



SPEECH
In part 3 of his Feb. 2 speech, President Ikeda introduces New York member Shunzo Ono's triumphant battle with cancer.
pages 4-5



FEATURE
The 'World Tribune' takes a kosen-rufu tour of the Caribbean.
pages 6-8

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S FEB. 3 MESSAGE

Forgetting Is the Easy Way Out

Photo by AP PHOTO/MARTIN GNEDT

In this message to a recent leaders conference, the SGI president talks about Dr. Simon Wiesenthal, survivor of the Nazi concentration camps and world-famous Nazi hunter. Dr. Wiesenthal says that forgetting is the easy way out, and President Ikeda echoes his message. Explaining that Dr. Wiesenthal sees his true enemy as humanity's inclination to forget past injustice, President Ikeda emphasizes how important in kosen-rufu it is to never stop fighting for justice — to never forget justice.



Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal (right) meets with Bosnia-Herzegovina Deputy Foreign Minister Husein Zivalj in Vienna, November 1998. Wiesenthal had just received an award from the Bosnia-Herzegovina Embassy.

Thank you for gathering for this prefecture leaders conference. First, I want to quote a passage from Nichiren Daishonin: "If a boat is handled by an unskilled steersman, it may capsize and drown everyone aboard. Likewise, even if someone has great physical strength, if he lacks a resolute spirit, he cannot give full play to his abilities. In this country, there are many wise persons, but they cannot utilize their wisdom because they are governed by

foolish leaders" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 198).

Leaders have an important responsibility. They are the motivating force that makes things happen. They are the heart of a movement. Everything depends upon them. Whether people's potential is given full play or wasted, whether opportunities are taken or lost — it all depends upon the leaders.

I hope that you will be wise, courageous leaders.

From Jan. 26, an exhibition commemorating the 30th anniversary of my appeal for the

restoration of diplomatic relations between China and Japan is being held at the Soka Gakkai Toda Peace Memorial Hall in Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan.

The exhibition, which will run through April 18, commemorates the 30th anniversary of President Ikeda's Sept. 8, 1968, call for the normalization of relations between China and Japan. Based on his belief that "world peace is not possible without friendly China-Japan relations," he suggested several practical ideas to be put into action, thus opening the way,

which had been blocked for so long, to restoring diplomatic ties between the two nations. His appeal is highly regarded in China and known as "The 1968 Proposal."

The friendly relations that exist today between China and Japan are the result of the efforts of many, many ordinary people working together at the grass roots.

Among the items on display at this exhibition are Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's ivory paper knife, given to me by his wife, Deng Yingchao, and her

own beloved jade pen holder, which she presented to me.

A very important essay that Deng Yingchao, "mother of the Chinese people," wrote in April 1988 at age 84, has recently been made public for the first time. It is a recollection in the form of a letter to her late husband Zhou Enlai, who had died 12 years earlier. Madame Deng reminisces about their life together, a life devoted to a shared cause. I want to introduce a portion of this essay today.

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 10

ESSAY

The SGI president explains why art is a 'weapon.'

page 2

NEWS

Anna Rosmus speaks against discrimination at SUA, Calabasas.

page 3

ENCOURAGEMENT

President Ikeda talks about taking action, March 10.

page 10

AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA



PEACE THROUGH ART

In this essay on Beijing Opera, President Ikeda makes the point that 'art is a powerful "weapon" in the struggle for peace. It is one of the highest expressions of human victory.' He praises artists for creating peace through their art.

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS



Brilliant mastery of dance; exquisite flowers of humanity. The tour of Japan by the China Beijing Opera Troupe, sponsored by the Min-On Concert Association, has been extremely well received. Each performance has drawn thunderous applause and cheers, the program being praised as one truly befitting the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, which the tour commemorates. This gives me great delight.

On Jan. 18, I talked at length about the fascinating appeal and spirit of Beijing Opera with representative troupe members who included Fang Jie, director of the troupe and vice president of the China Arts Festival Foundation.

The performers' faces exude a tremendous sincerity and integrity. Each utterance, each gesture is a lovely blossom, an expression of dignified elegance and grace. Even out of costume, the lifeblood of art flows through their veins. Their artistic spirit shines from their lives with diamond brilliance.



The performers are the very life of Beijing Opera, and their training is incredibly strict.

Mei Lanfang, one of the most famous Beijing Opera female-role performers of this century, began his training at about age 7 or 8. Both his father and grandfather were famous performers, but when young Mei started out, he was completely inept. He was so slow on the uptake that his instructor eventually threw in the towel in disgust.

Still, the youth was determined to learn. After being accepted by a new teacher, he got up every morning before dawn and went with his teacher to the

deserted city walls, where he practiced vocalization under his teacher's strict tutelage. They would return to young Mei's house, where his teacher would drill him rigorously in the basic movements and techniques of Beijing Opera, starting with the most elementary aspects like walking. Eventually, a voice as beautiful as an angel's — a voice that pierced the heavens — issued from his young lips.

Among the performers who

accompanied Mei Lanfang on his last tour of Japan, in 1956, was Yuan Shihai, one of the foremost Beijing Opera performers today. Now, his son, Yuan Xiaohai, highly acclaimed for his performances as Guan Yu in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, is a member of the Min-On tour. I had the pleasure of meeting him with the troupe representatives. Both father and son have now performed in Japan, contributing to two generations of China-Japan friendship.

As with Mei Lanfang, Yuan Shihai entered a school for Beijing Opera performers at around age 10, about seven decades ago. The school day was filled with rigorous practice starting early in the morning and continuing until

as late as 10:00 p.m. Of course, conditions are different today, but the great masters of Beijing Opera teach us the eternal lesson that trials and challenges are the key to self-perfection.



This year marks the 25th anniversary of my first visit to China, the first step in my endeavors to build a golden bridge of friendship between China and Japan. Since then, we have received many, many superlative Chinese artists, all of whom have been wonderful cultural ambassadors.

The performing arts groups that have visited Japan under the auspices of Min-On include the Peking Artist Group (1975); the Shanghai Peking Opera Troupe (1976); various artists and musical groups in the concert series "A Musical Voyage Along the Silk Road" (1979-present); the Beijing People's Art Theater (1983, 1990); the Shanghai People's Art Theater (1985); the Oriental Song and Dance Ensemble (1991, 1993); the Yunnan Song and Dance Ensemble (1995); the Xinhui Artist Group (1996); the Radio Nationalities Orchestra (1997); and the Central Nationalities Song and Dance Ensemble (1998).



I remember the 1976 visit of the Shanghai Peking Opera Troupe with a special fondness. The troupe presented contemporary, revolutionary operas such as *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, which depicted events of the Chinese Revolution. The final performance of the tour took place in the gymnasium of Soka University in Hachioji, and I was fortunate to attend. After the performance, the troupe members joined some 50,000 youth, many of them waving Chinese flags in welcome, on the university's athletic field for a friendship rally. I called then for the early conclusion of a China-Japan peace and friendship treaty.

The highlight of the evening was a chorus by all in attendance. Linked by a sense of deep connectedness, everyone there sang "I Love the Fate of Heavenly Peace in Beijing" in Chinese. By the end of the rally, the opera troupe members had linked arms with the members of the Soka Gakkai Brass Band and Fife and Drum Corps. Standing in front of a huge banner with the words "May the Friendship Between the People of China and Japan Long Endure," they sang as one.

Their voices reverberated high, endlessly high, into the clear, blue skies.



The friendship that exists between the people of China and Japan today is not the work of political leaders. It is the work of an alliance of wise pacifists who ardently hope for the peace of both nations. It is the crystallization of the people's will, and it was achieved through their combined effort. Anyone who would dare to exploit this friendship that is growing stronger between our two people and claim credit for it is insulting China and desecrating the incredible efforts of those who worked selflessly to forge this friendship's foundation.



Art is a powerful 'weapon' in the struggle for peace. It is one of the highest expressions of human victory. The efforts that artists make in perfecting and performing their art are in themselves efforts to create peace and culture for all humanity.

Beijing Opera originated among the people. Though in Chinese *Beijing Opera* literally means opera of the capital, it developed first in rural areas. It is a product of the people's energy. Eventually, it was adopted by China's capital, going on to become a spiritual treasure of the entire Chinese people.

To me, this dynamic popular spirit, like the ever-recurrent rhythm of life, makes Beijing Opera a perfect, unsurpassed artistic tribute to the lasting friendship between China and Japan.

This series is published as "Thoughts on The New Human Revolution" in the *Seikyo Shimbum*.



SUA Announcement

Now in its fifth year, Soka University of America's graduate school is accepting applications for its master's degree program in second and foreign language education.

Individuals seeking admission to the M.A. program must hold a baccalaureate or bachelor's degree with a minimum grade-point average of 2.7 or B-on a four-point scale. Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 600. Applications for the 1999-2000 academic year are due by March 31. For more information, contact the Graduate Admissions Office at 26800 West Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas, CA 91302. Telephone (818) 878-3717, e-mail: grad_admissions@soka.edu. Or visit our website: www.soka.edu/calabasas/

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MARCH 6 ENCOURAGEMENT


Members First!

SGI President Ikeda attended a conference March 6 in Shinjuku, Tokyo, with representatives from the United States, Hong Kong, Europe, Oceania and Japan. He gave the following points:

- Doctors who put their patients' welfare first, not their own, can be called genuine doctors. They are respected. Chefs always intent on satisfying their diners are highly valued. In the same way, SGI leaders who think of the members first in all endeavors, not of themselves, produce benefit for both themselves and others. They contribute to the development of our organization.

- It is important to make continual efforts to impart joy and delight to others and to offer warm words of praise.

- We should cast aside selfishness and devote ourselves to serving and supporting our comrades in faith. Then, we can live out our missions and bring our lives to wonderful completion. We must live in such a way that we have no regrets at the end of our lives. Viewed from the perspective of the Buddhist Law, to be a leader in the SGI is itself the highest honor.

- No one is stronger than those who have decided, no matter where they are, that "This is where I will live! This is where I will win!" Those who have striven throughout with this spirit will, at the end of their lives, emanate the luminous glow of fulfillment, joy and benefit that comes from the very depths of their beings. 

Anna Rosmus Speaks at SUA

As a young woman, Anna Rosmus had no idea of her Bavarian hometown's dark Nazi past. But in 1980, when she began research for an essay about her town, Passau, during the Third Reich, she met with enormous resistance and even persecution from her fellow citizens. No one, it seemed, wanted her to reveal that many town officials were former Nazis. Or that many Jews, including many children and babies, had been murdered there during World War II. The citizens of picturesque Passau had allowed the Holocaust to come to town and had supported it — but had tried to hide from what they had done. Ms. Rosmus, whose courage has since been immortalized in the Oscar-nominated documentary *The Nasty Girl*, decided to make Passau face its past.



Anna Rosmus shares her experience, March 2.

In a lecture March 2 at Soka University of America, Calabasas, Ms. Rosmus shared her experience, which she said taught her many lessons about "the danger of forgiving and the nature of personal responsibility." The more she delved into Passau's anti-Semitic past, the more she felt she understood the nature of discrimination: It is, she emphasized at SUA, the persecution of anyone considered different.

In a Q-and-A session after her talk, Ms. Rosmus said that while much has changed in Germany, she feels that the discrimination has never really ended — in fact, it has only spread to include other groups in addition to Jews. Ms. Rosmus believes that Nazism is unfortunately still alive and well today, and must still be combated. This is the mission to which she has dedicated her life.

The Rosmus lecture was the latest in the ongoing Human Rights Lecture Se-

ries being sponsored by SUA, Calabasas, to promote peace, justice and social reform through education.

— JEFF FARR



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Nothing Can Defeat Us, When We Have Good Friends

Adversity was to strike Shunzo Ono again. In December 1995, he was told he had cancer of the tonsils. The cancer was said to be Stage 4 — the most advanced stage. This time, it was not his career as a trumpeter but his very life that hung in the balance.

When I was notified that he would have to undergo surgery, I immediately sent a message to encourage him. And I prayed earnestly to the Gohonzon for the recovery of this most beloved disciple.

“Heavenly deities! Bodhisattva Medicine King! Please protect my dear disciple!” I prayed. “Please go to work on his behalf!”

Mr. Ono chanted to find a good doctor, and he did. The operation was performed by a leading specialist in the field and was a great success. That was three years ago, in February 1996.

From day to day, we may not be able to see the great benefit that we are accumulating in the course of our SGI activities, but at a crucial moment, it is clearly manifested as a powerful protective force — it’s much like having a million allies fighting on our behalf.

In Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, the benefits, whether inconspicuous or conspicuous, are enormous!

Mr. Ono’s courageous struggle for recovery continued after his operation. The surgery had removed not only the cancerous tonsils but also some of the lymph nodes and surrounding muscle tissue in his throat. He could not open his mouth unless he pried it open with his hands.

He had to undergo physiotherapy to regain use of his facial muscles and also had to go through more than 35 sessions of radiation therapy, which brought with it the side effects of vomiting and insomnia. These took a heavy toll on Mr. Ono’s body, and he grew extremely weak.

But he had a firm resolve that kept him going: to join his fellow members on stage at the 15th World Peace Youth Culture



Shunzo Ono (center) with Nestor Torres (left) and Wayne Shorter at Carnegie Hall, June 1996.

SGI President Ikeda continues with the experience of SGI-USA member and master trumpeter Shunzo Ono in part 3 of his February Headquarters Leaders Meeting speech. After recovering from a car accident, adversity strikes Mr. Ono again: cancer. But his fellow jazz musicians in the SGI rally round him and help him overcome this obstacle, too. ‘Nichiren Daishonin repeatedly exhorts us to associate with good friends,’ President Ikeda explains, so that we can completely triumph in life.

Festival to be held in New York a few months later.

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Ono waged an awesome battle against the devil of illness. They were absolutely determined not to be defeated. I sent them a number of messages of support. I also continued to chant for Mr. Ono’s recovery.

Up until five days before the culture festival, Mr. Ono was so weak that he had to have a tube inserted in his stomach and be fed intravenously. But through determination, through sheer force of will, he finally took his place on stage for that wonderful festival, which was held in the world-renowned Carnegie Hall. That was in June 1996.

Joining him on stage were the beautiful fellow members who had supported and encouraged him over the years. They were his friends, his fellow musicians, the world’s leading jazz artists.

On saxophone, there was Wayne Shorter, whose beloved wife, Ana Maria, died shortly after in an airplane crash. I also sent him words of encouragement and condolence at that sad time. He has risen above his grief with great strength and gone on to win Grammy Awards in 1997 and 1998.

On piano, there was Herbie Hancock, who won an Academy Award for Best Original Score in 1987 and Grammy Awards in 1995 and 1997.

There was also Buster Williams on bass, Larry Coryell on guitar, Nestor Torres on flute, Robin Eubanks and Steve Turre on trombone, Kenwood Dennard on drums and Frank Colón on percussion.

Each is one of the world’s top artists in his field; each is a great musician of the Mystic Law. They lent their warm support to Mr. Ono privately and profes-

sionally, and together they created a superlative culture festival that will go down in the annals of our movement and be remembered for all posterity.

We must never be deceived by corrupt individuals.

Mr. Ono has always shared life’s joys and sufferings with these good friends, with these wonderful fellow members. And, in fact, he has made it his guideline to do so. That is why he’s strong. That is why nothing can defeat him. That is why he continues to grow.

The Daishonin repeatedly exhorts us to associate with good friends. He cites the Sutra passage “Thrust aside evil friends and associate with good companions” (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 78).

We mustn’t allow ourselves

to be deceived by corrupt, self-serving individuals. Such people are arrogant and seek only to use others for their own ends. People of this kind exploit the Gakkai, the members’ sincerity, social status and even political power, using everything as a means for increasing their own wealth and prestige. They are consumed by self-interest.

The day of the culture festival, Mr. Ono’s fellow musicians, knowing his condition, rallied round him with a sublime harmony of spirit. I’ll never forget that sight. “The Song of Human Revolution,” transformed by a jazz arrangement, resounded powerfully through Carnegie Hall.

Today, the Soka Gakkai Brass Band also performed a rousing rendition of the same song. I thank them for it.

The performance in Carnegie Hall was the magnificent crystallization of the indestructible bonds of comrades. It was simply stunning — art at its most brilliant. Electrified by the jazz musician’s stirring performance, the audience responded with unrestrained cheers and thunderous applause. On and on it went, conveying their heartfelt joy and approval.

Professional musicians and music critics have also raved about Mr. Ono’s trumpet playing as he has returned to the limelight, making such comments as “Ono’s back on top!” and “Ono has made a comeback from illness to play better than he ever has before.”

I was overjoyed, too. “The SGI’s champion trumpeter has risen again like the phoenix,” I thought.

Sharing sufferings and joys with his fellow members, with the SGI and with me, Mr. Ono has performed a brilliant song of the triumph of the human spirit.

Let us join in a round of applause for Mr. Ono and his fellow artists in New York!

As we exert ourselves tirelessly for the sake of kosen-rufu, we transform our lives from those filled with the sufferings of birth, aging, sickness and

PLEASE SEE FRIENDS, NEXT PAGE

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

FRIENDS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

death and win lives of joy, lives infused with the four noble virtues of eternity, happiness, true self and purity. This is faith in the Mystic Law. This is the Daishonin's Buddhism.

In the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings," the Daishonin states: "The four sides [of the Treasure Tower] represent the four sufferings of birth, aging, sickness and death. These four aspects of life adorn the tower of our individual lives. By chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo through birth, aging, sickness and death, the fragrance of the four virtues [of eternity, happiness, true self and purity] are made to issue forth [from our lives]" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 740).

How do we overcome the inescapable sufferings of birth, aging, sickness and death? The answer is: only through faith in the Mystic Law. No other religion or political or economic system can provide a fundamental solution to these innate problems of human existence.

Without coming to grips with this one most essential issue, there can be no true happiness for the individual. Nor will it be possible to create a resplendent global civilization in the coming century.

And the time has come to usher in a Century of Life. But what is life? How do we live our lives? How do we overcome the sufferings inherent in the human condition? These questions must be humanity's focus. The undercurrents of the times are flowing steadily in this direction as we move inexorably toward the 21st century.

Since we are pioneering practitioners of the Daishonin's eternal Buddhism, let us sound a great, joyous and exuberant trumpet call of victory, like a bugle heralding the dawn. Let us work, with courage and vigor, to further spread throughout the world our great philosophy of hope for the new century.

Victorious reports of your activities in each region have been pouring in to our Headquarters. From the start of the year, each and every region has been making remarkable strides. A powerful momentum toward a year of perfect victory has begun. I commend all of you from the bottom of my heart.

All your dedicated efforts are for the sake of your fellow citizens and for your local communities. They are for the sake of



Joining Shunzo Ono on stage at the 15th World Peace Youth Culture Festival held at Carnegie Hall are his fellow member-musicians, who are some of the world's leading jazz artists.

kosen-rufu and for your own happiness as well. Please advance with that conviction.

The essence of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is sharing it with others.

February is the month in which the Daishonin and second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda were born. It is also the month of the Soka Gakkai's February Tradition — a tradition of redoubled efforts in propagation. This tradition has its origin in February 1952, when I, then a 24-year-old youth division member, joined Tokyo's Kamata Chapter as chapter staff and achieved with the members an unprecedented monthly membership increase of 201 households.

This was at a time when even the chapters with the highest propagation records could only manage at most around a hundred new households a month. Not even under the direction of veteran leaders could they get the numbers past this level.

President Toda watched this situation closely. "At this rate," he said, "the Soka Gakkai will never grow into a large organization. We won't be able to realize kosen-rufu." So he summoned me and said, "Daisaku, would you take on the position of Kamata Chapter staff and

begin to get things going in earnest?"

Having worked side by side with President Toda day and night for many years, I understood his meaning well. Kamata, too, was my hometown. "Leave it to me," I told him.

Embracing my mentor's heart as my own, I challenged myself with all my might. And I made Kamata the No. 1 chapter in Japan.

I created a breach for the advance of kosen-rufu. After that, this momentum for propagation spread rapidly to other areas of Japan, and our movement to widely share the Daishonin's Buddhism began to grow and make significant progress.

The Kamata Chapter leader and women's division leader at that time, Takashi Koizumi and Shizuko Shiraki, my wife's mother, also poured all their energies into propagation efforts.

I went to Kamata. And Kamata began to take off. Then Tokyo began to take off. And then our chapters all over Japan began to take off.

The new membership total for the whole Soka Gakkai for January 1952 was 635 households. After the landmark results of Kamata Chapter in February, the new membership total for that March showed a dramatic increase, surpassing 1,000 households — a figure

that had long been a monthly target for the Gakkai but never before achieved. By November and December the same year, the new membership monthly totals both reached in excess of 2,000 households. The entire Gakkai membership at the beginning of 1952 was 5,727 households. By the end of the year, it had leapt to 22,324 households.

There were many leaders who had far higher positions than I. But ultimately, positions have nothing to do with kosen-rufu. Truly praiseworthy are those who introduce and lead others to Buddhism.

The essence of faith in the Latter Day, the essence of the Daishonin's Buddhism, is propagation, introducing others to the Mystic Law. Those who do so are Buddhas; they are the proud disciples of the original Buddha, Nichiren Daishonin. Viewed from the Buddhist perspective, all other honors cannot compare.

Those who share the Buddhist teachings with others are far more admirable than the most powerful leaders in society. I declare that those who advance kosen-rufu are the greatest people of all!

In any event, everything began with my mentor, President Toda, sending me, his young disciple, into the "battle-

field." If President Toda hadn't taken this step when he did, and if I had failed to realize his vision, today's Soka Gakkai would not exist.

Because I fought with the spirit of oneness with my mentor, I opened a great path toward the realization of kosen-rufu.

I have spoken of this history today for the sake of posterity.

Let's do our best this spring!

You are all extremely precious. A terrible influenza is raging in Japan, so please take good care of yourselves. I am praying each day, with all my heart, for your health and longevity. As honorary Soka Gakkai president, I am, after all, here to serve you.

As the English poet Shelley says in "Ode to the West Wind," "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

Let's make another great stride as we head into March! Let's make the SGI the foremost organization in the world! Let's do our best!

The conclusion of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 31st Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Feb. 2. Part 2 appeared in last week's issue.



Emerald Isles Area members on Trinidad and Tobago.

Kosen-rufu

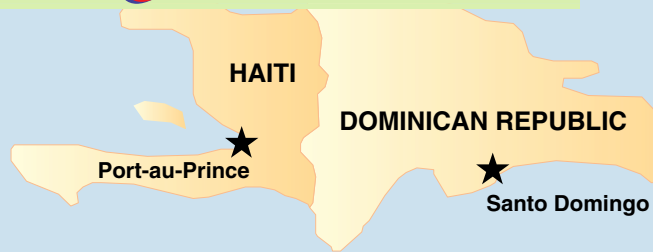
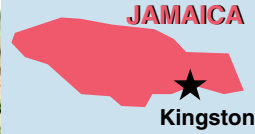
Flourishing in the Caribbean

See story, page 8



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

St. Maarten/St. Martin



Caribbean Area members on St. Maarten/St. Martin. At their general meeting, men's and women's division members (above) sing 'Different Colors,' a rousing reggae song. The Boys and Girls Group (below) performs.



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

St. Maarten/St. Martin

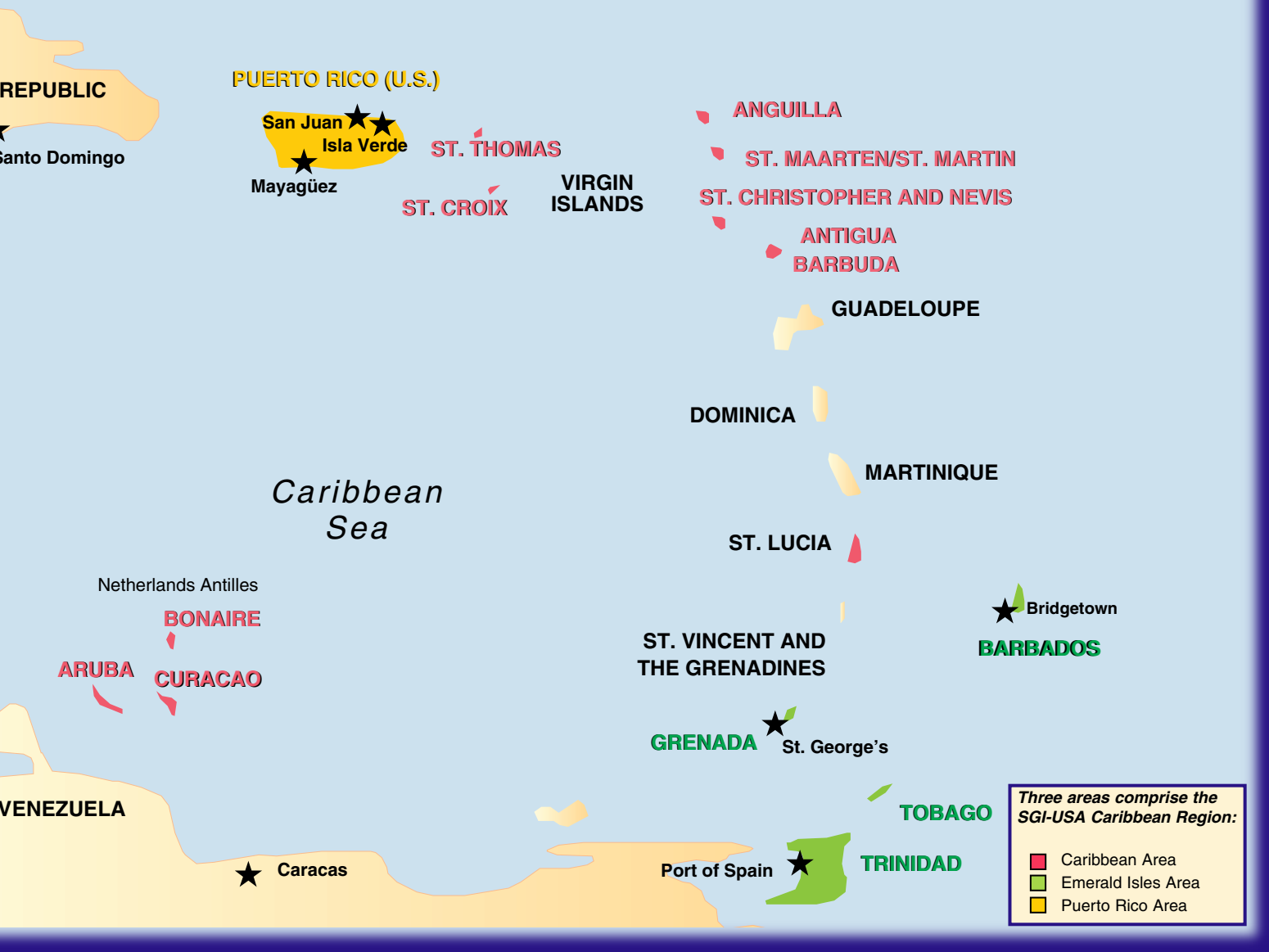


Neth

Atlantic Ocean



Puerto Rico Area members at their general meeting.



NEW Caribbean Region Announced

MIAMI, FEB. 25 SGI-USA General Director Fred Zaitzu formally announced the creation of the Southern Zone and a new region, the Caribbean Region, during a meeting with Florida members at the Miami Community Center. This change promises to enhance communication and nurturing of members throughout the seven southern states of Florida, Georgia, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, as well as the Caribbean.

Thus three regions — Atlanta, Florida and Caribbean — make up the Southern Zone, with Cliff Sawyer (who lives in south Florida) and Sheilah Edwards (an SGI-USA vice general director based in New York) holding dual responsibilities as Southern Zone and Caribbean Region leaders. Donna Fabian of Atlanta and Ingmar Soto of south Florida

leaders for the 21st century. Human revolution doesn't mean other people's human revolution."

Mr. Zaitzu was accompanied by Cliff Sawyer and Sheilah Edwards on a journey to the islands of Puerto Rico, St. Maarten/St. Martin and Trinidad and Tobago, where general meetings and various other activities with SGI-USA members were conducted.

— By Terry Ellis

PUERTO RICO, Feb. 27 The town of Isla Verde where the SGI-USA community center is located played host to a general meeting held this evening. Some members from the seaport of Mayagüez had chartered a bus and traveled more than two hours to attend the festive event.

To the members' delight, General Director Zaitzu delivered his entire speech in

care word can wound their hearts forever. So let's use warm, beautiful words to encourage one another whenever we speak, she said.

Cliff Sawyer expressed his sincere desire to get to know the members personally and find out what he could do to help them accomplish what they wanted to do as an organization.

— By Cliff Sawyer

ST. MAARTEEN/ST. MARTIN, Feb. 28 Spirits were high as members gathered at 3:00 p.m. for the Caribbean Area General Meeting at the Maho Beach Hotel Convention Center. General Director Zaitzu praised the pioneering efforts of all the Caribbean members and announced the formation of the new Caribbean Region. After the recitation of evening gongyo, Master of Ceremonies Urmain Dormoy and his daughter Dantza welcomed everyone in English, French, Dutch, Spanish and Papiamentu, the languages of the island. Then he welcomed Mr. Zaitzu, who had last visited the islands six years ago. Representatives from the neighboring islands of Aruba, Bonaire, Antigua, St. Lucia, Nevis, Guadeloupe, St. Croix and St. Thomas joined the festivities, pledging to strengthen organizational unity throughout the entire Caribbean.

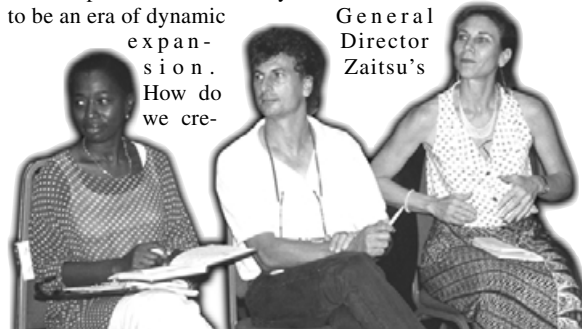
Mr. Zaitzu shared recent guidance from President Ikeda explaining the four keys to advancing in our lives and the organization: Pray for members' happiness, health, to have no accidents and for prosperity. "But this does not mean pray just for people you like and get along with," he explained. "True advancement comes only as we expand our compassionate prayers to everyone, including those people we do not like. We cannot stay in our comfort zone. We must always continue to

ourselves to have a fresh and vital life-condition."

He said that President Ikeda expects the 21st century to be an era of dynamic expansion. How do we cre-

formances featuring the steel pan, calypso, poem and dance that were distinctly Trinidadian.

General Director Zaitzu's



Caribbean Area members on St. Maarten/St. Martin.

ate this? By carrying out the basics of faith, practice and study, chanting daimoku, refreshing our determination and sharing this Buddhism with others.

Dr. Cora Christian from the U.S. Virgin Islands gave words of encouragement and made a presentation of Mako Jumbie dolls, the traditional dance of carnival on her island. Caribbean members affectionately call her Grandmother because she was the first person to receive the Gohonzon in this area.

Cliff Sawyer congratulated all the members on their new step forward in Caribbean kosen-rufu. He said: "Being the least experienced of all the zone leaders, it is I who have much to learn from all of you. I'm sure I'll make mistakes, but you can be sure also that I will chant wholeheartedly for our victory together, and I will do everything in my power to help you."

— By Jacci Thompson-Dodd

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, March 1 Participants at the general meeting held today at the Emerald Isles Area Culture Centre were treated to scintillating cultural per-

announcement that the Caribbean will now be recognized as a region in its own right, and that the SGI-USA organization is now legally registered on Trinidad and Tobago was greeted with thunderous applause and unfettered expressions of joy.

Mr. Zaitzu said to treat these developments as a new departure, a new beginning. He urged all to deepen their faith and commitment to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, to return to the basics of faith, practice and study and challenge our comfort zone, as well as to foster strong unity to prevent being influenced negatively by the Nikken sect.

Sheilah Edwards also echoed similar sentiments to Mr. Zaitzu about the occasion representing a new beginning. She then outlined plans for the establishment of a bookshop at the Centre in the not-too-distant future.

Cliff Sawyer praised the Trinidad and Tobago members for the high levels of energy and excitement that they displayed during the cultural performances. He said that SGI members should use their respective cultures to advance kosen-rufu.

Mr. Zaitzu's encouragement, as well as that of Mrs. Edwards and Mr. Sawyer, certainly gave everyone present a great boost, as evidenced by the animated discussion that followed the meeting. It is a momentum that the members vow to sustain.



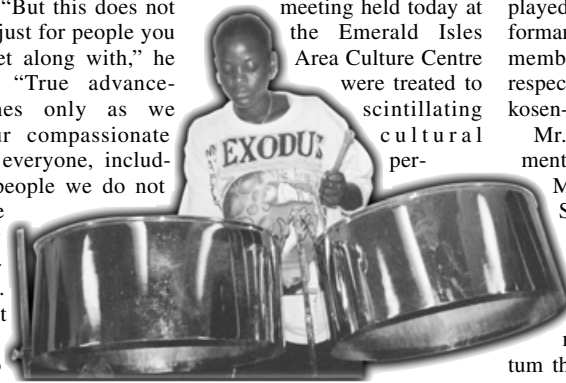
St. Maarten/St. Martin

are the zone youth leaders. Senior Vice General Director David Kasahara of New York will serve as advisor to the zone.

General Director Zaitzu took time to share some recent guidance from SGI President Ikeda on a variety of subjects from leadership to marriage and single life. On behalf of President Ikeda, he thanked all those who offer their homes for Buddhist meetings as places for "nurturing human potential." Buddhism is based on the idea of a great reformation in human life, he said, and so naturally "leaders must grow and reform themselves." Again quoting President Ikeda, Mr. Zaitzu reiterated: "We must nurture a new wave of caring

Spanish, diverting from the original plan to have an interpreter read the text. Cultural performances featured a salsa dance by young women and a quartet who performed a classical number.

After Puerto Rico Area Leader Eleso Echevarria gave opening words, Sheilah Edwards addressed the members, stressing that daily challenges are opportunities to grow strong. SGI President Ikeda handmade the organization, she said, and the members come first. She recalled SGI General Director Eiichi Wada's guidance, during his visit to the United States at the end of last year, that while one sincere word of concern can encourage people for a lifetime, one insin-



Ashaki DeFour performs at the Emerald Isles Area meeting on Trinidad-Tobago.

the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

'FRESH GROWTH'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 33-34

The New York Chapter is born on President Yamamoto's second visit to New York. Newly appointed leaders, sharing their sincere determinations for American kosen-rufu, introduce themselves at the America East General Meeting.

The America East General Meeting/New York Chapter Inaugural Meeting was held at the city's Japan Club, which had been rented for the occasion. Around 200 members attended, some of them traveling all the way from Chicago and Washington, D.C.

When Shin'ichi arrived, the meeting was already under way. Kiyoshi Jujo was announcing the establishment of New York Chapter, and excited applause filled the air.

When Shin'ichi entered the room, the audience cheered.

"Hello, everyone! Good evening," he called to them, then saying to Jujo, "Please continue."

The vice general director went on to read the new district leadership appointments.

New York Chapter, which would start out with six districts, would be the Gakkai's sixth U.S. chapter, after the Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Hawaii chapters.

Next, Shin'ichi introduced the new leadership for the America General Chapter and New York Chapter: "The following appointments for the America General Chapter were made in Hawaii: Nagayasu Masaki, general chapter leader, and Emiko Haruyama, general chapter women's division leader. They replace Mr. Jujo and Ms. Kiyohara, who will continue to support you as advisors.

"I also wish to announce today the appointment of Koichi Yabe as a general chapter ad-

visor and Tomio Haruyama as leader of the North America General Corps of the young men's division.

"And now the leaders of New York Chapter," he went on. "Tomio Haruyama has been appointed chapter leader — a position he will hold concurrently with that of YMD North America General Corps leader — and Yukiko Nishino, who until now has been the Washington District women's division leader, is the new chapter women's division leader. Mitsuo Sugihara will serve as chapter vice leader. In addition, Robert Nishino, until now a Washington District advisor, will become chapter advisor and Hanae Yabe will become chapter women's division advisor.

"I will now turn over the floor to the new leaders, so that they can introduce themselves," he concluded.

One by one, the newly appointed leaders came to the microphone and voiced their resolutions toward fulfilling their new responsibilities.

Emiko Haruyama was anxious, wondering what her husband would say. Although he had accepted the positions of chapter leader and YMD leader at Shin'ichi's request, it seemed improbable — going by his past words and actions — that he would make a determination that would inspire everyone.

She suddenly realized that she had begun to chant inside.

Finally, it was Chapter Leader Haruyama's turn to introduce himself. He calmly approached the microphone and said: "My name is Haruyama. I'm going to do my best in faith, study and practice."

Everyone waited expectantly for his next words, but that was it. He promptly returned to his seat. While this was still registering with the startled audience, Shin'ichi began to applaud, leading the others to do the same.

Emiko's reaction was mixed. On the one hand, she realized that this was probably the best Tomio was capable of at this stage, given his lack of experience. On the other, she couldn't help feeling that he could have made a bit more effort and said something more.

Eventually, it was her turn to take the microphone.

"On accepting the enormous responsibility of America General Chapter women's division leader," she said, "I pledge to work to the fullest to serve all of you. I look forward to your support.

"Today, the New York Chapter has been officially inaugurated. Congratulations!" she continued. "New York is a leading international center for business and many other fields. In fact, you could call it the heart of the world. The establishment of this New York Chapter is extremely significant in terms of our movement to spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism across the globe. I deeply feel the profound importance of our mission."

Emiko's words brimmed with renewed commitment to realize kosen-rufu. She had undergone a profound change of heart from the woman who, a few days earlier, had serious doubts about her ability to promote the Daishonin's Buddhism in America. The guidance she received from Shin'ichi in Hawaii had

marked a turning point.

Now, she was filled with hope for the future again. A desire coursed powerfully through her to pour her energies, steadily, naturally, into pioneering the kosen-rufu movement in America.

She had spoken with eloquence, the dynamic vitality of her newfound determination infusing her words.

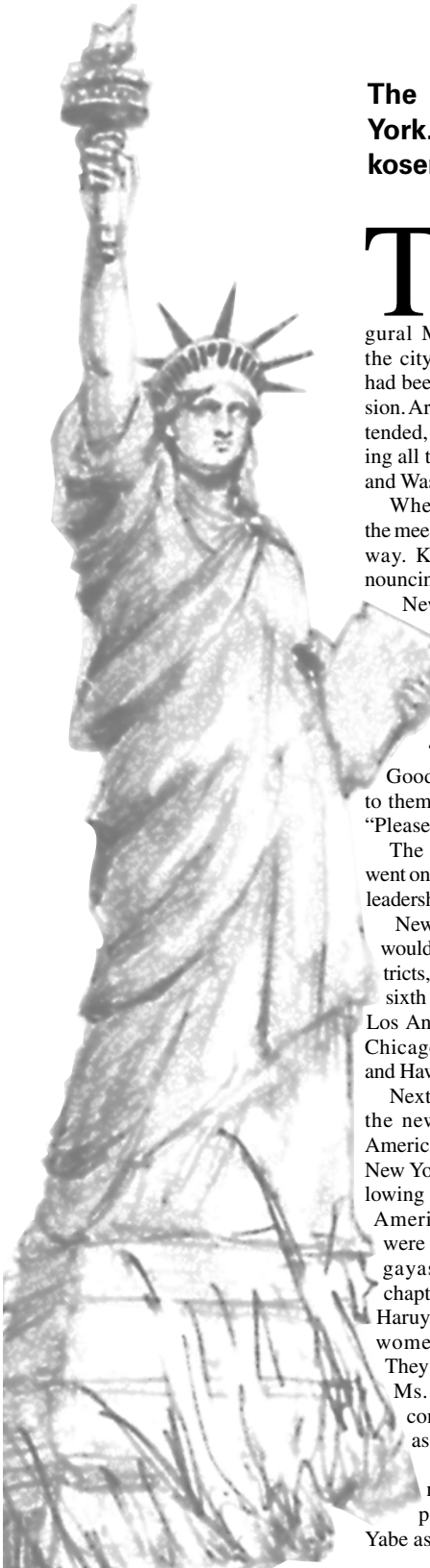
Next, General Chapter Leader Masaki rose to speak. He voiced his resolve to devote himself wholeheartedly to fulfilling his responsibilities, pledging to give his all to America to the last moment of his life.

Then, his voice breaking, he said: "I'm so happy, so very, very happy to finally welcome Sensei here in New York — a day we've been looking forward to for so long — and to hold such a fine meeting.

"In Los Angeles, President Yamamoto said that spring had come to Los Angeles at last," he went on. "And now, spring has also come to New York. I really feel this with all my heart. When the Bodhisattvas of the Earth rise, spring will always follow. Let's work together and bring a spring of happiness and peace to all America!"

To be continued

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



SPEECH, FROM PAGE 1

Madame Deng recalls the time before she married Zhou Enlai, when she was about 20. Zhou was a foreign student in Paris, and she was a teacher at a girls school in Tianjin, as well as a leader of a youth group that she, Zhou and others had formed.

"Following the elimination of the Gang of Four," she writes, "flowers of reform and openness are blossoming in our nation today, growing more beautiful, large and sturdy with each passing day. Rich fruit is appearing, making our nation prosperous and bringing happiness to our people.

"Do you still remember, oh so long ago, the letters that passed between us?" she asks. "They flew across the Eurasian continent, across the seas, from the famed city of Paris to Tianjin or Bohai Bay. I was always so grateful when the messenger in the green uniform (the mail carrier) would place one of your letters in my hand.

"Once, quite unexpectedly," she goes on, "I received a postcard bearing the image of Karl

Liebkecht and Rosa Luxemburg that you sent. On the postcard you wrote a heroic revolutionary's pledge: 'It is my wish that we might someday, like these two, mount the steps to the execution block together.'

Karl Liebkecht was a German revolutionary who opposed militarism, and Rosa Luxemburg was also an antiwar revolutionary, of whom I have spoken many times in my speeches. Liebkecht and Luxemburg fought as comrades, went to prison for their cause and were both killed by counterrevolutionary forces in January 1919.

The youthful Zhou Enlai called out to Deng Yingchao: Like Liebkecht and Luxemburg, let us give our lives to the revolution!

What a proud, noble vow of youth this was!

Madame Deng continues: "When we took our oath [to join the revolutionary movement], we made a firm resolve to die willingly for the revolution; we did not balk at shedding our blood and laying down our lives....

"Over long decades," she writes, "we devoted ourselves to

the revolution, we lived through untold dangers, faced privations and hardships, went through thick and thin together, shared grief and joy. Sometimes we fought side by side, sometimes far apart, but always without fear or thoughts of self-interest. In our life dedicated to the revolution, we have always fought with unswerving purpose, with perfect composure and calm.

"All through these many decades, our love never waned," she states. "The advance of the revolution, the progress of construction [of the New China] is certain to be infinitely bright and glorious."

These are the words that Madame Deng left us. She and Premier Zhou lived their life together as fellow soldiers, as comrades in arms. They cared nothing for fame or profit.

It is noble to be a true comrade. True comrades never betray one another.

When I think back to my own wedding, President Toda didn't offer my wife and me the usual sort of wedding congratulations. He said just one thing: "I want the two of you to work together and strive unceasingly for kosen-rufu!"

Revolution demands selfless commitment: Those who devote their lives — with this spirit — to a just, noble cause have no regrets.

We of the SGI value and respect each and every individual to the highest degree.

Soon, spring will be here. A new cemetery, the Okinawa Peace Commemoration Memorial Park, was recently completed. Where it is located is famous as the first place in Japan where the cherry blossoms bloom each spring. I hear that the cherry blossoms are now in full bloom there.

In April last year, we held the 20th annual Zhou Enlai Cherry Tree Viewing Celebration at Soka University in Hachioji. Close to a thousand guests attended this special event. Yuichi Hayashi, who made a tremendous contribution to friendly China-Japan relations, was among them. A former diplomat, he served as minister at the new Japanese embassy in China after diplomatic ties were restored. He has spoken with great feeling of his encounters with Zhou Enlai [in an interview in *The Japan-China Monthly*].

From spring 1973, the leaders of various African states began to make official visits to China. Mr.

Hayashi said that Premier Zhou always went out of his way to treat the representatives of these nations, which still had only a small international presence, with great respect and courtesy. The premier was already quite ill, yet when it came time for these African guests to leave, even in the depths of the harsh Beijing winter, he always accompanied them to the airport and cordially saw them off, remaining until their planes disappeared into the sky.

He was not simply following empty formality. No, he was always thinking about how to be more considerate, more welcoming, more sincere in his dealings with others. Through these painstaking efforts, Premier Zhou contributed to the construction of the New China, making friends and allies of his visitors.

In addition, he always made certain that his young successors were with him when he was engaged in diplomacy. He used those opportunities to teach them the art of diplomacy through his own example, showing them how to win people's hearts with sincerity, personal integrity and finely tuned courtesy and consideration.

Kosen-rufu is a movement of unsurpassed humanism, a movement that values and respects each and every individual to the highest degree. We must always strive to exert utmost concern and consideration for others and always think what we can do to be of service and assistance to others. We must act with such sincerity and integrity that people are moved — and astonished — by our example. This is the very life of the SGI.

I want to quote another passage from the Daishonin: "If mentor and disciple pray with differing minds, their prayers will be as futile as trying to kindle a fire on water."

Being in rhythm is very important in the mentor-disciple relationship. This is also true in sports: A team can't win unless its members are in rhythm, united in purpose. This accords with reason.

And how much more this applies to Buddhism, the realm of many in body, one in mind! A person out of rhythm with everyone else, a person who destroys the beautiful atmosphere of camaraderie and shared purpose, commits an offense tantamount to disrupting the unity of the *sangha*, the community of believers — a grave offense in Buddhism.

Unless evil is removed at its roots, it will come back again and again in the future.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles is an organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust. The center invited me to speak at its Museum of Tolerance [in June 1996] about Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the Soka Gakkai's founder, and how he laid down his life for his beliefs in the struggle against Japanese militarism. Recently, representatives of the center visited Japan in connection with the exhibition "The Courage to Remember: Anne Frank and the Holocaust" [cosponsored by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Soka University and the Soka Gakkai, continuing an extensive tour of Japan].

The center is named after Dr. Simon Wiesenthal, a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps. Dr. Wiesenthal, who is now 90, lives in Vienna, where he continues his crusade against the evil committed by the Nazis. His reputation as a Nazi hunter strikes fear into those he pursues. To date, Dr. Wiesenthal has discovered and brought to justice some 12,000 Nazi fugitives.

His struggle has led to an international consensus that the Nazis' acts must never be forgiven. Due to his efforts, former Nazis who remain at large are unable to sleep peacefully, living in constant fear of exposure.

No matter where they have hidden, Dr. Wiesenthal has ferreted them out. He has left no stone unturned in his search, painstakingly gathering and analyzing information from all over the world and conceiving of every possible means to hunt them down, and bring them to justice.

In these unremitting efforts, he has had no support from any public or government institution. He has remained a private citizen, and his efforts have been supported by the contributions of other private citizens.

His enemies have thrown up roadblocks in his path, threatened his life and spread foul rumors about him. He has received awards and honorary doctorates from places across the globe but has been a target of criticism at home.

Dr. Wiesenthal says that his true enemy, the thing he has been fighting for decades, is people's inclination to forget the past. As the years went by, even those who

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MARCH 10 ENCOURAGEMENT

People of Action Win in the End

SGI President Ikeda gave the following encouragement at an area leaders conference in Shinjuku, Tokyo, March 10.

Most praiseworthy are those who exert themselves sincerely in this organization dedicated to kosen-rufu. Thinking that you are special because of your accomplishments — like having graduated from a top university or studied abroad — and thus losing sight of kosen-rufu is extremely misguided.

What matters is this: How are you challenging yourself right now for kosen-rufu? Action is the heart of Buddhism. People of action win in the end.

It is not a matter of your position in the organization. Truly admirable are those who fight on the front lines of kosen-rufu regardless of title or rank.

Nichiren Daishonin writes, "The 84,000 teachings [of the Buddha] are the diary of one's own life" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 563). Only to the extent that we exert ourselves for kosen-rufu will all the Buddhist principles come to bloom in our lives, will we be able to do our human revolution, and will we attain the state of ultimate fulfillment.

Please take care of your health, and avoid traffic accidents. Please continue to consolidate the foundation for the 21st century. ❧

SPEECH, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

had burned with anger at the Nazis after the war began to think that maybe "enough is enough." Even some of the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, he says, declared that they just wanted to forget about those terrible times.

There had even been moves to establish a statute of limitations on claims against ex-Nazis, and such a statute had come within a hairsbreadth of being made law. But Dr. Wiesenthal has always insisted that there can be no statute of limitations on our moral obligations, no statute of limitations on realizing justice.

Through Dr. Wiesenthal's activities, Germany and Austria have abolished their statutes of limitations on murder and accessory to murder.

Dr. Wiesenthal believes that unless evil is completely removed at its roots, the tragedy it can spawn will be repeated in the future. Will we permit that? The Nazis murdered 6 million Jews. Dr. Wiesenthal himself was transferred from concentration camp to concentration camp, and he only survived by a miracle. He feels it is his duty as a survivor to continue fighting, to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive.

While on a totally different plane, we must remember that the sincerity of some 10 million Soka Gakkai members has been trampled on by scheming, self-serving priests and corrupt ex-Clean Government Party (Jpn Komeito) politicians. How hard all those Gakkai members worked to support those priests and politicians!

There were even people who lost their lives in tragic accidents while campaigning for Clean Government candidates. They are martyrs. Their sacrifice alone makes it impossible for us to accept the betrayal of trust committed by those self-seeking former representatives. Nor can we ever forgive those corrupt priests who have inflicted suffering on our members.

Dr. Wiesenthal says that forgetting is the easy way out. He imagines himself and his fellow survivors of the Nazi concentration camps going to heaven after they die and being greeted by their comrades who did not survive. They will no doubt congratulate us, he says, for having escaped their terrible fate and ask us what we have done with the wonderful gift of those extra years of life we enjoyed. One person might reply

that he had been successful as a merchant, another as a lawyer, another as a teacher. But Dr. Wiesenthal declares that he wants to report, "I have never forgotten you."

In Japan today, we see a growing pressure to forget the tragedy of the World War II, to bury Japan's past history of aggression against its Asian neighbors. This is an extremely dangerous trend. It is crucial that we take a stand and fight against it.

Dr. Wiesenthal is often criticized for his relentless pursuit of Nazi war criminals. People say that he should drop it and stop obsessing about it. They say that going after individuals is going too far. But these criticisms don't stop him. His answer is simple: He is not looking for personal revenge, only justice. If people who have committed such evil acts are allowed to lead easy lives, can justice be said to exist in this world? The very foundation of social justice would collapse. Dr. Wiesenthal believes that evil cannot be ignored, if we are to restore our faith in humanity.

For justice to triumph, we must thoroughly, persistently defend it.

And if we are to realize kosen-rufu, it is essential that we thoroughly repudiate those individuals who have turned against the Daishonin and the SGI members. The Japanese practice of overlooking differences or putting them aside may seem compassionate, but really, it is only a lack of anger at evil — a moral weakness. Soft-pedaling moral questions is the beginning of moral collapse.

Neither the Daishonin nor his direct successor, Nikko Shonin, would accept even the slightest evil. Buddhism is not a teaching of sentimentality; it is a fierce struggle for justice and truth.

Mr. Toda often used to laugh that the Daishonin could be more scathing than anyone. The Daishonin publicly denounced Ryokan of Gokuraki-ji temple, a highly respected priest of the day, likening him to "a mosquito, a gadfly or a toad," and justified his words by saying that Shakyamuni



Dr. Lester C. Thurow, world-famous economist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, meets with President Ikeda, Jan. 25. They agreed that leaders must change themselves first.

says similar things in the sutras.

In the "Letter of Petition from Yorimoto," in which the Daishonin writes on behalf of Shijo Kingo (also known as Yorimoto), he declares, "Even if I, Yorimoto, should compare Priest Ryokan to a mosquito, a gadfly or a toad, because such assertions are clearly based on the sutras, you would have no reason to find fault with me" (MW-5, 231).

Nikko Shonin never forgave the five senior priests, who turned their backs on the Daishonin's teachings. Forty years after leaving these slanderous priests and Mount Minobu behind, Nikko Shonin had one of his disciples write the treatise "On Refuting the Five Priests."

In the "26 Admonitions of Nikko," written shortly before his death, Nikko Shonin also strictly refutes the legitimacy of the five renegade priests, stating, "The doctrines of the five senior priests differ in every regard from the teachings of the late mentor [the Daishonin]" (Article 2; *Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1617). To the very end, he never let up in his repudiation of these aberrant priests.

For justice to triumph, we must be thorough and persistent in our defense of it. A halfhearted struggle only makes those who would subvert justice happy.

If an organization is to grow and change, its leaders must first of all grow and change themselves.

I want to cite another famous passage from the Daishonin's writings: "If a commanding gen-

eral is fainthearted, his soldiers will become cowards. If a bow is weak, the bowstring will be slack. If the wind is gentle, the waves will not rise high. All this is in accord with the principles of nature"

erally is fainthearted, his soldiers will become cowards. If a bow is weak, the bowstring will be slack. If the wind is gentle, the waves will not rise high. All this is in accord with the principles of nature" (MW-5, 157-58). I recently met with Dr. Lester C. Thurow, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a world-famous economist. In our discussion, our views on leadership struck a chord. These were some of our conclusions: Leaders must change themselves first. All change must come from the top. To change the whole, those at the top must change. If organizations are to grow and change, their leaders, first, must grow and change.

Mahatma Gandhi says: "Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant in spirit glory in fighting alone." José Martí, hero of Cuban independence, says, "Triumph belongs to those who are willing to sacrifice themselves; the heart of the people belongs to those who take daring action." I dedicate these words to all of you.

Please take care not to catch cold! And when you return home, please give my regards to all your fellow members.

I conclude today's message with my prayers that all of our members will enjoy long, healthy lives filled with boundless good fortune.

SGI President Ikeda's message to the February Soka Gakkai Prefecture Leaders Conference, held at the Soka Gakkai Headquarters, Shinanomachi, Tokyo, Feb. 3.

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Celebrating Black History

WITH FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Taking to heart the direction for this year of Victory in the Community, members of New Jersey Region joined with members of the community in Montclair, N.J., to celebrate Black History Month (February) at a senior residence in the town. By the end of the program, about half of the seniors in the audience were on their feet dancing and having a great time.

Highlights of the event included Ron Bascombe, a minister at St. Paul's Baptist Church in town, who read his own poems; songs and poems performed by SGI-USA members; and the African Drummers, four SGI-USA members who poured their hearts into dances that told of the journey from enslavement to liberation and the joy that comes after harvest.

Finally, Marie Ruth Wargnye, a native of Cameroon, sang an original song, "La Fleur de Lotus" (The Lotus Flower), and performed a dance. When she invited people to join her, many did, swaying to the upbeat sounds. It was all smiles as the program ended and the seniors and participants mingled and had refreshments. Everyone agreed it was a joyful event. Both the performers who had worked so hard putting the program together and the seniors who enjoyed it so much felt they had a lot to celebrate.

— STEVE PIONTEK

'By the end of the program, about half of the seniors in the audience were on their feet dancing and having a great time.'



Burlington District members in South Jersey (Philadelphia Region) celebrated Black History Month at their February discussion meeting. They presented 40 centuries of black history and culture as a study of "Heroes in Hardship," who overcame overwhelming odds to accomplish milestones in the United States and throughout the world. In particular, the African drum has served as an instrument for communication and celebration and remains as the heartbeat of African music. Members (right) demonstrated various African instruments. At the close of the meeting, instruments were distributed to everyone present to join in an African musical finale.

— JUDY and SAM BLANGO



乙御前母御書

池田會長講解

(下)

二二七三年(文永十年)十一月(推定)五十二歲作

日蓮大聖人教示：「成佛之事，凡夫必先於「志」之一字有得於心，而後可。」(白米一俵御書)。

要將已心深處的一念朝向廣布，因為這一念可決定成佛與否。一切的福德寶會凝聚在這一念。這一念可以使「美好人生之旅」的夢想成真。

信心的「一心志」所帶來的福德，不止於今世，是互及三世。生命與因果法則是永遠的，這是儼然的事實。

確信此事就是相信壽量品的人。

釋迦如來眾多弟子之中，有十大弟子，其中有名目捷達尊者之人，稱神通第一。日月巡行之四天下，彼則于不待斷髮之一瞬間巡之，此是何故？云是先世不惜奔走千里以聽聞佛法之故。

天台大師之弟子名章安者，踏破萬里為求聽聞法華經。傳教大師渡二千里以習止觀，玄奘三藏行二十萬里求得般若經，路途彌顯其志哉。

釋迦如來的眾多弟子當中，有十名所謂「十大弟子」的(代表性)弟子。

其中有位名叫目捷達(目達)尊者的人，是屬「神通第一」。在尚未剪斷一根頭髮的極短時間內，便能繞行四天下(指古印度的世界觀中的東西南北四大大陸，也是指全世界。)即太陽和月亮所繞行的世界一周。

探尋其原因，那是因為於過去世為聽聞佛法不惜跋涉千里之故。

天台大師的弟子中，有名目章安之人，披荊斬棘萬里(為師事

天台大師)，聽聞法華經。傳教大師步履二千里(或三千里)。(在中國師事天台宗遠達)，學習摩訶止觀。玄奘三藏(從中國)西行二十萬里(在印度)取得(梵語的)般若經。

(看看這些先人的例子，求法的)旅程之遙遠，可見其「一心志」(之高強)。

為佛法奔走，步步化為福運。若多為佛法奔走一分，則便能多積得自在的環遊世界的福德。

為了佛法，整理作為法座的會場，清掃會館或研修道場的人，將來必有人入主「寶宅」的境涯。

不是說神話。妙法是一不可思議之法，也是一因果俱備時之法。

為廣布付出的行動，不可能沒有結果出現，若能確信此事，就必然能顯現結果。

若半信半疑，就如弦月的月光般，看到的結果也是模模糊糊的。

乙御前母子所走的路，不是一般的路，而是朝向成佛、累積無量福德之道。

「路途彌顯其志哉」，當時雖然很辛苦，但在認真走訪的道路上，走過的每一步都將深植福德的種子，總有一天必然開花、結果。

為想必是源自(可貴的)「宿善」(指過去世的善根)！不惜生命追求法的勇者大道——名留青史的前人都走過這條道路。

乙御前的母親也加入這偉大前人的行列。

這是多麼劃時代的教導啊！就當時的常識、宗教環境而言，這句話，除了大聖人誰說得出口？

比起男性，乙御前之母是女性；比起一群「權化」(佛、菩薩的化身)者，一個是對法理毫無所知的無名信徒。

即使如此，大聖人仍說乙御前的母親是「將成佛之女人」。

一切皆與性別、社會地位或名分無關，重要的是在於信心與「一心志」。

佛法是「出世間」之法，「世間」是指凡事有種種「差別」(不同、差異、異)，超出這表面上的種種差異，就叫「出世間」。

因此，出世間是指排除一切的差別，正視「生命」、「心」、「人」。

由這「佛法眼」來看人的社會時，是與映在「世間眼」裡的社會截然不同。

權力並非高高在上，百姓也非屈居於下；並不是位高的人纔偉大，權威的纔尊貴。

此致乙御前之母 日蓮花押(指印)

這些並實際上真有其事，但也非純屬虛構。意思是說，生命本質的境涯本身變成了石頭、木頭、蛇。今天類似的例子，不也是不勝枚舉嗎？

就某個層面來看，這段比喻或許頗戲劇性，但令聞者痛。

人會因思慕異性而願化成石頭、變成蛇，人也會因思慕法華而願成佛。大聖人以此來作對比。

佐渡御書教示：「人亦如是，常以世間細故而喪失生命，而為重要之佛法捨之者則難，是以成佛之人亦無矣！」

難得今世生為人，幸逢難遇之佛法。由於立定為廣布的「一心志」，不僅能使自己獲得三世永遠的幸福境涯，更能成佛。

只要自己能成佛，便能救渡所愛的人，一同獲得幸福。

乙御前成長幾許，希多為法華經效力，乙御前後必多福。

乙御前長高多了吧！你為法華經所效之勞，將使乙御前一生幸福。

大聖人經常惦记著乙御前的成長狀況。在「乙御前御消息」(致乙御前的信)裡，曾說示：「想已長成，定必穎異」。乙御前是被「廣布之母」帶至佐渡的孩子，沒有比她的成長更令大聖人慶幸。

其含意是，由於母親為法華經竭盡心力的福德，會使乙御前獲得幸福。因信心奮鬥所得的福德，必顯現在孩子或孫子等一族身上。

佛法是最好的良藥。大聖人說，信心的功德能上溯七代祖先，下滲子孫七代。

大聖人的一句話，將帶給乙御前的母親多少安慰呢？對一位母親來說，最難忘的是女兒的將來，何況又是無夫之婦。

針對視如己命的女兒之幸福，大聖人亦給與承諾，想必母親也因此滿心感受到聖人的慈愛，並使辛勞皆隨之消失。

此後，乙御前之母也貫徹信仰不渝。即使大聖人入身延後，也前訪身延。

堀日亨上人也說，後來日興上人離開身延，她也曾帶著乙御前一起尋訪日興上人。(文見御書全集收錄的「弟子檀那等列傳」)

為求道而貫徹始終的一對母子，真是難得啊！

當第二次「蒙古來襲」的不安籠罩世時，大聖人曾告訴她們母女：「無論發生何時，儘管來此身延，即使一同餓死山中」。(大意：乙御前消息)

有苦同當吧！永遠同甘共苦吧！這就是大聖人的心意。大聖人絕不會忘記在佐渡最艱難時，為大聖人竭盡真心的人。

大聖人在本文教示，我會拚命守護你的。大難中所構築的「心與心的連結」才是永遠的，還有比這份真情更珍貴？更值得自豪的嗎？

這對母子的旅途雖是翻山渡海，但走到盡頭，是使兩人榮獲無上至寶。

現今，在共越廣布幾度山河的我等胸中，步步不僅將成為永遠的瑰寶，更如同在譜寫永遠的戲劇、名畫、交響樂，不是嗎？

(取材自SG通訊第一九六三、一九六六號)

十一月三日 日蓮花押

乙御前之母

從前有女性為追求其喜愛的男性，不惜千里尋訪；(或因害相思)化為石頭、木頭、鳥、蛇的例子也可見。

十一月三日

乙御前之母

從前有女性為追求其喜愛的男性，不惜千里尋訪；(或因害相思)化為石頭、木頭、鳥、蛇的例子也可見。

十一月三日

初級考試模擬試題

今年的初級考試將於四月二十五日在全國各地舉行。實際的試題將以模擬試題為範本。每個問題後面括弧內的數字是入門考試中文研習教材修訂本的頁碼。實際的試題將採選擇題形式，因此，模擬試題比實際考試困難得多。此外，下列問題中，只有百分之四十至百分之五十會出現在實際試題裡，實際試題只有二十五至三十五題，我們希望這些資料將會幫助你們準備考試，祝你們好運！

日蓮大聖人的一生

- (1) 一二五三年四月二十八日大聖人建立的修行是甚麼？(36)
- (2) 就大聖人的身份說明龍口法難的意義。(38)
- (3) 在龍口處決大聖人的企圖失敗後，他被放逐到一個荒涼嚴寒之地。那是甚麼地方？(39)
- (4) 根據大聖人，世人不幸的根本原因是甚麼？(36-37)
- (5) 在佐渡流罪間，大聖人完成了他的教義的理論基礎。在這期間所寫的那兩篇御書建立了顯御本尊的理論支架？(39)
- (6) 大聖人蒙難期間一直隨侍在側的是誰？(39)
- (7) 大聖人在甚麼法難之後開始顯御本尊？(龍口法難)
- (8) 御本尊上書寫「南無妙法蓮華經」和「日蓮」，這代表甚麼法理？(人法合一)
- (9) 在第三次進諫不受採納後，大聖人援古賢「三諫不納，歸隱山林」之例，退隱身延山中，為令法久住作準備工作。對大聖人而言，退休不是悠閒的生活，他作了那三件事？(40)
- (10) 為了培育身延山中的弟子，大聖作了一連串重要的講習。日興上人筆錄成一本書，書名是甚麼？(御義口傳)
- (11) 大聖人在甚麼御書中宣稱完成出世本懷的時機已成熟？為甚麼？(41)
- (12) 大聖人的弟子因為甚麼樣的活動遭受迫害？(40)
- (13) 大聖人將血脈付囑何人？為什麼？(41-42)
- (14) 大聖人選定六老僧的目的是甚麼？(4)
- (15) 五老僧犯了甚麼謗法罪？(造立釋尊佛像，參詣供養謗法社寺，捐助南部鄉內福士塔之供養，造立九品念佛道場。)
- (16) 日興上人為何離開身延山，移居富士山麓，創建大石寺？(因為地頭踐踏大聖人教義，與日興上人敵對，成為謗法之徒，身延成為惡魔之居所，日興上人如繼續留居身延，是意味下種佛法的崩毀。大聖人遺言：「地頭不法時，我亦不能住。」)
- (17) 日興上人撰寫「二十六條遺誡置文」的目的是甚麼？(維護大聖人教義的純潔，傳達對大聖人本懷的正確的了解。)

一生成佛抄

- (18) 大聖人的成佛觀與爾前經有何不同？(6)
- (19) 甚麼是「一心法界之法理」？(4)
- (20) 大聖人以「窮人日夜計數鄰人之財」的譬喻說明甚麼？(9)
- (21) 甚麼態度會讓我們覺得修行是「無量苦行」？(9)
- (22) 根據此信，甚麼是外道的態度？(9-10)
- (23) 此信強調的佛道修行的主要成份是甚麼？(7-8)
- (24) 「是以習佛教者，若不觀心性，則斷難離生死也。」請說明此話的意義。(8-9)

第二十五和二十六題出自以下一段御書：

「淨明經中明諸佛之解說，若求於眾生之心行，眾生即菩提也，生死即涅槃也。又云：眾生心污，則土亦污，心清則土亦清。云淨土，云穢土，土無二隔，只見我等之心有善惡耳！」(3)

- (25) 根據大聖人，佛是甚麼？(11)
- (26) 淨土、穢土由甚麼決定？(11)
- (27) 凡夫與佛有何不同？
- (28) 請說明「唱佛名，讀經卷，散花拈香，是皆納於我一念之功德善根也。」(10)

- (29) 請說明生命與妙法的關係。(11)
- (30) 根據大聖人，甚麼是靈法？(4,7)
- (31) 在甚麼情況下，唱唸南無妙法蓮華經等同修行權教？(4,7)
- (32) 大聖人教導「故唱妙法，讀蓮華時，_____，須深發信心。」(2)
- (33) 大聖人把那一種修行的行為比喻為磨拭鏡子？(5,11-12)
- (34) 供養御本尊會得到甚麼功德？(19)
- (35) 請說明御本尊是甚麼？它有甚麼作用？(20)
- (36) 「九識心王真如之都」指的是甚麼？(21)
- (37) 「十界具足」的意思是甚麼？(21)
- (38) 我們如何才不會受宿業牽制？(21)
- (39) 「此御本尊祇納於信心二字之內。」請說明此話的意義。(22)
- (40) 釋尊的弟子舍利弗以「智慧第一」著稱，但他並非濠智德得道。他如何進入佛之智慧世界？(22)
- (41) 何謂「進入此御本尊之寶塔中」？(22)
- (42) 一生成佛的直道是甚麼？(22)
- (43) 大聖人以漢王的故事說明甚麼？(23)
- (44) 甚麼是「圓信」？(23)

眾生所遊樂御書

- (45) 我們如何提昇內在生命境界？(7)
- (46) 提昇生命境界為什麼很重要？(27)
- (47) 大聖人為甚麼說「一切眾生，唱南無妙法蓮華經外，別無遊樂？」(27)
- (48) 什麼能夠讓我們領受「法樂」？(28)
- (49) 「法樂」和「欲樂」有何不同？(28)
- (50) 為什麼「將自己的煩惱歸咎於他人」和法華經的教導矛盾？(28-29)
- (51) 以什麼樣的一念修行才會有助於我們提昇生命境界？(29)
- (52) 「遊樂」一辭與我們的生活有何關係？(31)
- (53) 「自受用身之佛」的意義是什麼？(30)
- (54) 「現世安穩」的意義是什麼？(30)
- (55) 佛法對「世間留難」持何種看法？(31)
- (56) 大聖人為何鼓勵四條金吾「益致強盛之信力」？(34)
- (57) 大聖人指導四條金吾「可共妻子飲酒，唱南無妙法蓮華經」，請解釋此文之意。(33)
- (58) 信心的目的是什麼？(25)

宗門問題問答

5 9 至 6 3 題是出自「宗門問題」部份 (44~45)

- (59) 對於要求信徒被動而且絕對服從的行為質疑與挑戰，是根據那一項佛法的本目的而產生的？(44)
- (60) 法華經中那一句話恰當描述當今國際創價學會所遭受的迫害？(44)
- (61) 佛教如何詮釋權勢階級的壓迫？(44)
- (62) 在弘法中遭受障礙的意義何在？(45)
- (63) 宗門對國際創價學會的壓迫有何意義？(45)

6 4 至 6 6 題出自第二章：為甚麼需要了解宗門問題？

- (64) 了解宗門問題的益處何在？(46)
- (65) 「正確信仰」的意義是甚麼？(46)
- (66) 就未來而言，為甚麼需要了解宗門問題？(46)

6 7 至 7 0 題出自第四章：宗門和學會真正不同之處是甚麼？

- (67) 日蓮正宗對於僧俗平等的立場是甚麼？(47)
- (68) 日蓮正宗對於「御本尊」的看法如何與日蓮大聖人的看法矛盾？(47-48)
- (69) 日蓮大聖人清楚地描述信心血脈的意義。日蓮正宗的看法與日蓮大聖人的看法不同之處何在？(48)
- (70) 對於廣宣流布的承諾和行動，日蓮正宗與國際創價學會的不同之處是甚麼？(49)

이 승리의 드라마를 보아라!

- 제 31회 본부간부회, 이케다 SGI회장 스피치 -

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하늘까지도
울려 퍼지는구나
천재(天才)인
그대의 악기
이 얼마나 훌륭한가

'천재'란 '노력'의 이명(異名)이다. 오노씨도 피가 배는듯한 '노력' 또 '노력'을 계속해온 사람이다. 현재 49세. 교통사고와 암, 몇 번이나 인생의 시련의 산하를 타고 넘어온 동지다. 따라서 그 연주에도 진짜 '생명의 용자'로서의 울림이 있다. 그것은 죽음의 선을 타고 넘어 학회와 운명을 같이 하자고 맹세한 사람만이 말하는 '요움'의 울림이다. 스스로 고난과 싸워 단련해 온 '생명의 악기'로부터 '끝까지 살아라!' '승리해가라!'는, 혼을 뒤로 흔드는 용기와 곡이 울려 퍼진다. 내게는 그렇게 들린다. 오노씨는 궁지 높은 주부 음악대의 출신이다. 미국의 천지에서 남자부의 방면장, 음악대의 책임자 그리고 창가반으로 활약했다. 광선유포의 조직 제일선에서 동지와 더불어 학회활동에 면려해왔다. 조직에서의 고생을 피해서는 진짜 인간은 만들지 못하는 것이다. 아무리 훌륭하게 되어도 고생하지 않는 인간은 토대가 없고 뿌리가 없는 인간이며 무슨 일이 생기면 바로 무너져 버린다. 1987년 2월, 내가 마이애미 연수센터를 방문했을 때도 창가반의 일원으로서 뉴욕에서 달려와 주셨다. 음지에서 철저하게 움직이면서 끈기있는 맘을 흘리고 있었다. 저 늙은이 자제를 나는 평생 잊을 수 없다. 지금도 부부가 함께 뉴욕의 지구

간부로서 활약하고 계시다. 세계적으로 유명하게 되어도 그의 성실함은 전혀 변하지 않는다. 거만함도 우쭐거림도 없다. 세계적인 예술가이면서도 어디까지나 '우선은 학회원'이라는 점을 관찰하고 있다. 학회를 존경하고 있다. 소중히 하고 있다. 또 끊임없이 포교를 계속하여 많은 인재를 낳고 있다. 철저하게 가정방문을 몸소 실천하고 있다. 훌륭하다. 유명 따위는 환영(幻影)이다. 인간이 어떠한가이다. 조금 유명해지자 정법을 가르쳐 준 학회의 은혜를 잊고 깔보며 바보 취급하는 인간이 있다. 최후는 반드시 영락한다. 이것이 불법의 엄격한 인과의 방식이다. 오노씨는 동지가 곤란해 처했다고 들으면 곧바로 달려간다. '구급차'와 같이 그의 격려로 얼마나 많은 벗과 후배가 기뻐하고 분기했던가. '부처의 사자'인 존귀한 동지를 지키는 이상으로 존귀한 행동은 없다. 1988년 12월, 그는 개인지도를 마치고 돌아오는 길에 친구의 차에 탄 채 교통사고를 당했다. 여러분도 교통사고는 절대로 일으키지 않기를 바란다. 이때, 오노씨는 앞니가 부러지고 윗입술의 근육이 찢어져 버렸다. 트럼펫을 연주하는데는 절대 절명의 위기였다. 아무리 연주어도 음이 나오지 않게 되어 버렸다. 그러나 오노씨는 기가 꺾이지 않았다. 움츠리지 않았다. 여기에 '요법의 예술가'의 진수가 있다. 절망하기는 커녕, '이것으로 세계 제일의 트럼펫 연주자가 될 수 있다'는 것을 확신했다고 한다.(대박수) 실은 오노씨는 젊었을 때 음악 학교에 다닐 기회도 여유도 없었다. 자기식으로 기술을 높여 온 노력가이다. 거기서 '지금 이때, 한번 더 기본으로 돌아서서 본격적으로 기초부터 다시 시작하자. 그 '때'가 온 것이다.'고 결의했던 것이다. 그리고 미국 전역에서 초일류라고 불리는 트럼펫의 스승들을 차례차례로 찾아가서 겸허하게 배우고 훈련을 받아갔다. 그 덕택에 이전의 몇 십배나 되는 집중력으로 표적을 정하여 활을 쏘듯

바라던 대로 음을 낼 수 있게 되었다고 한다. 어서에는 '삼장사마라'고 하는 장애가 나타나는데 현자(賢者)는 기뻐하고 우자(愚者)는 물러남이 이것이 나라'(어서 1091쪽)고 말씀하신다. 오노씨는 '현자'였다. 물러서지 않았다. 인생, 누구에게도 슬픔과 고난의 산이 있다. 그것을 어떻게 타고 넘어갈 것인가. 그 산을 타고 넘어 승리해 갔을 때, 경에는 높아지고 눈앞에 '무안한 광야'가 펼쳐진다. 산이 크면 클수록, 어려우면 어려울수록 타고 넘어 뒤의 공덕도 또한 크다. 그렇기 때문에 바로 고생이 재산인 것이다. 몇번이 말 쓰드려 왔지만, 마쓰시타 고노스케씨는 창가대에 오셨을 때 이렇게 말씀하셨다. "이케다 선생, 역시 젊었을 때의 고생은 사서라도 해야지요. 포기하면 안돼요. 고생하지 않은 인간은 쓸도없지요"라고. 니치켄 대성인의 불법은 '번뇌 즉보리'의 요법이다. '벌죽이'의 이자 '번독위약'의 인생을 반드시 보낼 수 있다는 약속이신 것이다. 대성인은 "제가 온다 해도 변하여 행으로 되리라"(어서 979쪽)고 단언하고 계시다. 오노씨에게는 그 후에도 이루 말할 수 없는 어려움이 덮쳐왔다. 1995년 12월, 이번엔 편도선암의 선고 받았다. 암은 제 4기(말기)까지 진행되고 있다고 했다. 트럼펫을 불기는 커녕 목숨마저도 위태로웠다. 수술연락을 받았을 때 나는 그 자리에서 격려의 전보를 쳤다. 그리고 애제자의 병이 낫기를 어본존님께 진지하게 기원했다. "제천신신이며, 약왕보살이며, 나의 제자를 지켜주시라. 움직이시라"고 기원했다. 오노씨는 자신이 원하던대로의 명의를 만나 수술도 무사히 대성공했다. 3년전 2월의 일이다. 평소 학회활동의 대공덕은 그때는 눈에 보이지 않는 듯해도 유사시에 백천만 대군과 같은 힘이 되어 분명히 나타난다. 니치켄 불법은 '명'의도 '현'의도 함께 절대적이다. 수술 후에도 정절한 투병생활은 계속되었다. 편도선 주변의 입파절이나 근육을 상당히 도려냈기 때

에 입을 여는데도 처음은 손으로 비집어 열지 않으면 안되었다. 얼굴 근육의 복귀훈련과 더불어 가혹한 방사선 치료를 35회나 받았다. 방사선 치료 때문에 구도, 불면이 계속되어 몸은 쇠약해졌다. 하지만 그에게는 단 한가지 단호한 결의가 있었다. 그것은 예정을 눈앞에 두고 있던 '제 15회 세계 청년평화문화제'의 무대에 동지와 함께 서는 것이었다. 오노씨 부부는 무서운 기백으로, 지지않는 혼으로 병마와 투쟁했다. 나도 몇번이고 격려의 전언을 보냈다. 회복을 위해 계속 기원했다. 뉴욕 문화제의 5일 전까지 위에 구멍을 뚫어 영양제를 관에 넣지 않으면 안되는 그런 상태였다. 그러나 그는 집념과 인내로 마침내 저 영예로운 카네기 홀의 무대에 섰던 것이다. 1996년 6월의 일이었다. 그 대무대에는 여러 해에 걸쳐 그를 받쳐주고 계속 격려해 온 아름다운 동지의 모습이 함께 있었다. 그것은 오노씨의 동료 - 세계 최고봉의 재즈연주자들이다. 색소폰은 웨인 쇼터씨, 그는 1996년에 가장 사랑하는 부인을 비행기 사고로 잃었다. 나도 몇번이나 격려했다. 그 슬픔을 훌륭하게 극복하고 97년, 98년 연속으로 '그레미 상'에 빛났다. <그레미 상은 미국 음악계의 최고 영예. 웨인 쇼터씨는 95년에도 이 상에 빛났다> 피아노는 허비 헨콕씨. 87년에 아카데미 상(영화 음악부문)과 95년, 97년에 그레미상을 수상했다. 베이스는 버스터 윌리엄스씨, 기타는 랠리 코리얼씨, 플루트는 네스터 토레스씨, 트럼본은 로빈 유번크스씨와 스티브 토레스씨, 드럼은 켄우드 데너드씨, 퍼커션(타악기 부문)은 프랭크 콜런씨가 연주했다. 누구나가 '세계 초일류'이자 위대한 요법의 음악가다. 오노씨를 음으로 양으로 지키고 받쳐주며 위대한 문화제를 후세에 남겨 주셨다. 오노씨는 항상 이 착한 동료, 좋은 동지와 고락을 함께 해왔다. 또 그것을 모두(좌우명)로 해왔다. 그래서 강근육을 상당히 도려냈기 때

다. 따라서 성장한다. 어서에도 거듭 "선한 친구를 가까이하라"고 말씀하신다. "악지식을 버리고 선우에게 친근하라"(어서 1244쪽)고. 악인에게 속아서는 안된다. 뽕내게 놔두면 자기가 이용당할 뿐이다. 나쁜인간은 학회를 이용하고 남의 진심을 이용하며 지위를 이용하고 국가를 이용하여 모두 자신의 명문명리를 위해 수단으로 삼는다. 자신의 일밖에 생각하지 않는 법이다. 문화제 당일도 오노씨의 몸상태를 아는 음악가 동료들은 전원이 '절묘한 호흡'으로 오노씨를 도와 제 실력을 내도록 했다. 있을 수 없는 광경이다. 재즈로 편곡된 '인간혁명의 노래'가 세계 최고봉의 예술의 전당 '카네기 홀'에 울려 퍼졌다. 오늘은 그 '인간혁명의 노래'를 음악대 여러분이 훌륭하게 연주해 주셨다. 감사합니다(대박수) 문화제는 금강과 같은 동지가 훌륭하게 합주한 연주였다. 예술의 극치였다. 장내에는 감동의 전류가 새차게 흐르고 우뢰와 같은 박수갈채가 그칠 줄을 몰랐다. "잘했다!"고 하는 생명 오저에서의 박수를 청중은 계속해서 보냈다. "세계적인 오노가 부활했다." "큰병을 극복하고 오노의 음은 한층 더 좋아졌다"고 전문가들도 절찬했다. 나는 기뻐했다. '나의 창가의 트럼펫 제왕은 불사초처럼 당당하게 되살아났다'고 동지와 함께 학회와 함께 그리고 나와 함께 오노씨는 영예롭게 개가를 올렸던 것이다.(대박수) 뉴욕의 오노씨와 그 동료에게 박수를 보냅니다! 마지막으로 다음의 말을 소개하고 싶다. (노자의 말로 롤스토리가 쓴 것) 「타인을 아는 자는 현명하나 자기 자신을 아는 자는 깨달은 사람이다. 타인에게 승리하는 자는 강하지만 자기 자신에게 이기는 자는 위대하다. 죽을 때에 자신을 멸하지 않음을 아는 사람은 영원하다」 우리들의 여로는 '영원불멸'한 영광의 길이다. (화광신문 99년 2월 26일)

法華經의 지혜

제 35회 테마: 여래 수량품 ⑩

사이트 교학부장: '생명의 영원성'을 생각하면 생각할수록 알 수 없다는 것에 부딪힙니다. 그 대표는 '사후의 생명'입니다. 죽음에 의해 육체가 멸한다는 것은 눈으로 확인되는 사실입니다. 그렇다면 무엇이 남게 되는 것인지, 무엇이 '영원'한 것인지 무엇이 사후까지 계속 되어 가는 것인지..

엔도 부교학부장: 네. 지난 회에서는 "죽으면 아무것도 남지 않는다."는 사고방식은 근거가 없는 것임을 다루어 보았습니다. 요컨대 '단견'의 부정입니다. 그러면 육체와는 별도로 불변하는 '혼'같은 것이 있어 그것이 줄곧 계속되는가 하면 그렇지도 않습니다.

스다 부교학부장: '상견'의 부정이군요. 죽은 후 등등 떠다니는 영혼과 같은 '실체'는 없다는 말이지요.

사이트: 불교의 '사후의 생명'이라고 하면 이 영혼설을 말한다고 생각하는 사람이 많은 듯합니다. "불교에서는 영혼을 부정하고 있다." 그 말하면 놀라는 사람이 많은 것 같아요.

스다: 그러면 영혼이 없다고 한다면 무엇이 계속되는가, 이것이 어려운 문제입니다..

이케다 SGI회장: 도다 선생님은 자주 "우리들의 생명은 사후 대우주로 녹아든다"고 말씀하셨습니다. 영혼이 아니라 색심불이의 생명 그 자체가 대우주로 되돌아간다. 대우주 그 자체가 하나의 대생명입니다. 대생명의 바다입니다. 온갖 것을 키우고, 온갖 것을 태어나게 하고 움직이게 하고 온갖 것을 다시 그 품안에 꺼안고 새로운 에너지를 준다. 넘치도록 풍부한 대생명의 바다가 있다. 그 바다는 언제나 움직이고 있다. 움직이고 변화하면서 '생'과 '사'의 리듬을 연주하고 있다. 우리들의 생명도 대우주라는 대해에서 태어난 '물마루'와 같은 것입니다. 파도가 일어나면 '생', 또 대해와 하나가 되면 '사'입니다. 영원히 이것을 되풀이해 가는 것입니다. 생명체가 '생'에서 '사'로 향할 때 무엇이 일어나는가. 불법에서는 일개의 생명체를 심신의 움직임이 '임시로 화합한 것'으로 본다.

엔도: 오음가화합(五陰假和合)이군요.

SGI회장: 오음 가운데 '색음'은 생명의 물질적 측면입니다. '수음, 상음, 행음, 식음'은 정신

작용입니다. '생'의 힘이란 이러한 색심의 움직임을 '화합'시키는 힘입니다. 화합하고 통합하고 외계를 향하여 능동적으로 활동하게 한다. 그것이 '사'로 향할 때 생의 통합력이 상실되고 '임시로 화합하고 있었던' 오음의 화합이 풀어지게 된다. 색심의 움직임은 '잠재화'되어 갑니다. 또 육체를 받쳐주고 있었던 오대(五大:지수화풍공)의 통합이 상실되어 갑니다.

스다: 「임중용심초」에서는 "단 말마라고 하는 바람이 몸속에서 나올 때 뼈와 살이 떨어지도다"라고 있습니다. 몸속에 바람이 불어 오체를 갈기갈기 찢는 것처럼 느낀다고 할까요. 실제로 그러한 입사체험도 있습니다. 그때에 받았던 고통을 '사고(死苦)'라고 부릅니다. 니치칸 상인은 사고에 대해 '선업있으면 고뇌 많지 않도다'라고 말씀하십니다.

SGI회장: 죽을때에 괴로워하지 않는다. 이것만으로도 신앙의 위대한 공덕입니다. 얼마나 고마운 일인가.

사이트: 거기서 문제는 사후 무엇이 계속되어 가는가입니다. 특히 불교에서는 영혼등의 실체를 부정하고 '무아(無我)'라고 설합니다. 영원히 불변하는 '아(我)'는 실체로서는 존재하지 않는다는 것입니다. 그 한편에 사후의 생명을 설하고 어느 의미에서 '윤회전생(輪廻轉生)'을 인정하고 있다. 이 두가지는 모순되지 않은가 하는 것입니다.

SGI회장: 불교가 발상한 이래 가지게 된 오래된 의문입니다. 이것을 불교사를 통하여 논하면 흥미있지만 번잡해지므로 생략합니다. 사후, 무엇이 계속되는가? 결론으로 말하자면 석존의 답은 '업상속(業相續)'이었습니다. 현재는 과거의 행위 <업: 카르마>의 결과 <과보(果報)>이며, 현재의 행위가 미래 생의 모습을 결정한다. 요컨대 행위(業)의 영향이 차례로 생사를 초월하여 이어져 간다는 것입니다.

사이트: 업 - '신구의(身口意)의 삼업'이라고 하는 것처럼, 색심의 '행위'를 말하는 것이군요. '한 것' '말한 것' '생각한 것', 그것들의 영향이 적어도 사라지지 않고 모두 미래로 계속된다는 것이군요. 생각해보면 업속할만큼의 엄한 가르침입니다.

SGI회장: 그렇습니다. 현대인에게 알기 쉽게 말하면 '업의 에너지가 생사를 초월하여 계속되는 것입니다.'

엔도: '에너지'에서 생각난 것으로 물리학의 법칙에 '에너지 보존의 법칙'이 있습니다. 에너지는 '불생불멸'이라고 하는 것입니다. 열에너지가 운동에너지로 변하거나 위치에너지가 전기에너지로 변환되는 일은 있어도 무에서 갑자기 에너지가 생기는 것은 아니며 지금 있는 에너지가 갑자기 사라지는 경우도 없다는 것입니다. 다만 모습을 바꿀 뿐입니다.

스다: '물질'이라고 해도 그 물질이라는 것은 '에너지'가 안정된 상태의 바뀐 것을 의미하는군요. '에너지야말로 구극의 실체'라고 하는 것도 분명 이유가 있습니다.

SGI회장: 르네 위그씨도 명저 '형상과 힘'에서 그것을 논하고 있었습니다. '힘'이란 지금의 경우 에너지의 별명이라고 해도 좋다. 그 에너지가 어떤 작용에 의해 안정된 '형상'을 만든다. 그 '형상'에 담겨진 에너지가 작용을 수행하면 또 다른 '형상'을 취하거나 에너지 그 자체가 되돌아간다. 불법의 눈에서 보면 '힘'이란 '공제'의 측면이며, '형상'이란 '가제'의 측면입니다.

사이트: 그렇다면 '생과 사'로 있어서는 업의 에너지가 임시로 결정된 '형상'을 취했던 것이 '생'이며, 그 '형상'을 무너뜨리고 에너지의 흐름 그 자체로서 우주의 생명류에 녹아들어 가는 것이 '사'라고 생각해도 좋을까요.
엔도: 업력의 과보로서 머리가 좋게 태어나거나 아름답게 태

어나기도 한다. 이것은 자기 자신의 주체에 대한 과보이니까 '정보(正報)'입니다. 싸움이 끊이지 않는 집에서 태어나거나 하는 것은 '의보(依報)'로서의 과보가 됩니다. 도다 선생님은 이렇게 말씀하셨습니다. "과거 세에 행한 자신의 행위라고 하는 것이 자신의 생명 속에 전부 포함되어 있는 것입니다. 여기에 불법의 소증함이 있는 것입니다."라고. "전에 했던 일은 전혀 관계없다. 나는 새롭게 태어나니까"라고 말하고 싶겠지만 그렇게는 되지 않습니다. 왜 가난뱅이로 태어났던가, 왜 머리가 나쁘게 태어났던가, 어떻게 장사를 열심히 하는데 왜 잘되지 않을까... 모두 과거세에 있는 것입니다. 과거세에 있지만 그것을 어떻게 타개하는가가 대성인의 불법인 것입니다.

SGI회장: 인간도 태어날 때 자기 자신의 업에너지에 적합한 색심 즉 '정보'와 어울리는 환경, 즉 '의보'를 얻어 태어납니다. 물론 이 두 개는 의정불이로서 일체입니다. 모두 자기 자신의 업에너지가 현현(顯現:과보)한 것이기 때문입니다. 이러한 '생에서 사로'라는 것에 대해 도다 선생님이 자주 예로 드신 것이 바둑의 승부내기입니다. 명인전 등의 큰 타이틀전에서는 일국의 승부를 이틀간에 걸쳐 하지요. 첫날에 결착이 나지 않으면 일단 끝을 내는데 이것이 '임중'에 해당됩니다. 그러나 다음날에는 다시 바둑돌이 끝날 때와 완전히 똑같이 놓여져 대국이 시작되지요. 이것이 '다음의 생'입니다. 연속하고 있는 것입니다. 체로에서 시작하는 것이 아니라, '계속'되는 것입니다. 따라서 '다르게 태어난다'는 것은 아니죠. 도다 선생님은 "길이 긴 향이 짧은 향으로 다르게 태어났든가, 긴 담배가 짧게 태어났든가라고 말할 수 없다. 이 생명이 그대로 계속되는 것이다."라고 강조하셨다. 당신의 가슴을 두드리면서 '이 육체가 그대로

계속되는 것입니다.'라고 말씀하셨던 것입니다. 어디까지나 색심일체의 생명이 연속되는 것을 가르쳐 주셨던 것입니다. 여하튼 우리들 각자의 생명은 심계 어딘가에 해당됩니다. 도다 선생님은 그 심계의 차이를 파장의 차이로 비유하고 심계의 차이를 '생명의 파장'으로 하셨던 것입니다. 그리고 우주의 대생명에도 심계가 있다. 그 사람의 임종의 일념이 지옥계라면 우주생명의 지옥계에 녹아든다. 천계라면 천계에 녹아든다.

스다: 의문점이 하나 있는데요. 죽은 사람의 생명이 명복하고 있어 '무생무상'이라고 합니다. 그래도 사후의 생명이 괴로움이나 즐거움을 느낄까요.

SGI회장: 그렇습니다. 느낍니다. 도다 선생님은 "사후의 생명을 보는 기계가 발명된다면 재미있겠어"(웃음)라고 말씀하셨습니다. "생의 특징은 능동성에 있지만, '사'의 생명은 기본적으로 수동적입니다. 자신의 생명 실감을 스스로 바꿀 수는 없는 것입니다."

예를들면 '생'의 때는 생명의 '기저부'가 지옥계인 사람이라도 다양한 연에 접하여 천계가 되거나 인계가 되는 경우도 있겠지요. 그러나 '사'의 생명은 '기저부'의 생명감 이외에는 없애지고 맙니다. 지옥계의 기저부를 가진 생명은 죽음과 함께 우주의 지옥계와 일체가 되어 고뇌일색으로 물들어지는 것입니다. 아귀계의 기저부를 가진 생명은 아귀감이 더욱 강해진 채 생명을 영위해 갑니다. 천계나 인계의 기저부를 가진 생명은 아귀감이 더욱 강해진 채 생명을 영위해 갑니다.

천계나 인계의 기저부를 '사고(死苦)'를 타고 넘어 다음에는 생명의 '아'가 평온함을 되찾아 충실한 만족감이 물밀듯이 밀려 오겠지요. 결국 불계를 기저부로 한 생명은 순식간에 대우주의 불계와 일체가 되고, 그 황금의 대화로 감싸여 갈 것이 분명합니다. 그리고 전 우주가 불국토라고 실감하면서 '아차토안은 천인상중만' '중생소유락 재천적천고'의 경예를 즐기면서 스스로의 서원대로 '구원의 부처'와 일체된 행동을 생사불이로 해가겠지요. 이 불계의 생사에 대해서는 다음회 수량품의 종결할 때 다시 논하기로 합시다. (리빙부디즘 99년 2월, 법편 98년 2월)