라고 하고 예토라 함도 토에 들의 차이가 없으며, 오직 우리들의 마음의 선악에 의한다고 쓰여있다"(어서 384쪽)**

25. 어떠한 불법의 원리가 이 구절에 설해져 있습니까?
26. "선과 악의 마음"이란 무슨 뜻입니까?
27. 불국토(정토)는 어디에 있습니까?
28. "생명과 일체의 현상"의 상호관계의 원리에서 생명이란?

29. "생명과 일체의 현상"의 상호관계의 원리에서 일체의 현상이란?
30. 니찌렌 대성인에 의하면 열등한 가르침이란 어떠한 것입니까?
31. 남묘호행계교라고 불러도 어떤 경우의 이전경의 가르침으로 됩니까?
32. 우리들이 본존님께 제목을 올릴 때 "----"이다라는 확신으로 임하라고 대성인은 가르치신다. "----"는 무엇입니까?
33. 어떠한 불법수행 방법을 대성인께서는 거울을 닦는 비유로서 말씀하시고 계십니까?
34. 이 어서에 의하면 무엇이 "성불의 직도"입니까?

니찌노 부인답서

**이 어본존을 결코 타처에서 구하지 말지이다. 다만 우리들 증생이 범화경을 수지하고 남묘호행계교라고 봉창하는 흉중의 욕단에 계시느니라. 이것을 구식심왕진여의 도라고 하느니라.... 이 어본존도 다만 신심의 이자에 들어 있으니 이선득입이란 이것이니라(어서 1213쪽)**

35. 대성인께서 역설하신 우리가 생명 속에서 찾아야 할 것은 무엇입니까?
36. "구식심왕진여의 도"란 무슨 뜻입니까?
37. 위의 어서에서 생명 속에 존재하고 있는 어본존 실체를 말씀하셨는데, 어본존과 타종이 숭배하고 있는 그들의 그릇된 본존과의 다른점은 무엇입니까?
38. 처음부터 분동되지 않는 신심을 가진 사람은 드물다. 신심을 시작할 때 어떠한 자세로 임하는 것이 바람직합니까?
39. 제목을 봉창할 때 나타나는 사력중의 근본이 되는 두가지 힘은 불력과 법력인데, 어떻게 이것을 우리 생명 속에 융현시킬 수 있습니까?

40. 석가모니 부처의 제자인 사리불은 지혜가 가장 뛰어난 사람으로 소문이 나있었는데도, 지혜를 가지고 성불은 하지 못하였습니다. 그러면 어떻게 사리불은 성불하였습니까?
41. 의심이 자연스럽고 피할 수 없다해도 의심이 없는, 신심을 추구하는 것이 중요합니다. 신심수행에 있어서 의심이 생기거나 진지하지 못할 때 우리는 걱정하거나 고뇌하는 대신 어떻게 해야합니까?
42. 니찌렌 대성인의 불법에 있어서 신심으로부터 일어나는 두가지 행동은 무엇입니까?
43. 니찌렌 대성인께서는 한 나라의 황제나 리왕을 통하여, 이 어서에서 우리들에게 무엇을 가르치시려고 하였습니까?
44. 어본존님의 중앙에 한자로 남묘호행계교, 니찌렌이라고 쓰여져 있는데 이것은 불법에 있어서 무슨 원리를 말하는 것입니까?

시조 킨고 전답서

45. 우리들은 어떻게 하면 생명의 경애를 끌어 올릴 수 있습니까?
46. 생명 경애를 높이는 것이 왜 중요합니까?
47. 대성인께서는 왜 "남묘호행계교라고 부르는 이외에 유락은 없다"라고 말씀하십니까?
48. "자수법락"이란 무엇입니까?
49. 법락과 유락의 차이는 무엇입니까?
50. 행, 불행의 원인을 다른 사람의 탓으로 돌리는 것은 왜 범화경의 가르침에 위배되는 것입니까?
51. 어떠한 결의를 하면서 창제하는 것이 우리들 생활상의 발전을 피할 수 있습니까?
52. "행복과 안이함"이란 우리 생활과 어떠한 연관이 있습니까?
53. 절대적인 자유를 갖고 있는 부처란 누구를 말합니까?

54. 평화와 안녕을 누린다함은 무엇을 뜻합니까?
55. 불법신자에게 고(苦)란 무슨 의미입니까?
56. 대성인께서는 왜 시조킨고에게 "더욱더 강성한 신심을 하십시오"라고 하셨습니까?
57. 대성인께서는 왜 시조킨고에게 "다만 아내와 더불어 술을 마시고 남묘호행계교라고 부르고 계십시오"라고 하셨습니까?
58. 우리들의 신심의 목적은 무엇입니까?

중문 문제에 관한 집의응답

59. 신도로부터 수동적이고 맹목적인 복종을 원하는 사람들에게 도전하는 것을 불법의 입장에서 볼때 무엇이라고 합니까?
60. SGI가 받고 있는 모든 박해는 범화경의 어느 구절에 해당 됩니까?
61. 권위자에 의한 반대를 불법에서는 어떻게 생각합니까?
62. 불법 활동에 있어서 장해란 무엇을 의미합니까?
63. 창가학회가 중문으로부터 반대당하는 것은 무엇을 의미합니까?
64. 중문문제를 이해함으로써 얻는 공덕은 무엇입니까?
65. 올바른 신심은 무엇입니까?
66. 미래에 있어, 중문문제를 이해한다는 것이 왜 중요합니까?
67. 불법신도와 승려사이의 평등에 관해서 일련종의 입장은 무엇입니까?
68. 본존님에 대한 일련종의 견해는 니찌렌 대성인의 견해와 모순됩니다. 일련종에서 대성인의 생각을 틀리게 말한 것은 무엇입니까?
69. 니찌렌 대성인께서는 혈액상승을 받는 것이 무엇을 의미하는지를 분명히 말씀하셨습니다. 그런데 일련종의 혈액상승에 대한 견해는 니찌렌 대성인의 견해와 어떻게 다릅니까?
70. 일련종과 SGI는 광선유포에 대한 행동과 책임에 대해서 어떻게 다릅니까?

# 法華經의 지혜

## 제 34회 테마: 여래 수량품 ⑨

**SGI회장:** '죽음뿐만' 체험-임사체험은 최근 많은 연구가 이루어지고 있지요. 본격적인 통계조사가 시작되고 있다고 들었습니다.

**사이트 교학부장:** 네. 미국의 어느 조사에 의하면 '죽음 직전까지 갔다가 구사일생으로 살아돌아왔다.'고 답한 미국인이 15%이나 되었습니다. 그 가운데 3분의 1, 즉 미국의 인구 비율로 보자면 8백만명 정도가 임상 상태에서 무언가의 '사후의 세계'를 체험하고 있다는 겁니다. <칼리스 오시스, 에를렌도르 해럴드슨 저, '사람은 죽을 때 무엇을 보는가-체험 1천명의 증언', 존 갤럽(갤럽 여론조사기관 회장)과 윌리엄 프록터에 의한 조사>

**엔도:** 8백만명이라면 굉장한 숫자이군요.

**SGI회장:** 그러한 체험이 문혀진채 있었다니 아깝습니다. 앞으로도 세계적으로 엄밀하게 조사를 했으면 좋겠습니다. '사후의 세계'가 있는가 없는가, 있다고 한다면 어떻게 되어 있는가, 이것은 어느 의미에서 우주처럼 이상으로 가치가 있는 인류 최대의 과제이겠지요. 그 답이 어떠한가에 따라서 인류의 삶 자체가 일변할 가능성이 높기 때문입니다. 확실히 음(심층심리학자)도 임사체험을 사전에다 쓰고 있습니다.

**엔도:** 네. 음은 1944년 심장경색에 이어 다리를 골절했습니다. 의식을 상실하는 가운데 꿈은 꾸는 것인지만 우주의 도취에 빠져 있는 것인지 알 수 없었는데, 자기 몸에 터무니 없는 일이 일어났다고 기록합니다. "나는 우주 꼭대기까지 올라가고 있다고 생각했다. 저멀리 아래에는 푸른 빛이 빛나는 가운데 지구가 떠 있는 것이 보이고, 거기에는 검푸른 바다와 여러 대륙이 보이고 있었다. 다리 밑 저멀리에는 실론이 있고 그 옆에 아득한 인도 대륙이 있었다. 나의 시야가운데 지구 전체는 들어오지 않았으나, 지구의 둥근 모양은 선명하게 떠올라 그 윤곽의 멋진 푸른 빛으로 빛을 내며 온색의 빛을 발하고 있었다." "어느 정도의 고도에 도달할까 이처럼 전망할 수 있는지 나중에 알게 되었다. 그것은 놀랄게도 거의 1,500킬로미터 높이에서였다. 이 고도에서 본 지구의 전경은 내가 지금까지 본 광경 가운데 가장 아름다운 것이었다." (음 자전, 2)

**SGI회장:** '지구는 푸르렀다'고 말하는군요. 가가린 이전의 일이지요?

**사이트:** 가가린의 인공위성이 1961년이니까, 그로부터 17년 전의 일입니다. 즉 1944년에는 누구도 우주에서 지구를 본적이 없던 시대입니다.

**엔도:** 거기서 음은 지구를 바라본 다음, 인도양을 뒤로하고 우주공간을 떠돌기 시작합니다. 그리고 검고도 큰 돌덩어리가 보입니다. 돌덩어리는 가운데가 구멍이 뚫려 있어 흰둥고 예뻐다가 되어 있습니다. 음은 그 속으로 들어갑니다. 거기서 자기의 경험, 사색, 지상에 존재하는 모든 것들이 사라져가는 느낌이 들었다고 합니다.

**SGI회장:** 선명한 체험이었군요.

이때부터 음은 광대한 정신세계를 탐구하는데 큰 진전을 보게 되는군요.

**엔도:** 사실 음은 사후의 존재를 확신했던 겁니다. '임사'라는 것은 물론 죽음 그 자체는 아닙니다. 그러나 '죽음'이란 것을 강렬하게 자각하는 계기가 되는 것은 틀림없겠지요. 그 결과 임사체험을 했던 많은 사람들은 그때까지의 살아가는 태도를 일변시키고 있습니다. 분명 임사체험을 가진 사람은 '남에게 더욱 관용을 베풀게 되었다.' '적극적으로 상대방을 위해 주는 마음을 가지게 되었다.'는 예가 많은 듯 합니다.

**스다:** 앞서의 요시마치씨도 '임종할 때 인간이란게 이렇게도 스스로를 컨트롤할 수 없는가' 통감했습니다. 목숨이란 것이 얼마나 덧없는가. 부서지기 쉬운가. 앞으로는 하루를 빼집없이 '만약 만애하나 이대로 죽어도 후회는 없다'고 진짜로 말할 수 있는 나날이 되어야 한다고 강렬하게 느꼈다는 것입니다.

**사이트:** '임종 지금에 있다.'라는 정신이군요. 이른바 임사체험과는 다르지만, 저한신 아와지 대지진으로 인생관이 바뀌었다는 사람도 많았답니다. 물론이나 지위, 명성이나 명예 이상으로 중요한 것이요. 그것이 바로 인간의 목숨이라는 것을 알았다. 그때까지 머릿속으로는 알고 있었으나, 비로소 실감으로서 솟아 올랐다고 합니다.

**SGI회장:** 자기에게 가장 중요한 것은 무엇인가 - 죽음에 임했을 때 그것이 분명해진다.

**사이트:** 니찌렌 대성인의 '우선 임종의 일을 배우고 후에 타사를 배워야 한다고 생각하여'(어서 1404쪽)라고 말씀하셨던 것은 중요하군요.

**SGI회장:** 석존도 태어난지 얼마되지 않아 어머니를 잃게 되어 어릴 적부터 죽음에 대해 생각하고 있었습니다. 대성인도 어린 시절부터 '죽음'을 응시하고 계셨습니다. '임종'이란 '산꼭대기'에 비유될지도 모릅니다. 인생이란 등산을 끝낸 그 지점에서 되돌아보아야 비로소 자기 인생이 전부 보이는 것입니다. 자기는 이 일생에서 무엇을 했는가, 무엇을 남겼는가, 얼마만큼 선을 행했는가, 악을 행했는가, 남에게 친절했는가, 남에게 상처를 입혔는가, 어느 쪽이 많았는가. 자기에게 도대체 무엇일 가장 중요하고 소중한 것인가. 그것들을 통렬하게, 아니 폭풍과 같은 격렬함으로 가슴에 저며 온다. 그것이 '임종'의 한 측면일지도 모릅니다.

**엔도:** 죽어가는 사람의 육체의 조용해 누워있어도 그 가슴 속에서는 굉장한 갈등의 드라마가 전개되고 있을지도 모릅니다. 그것을 표현하는 육체적인 힘이 더이상 없기 때문에 밖으로는 나타나지 않습니다.

**SGI회장:** 이러한 체험을 어떻게 해석하는가. 그것은 사람마다 다양하

다. 다만 나는 일체의 선입견을 버리고 엄밀하게 조사 연구하면 '죽음에 의해 생명이 끝나게 된다'는 현대적 생명관으로는 설명할 수 없는 요소가 있음을 증명한다고 믿고 있습니다. 그러나 연구는 아직 실마리만을 잡았을 뿐이지요.

**엔도:** 로스 박사 자신도 임사체험을 가지고 있습니다. 죽음의 고통을 맞고고 연이어 재생을 경험했다고 합니다. 자신을 내려다 보는 '계 2의 나가 빛에 가까이 다가가 빛에 녹아들고 일체화한 순간 깊은 정적에 빠져들었다. 그리고 눈을 떴을 때 그녀는 살아 있는 온갖 생명의 맥동을 체감하는 것입니다. 돌에도 생명이 있음을 느꼈습니다. "나는 나를 둘러싼 세계에 대한 사람과 경외심으로 가득 찼습니다. 나는 일사귀 하나 하나에서 구름 하나 하나, 풀 하나 하나, 벌레 한 마리 한 마리에서 사랑을 느꼈습니다. 길가의 작은 돌들이 맥박치고 있는 것을 느꼈습니다." <죽는 순간과 임사체험>

**스다:** 로스 박사가 첫 테이프를 끝은 다음, 내과 의사인 레이몬드 무디 씨가 임사 체험을 정리합니다. (1979년) 이것이 큰 반향을 불러일으켜 학문적인 연구가 본격화됩니다. 현재로는 국제적인 연구단체가 조직되고 있습니다.

**SGI회장:** 그때까지는 임사체험이라고 해도 단순한 꿈이나 환상이라고 생각하고 있습니다. 그러나 과학자 조사의 사례를 축적하면서 반드시 그렇지는 않다고 생각하게 되었지요.

**사이트:** 네. 임사체험에는 문화나 종교를 초월하여 서로 공통되는 보편적인 내용이 있습니다. 어떻게 전혀 다른 문화에서 자라난 사람들이 같은 체험을 하는가, 그중에서는 자기가 믿고 있었던 종교와 모순된 체험을 하는 사람도 있는 듯 합니다. 이렇게 되면 무엇인가 보편적인 '생명의 사실'이 있다고 생각하는 쪽이 합리적이라는 생각이 듭니다. 심리학이나 약물학, 신경학적인 해석으로는 충분하게 다 설명할 수 없는 면도 있는 것 같습니다.

**SGI회장:** 현 단계로서는 임사체험이 무엇을 의미하는가, 학문적으로는 아직 결론이 나오지 않았지요.

**엔도:** 네. 크게 나누어 두가지 견해가 있습니다. 하나는 무언가의 의식의 사후에도 존속하는 것은 아닌가하는 설. 다른 하나는 모든 임사체험은 '뇌 안의 현상'이 아니라 주는 것'으로 설명할 수 있다는 설입니다. 이 설에 입각한 과학자는 임사체험은 사후의 세계를 나타낸 보인 것이라고는 할 수 없다고 주장합니다.

**SGI회장:** 분명히 '사후' 그 자체는 실험에 의해 검증할 수 없는 이상, 가설의 영역을 넘어서지 않습니다. 문제는 '사후'가 있든 없든간에 '그 어느쪽도 가설에 불과하다'는 것이냐. 결국 유훈론적인 생명관만이 진실이

고 '사후 존속'설만이 가설인 것은 아니라 하는 것이지요. 실증할 수 없다는 점에서는 같은 입장입니다.

**사이트:** 현대의 교육을 받은 사람들 중에는 '사후의 생명=미신, 비과학적'이라는 도식을 맹신하는 사람들이 많은 것도 사실입니다. 그 도식 자체가 증명할 수 없다는 의미에서는 '미신'이지요.

**SGI회장:** 그렇기에 중요한 것은 어느 쪽의 가설이 보다 합리적이고 설득력이 있는가, 즉 많은 임사체험이나 '과거세를 기억하는 사람' 등의 예를 검증하여 어느 설이 그것을 잘 설명해 줄 수 있는가 하는 것입니다. 앞서도 이야기가 나왔지만, 인간이 죽어갈 때 겪는 체험의 핵심부분은 문화나 종교, 개인적인 요인에 그치지 못하지 않는 것 같습니다. 오히려 놀랄 정도로 서로 닮아 있다고 합니다. 그 자체도 불가사의 합니다.

**엔도:** 더욱 불가사의한 것은 눈이 보이지 않는 사람이 정확하게 주위가 보였다는 것입니다. 큐브라 로스 박사는 눈이 먼 사람이 병실에 있었던 사람들이 입은 옷에 대해 상세하게 설명할 수 있었다는 예를 보고하고 있습니다.

**SGI회장:** 이것들은 '생리학적으로 설명하기 아주 곤란하겠지요. 그밖에도 그러한 예를 들 수 있다고 봅니다. 그러나 일단 '사후의 생명 따위는 미신'이라고 믿는 사람에게 사실을 직시하게 만드는 것은 여간 어려운 일이 아니지요.

**엔도:** 학회원이라도 신앙하기 전에는 '신앙으로 생명력이 강해지고 병도 낫는다'는 것은 미신이라고 믿고 있었던 사람은 아주 많이 있었습니다. 아무리 설명해도 들을 수 있는 귀를 가지지 못한 사람도 많은 게 아닐까요. **사이트:** 큐브라 로스 박사도 이렇게 말하고 있습니다. "어느 사실에 압도하지 않으면 사람들은 그것을 부정하는 몇천가지나 되는 반론을 갖다 댑니다. 이것은 그 사람 자신의 문제이며, 그와같은 사람을 무리하게 설득하고자 하지는 않습니다." 왜냐하면 '결국은 죽으면 알게 되니까요'(웃음)

**SGI회장:** 분명히 죽어보면 아는 것은 틀림없습니다.(웃음) 그러나 그때는 이미 늦었을지도 모릅니다.(웃음) 결국 현재로서는 어느 설도 이론상으로는 결정적인 '결론'을 내리기에 부족하다고 하겠지요. 그러기에 나는 언제나 파스칼의 논의를 생각하는 것입니다.

**스다:** '사람은 생각하는 갈대'라고 말한 수확자군요.

**SGI회장:** 사상이나 수학에도 아주 능통했습니다. '파울' 연구로도 유명합니다. 그러한 그대께 사후의 생명에 대해 파스칼은 '내가'의 이론으로 설명합니다. <광세> 즉 사후의 생명이 있는가 없는가, 이성으로는 무엇이냐고 말할 수 없다 - 이것은 칸트가 중

명하고도 있지요. 그러기에 만약 사람이 '사후의 생명이 있다'는 쪽에 걸고 살아가다가 죽었다고 합니다. 그 결과 내기에 졌다 - 즉, 실은 그것이 존재하지 않았다고 해도 '당신은 아무런 손해도 보지 않는게 아닌가'라고 파스칼은 말하는 것입니다. 한편 '사후의 생명이 없다'는 쪽에 내기를 걸고 살아가다 죽었다고 합니다. 그렇게 되면 만약 사후의 생명이 실재하고 있었다면 이미 되돌이킬 수 없게 됩니다. 살아있는 사이에 선행을 쌓고 사후를 준비해두면 좋았을 걸이라고 생각해도 이미 늦습니다. 그러므로 사후를 믿는 쪽에 걸어 내기에서 이기면 행복해지며, 진다고 해도 아무런 손해볼 보지 않습니다. 그러나 반대쪽에 걸어 내기에서 지면 되돌이킬 수가 없게 됩니다. 이렇게 냉정하게 생각하면 사후의 생명을 믿는 쪽에 거는 것이 - 즉 종교를 믿어들이는 것이 극히 '합리적인 선택'이며 이성적인 사람이라면 이것 이외의 선택이 없다는 이릅니다. 다른 이론도 있겠으나, 나는 파스칼의 이론이 지금도 설득력이 있다고 생각합니다.

**사이트:** '단견'이란 생명이 죽음에 의해 무로 돌아간다는 생명관이지요. 이러한 '단견'이 대다수 현대인의 생사관이라고 생각합니다. 이것을 임시로 '단편론'이라고 이름하고 싶습니다. 한편 현대에는 영혼불멸론도 여러가지 형태로 바뀌면서 유행하고 있습니다. 그러나 육체와는 별도로 불멸하는 '혼과 같은 것이 있어 그것이 썩을 계속되고 있다는 생각은 '상견'이라고 하여 이것을 불법에서는 부정하고 있습니다.

**SGI회장:** 그렇지요. 윤회 날아가는 영혼과 같은 '실체가 있는 것은 아닙니다. 어디까지나 색심불이입니다. 또 사후의 생명은 '공(空)'으로서의 우주에 녹아들고 우주와 일체가 됩니다. '상견도 '단견도' 잘못된 것입니다. 그 어느 쪽도 일면의 진리를 포함하면서 역시 한쪽으로 치우친 관점입니다. 그러한 수량품에 설하는 '영원한 생명'이란 무엇인가, 그것을 다음 회에 생각해 봅시다. 니찌렌 대성인은 '다만 오로지 본분수량의 일품에 한하여 출리생사의 요법이니라'(어서 1022쪽)라고 말씀하셨습니다. <모든 여러 경전 속에서> 다만 본분 수량품 일품만이 생사의 미고를 타고넘기 위한 요법인 것이다> 올바른 생사관을 확립할 수 있는가 어떤가. 그것에 의해 사의 의미가 바뀐다. 생의 의미가 바뀐다. 괴하는 '내세를 믿지 않는 자는 모두 이 세상에서 죽어있다'고 말하고 있습니다. <여러만 저, '괴테와의 대화' (상)> 생기발랄하게 '영원한 희망'을 가지고 살아가기 위해서 지금 불멸을 배우는 것입니다. 이윽고 다가올 죽음을, 당당한 '인생의 완성'의 때로 할 것인가, 아니면 비참한 '인생의 보지'의 때로 할 것인가. 이것은 모피 이 일생을 이 '지금'을 어떻게 살았는가로 결정되는 것입니다. 그런 의미에서도 '임종'은 바로 '지금'에 있는 것입니다. (법린 99년 1월)