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SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S JULY 3 SPEECH

We Have a Mission!

SGI President Ikeda tells members from 52 countries that 'we have been born with the mission to lead people to happiness.'

My dear friends from 52 countries, a warm welcome to you! You are all people who will go down in the future histories of your countries. You are worthy of the highest respect. You are noble leaders who are praised and protected by Nichiren Daishonin and the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the 10 directions.

Right now, you may be unknown. You may have no money. You may be laughed at

and ridiculed by people ignorant of the Daishonin's Buddhism. But when viewed from the perspective of the eternity of life, you are all supreme victors, people who will achieve unsurpassed success in life.

There is no doubt that in future existences, each of you will enjoy an expansive life-condition, far surpassing that of presidents, business tycoons or eminent scholars. The Daishonin assures us of this in his writings. If it were not true, the Daishonin would be a liar. And that

just isn't possible. The Daishonin never lies.

On July 1, I joined SGI representatives in welcoming Minister of Foreign Affairs Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire in Africa to the Seikyo Shimbun Building in Tokyo. Seeing the warm camaraderie evident among our friends from around the world, he exclaimed, "Here is the world of the future!" As I watched Mr. Essy shake hands with members of the welcoming party, I wanted to shout, "Three cheers for our global SGI family!"



Photo by ROB HENDRY

SGI Training Course participants take a walk in a park.

Never sever a bond of friendship.

Members from the Dominican Republic have also joined us today. I am delighted to see friends from a place that brings back many fond memories.

There is a poem that I wish to share:

*Nothing can tear my flag!
.....
I will fill my life with
heroic drama!
And with a passion flamed
by anger
Set my heart on fire!*

This is a verse from a poem by the poet-statesman Joaquín Balaguer, former president of the Dominican Republic, jewel of the Caribbean.

I visited the Dominican Republic in 1987. It was a magical land, shining with emerald waters, blue sky, vivid flowers and luxuriant green, as well as people of beautiful hearts. At the



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI President Ikeda meets poet-statesman Joaquín Balaguer of the Dominican Republic, 1987.

president's invitation, I visited his office, where we met and had a conversation.

Dr. Balaguer is an outstanding leader, who built a proud, prosperous, democratic nation. Never married, he has devoted his life to serving his country. He has literally made the Dominican Republic his lover and spouse, and its people his children. Once called the president without a savings account, he is known throughout the world for his high principles and modest lifestyle.

Many of you may not have much savings, either. Why don't

you take it as a sign of greatness similar to Dr. Balaguer's!

As president of his country, Dr. Balaguer put great energy into improving education. He raised student enrollments at the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, one of the oldest, most prestigious institutes of higher learning in the Americas, from a mere 4,000 to 60,000.

The Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo was founded in

Tenacity, Tenacity, Tenacity

EDITORIAL

By TED MORINO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

It is not easy to win in every endeavor. It takes a great amount of energy and willpower to reach the point where we can score a final victory. This is how things work in secular affairs and naturally so in the realm of Buddhism, since



Buddhism is essentially common sense. Tenacity is vital for victory.

It is not always true that the strong win over the weak. It happens from time to time that the underdog beats the favorite. As

we see occasionally in the world of baseball, football, soccer and so forth, when teams play extra innings or overtime, anything can happen; the weak can defeat the strong. In such cases, it is most often the one who has really decided to win who wins. In these cases, life-force that was hidden within can be tapped through that tenacious determination to win.

The power of determination and tenacity accords with the Buddhist teaching that miraculous power is innate in one's *ichinen* or life-condition of Buddhahood. Nichiren Daishonin, having overcome one persecution after another for the propagation of the Law and the happiness of the people, shares how he felt toward his ordeals: "Still I am not discouraged" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren*

Ted Morino says that 'tenacity is vital for victory.'

Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 166). In this passage, we can see how tenacious the Daishonin was in pursuing his noble cause.

The temple issue, in the final analysis, is a struggle to win over the devilish function that has arisen in the propagation of the Daishonin's Buddhism to affect the movement negatively. It takes a ceaseless renewal of our determination to put aside our shallow, incorrect views and those of others to win in this case.

Tenacious prayer and courageous action provide us with the power to spread the Mystic Law and diminish the power of devilish functions in our lives and environment.

In this respect, the Daishonin states, "After staging a great battle with the 10 armies of the King Devil of the Sixth Heaven for the past 20 some years,... I have never had the mind to retreat" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1224). We see a great example in his resolve.

Also, the essential nature of the battle between one's Buddhahood and devilish functions is summed up in the passage from his writings that reads, "Should you slacken even a bit, demons will take advantage" (MW-1, pp. 241-42). If we don't slacken, devilish functions can find no opening to enter into our lives.

As SGI President Ikeda states: "No matter what the circumstances, you should never concede defeat. Never conclude that you've reached a dead end, that everything is finished. You possess a glorious future. And precisely because of that, you must persevere and study. Life is eternal. We need to focus on the two existences of the present and the future and not get caught up in the past. We must always have the spirit to begin anew 'from this moment' to initiate a new struggle each day."

A solid determination, resolute prayer and tenacious effort in this very moment — directed toward the long, happy future that awaits us — is the source of our every victory. The key to the future is tenacity, tenacity and more tenacity. ❖

SGI President Donates Books to the University of Alaska



Photo by TOM ANDERSON

SGI President Ikeda donated 37 books to the University of Alaska, Anchorage, on June 29. George Kataoka, Pacific Northwest Region senior advisor, and several SGI-USA Alaska leaders presented the books to Chancellor Edward Lee Gorusch and other university officials.

In a speech, Chancellor Gorusch said that "the pursuit of peace is a long and challenging pursuit, and I very much admire those who dedicate their lives to this pursuit. I feel that we have a common pursuit of education and enlightenment, which will lead to peace and prosperity... You've given a contribution that will stimulate students' curiosity and rouse their desire to explore peace. Your gift today will contribute to our capacities to establish these goals." ❖

Officials of the University of Alaska, Anchorage, accept a donation of books from SGI President Ikeda, June 29. (L-r) Todd McGovern, Gail Engblom, Associate Dean of the College of Art and Science Kerry Feldman, Shigeko Hunziker, Professor Hiroko Harada, Lili McGovern, Grace Christianson, George Kataoka, Carolyn Phillips, Chancellor Edward Lee Gorusch, Franchesca Pacram, Provost Dan Johnson and Dean of the Consortium Library Steve Rollins.

The Power of Life's Eternity

The following article is reprinted from the June 1998 issue of the SGI-Canada publication's New Century supplement 'World Beat.' Dr. Yoichi Kawada, director of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy at Soka University in Tokyo, lectured on the Buddhist view of death at the Toronto Culture Centre, April 2, 1998.



Dr. Yoichi Kawada

BY MIKE WONG
TORONTO, CANADA

Dr. Kawada, Director of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy at Soka University in Tokyo, started chanting in 1961 when he was a medical student plagued by chronic kidney problems. During this period, a time of political turmoil, he joined other students in demonstrating against the military security pact between the U.S. and Japan. He also had an avid interest in psychology and Buddhism and read widely on both subjects. During that time his kidney problems reached a life-threatening level. He was finally able to regain his health after a year and a half of practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

Although he joined the Soka Gakkai to learn more about the Lotus Sutra, it was his landlady's dedication to doing gongyo with him every day for a month until he could do it on his own, that an indelible impression on him, forming the basis of his faith. Two years after his health had improved, he heard Daisaku Ikeda speak on the Lotus Sutra and was extremely impressed by his lectures. Several years later he participated with SGI President Ikeda in a dialogue leading up to the book *Dialogue on Life* and continued working very closely with him for the next three years. These opportunities formed the foundations of his faith.

Dr. Kawada interviewed the rector of Moscow University, Anatoly Loganov, as part of two published dialogues with President Ikeda. Professor Loganov's view on the role of religion in society changed between the two meetings, the first of which took place before, and the second after the Gorbachev era. Initially he put forth the Marxist position that religion is an opiate that dulls people's view of reality; at the second meeting, he said religion is absolutely necessary for people to be able to live humanely. In this later exchange, Professor Loganov also said he had come to understand karma in terms of the indestructibility of energy, a theory central to physics. He could understand

how our individual karma survives physical death as energy and is absorbed back into the universe, remaining there as a potential to be manifested again when conditions are appropriate. In Buddhism this karmic continuity is called karmic inheritance. Dr. Kawada pointed out that Professor Loganov came to this understanding after an in-depth study of Buddhism, particularly writings of President Ikeda, and having his questions on Buddhism answered by President Ikeda.

Using the Buddhist teachings of the nine consciousnesses, Dr. Kawada explained that what we commonly call consciousness is a collective of our five senses, that processes information in our environment, along with a sixth component that integrates this sensory input, distinguishing between objects and forming coherent images. It is this integrating component that Buddhism refers to as our sixth consciousness. When we are asleep, this consciousness and the accompanying five senses become latent and we enter a state called the *mano* consciousness, which corresponds to the unconscious state.

In the earliest stages of dying, the five senses are the first to lose their capacity to function, with sight being the first to go. Hearing, however, remains, even in a deep state of coma. Health care professionals who work with dying patients report it is not unusual for individuals in a coma to show discernible responses to soothing or familiar sounds. As the dying process progresses, the person goes into a state where the normal responses of the nervous system no longer exist. At this stage the waking consciousness referred to earlier recedes into the *mano* consciousness; here there is still an awareness of self as an individual entity. Death is the transition from *mano* consciousness to what is called the *alaya* consciousness or karmic storehouse. At this stage the dying person's energy level is too low to be manifest either in the *mano* or *alaya* consciousness and is incapable of acting upon or interacting

with the world outside itself. It is the *alaya* consciousness which survives physical death. The karmic energy created by our thoughts, deeds and actions in this lifetime survives in a latent state but possesses the potential to become manifest again given appropriate circumstances.

Near-death experiences occur at the level of the *mano* consciousness. Reports by individuals include both "out-of-body" and the "tunnel" experience in which they travel through a dark tunnel leading to either a large field or a bright light at the end

'We are in fact creating a new karmic reality moment by moment. This process continues right up to the moment of death.'

of it. Individuals having had near-death experiences have also related the phenomenon of having their lives "flash" before them. Here the *mano* consciousness experiences the major emotional experiences or karmic causes of the person's life. In his "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra" President Ikeda said the systematic examination of near-death experiences by western scientists since the 1970s offers good evidence to support the idea that our lives do continue in some form beyond physical death.

Dr. Kawada then pointed out that the transition from life to death is depicted in both Japanese and Greek mythology as the crossing of a river — the River of Three Crossings in the Japanese tradition and the River Hades in Greek myth. In the writings of Nichiren Daishonin, references are made to demons that wait on the other side of the

river to strip the dead of all their clothing. In his "Discussions on the Lotus Sutra" President Ikeda says these are symbolic of the uselessness of our worldly attachments — to power, status, wealth — in death. In a treatise entitled "Admonitions on Preparation for Death," Nichikan Shonin, the 26th high priest, describes how a person's strong attachments can make the transition from life to death a difficult one. Attachment may take the form of the dying person's concern for the well-being of loved ones. The SGI family can make such a person's transition easier by offering assurances that loved ones will be well taken care of by the organization's members. Nichikan Shonin recommends we continue praying for a person even after death because his or her life can still benefit from our chanting. He explains that upon death the person's life merges with the karmic flow — *alaya* consciousness — of the universe, so our chanting will always reach that person.

In a dialogue with President Ikeda, Professor Johan Galtung, founder of the International Peace Research Institute, asked him: If Buddhism refutes the views of both scientific materialism that after physical death nothing survives and of other religions which posit the eternity of an individual soul, then what is it that survives physical death? After hearing President Ikeda's answer to this question, Professor Galtung said that, having spoken to many other Buddhist scholars and read many treatises on the subject, he considered President Ikeda's explanation the clearest and most comprehensible he has ever had.

Elaborating on this explanation, Dr. Kawada said the term "karmic storehouse" can be misleading if we perceive it as some kind of repository. It can be more accurately perceived as a powerful and vibrant river of karmic energy flowing at the deepest levels of our lives. When

we are alive there is a constant circulation between this "river" and our individual consciousness and *mano* consciousness. Karma constantly manifests in our consciousnesses in the form of thoughts, words, and actions, which in turn create more karmic energy for the *alaya* consciousness. The *alaya* consciousness is also the source of the vital energy that enables the components of our bodies to function as a single integrated living entity. This interaction forms the principle of dependent origination. The *alaya* consciousness of each individual interacts with that of others, influencing and being influenced by them. This creates a web of karmic influence which embraces the entire universe. The SGI's movement, based on the belief that a great human revolution in the life of a single individual can transform not only the destiny of a society but that of humankind, is rooted in this principle of dependent origination.

If we look at the dependent origination of the *alaya* consciousness in terms of time, we continue right up to the moment of death. He said that al-

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FROM MISSION, 1

1538. President Ikeda has been made an honorary professor of this university.

While in office, Dr. Balaguer was extremely busy every day, devoting himself tirelessly to his many responsibilities. He is renowned for having established many educational facilities, such as elementary and junior high schools in small towns and villages at the request of local citizens.

Cataracts on his eyes have left him with almost no vision, but the eyes of his heart have been keenly honed and are very sharp.

He is also a well-known poet and cultural figure. During our meeting, which was held in the president's office — a room adorned with magnificent paintings — I recited a poem that Dr. Balaguer had composed in his youth. "Mr. President, please allow me to recite one of your poems," I proposed. Surprised, the president listened intently as I began my recitation. My wife was there, too. Knowing that Dr. Balaguer's eyesight was so poor that he must no longer be able to read even his own poems, I hoped that my reciting some of

his poetry would give him a short respite from the constant pressures he faced. He seemed to be delighted by my small gesture.

One of his aides later said that they had never seen him look so happy. Like an unforgettable drama, that scene is engraved in my mind even now.

My friendship with Dr. Balaguer — our beautiful heart-to-heart exchange — has continued since that time. It is important never to sever a bond of friendship with someone once you have made it. Instead, you must work with deep sincerity and goodwill to treasure and further expand such ties. This is kosen-rufu. This is the human diplomacy of the SGI.

Dr. Balaguer expressed the hope that I would visit his country again, and that we could meet once more at that time. The former president honors the SGI with his friendship and a profound understanding of our efforts to promote cultural exchange and greater unity among the world's people. He also refers to me, a person 20 years his junior, as a close friend, and we have great mutual respect. Last year, on reading a translation of my poem "An Ode to the Noble Mothers

of Kosen-rufu," Dr. Balaguer sent a letter sharing his impressions of it.

Dr. Balaguer writes: "The sentiments of love and respect that you teach through this deeply spiritual poem are completely different from the trend that prevails in the world today. I wish to congratulate and applaud you for your wonderful poem and for your lofty and selfless efforts to unite humanity."

Dr. Balaguer stepped down as president three years ago. In September, he will turn 92. He is in vigorous good health and continues to publish one written work after another.

No matter what his age, no matter what his position, he continues unceasingly in his value-creating efforts for those of younger generations who will follow him. A lively, fighting spirit knows no deadlock.

A person of genuine character is free of self-interest.

Actually, I hear that Dr. Balaguer is being urged to run again in next year's Dominican Republic presidential elections. A few months shy of 92, he is

like a youth, blazing with an immense, selfless passion to fight for the welfare of his country and fellow citizens. To possess great passion, free of all self-interest and cunning — such is the heart of a person of genuine character. Such is the life of a hero. This is a prerequisite for genuine faith.

To someone who is more than 90, people in their 50s and 60s must still seem like children!

It is nothing but laziness to think about retiring and taking it easy at an early age. Older and far more active people will regard you with disgust. Of course, as you age, you may experience various illnesses and physical ailments. Since life is a long battle, rest and relaxation are necessary — but if you let old age get the better of you and grow old inside, too, it signals a spiritual defeat.

We have been born with the mission to lead people to happiness. What good will our faith and Buddhist practice be, if we — the very people who are supposed to be working for humanity's happiness — collapse into immobility! We must not become soft and spoiled. We must not be cowardly.

The SGI tradition is to always advance with a vibrant,

youthful spirit. Let us emulate the spirit of Dr. Balaguer, who in his 90s continues to fight with such vigor!

Happiness and victory lie in store for those who advance on the path of kosen-rufu.

A verse in one of Dr. Balaguer's poems reads:

*To walk and keep walking —
That is your destiny
For your feet never rest.
At the end of one road
Starts another even longer.
Traveler: your road
Begins together with your hope!*

Dr. Balaguer writes of a traveler. In my youth, I also wrote a poem about a traveler.

The 21st century is almost upon us. A wide, new road of kosen-rufu, leading to a new era, opens before us. Happiness and victory lie in store for those who advance on this path.


There are many paths: hope-filled paths, evil paths, green paths, concrete paths and muddy paths. There are paths of frivolity and temptation. And then there is the noble, shining

FROM POWER, 3

though the reality of life's eternity may be philosophically difficult to accept, if we view the process as we do a flowing river, we realize that at any moment we cannot identify any individual portion of the water in that flow; we recognize it as a single integrated flowing body of water. In the same way, interaction between the karmic energy flow of the *alaya* consciousness and our individual life consciousness moves forward as an integrated entity. This view of life's continuity is unique to Buddhism.

When we recognize this continuity of our individual *alaya* consciousness and that of all humanity, then we realize that by developing the qualities of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva — compassion, wisdom, altruism — in our individual lives, we can positively influence the karmic reality of all humanity. However, the conditions that prevail in our everyday world are more likely to induce the lower life-conditions of Hell, Hunger, and Anger than to encourage the develop-

ment of our Buddha nature; so the practice of merely sitting quietly in meditation to accomplish this is likely to prove futile. In order to change our karma, he said, the entire cycle of interaction between our consciousness and the *alaya* consciousness must be embraced by the ninth consciousness or pure life condition of our Buddha nature. The unique practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism provides a powerful means to accomplish this.

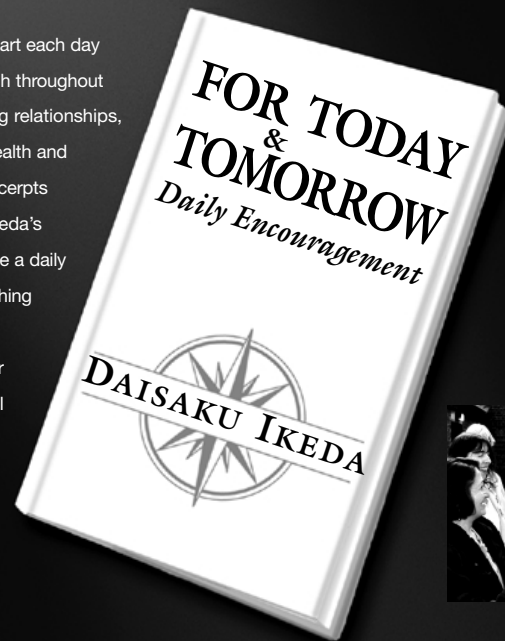
Buddhism's precise and profound explanation of life is what distinguishes it from all other religions. The Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin is itself unique, in that by inscribing the Gohonzon, the Daishonin made manifest the life-condition of the Buddha — the ninth consciousness — in concrete form. By connecting with the Gohonzon, through prayer we can enable our Buddha nature to emerge into our *alaya* consciousness. The Daishonin's Buddhism is accessible to people from all walks of life; this is what makes it the Buddhism of all the people — the means for all people to benefit and gain enlightenment. 

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path of mission. We of the SGI follow the unsurpassed way. It is the supreme path taught by the Daishonin.

It is a path that enables us to lead lives of utmost dignity, joy and happiness. In other words, it is the path of happiness, the path of peace and the path of justice. We are advancing upon this supreme path. Let us continue striving with all our might.

The Mystic Law is the wellspring of life-force and vitality.

The Mystic Law is the law of perennial youth and eternal life. It is the wellspring of boundless life-force that enables us to live with unending youthful vitality. We can bring forth powerful life-force to strive for our own happiness and that of our families and fellow human beings, and to devote our lives to working for the Law. If we practice in accord with the Daishonin's teachings, we will definitely attain such a state of life. That is why faith is so important.

Everything is determined by faith. The Daishonin writes: "Strengthen your faith day by day and month after month. Should you slacken even a bit, demons will take advantage" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, pp. 241-42). This is the spirit he is

talking about: "I have grown again this month. Next month I'll do so, too. Today again, I have moved forward. And I'll do the same tomorrow." This is the spirit of faith.

If we are off guard for even a moment, demons will take advantage and enter the opening we have given them. Demons, or the negative forces inherent in life — which includes the devil of illness — attack us in all sorts of shapes and sizes. We must not let them defeat us. Not being defeated is faith.

The Daishonin repeatedly urges his followers to exert themselves harder, to redouble their efforts. He says, "You should therefore strive in faith more than ever to receive the blessings of the Lotus Sutra" (MW-1, 9). Benefit is something that we have to win for ourselves. No one can give it to us.

The Daishonin also writes, "Above all, strengthen your seeking mind for the Way even further, so that you can attain Buddhahood in this lifetime" (MW-6, 263). Our aim is not to attain Buddhahood after death. If we do not become a Buddha while we are alive, how can we possibly become a Buddha by the mere act of dying? In other words, we cannot become a Buddha without struggle and effort.

Only by fighting against

devilish forces can we defeat them. Only by exerting ourselves can we receive benefit.

Whether or not the people we introduce start practicing, our benefit is the same.

Shakyamuni encountered and triumphed over countless persecutions during his lifetime. How old was he when he began to expound the Lotus Sutra, the teaching that represents the ultimate purpose for which he appeared in this world? He was said to have been 72. He preached the Lotus Sutra for the next eight years, in what was a momentous struggle.

In comparison, we are all still young. A time of the great

vibrant, cheerful, strong and joyful! It is far better to live with a bright, positive and confident spirit, no matter what happens.

You may not always be successful when trying to introduce people to the Daishonin's Buddhism. But because introducing others to this practice is so difficult, when you actually *do* succeed, your joy will be all the deeper. Because it *is* such a challenge, the benefit you receive through trying is also great.

It's like sitting for school entrance exams. The exams to get into a good school are usually difficult, but precisely because they are, you study diligently, thereby gaining knowledge and ability. And how great is your joy when

embrace faith.

I wish to extend a warm welcome once again to the SGI members who have traveled from abroad to be here. Thank you so much for coming. You have saved up your money and made a long journey for the sake of Buddhism. Immeasurable benefit will definitely accrue to your lives as a result.

There are, however, some who live in Tokyo yet grumble, "Why is the Makiguchi Memorial Hall so far away?" What would our overseas members think, if they heard you?!

A steady stream of successors will continue to follow in our footsteps in the future. All of you are opening the way for them. I hope that you will treasure, respect and care for your juniors. This is the spirit of a Buddha. This is our path to glory. Let us magnificently open and adorn this path for those who will carry on after us.

Part 1 of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 35th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, July 3 (Day of Mentor and Disciple). Part 2 will appear in an upcoming issue.

It is important never to sever a bond of friendship with someone once you have made it. Instead, you must work with deep sincerity and goodwill to treasure and further expand such ties. This is kosen-rufu.

flourishing of the Mystic Law lies before us. It will be a golden time of glory. Let us stay in good health and live to a ripe old age, so that we may enjoy this brilliant era together and lead wonderful lives.

May you be increasingly

you actually pass!

The Daishonin teaches that, even if we introduce people to Buddhism and they don't begin to practice at that time, we receive the same benefit as when we introduce people who are inspired to

Topics for Discussion Meetings

Introducing Others

From This Speech:
You may not always be successful when trying to introduce people to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. But because introducing others to this practice is so difficult, when you actually *do* succeed, your joy will be all the deeper. Because it *is* such a challenge, the benefit you receive through trying is also great.

1. How do you feel when you introduce a friend to this Buddhism?
2. When a friend you introduce doesn't want to practice, how do you keep your friendship going with that person?
3. When a friend doesn't want to practice, how do you encourage yourself?
3. What's the greatest benefit you've received from trying to introduce a friend?
4. Have you ever had a friend whom it took several years to introduce to this Buddhism?

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Parenting and Boys & Girls Group Coordinators Conference Held at FNCC

BY STEPHANIE NATKINS
LAWRENCEVILLE, N.J.

I have five children; the oldest is 8 and the youngest are 1-year-old twins," Los Angeles member Janet Vinograd explained. "I work full time. When I get home, it feels like everyone is competing for my attention. If I'm holding one baby in my arms, the other is clinging to my leg. In the next room, two of my kids may be fighting. Sometimes I just lose it. I feel overwhelmed. How do I divide myself up so that I can give each of them the attention they need?"

During the four-day Parenting and Boys and Girls Coordinators Conference that ensued, the concerns of the many SGI members who had trekked to the Florida Nature and Culture Center seeking answers to difficult questions like Janet's, were addressed in depth. The issues motivating each member to come were varied.

Lynn Freeney, a recently divorced single father of 10- and 13-year-old children, came seeking direction on how to raise his two children alone. Daniel and Susan Leieritz, the young parents of a 15-month-old daughter, came because they "wanted to learn to do the job of parenting right, from the

very beginning." Bruce Miller, a Boys and Girls group coordinator from the San Francisco Bay area, spoke of his desire to share ideas and activities that are being used successfully by Boys and Girls groups around the country. "We have a responsibility to help these children grow up feeling good about themselves. I want them to know that all their efforts within the SGI are appreciated by the adults around them."

Both women and men, mothers and fathers were represented at this first SGI Parenting and Boys and Girls Group Coordinators Conference. Among those in attendance were five husband-and-wife teams. No matter how varied their specific concerns, a common thread united the many attendees: the conviction that every child is a precious treasure deserving of our deepest love and respect. This sentiment was given voice in the conference mission statement that was read by Anne Martin, a Philadelphia member and contributor to its formulation:

By sharing the basics of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism,

President Ikeda's heart and the importance of the SGI,

we are committed to foster-

ing hope, courage, and confidence in our children.

Acknowledging the absolute value of each and every child, we will nurture, support, listen to and stand up for the rights of all children.

Together, we will create a "new century of peace."

Workshops for parents and Boys and Girls Group coordinators were given on such topics as: Motivating the Unmotivated Child, Communication Skills That Encourage Family Dialogue, Parenting Young Children 1-4 Years, and Active Parenting of Teens. In addition, there were Boys and Girls Group Activities Workshops and information sessions regarding new publications for children. During all the sessions, there seemed to be an invisible bond of magnetism between instructors and participants. The eager participants pulled wisdom from the knowledgeable instructors like hungry diners seeking sustenance at a long-awaited feast.

Kathleen Tracy, an elementary school principal and parenting instructor from Lakewood, Wash., discussed, among other topics, the three styles of parenting: autocratic, permis-



Photo by LISA KIRK

San Francisco Bay Boys and Girls Group Area Coordinator Bruce Miller: 'We have a responsibility to help these children grow up feeling good about themselves. I want them to know that all their efforts within the SGI are appreciated by the adults around them.'

sive and democratic. Participants at her workshop learned the importance of enabling a child to establish good self-esteem and self-concept as a precursor to becoming a capable human being. The listeners discovered that each parenting style has its strengths, but that the overall impact of the Autocratic and Permissive styles is to destroy the child's self-esteem and self-concept, while the Democratic style fosters these qualities. They also learned that there are tools and strategies that can be used to transform negative parenting habits into more democratic and constructive practices.

Asked about her first experience teaching parenting skills to SGI members, Kathleen stated: "The energy I put into these workshops was received with 10 times the enthusiasm that I expected. Once people learn that there are things they can do to benefit their own lives and the lives of their children, they get so excited! ... People come to the FNCC with a hope for an insight and realization;

and their mind set enables that awakening to happen. It was my great benefit to be able to share so much guidance and encouragement with the members here at this conference."

Cynthia Klein, another instructor at the conference, had long cherished a dream of presenting a parenting conference to SGI members. A child psychologist, elementary school teacher and parenting instructor, Cynthia led workshops on enhancing a child's learning abilities, helping children with homework and encouraging family dialogue. "As parents," she explained, "we have a critical role in deciding what our world will be like in the future. By raising our children in a way that enables them to be respectful of others and that encourages dialogue, we can ensure a peaceful and creative future."

Cynthia described the Five Steps of Active Communication in one of her workshops. The first step is listening actively, which means to use posture, tone of voice and words to fa-



Photo by LISA KIRK

Kathleen Tracy, an elementary school principal and parenting instructor from Lakewood, Wash., discusses, among other topics, the three styles of parenting: autocratic, permissive and democratic.



The Florida Nature and Culture Center.

cilitate listening skills. The second step is listening for feelings. This means to hear the emotions that are being expressed by the child. The third step is to connect feelings to content by restating the child's comments so that the listener correctly understands the child's emotions. The fourth is to look for alternatives and evaluate consequences. In other

words, to encourage the child to develop strategies to solve their problem and to help the child understand the consequences of these choices. The fifth and final step is to follow up, or, find out how the problem was resolved. These tools enable parents and friends to support children in handling their problems.

Even morning exercises, led by an enthusiastic Roberta Templeman, Montessori teacher and parenting instructor, was chock full of fun-filled activities for the participants to take back to their local areas.

One lighthearted activity was the Buddhist Find-Your-Partner Game. In this game, half of a Buddhist term is written on two pieces of post-it paper and stuck on the backs of two game players. Each player has to rely on someone else to read the word on his or her back. Then the player has to find the missing half of their Buddhist term on the back of

another game player. This game resulted in lots of laughs and a unique lesson in cooperative play and the study of Buddhist concepts.

After each workshop session, participants continued to discuss the ideas that had been presented. Often small groups of members could be seen in the courtyard and in the dining hall talking, encouraging and embracing one another.

It was a most meaningful conference for each of the attendees. They had come seeking answers to the challenging issues facing their families, their schools and their communities. They were refreshed with renewed hope and confidence for the future.

During the final workshop before departing from the FNCC, members shared their conference experiences. Janet Vinograd, who had bemoaned her challenging life at the start of the conference, declared: "I can't wait to go home now! Just



A fun-filled time is had by all.

bring on the kids. I'm so excited about using what I've learned here to improve my children's lives and change our family dynamics!" Seattle member, Pat Williams, who has five children, stated: "The condition of our youth in society today is just screaming for help. The well-being of our children is at the center of the new century. My children are my teachers, encouraging me to do my own human revolution first. Here at FNCC, I have learned critically important parenting skills. I realize that, as SGI members, we must lead the way by supporting our youth as they enter the 21st century."

SGI President Ikeda has said,

"One of the most essential ingredients in raising children to become fine adults is that parents get firmly in tune with their children and grow together with them, marching forward as one" (March 1993 *Seikyo Times*).

This is the guiding principle of the first Parents and Boys and Girls Coordinators Conference. Participants unanimously agreed that this would not be the last such conference. With determination they pledged to return next year, together with friends and spouses, to continue their training and development as parents and leaders of all children, future leaders of a new century of peace.



A child psychologist, elementary school teacher and parenting instructor, Cynthia Klein led workshops on enhancing a child's learning abilities, helping children with homework and encouraging family dialogue.

Upcoming Conferences at the Florida Nature and Culture Center

Aug. 5-8 Chinese Language Conference

The language conferences are intended to provide members with the opportunity to study Nichiren Daishonin's Major Writings and President Ikeda's guidance, discuss organizational direction and Buddhist practice in the United States, and share experiences and develop friendships in their native language. (This conference was originally scheduled Aug. 26-29.) Attending leaders include Frank Nakabayashi, David Lee and Judy Chow.

Aug. 12-15 Korean Language Conference

Attending leaders include Richard Sasaki, Yong Won Cho and James Lee. (This conference was originally scheduled Sept. 16-19.)

Aug. 19-22 Men's Division Conference #1 Aug. 26-29 Men's Division Conference #2

Toward a new "Century of Humanism," men's division members will be holding dialogues through studying Nichiren Daishonin's teachings, SGI President Ikeda's writings, guidance and sharing of personal experiences. These conferences will feature an all-day boat tour, during which discussions will be held on topics such what is the SGI spirit and the role of the men's division in the kosen-rufu movement. Attending leaders include Richard Sasaki and Shinji Ishibashi.

Sept. 9-12 Third Stage of Life #3

This conference is for Japanese-language participants age 55 years and above. Attending leaders include Kazue Elliot and David Kasahara.

Please contact your regional office or send your inquiries about the conferences to the SGI-USA Headquarters, Attn: FNCC Information, 606 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

Impressions of SGI Training Course in Japan

Four hundred SGI members from 52 countries attended the recent SGI Training Course in Japan, June 30 – July 4. The following are impressions of four of the 36 SGI-USA participants.

On July 3, the Day of Mentor and Disciple, all of us, the Bodhisattvas of the Earth, started the morning with a commemorative photo session at the new Soka University Central Tower. In the afternoon, we attended a guidance meeting with SGI President Ikeda at Makiguchi Memorial Hall. We then visited the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum where



we saw the exhibition "Napoleon Bonaparte: The Man."

At the meeting President Ikeda announced the formation of an SGI chapter in Yugoslavia; a single individual representing the country was present. This is the essence of our SGI movement — cherishing each human being and bowing to the treasure tower that resides in people's hearts. I will continue to support this noble mission.

Discussing at length vitality and longevity, President Ikeda also encouraged us that "there is

no retirement from faith."

On the last day of the Training Course, SGI-USA members held two separate question-and-answer sessions. In one of the morning sessions, SGI General Director Eiichi Wada talked about raising the members of the youth division. He said the best time to lay the foundation for youth is while the youngsters are practicing in the Boys and Girls Group.

Mr. Wada told us the things that he remembers most from his youth division experience are the

hot soup and rice he was fed by the women division members, rather than the guidance he received. He encouraged us to be warm parents, respecting and taking care of the children.

This training trip gave me the opportunity to share experiences, goodwill and new determinations with new friends I have met from Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin America, Europe and North America. Our Soka Gakkai family, although we are people of many cultures, has one mission — to build a "century of peace."

Kosen-rufu is a deep heart-to-heart communication among people. It is determined by how we are connected with others.

My experience on this trip reconfirmed that all my efforts in faith, studying Buddhism and supporting SGI activities and ideals prepared me well to learn and grow together with the SGI members I have met. In Buddhism, nothing is wasted.

— TESFAYE ABAGAZ,
Los Angeles

You know how it is when you hear things over and over and over, then, one day it clicks — you get it! Well, while I was in Japan I think I had this experience during a lecture on the oneness of mentor and disciple as taught in the Lotus Sutra. SGI Study Department Chief, Katsuji Saito related, "It is the rhythm of a Buddha to accomplish kosen-rufu."



He went on to say, "The practice of faith is the spirit that everything starts from now." How profound I thought...it doesn't matter what calamities have befallen me. My problems, my lack of fortune, my difficulties in life happily don't mean diddley, as long as I believe that I can start fresh from this moment to pull myself up. Of course, I know this from chanting every morning and evening, but there was something, my frame of mind, or the fact that I was 9,000 miles from my calamities and problems, that made it more real. When I

heard this at that moment, I felt so refreshed and ready to start anew, to tackle all obstacles and win over them. A determination welled forth from within me that nothing and nobody could ever discourage me again, for I can start anew from now, this moment in time. I can create the cause to change my future forever. I believe it is this spirit that is at the heart and soul of our mentor President Ikeda. No wonder he's so full of vitality and compassion.

Mr. Saito went on to say, "The message of the Lotus Sutra is

definitely that everyone is the Buddha, and the only difference between a Buddha and an ordinary human being is whether they are awakened to this truth. Once awakened to this truth a dramatic transformation occurs and the desire for all people to be awakened to it." Wow man! Isn't that *shakubuku*?

Unbelievable! I thought it was so much more complicated than that. This was crystal clear. I awaken, then I awaken others. I can do that. As Mr. Saito further explained, "Herein lies the Bud-

dha's spirit for compassion. This is why Shakyamuni's statements that all people are equal are true. There is no distinction between people." I realized too that this is why the priesthood is mistaken. The priests think they've got the corner on Buddhahood, but if they did, they would awaken us, not excommunicate us. Nikken's taking himself way too seriously as a Buddha. I'm one too, so are you.

— VAHAN TAFRALIAN,
Las Vegas

An unexpected aspect of this trip for me was the strong connections I made with my fellow SGI-USA members: an instant bond with my roommate from Chicago; sharing a treasure-filled day of exchange meetings with my new friends from Dayton, Ohio, San Diego, Baltimore and New York; hearing news of former Boston members now living



in New Orleans, Seattle, and El Paso, Texas; pledging together with SGI Vice President Shigeo Hasegawa to meet again in the year 2020 and share our advancement.

All of the SGI-USA members had the opportunity to meet with Vice President Hasegawa. I would like to share some of his encouragement. He started by saying that he is now 58 years old. He joined when he was 10, and throughout his youth division years, SGI President Ikeda encouraged everyone to aim for May 3, 2001. As a youth

that date seemed so far in the future but President Ikeda encouraged everyone to advance no matter what obstacles they may face. Mr. Hasegawa said of course he had obstacles. He often felt like quitting and felt burdened or even bitter. Now that 2001 is so close at hand, he is so happy to have continued and followed President Ikeda.

Mr. Hasegawa elaborated further on the importance of May 3, 2001. He said it is the start of the second seven bells. The stage for the first seven bells was Japan (1930–79). The stage for the sec-

ond seven bells — beginning May 3, 2001 — is the world. Mr. Hasegawa expressed his hope that America would take the lead in advancing kosen-rufu of the second cycle of the seven bells. The United States is the stage to carry out the global kosen-rufu movement. As Americans we have a noble, wonderful mission to fulfill. Because in America we have so many problems and issues, that is why we can advance together. When a problem is challenging we can chant seriously and definitely overcome it. He encour-

aged all of us to aim toward May 3, 2001, so we can make a beautiful departure toward the future.

— EILEEN MILLANE,
Boston

Seven bells is the term given to the seven seven-year periods marking the history of the Soka Gakkai's development from its founding in 1930 through 1979. The second cycle of the seven bells will begin May 3, 2001, marking a new stage of development in the SGI's kosen-rufu movement.

Isshin yok ken butsu. Fu ji shaku shinmyo. We recite these words daily while doing gongyo. These words mean: "yearning to see the Buddha even at the cost of my life." These must have been the words that made Abutsu-bo's many trips to meet Nichiren Daishonin, despite treacherous terrain,



dangerous circumstances, and old age, a reality. I believe it was my struggle to live these same words that made it possible to meet my mentor, SGI President Ikeda in Japan, at the recently concluded training course.

I embarked on a personal struggle to hone my faith and seeking spirit. Every action became a cause toward attending this training course. In the nine months preceding this course, I introduced nine people to our

wonderful practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, chanted hours of daimoku and visited numerous SGI members in my attempt to practice for others. And then it was time.

Four hundred participants from 52 countries — it was like we had always known each other, eternal bonds transcending lifetimes. Every look exchanged, every hug, all the tears unashamedly shed, every experience shared, the celebrities we were made to feel — it was a

world like no other.

Unforgettable is the moment when at an exchange meeting, my eyes met those of a pioneer women's division member and instantly we understood each other's struggle without exchanging a word. Each thoughtfully packed gift, some handmade, each lingering handshake — all were testimony of the Gakkai's world without borders, of respecting and learning from our differences, a world that is truly magnificent and worth giv-

ing one's life to.

I am back though my heart still wanders there. And now to my mentor, President Ikeda, I must pay the greatest tribute I can: to work with all my heart for others' happiness. This is President Ikeda's heart. Therefore, this is my pledge, my source, the point I will always return to. Again and again, I will keep a seeking mind. *Isshin yok ken butsu. Fu ji shaku shinmyo.*

— SHAIENDRA PRATAPJAIN,
Rochester, N.Y.

AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

Change the Times!

Remembering the Yubari Coal Miner's Union Incident and the formation of the student division, SGI President Ikeda says that 'we must fight to change the times, to usher in an age in which treacherous individuals cannot arrogantly savor triumph.'

Courage yet, my brother or my sister!

Keep on — Liberty is to be subserv'd whatever occurs;

That is nothing that is quell'd by one or two failures, or any number of failures,

Or by the indifference or ingratitude of the people, or by any unfaithfulness,

Or the show of the tushes of power, soldiers, cannon, penal statutes.

I am fond of the *Leaves of Grass* poem by Walt Whitman, "To a Foil'd European Revolutionaire," which begins with the stanza above.

In June 1957, an incident occurred in Yubari, a coal-mining town in Hokkaido. In the nationwide Upper House elections held in July 1956, the Soka Gakkai members among the Yubari Coal Mine workers voted for the candidate endorsed by the Soka Gakkai instead of the candidate endorsed by the Coal Miner's Union. This caused the union to accuse the Gakkai members in its ranks of disrupting union solidarity and to take measures to shut them out. The union leadership decided to openly have a confrontation with the Soka Gakkai.

This was the Yubari Coal Miner's Union Incident.



At that time, the union wielded such enormous power over the lives of its members that many felt it futile to try to resist its demands.

Prior to the incident, several miners who were Soka Gakkai members had been called to the union offices and told to either give up their faith or face expulsion from the union. Being expelled meant simultaneous dismissal from the coal mine.

They were being treated as outcasts simply because they belonged to the Soka Gakkai.

Their wives and even their children were ostracized. Defamatory posters were pasted up on electric poles and the walls of homes, and attacks and criticisms of the Soka Gakkai and its members were broadcast on the radio.

In a strange perversion of the union's role as protector of workers' rights, it became a violator of their rights, in particular their right to freedom of religious belief. The union acted in an underhanded, unacceptable manner. We of the Soka Gakkai were outraged by the union's actions, and we rose up to protect our fellow members and win in this struggle.

On June 28, 1957, a young lion flew to Hokkaido. This was only nine months before President Toda's death. My mentor had already grown frail, and I was acting in his place, manning the helm and taking full responsibility for the Soka Gakkai. As such, I stood at the forefront of the people's struggle for human rights.

If the established powers were going to unjustly oppress the people, then we would rise up under the banner of justice to defend them. We would fight with undying courage!

In Yubari, I visited the homes of our members, who were bravely devoting themselves to their Buddhist practice, and encouraged them: "Let's fight together! We must not lose!"



In the midst of all this, on June 30, the student division's inaugural meeting was held at the Azabu Civic Hall in Tokyo. On that morning, I sent a telegram to be read at the meeting. I thought of the students, their faces brimming with joy and a fresh pledge for kosen-

rufu. My message read: "Congratulations on the inaugural meeting of the student division, a gathering of talented young men and women who will shoulder the next century! Under President Toda's leadership, please embark on your journey in high spirits."

Mr. Toda was overjoyed at the establishment of the student division, which was to be the last division he formed during his lifetime. He had high hopes for the bright future of the student division members, urging half of them to become company directors and the other half to earn doctorates. He earnestly hoped that they would become the compassionate, wise leaders of a new age, leaders who would fight for and protect the people.

This revolution of leadership, this revolution of society's elite, is the student division's eternal, unchanging mission.

How lamentably vast are the numbers of "talented animals," as the Daishonin would call them — people who are obsessed only with gaining personal honor and distinction, who despise and trample on others! And how many are the young people who seek only fleeting pleasures, who lose themselves in empty amusements, who waste this precious never-to-come-again time for building valuable, meaningful lives!

What good is intelligence if you refuse to fight against injustice? What good is learning if you don't protect the people? What good is youth if you don't use it to strengthen and forge yourself as a human being?



Cuban freedom fighter José Martí declared that our abilities are for the people, who draw



San Francisco student division members enjoy their Ikeda Auditorium.

those abilities forth and allow them to be developed. If we do not use them to serve the people, he asserted, our abilities have no meaning. Not using them for that purpose is shameful.



Confident that the student division members would follow in my footsteps, I denounced the actions of the Coal Miner's Union at two Soka Gakkai protest rallies held in Hokkaido, resolutely proclaiming, "The Soka Gakkai is the tide, and its roar is the roar of a lion king!"

Eventually the Coal Miner's Union was forced to back down from its attempts to exclude Soka Gakkai members. The true unity and courageous demands of the people crushed the arrogant attempts of those in power to oppress them.

Nichiren Daishonin writes, "The rulers and people who despised the votaries of the Lotus Sutra seemed to be free from punishment at first, but eventually they were doomed to fall" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 241). This is our conviction and an unwavering truth of Buddhism.

In time, the powerful Coal Miner's Union declined and disappeared from society's stage.



It was in the midst of this intense struggle that the Osaka Prefectural Police Headquarters summoned me for questioning. Several Gakkai members had been accused of violating the election law dur-

ing the campaign for an Upper House by-election in the Osaka electoral district held that April. They demanded my appearance as the person in charge of the Soka Gakkai's campaign activities in that election.

It goes without saying that what was behind all this was the political establishment's fear of the Soka Gakkai as a new popular movement dedicated to the rights of the people. This marked the first full-fledged attempt to try to destroy our organization.

The newly formed student division sailed out bravely onto these troubled waters and rang the bell heralding the start of a new era.

The Daishonin writes, "I pray that my followers will be lion kings, above the mocking taunts of packs of foxes" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1589). We must fight to change the times, to usher in an age in which treacherous individuals cannot arrogantly savor triumph. We must make it an age in which the people, the true heroes, can joyfully sing a brilliant paean of victory, of happy, fulfilled lives.

To do that, we must fear nothing, falter at nothing, persevere with patience and fight with determination!

The morning of July 3, I flew from Hokkaido to Osaka, where I voluntarily presented myself for police questioning. It was there, accused of a crime of which I was completely innocent, that I would be imprisoned. That was the Osaka Incident.

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

'Human Rights for All!'

INTERVIEW

John Montgomery, Pacific Basin Research Center Director

The Pacific Basin Research Center was formally launched at Soka University of America, Calabasas, on Jan. 2, 1991, under the direction of John D. Montgomery, Ford Foundation Professor of International Studies, Emeritus, Harvard University.

The PBRC has awarded more than 60 grants and post-doctoral fellowships to scholars at Harvard University and other universities studying policy experiences in Asia and the Pacific. The research has studied such issues as international security, economic and social development, educational and cultural activities, and environmental protection; it is especially interested in positive human rights policies and social capital formation in Asia and the Pacific Rim.

At the Dec. 10, 1998, SUA, Calabasas, Human Rights Day Symposium, John D. Montgomery, director of the Pacific Basin Research Center, moderated a panel presentation by four PBRC fellows on "Human Rights: Positive Policies in Asia and the Pacific Rim." The topic of the presentation is also the title of the PBRC's most recent book, a compilation of 15 essays developed under PBRC grants between 1994-97, exploring the consequences of affirmative action and other positive human rights policies in Asia and the Pacific Basin.

The following interview with Dr. Montgomery focuses on those findings and their significance for groups and individuals to pursue their human dignity in practical ways.

WT: At the SUA Human Rights Day Symposium, the

PBRC panel covered different phases of human rights activity that have emerged in the 50 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Please identify those critical benchmarks and share with us their significance in creating positive human rights policies.

John Montgomery: The most arresting element in the half-century of the present human rights regime is the dynamic ebb and flow of support and commitment to the concept. The Declaration itself began in the euphoria of the World War II victory and the aspiration for a New World Order in which nations would join in respecting and advancing human rights and dignity. But in only a few years the distrust and tension of the Cold War set in and the world split into two camps, neither of which placed a priority on human rights. However, in the last decade or so, enthusiasm rekindled, and new commitments emerged, both in law and in the policies and norms that states began to observe.

WT: In your estimation, which Asian-Pacific countries are the most progressive in instituting and fostering positive human rights policies?

Montgomery: Countries have differed quite strikingly in their commitment to human rights. The Atlantic community led in the ratification of the major covenants; as for the rest of the world, the record shows two significant developments: All regions have steadily improved in the rankings for eliminating abuses, but the Asian region has progressed faster than the Latin American region. The performance of some countries has been quite remarkable.

For example, in spite of the persistence of the caste system, India has adopted laws and procedures that have been models to other countries in Asia. And perhaps some people will be surprised to learn that China, apart from horrid successes like

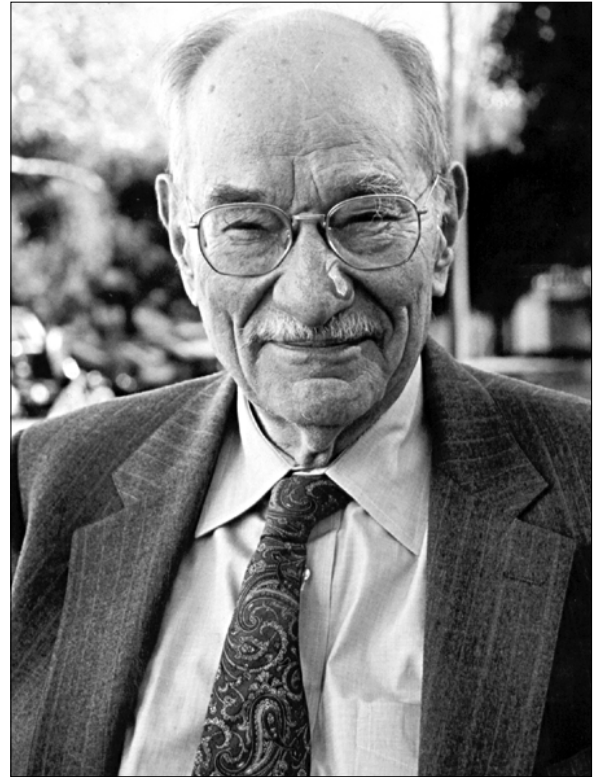
Tiananmen Square and the toleration of child labor, has adopted laws protecting economic and social rights and has even begun to offer legal assistance to the disadvantaged.

WT: In the PBRC book *Human Rights: Positive Policies in Asia and the Pacific Rim*, one of the authors, PBRC fellow Jennifer Schirmer, describes how the families of "the disappeared" in Latin America organized to protest abuses against their relatives. How successful is this form of non-violent response in rectifying injustices, and are there other forms of compensating outcomes?

Montgomery: The case study that Jennifer Schirmer carried out demonstrates the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. The families of people in Latin America who have been tortured and even killed gathered together to demand an accounting of these atrocities and they proceeded to move beyond their own grievances to work for the human rights of all, especially women.

WT: Recently, the PBRC developed a Human Rights Survey in collaboration with faculty and students of the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University. The survey is unique in that it asks not for an individual's opinions, but rather, for an individual's actual experiences as members of a society that presumably respects human rights. What have the survey results revealed?

Montgomery: What we did was to reach out to people by inviting them to use the worldwide web (<http://learning.gse.upenn.edu/hr>) to respond to questions about their experience with human rights. We wanted to know not merely their opinions and attitudes but their actual experiences with them. The responses are still coming in, and the sample is still small but we have learned which rights have



John D. Montgomery says that 'there is still a lot to do in spite of recent progress' for human rights.

been most frequently abused.

The results for the United States may surprise some people, in that many are taken for granted here — travel and freedom of assembly, for example — but are seriously abridged elsewhere — China, for example. We were surprised to learn that privacy was invaded here more frequently than we had anticipated; family rights and mail, especially e-mail, were among the five rights most often abused among our respondents. There were also racial and gender differences that I found disturbing in spite of our recent progress.

WT: Since the SUA Human Rights Day Symposium last December, the role — and ratification — of international human rights tribunals, such as the International Criminal Court, and peace-keeping organizations, such as NATO, have become a topic of passionate debate within the world human rights community. Based on the PBRC's research, what role do you believe these organizations will play in advancing positive human rights

policies and procedures?

Montgomery: The most important human rights organizations are now non-governmental and non-official. There are thousands and thousands of non-governmental organizations agitating for human rights and monitoring and reporting on their observances. They have great influence in forming public opinion, which in turn influence government and corporate policies.

The most disappointing performance to me was that of the United States. The United States has frequently attached reservations to its ratification of human rights agreements asserting that its sovereignty prevails over international norms like the tribunals that adjudicate violations and abuses. The United States does not have the best record even in the number of covenants and agreements it has signed and ratified, and to some of these to which it has committed itself, it has invented ways of weaseling out of compliance. There is still a lot to do in spite of recent progress. ■

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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.

Greetings

To the great members in Philly: If you don't see me around, it's 'cause I was hired as the executive director of a children and family community theatre in York, Penn. I may have moved out of Philly but my heart is eternally yours:

Passionate comrades
Continue to share with friends
This wonderful Law

— Fred Mayer, York, Pa.

Our dear friend David Hudson, longtime No. Hollywood member and founding member of the Golden Eagle Bagpipe Band, is seriously ill and battling cancer. He has moved to his brother's home in Vista, Calif., near Oceanside, and can be reached at (760) 727-2703. Please send daimoku and any encouragement you can. I know he would enjoy hearing from all the Gakkai friends he has. I thank you deeply for your support. — Nancy Kennedy, Rye, N.Y. (914) 967-3646.

Crossing boundaries of gang turf, language, culture and economics; artistic expression of our shared humanity will be on display in the collaborative community sculpture "Branches of Creativity" conceived by artist Lynette Yetter. Children of all ages at community festivals in the Northeast Los Angeles communities of Highland Park and Eagle Rock decorated branches with paint, glitter, glue, feathers and fabric. The artists and guests will

arrange the branches to lean against each other at the opening reception, creating the installation sculpture based on a poem by poet laureate Daisaku Ikeda. The branches are like people. Each one is unique and beautiful. By supporting one another with trust, we create something magnificent. Branches and art supplies will be on hand at the reception so that you can add to the sculpture. Sponsored by the Eagle Rock Community Cultural Center and Hathaway Family Resource Center. Reception, Aug. 4, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Eagle Rock Community Cultural Center, 2225 Colorado Blvd., Los Angeles (323) 226-1617. Installation runs through Aug. 29.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Stacey Smith, Nathan Gauer and Dara Carrera in the Washington, D.C., region on their graduation from high school. Your efforts are exemplary and your lives shine brilliant. How proud we all are of our SGI youth! — Ariana Bock, 2700 Ontario Rd. NW Wash., D.C. 20009 (202)232-1693.

Patrick Hawes from Gurnee, Ill., was recently selected for promotion to Musician Second Class (E-5) in the US Navy. Patrick is a clarinetist with Navy Band Great Lakes. Patrick wishes to express his deep gratitude to all of the members who have been supporting him through the years, especially his district chief in Chicago, Tom Friese, along with the members in Baltimore, Norfolk, Va., and Asheville, N.C. "I

love you all and can't thank you enough for all you have taught me about the greatness of the SGI and Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. I promise to continue to show actual proof!!!!"

Milestones

Congratulations to Don and Carrie Sanders of Los Angeles. Their daughter Kaia Selena Sanders was born on April 20, at 4:55 a.m. She weighed 8 lbs., 1 oz. and was 20.5 in. long.

A Cambodian SGI men's division member passed away June 18 of heart failure at Long Beach Memorial Hospital. He was 64 years old. His surviving family members are Mrs. Vann Sath Gnuon, daughters Diana Chea and Janet. — Vuthi Seng, Los Angeles

Lost and Found

I would like to reach my dear friend Mariella Quevedo, who encouraged me to begin this practice in Seattle in 1985. Last I heard, she was in Florida...married? Has a young son? These are the rumors I have heard! I'm still in Alaska, but everything has changed in my life since I last saw Mariella, and I really want to catch up! Please contact me soon! I miss you, Mariella! — Julia (Young) Bastuscheck, P.O. Box 22518, Juneau, AK 99802; e-mail: spug@gci.net

Are there any members in Nigeria who might know Okey Uhiara? He is the son of a Nigerian chief who came to Belling-

ham, Wash., around 1980 to study geology as a graduate student at Western Washington State University. He actually thought that WWSU was in Washington, D.C., when he first enrolled. In any case, we met in Bellingham and became very close friends. He joined in my district and practiced as a very enthusiastic member of the young men's division for a number of years until his visa ran out. He continued to write to me from Nigeria, but eventually my letters went unanswered. I have not heard from him for many years. If you have any information, please send e-mail to pbanne@metlife.com or write to me, Peter Nathen Banne, 5007 Palmetto Avenue #41, Pacifica, CA 94044. Telephone (650) 755-7873.

There were two women's division members I practiced with in the late '80s and early '90s. They left the area and I haven't heard from them. Betty Ann Dingman went to Florida and Lillian Ortez left for California. I'd love to hear from both of you. I'm at 354 Hoyt St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14213-1245. My telephone number is (716) 882-5173. — Beverley Schleip

Correction: Laurent and Maria José Cohen's baby daughter, Africa, was identified incorrectly in a photograph on page 2 of the June 18 issue. Africa is sitting on her mother's lap.

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S JUNE 30 ENCOURAGEMENT

How To Achieve an Unaging Life-Force

The evening of June 30, SGI President Ikeda attended an informal gathering watives in Shinjuku, Tokyo. President Ikeda said that "Buddhism teaches us how to achieve an unaging, eternally vibrant life force. Nichiren Daishonin declares, 'You will grow younger' (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*,

vol. 5, p. 158). With an ever-youthful spirit, may you always be dedicated, in your respective parts of the world, to spreading the ideals of Buddhism for the happiness and peace of all people. And may you accumulate infinite, everlasting benefit in your lives as a result.

"The true teachings of the Daishonin's Buddhism," he added, "do not lie in formalities or authority. They are found only in the faith and practice of those who strive earnestly for kosen-rufu throughout their lives."

WT

Value Creation Explored at 3rd Annual Day of Indiana

Day of Indiana III, dubbed "Creating Value for a Hopeful Future" in honor of Soka Gakkai founder Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, was held on Makiguchi's birthday, June 6, in Indianapolis. After Gloria Velasquez revealed plans for a daimoku quilt, SGI-USA Senior Vice General Director Guy McCloskey stressed the importance of recognizing that everyone's life has value and respecting everyone's differences.

Following Mr. McCloskey's speech, a flute performance of "Part of Your World" from *The Little Mermaid*, performed by Evan Kang, was among the entertainment highlights. Also



Photo by GARY RUSSELL

Day of Indiana III is held at the Indiana Community Center, June 6. The meeting commemorated the third anniversary of SGI President Ikeda visiting Indianapolis, when he had a layover on his way to New York.

moving was the song "Miss Tambourine" by Ann Marie from Chicago, which reflected her experience of teaching music to preschool children in an area filled with drugs, poverty and despair.

On a lighter note, a skit based on the TV program *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer* was presented. Gary Russell, as Buffy, learned about value creation and the mentor-disciple relationship from her mentor, Makiguchi, played by John Fox.

In a pivotal scene, Buffy learned that value creation requires action and that being an SGI member is not like "punching a clock." "A job you can quit," Makiguchi explained, but "a mission is inescapable." The

entertainment portion of the activity ended with an audience participation song led by James Ryan and Betty Klein that was derived from the Chumbawumba tune "Tubthumping" (I get knocked down / But I get up again).

One display, constructed by Yukari Fukuta, was a colorful collage of Indiana members past and present. Another exhibit highlighted the three Soka Gakkai presidents. All in all, the message was that value creation is more than a slogan or catch phrase: It's what all of us must do in order to have a better, hopeful 21st century.

— GARY RUSSELL

Wisconsin Area Holds Family Festival

Children tied to yellow, red and blue balloons; Japanese women swirling in summer kimonos gaily performing what looked to be the Tokyo bunny hop but was really a mining dance; a play starring two bodhisattva parrots; people singing about dreams, sunshine, friendship — all of this was part of the kaleidoscope of Wisconsin Area's second annual SGI-USA Family Festival held on May 23.

Hosted at the Zoofari center next to the Milwaukee Zoo, the event drew a considerable crowd of which half were children. Visitors included guests from Japan accompanying graduating student members



Photo by MICHIKO and MARY RAY HOLIDAY

Milwaukee members perform 'You Are the Sunshine of My Life' at their second annual SGI-USA Family Festival, May 23.

and members' friends and family members. The event, planned and executed by the youth division, was aimed at children and attracting new members.

"I enjoyed the freedom given to children to express their thoughts," remarked MaryRay Coker, a member since age 2 and attending with her teenage daughter, Amber. "It was refreshing to hear that some of the next generation have focus in their lives. This means that parents are doing the job that needs to be done. Kids are mirrors of ourselves."

Highlights included "Hold On to Your Dreams," a song written by Tim Gruber and performed by Madison Chapter members. Tim, who is a general

music education teacher, asked his students to write about their dreams. He later wrote the music and fashioned the dreams into lyrics.

Milwaukee members performed "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," with both the enthusiasm and finesse usually associated with past SGI movements. There were Japanese songs, Japanese dances, a rip-roaring samba and a gymnastics routine to the tune of "Fly Like an Eagle."

Artists also exhibited their crafts in a nearby lobby, alongside a three-panel display on the SGI.

— ELIZABETH THOMPSON

Football Hero Encourages Las Vegas Members

The movie *Rudy* is a true story and an unforgettable testament to the power of dreams and the triumph of the common man. Millions have been inspired by the movie. Now, let the man behind the movie inspire you!" With these words, the Boys and Girls Group recently invited all the Las Vegas members to hear Rudy Ruettiger speak at the Community Center.

About 170 excited members and guests filled the lobby to greet Rudy when he arrived. A special message from Los Angeles member John Astin was read to Rudy — special because Mr. Astin's son Sean starred in

the movie *Rudy*.

Rudy once said: "To go to Notre Dame, you had to be in the top 10 percent of your class. To play football, you had to be big and strong. I was neither of those things. But I had a dream and a passion for life, and nothing was going to stop me from fulfilling my dream. I fulfilled my dream to play on the field of Notre Dame. It may have been for only 27 seconds, but it was enough to fill my heart forever."

Almost 25 years later, Rudy is living another dream: to make sure that children from all nations build a belief in themselves. For information on his new foundation for chil-

dren, visit his website at www.rudyint.com.

In the beginning of his talk, he asked the small children whether they made their bed in the morning and did their homework and what the result was from accomplishing these tasks. One of the young kids said, "Cause and effect" — Rudy replied, "I'll remember that phrase." We all applauded because we knew that we were sharing the spirit of Buddhism with Rudy. He related so well with the children — without making the adults feel left out.

And when he touched on adult matters, he did it in a way that the children could under-



Photo by AUDREY DEMPSEY

Rudy Ruettiger visits the Las Vegas Community Center

After a standing ovation Rudy stayed and talked to all who wanted to talk to him, signing autographs and taking pictures. We gave Rudy several of President Ikeda's books as a thank you gesture and Rudy autographed a copy of his new children's book for President Ikeda.

Although Rudy is a highly sought-after motivational speaker earning thousands of dollars, he volunteered his time to speak to the Las Vegas members. For all of us there, meeting Rudy was priceless!

stand as well. Rudy demonstrated how you must take action to accomplish your dreams.

— FERN REYNOLDS and
AUDREY DEMPSEY

최고(最高)의 혁명

- 5월 27일 SGI 이케다 회장 스피치 -

잘 오셨습니다. 대단히 고맙습니다! 즐거운 회합을 갖도록 합시다! 멀리 주부 주코쿠, 시코구 그리고 해외에서 오신 여러분께 감사드립니다. 오늘 5월 27일은 인도의 네루 초대수상이 서거한 날이다. 35년전(1964년)이다. 도다 선생님과 네루 수상에 대해 "한번 만나고 싶구나. 만나면 바로 이야기가 통할 것 같다." 라고 말씀하셨다. 유감스럽게도 도다 선생님은 그를 만날 수 없었지만 불가사이하게도 도다 선생님의 마음은 때와 더불어 실현되고 있다. 즉 제자인 내구 네루 수상과 손자인 라지브 간디 수상 일가족과 우정을 쌓게 되었기 때문이다. 수상은 일본 영빈관(1985년)에서 나와 회견을 마친 후 "참된 일본인을 만날 수 있었다"며 기뻐해 주셨다고 한다. 그는 1991년 비극적으로 암살당하고 말았지만, 나는 부인 소냐 간디 여사, 영애 프리얀카씨 그리고 일가족과 우정을 계속하고 있다. 네루 수상은 1957년 10월에 일본을 방문하셨다. 이곳 교토에도 오셔서 일본 정원의 '균형잡힌 아름다움'에 감탄하셨다는 기록이 있다. 네루 수상은 젊은 날 혁명투쟁으로 투옥되었다. 투옥되었기에 진짜 혁명가다. 혁명에 일어서면 살해 당하는 것이 보통이다. 감옥에 들어가지 않고 잔혹한 비난 중상의 집중공격도 받지 않는 - 그런 혁명가는 있을지 없다. 박해가 없는 것은 요령 좋게 적당히 빠져 나가고 있는 것에 불과하기 때문이다. 네루 수상은 긴 옥중생활을 맞보았다. (통산 9회, 약 9년간) 그러나 옥중에서 딸 인디아에게 편지를 보내 세계사를 가르쳤다. 거기에는 '세계적인 지도자가 되어달라'는 기대가 있었다고 생각한다. '어린이가 그런 어른의 이야기를 알 수 있을까' 이렇게 생각하는 사람도 있을지 모른다. 그러나 실은 어린이는 어른이다. 진

지하게 말한 것은 반드시 통한다. 학회의 가정에서도 마찬가지이다. 어린 시절부터 학회의 목적을, 역사를, '광선유포'를 가르치는 일이 중요하다. 인디라는 아버지의 투옥을 계기로 13세의 어린 나이에 독립운동에 참가했다. (인디라는 라지브 간디 수상의 어머니. 훗날 인도의 제 3대 수상) 아버지는 옥중에서 편지를 써서 딸에게 보냈다. "우리들은 쓰레기를 쓸어내듯 우리들의 나라로부터 빈궁과 비참을 쫓아내지 않으면 안된다" 도다 선생님이 "나는 간사이에서 가난뱅이와 병든자를 없애고 싶다"고. 방정식은 똑같다. 어떻게 괴로운 균중을 구제할 것인가이다. 추상론도 아니고 관념론도 아니다. 그 편지 속에서 네루는 계속 말한다. "우리들의 목전에 놓인 대 과업에 협력하는 것을 거절하는 사람들의 마음 속에 처진 거미줄을 제거하지 않으면 안된다. 거미줄을 제거하는 일은 큰 작업이다. 시간이 걸릴지도 모른다. 그러나, 적어도 시도는 해 봐야 한다. - 인퀴라브즈인다 바드(혁명만세)!" 광선유포도 대과업이다. 이성업에 협력하려고 하지 않는 사람들. 그 마음 속의 거미줄을 제거하지 않으면 안된다. "할 수 있는 일이라면 무엇이든지 하겠다. 설령 작은 일이라도 최선을 다하겠다" 이것이 혁명정신이며 광선유포의 정신이다. 광선유포야말로 '최고의 혁명'인 것이다. 그러므로 여기에 몸을 던져가는 인생이 '최고로 존귀한' 인생이다. 21세기는 이미 눈앞에 다가왔다. 모든 청년부가 광선유포에 앞장을 서야할 때가 왔다. 그 대투쟁의 원천이야말로 간사이다. - 이렇게 자각하고 이 땅에서 21세기를 향해 혁명의 파도를 일으켜 주시길 바란다. 비록 바다의 표면은 조용하고 부드럽게

파도가 일지라도, 그 저류에서는 강하고, 힘찬 물결이 흐르고 있다. 바라옵건데 교도와 간사이도 그렇게 해주시길 바란다. 한때 교도의 유명했던 그룹, 무사도처럼 광포를 위한 싸움에 긍지를 가져주시길 바란다. 용감하게 전진하여 사람을 행복하게 인도하고, 그들의 능력을 깨우쳐 주시기 바란다. "강한 사람은 잘 견딘다. 잘 견디는 사람을 강자라고 한다." 니토베 이나조씨의 말이다. 니토베씨는 마키구치 선생님과 대단히 친했다. 세계적으로 유명한 학자이다. "잘 견디는 사람"은 강자이다. 인격자이며 용기있는 사람이다. 불법에서도 부처를 능히 - 능히 참는 사람 - 이라고 부른다. 견디지 못하는 것은 무기력한 비겁자다. 학회에서 떨어져 나간 사람이 그랬다. 자신을 꾸미는 핑계는 능란해도 언제나 노고하는 것을 피하고 있었다. 스스로 어려움을 받아들이면서 나아가겠다는 각오등은 아무리 보아도 없었다. 고대 로마의 철학자 세네카는 말했다. "욕망이 있어 은혜를 모르는 욕망만큼 큰 악은 없습니다." 은혜를 모르는 것은 자신이 충분히 받고 있는 대을 자각하지 않고 더욱 많은 것을 원하기만 하는 식의 오로지 자신의 욕망을 채우는 것밖에 생각하지 않는 것이다. 인간의 본질은 로마시대나 지금이나 조금도 변하지 않는다. 여러 가지 이야기를 했지만 일체는 제군의 공부를 위한 것이다. 고금의 위인이나 영웅의 선론은 모두 불법과 통한다. 그러므로 제군은 더욱 공부해 주기를 바란다. 그 위에 제목이 있으면 배운 '정의의 레도'를 현실에서 걸어갈 수 있다. 로케트도 레도의 '계산'이 잘 되어 있다고 해도 쏘아 올리는 힘이 약하면 레도에 진입할 수 없다. 제목의 힘은 로케트를 분사시켜 가는 무한한 힘이다. 미국의 철

안내 말씀

6월 30일 현재, 한국어 페이지 신청 접수가 미 전역에서 168건 접수되었습니다. 월드 트리뷴 구독자에 한하여, 한국어 페이지는 무료이며 신청자에게만 배부됩니다. 이번 기회에 신청을 하지 않으시면 한국어 페이지를 받을 수 없게 됩니다. 설령, 영어를 잘 읽는 분일지라도 (한국어 페이지가 필요 없을지라도) 신청해 주시면 감사하겠습니다. 왜냐하면 우리들은 한국어 페이지를 통하여 서로의 정보를 교환할 수 있고, 또 미국에서 신심하고 계시는 한국인 회원의 현황 파악 (회원수도 가능해지기 때문입니다. 각 지역의 리더 되시는 분들께서는 월드 트리뷴을 구독하시는 회원들 중 한분도 빠짐 없이 한국어 페이지를 받아보실 수 있도록 확인해 주셨으면 감사하겠습니다.

회장선생님께서 한국에 주신 시

"사계의 선물 민중의 개개"에서

- 지금 한국 SGI가 전세계의 모범이 되어 불법 르네상스의 욕망을 지구사회를 찬란하게 비추어간다 -

인 에머슨은 말한다. "적절한 행동에 전력을 쏟은 사람은 더할 나위 없는 풍부한 지혜를 보수로 받습니다." 이 말씀은 여러분 모두에게 적용된다. 학회활동에 전력을 다하면 자연스럽게 최고의 지혜에 걸맞는 행동으로 된다. 인간혁명하여 복운을 쌓는다. 전부 자기 자신의 득이 된다. 롱펠로는 미국을 대표하는 민중 시인. 19세기에 전세계에서 절대적인 인기를 차지했다. 하버드 대학의 교수이기도 했다. 그는 노래한다.

우리는 운명의 암길이 있는 것은 쾌락도 아니며 비애도 아니다 단지 오늘에서 내일로 계속 나아가는 행동이다

그대로다. 행동이다. 쾌락이나 비애에 휘말리는 인생이어서는 안된다. 롱펠로 시의 원문은 미구 창가대에 중보로서 소장되어 있다. 그밖에도 귀중한 '인류의 유산'이 많이 있다. 모두 제군을 위하고 후세를 위한 것이다. 일체가 제군의 재산이다. 이번에 타이완 SGI의 대표 3백명이 문화교류단으로 일본을 방문하여 오늘 이 회합을 오키나와 연수도장에서 위성중계로 보고 계신다. '타이완 SGI 여러

분 잘 오셨습니다." 교류단 여러분은 이번 오키나와에서 개최되는 '아시아 평화 예능 페스티벌'에 참가할 예정이다. 타이완 SGI 동지 여러분은 사회 지역에서 단단한 뿌리를 내려 훌륭한 실증을 보여 오셨다. 전국 2천 7백개의 사회 단체 중에서 작년까지 7년 연속으로 '전국우량인민단체상'에 빛나고 계신다. 7년 연속은 타이완 SGI만의 쾌거라고 한다. 진심으로 축하드립니다(대학수) 타이완 내정부의 황부장(장관에 해당)도 "민중의 힘은 무한합니다."고 찬탄해 주시고 있다. 지금 활자문화가 쇠퇴하는 가운데 가장 착실하게 가장 앞서 왕도를 걷는 잡지라고 기대되는 월간지 『우시오』 우시오에서 나는 현재 '쿠바 공화국의 국가적인 영웅 호세 마르티'를 둘러싼 대담을 개시했다. <쿠바의 사도 호세 마르티를 말한다> 대담의 상대는 마르티 연구의 제일인자인 비티엘 박사. 쿠바의 카스트로 <국가 평의회> 의장으로 부터도 "「대담」의 성공을 가까워서 지켜보고 있습니다. 「대담」의 성공을 위해 내가 필요하다면 뭐라도 말씀해 주십시오."라는 고마운 연락도 받았다. 또 의장은 나

에게 "꼭 다시 쿠바를 방문해 주시기를 바랍니다. 그리고 함께 이야기를 나누고 싶습니다."고도 전해주시고 있다. 5월은 마르티가 순난한 달이다. 1895년 5월 19일, 42세로 전사했다. 5월의 27일 - 오늘, 쿠바의 해안지역에 매장되었다. 그래서 오늘 그에 관한 이야기를 해두고 싶다. 그것은 독립투쟁 - 혁명의 한창 때였다. 그는 장래 나라의 지도자가 되어야 할 소중한 인물이었다. 없어서는 안 되는 인물이었다. 그러므로 '군의 후방에 남으라'고 강하게 권유 받았다. 그럼에도 불구하고 그는 일보도 물러서지 않고 제일선에서 끝까지 싸웠던 것이다. 세발의 총탄이 마르티의 몸에 박혔다 - 유체는 적이 전리품으로 가져가고 말았다. 그는 자신의 죽음도 유린당했던 것이다. 그러나 그는 확신하고 있었다. "나의 몸이 사라지는 일이 있어도 나의 사상은 사라지지 않을 것이다." "만인을 위해 사는 인간은 만인의 마음에 계속 살아갈 수 있다" 광선유포의 혁명에 있어서도 1천명, 2천명의 빛을 위해 일한 사람은 영원히 그 사람들의 마음에 남는다. 영원히 그분들이 권속으로도 되고 제천선인으로도 되어 지켜준다. 그런 '경애'가 된다. 전세계에

광선유포를 하면 전세계의 사람들로 부터 학회는 지켜진다. 여러분이 지켜진다. 이것이 불법의 방정식이다. 그렇기 때문에 나는 '광선유포를 위해 살아가라. 그 편이득이다'고 말하는 것이다. 그 죽음으로부터 1백년 이상 지난 지금에도 마르티는 제대로 찬탄받고 존경하는 대상이다. 인류를 진보시킨 사상은 아니 더한층 빛나고 있다. 순난의 영웅 - 그 모습은 마키구치 선생님파도 서로 공명한다. '마르티'의 이름은 일본에서는 그다지 알려지지 않았을지도 모른다. 그렇게 때문에 나는 특히 청년부의 제군이 알아주기를 바란다. 가르쳐 주고 싶다. 젊은 지금이야말로 무엇이랴도 탐욕적으로 배우고 온갖 지식을 흡수하여 장래 세계 제일류의 학자와도 당당히 이야기를 나누는 자기 자신을 만들어 주길 바란다. 그렇게 되지 않으면 세계의 지도자로는 될 수 없다. 광선유포는 진척되지 않는다. 마르티의 신념은 무엇이였을까? 그는 말한다. "스스로 연마하고 스스로 일어난 사람이야말로 왕보다도 높게 우뚝 솟는다. 그 사람은 (자기 자신에) 이기지 못한 덧없고 우쭐해진 자들을 내려다 볼 수 있다. 이것이 나의 신념이다." 왕위

가 무엇이냐! 영예가 무엇이냐! 자기 자신의 힘으로 일어난 인간이 훨씬 위인 것이다! 라고. 하물며 요법을 넘치는 사람은 최고로 존귀한 존재이다. 한 사람이 엄연히 우뚝 솟아가면 된다. 후지의 고향에서 내려다 보는 것처럼. 마르티는 쓴다. (회곡 「조국과 자유」) "벗이여, 용기를 가져라! 승리는 우리들의 손안에 있다!" "벗이여!" 라고. 한사람만으로는 광선유포할 수 없다. '벗과 함께' '동지와 함께'. 이것이 정도(正道)다. 그러므로 불법에서는 '권속요'를 설하고 '사제론'을 설한다. "운명의 주사위는 던져졌다. 명예롭지 못한 인생이 되느냐, 혹은 불멸의 영광을 쟁취할 것인가. 그 이외의 운명은 있을리 없다!" 싸움은 시작되었다. 제군의 사명의 '인생극장'은 이미 시작되고 말았다. 이제는 앞으로 앞으로 나아가 '불멸의 영광'을 쟁취하는 이외에 길은 없다. 도망치면 영원히 '불명예의 인생'이 되고 만다. 최후까지 끝까지 싸우는가. 돌 중에서 되전하는가. 길은 돌 중에 하나이다. 함께 노력합시다! ('예!'라고 맹세의 대답이) 마르티는 말한다. "시기에 적절한 발언이란 무엇인가. 행동하는 것이다. 그리고 스스로의 의무를 다하는 사람이

게 경의를 표하는 것이다." 행동밖에 없다. 백번의 말보다 한번의 행동이다. 논의만 할 뿐 행동이 없으면 '탁상공론'이다. 아무런 효과도 없다. 간부가 어떤가가 아니다. 역직의 상하가 아니다. '행동하고 있는가 어떤가'이다. '스스로 움직이는 것이다' 이외에 불법은 없기 때문이다. 광선유포는 없기 때문이다. 진정한 영광도 없기 때문이다. 그리고 '열심히 학회활동을 하고 있는 사람'을 존경하는 것이다. "언제나 고생이 많으십니다!" "정말로 잘 오셨습니까!" "광포를 위해 싸우는 여러분들에게 경의를 표하지 않으면 누구든 불법을 받는다. 경의를 표하면 자신도 상대도 모두가 공덕을 받는다. 마르티는 호소했다. "위대한 사업이 성공하는가 실패하는가 어떤가"에 달려있다. "너무나도 큰 괴로움과 무거운 책임을 지고 있는 나의 몸이 되어 생각하고 생각해 보아야 한다. 허풍을 떨거나 수다를 떨지 말고 순수하게 '사람을 힘내게 한다'는 것이 얼마나 어려운가 생각해 보아야 주십시오. 하물며, 힘을 내는 사람을 기죽이지 않는 것이 얼마나 어려운가를 생각해 보아야 주십시오." 이것이 되는 사람이 진짜 지도자다. 진짜

간부다. 진짜 불법자다. 그 사람을 '보살'이라고 한다. 마르티는 혁명의 동지에게 호소했다. "최대의 덕에 대해 인간의 야심이나 허영심은 항상 저지하려고 한다. 그러나 넘기 어려운 어떠한 곤란 일지라도 구제의 정신으로 불타는 우리들을 가로막을 수 없다. 빛의 대군인 우리들을 지배할 수 없다. 빛의 대군인 우리들을 지배할 수 없다." '최대의 덕'에 대해서는 반드시 비겁한 인간이 질투하고 방해한다. 니치렌 대성인에 대해서도 그랬다. 닥코 성인에 대해서도 그랬다. 근대에는 마키구치 선생님, 도다 선생님에 대해서도, 또 나의 시대에 박해의 구도는 마찬가지였다. 그러나 우리들은 '빛의 대군'이다! 신심은 눈에 보이지 않는다. 그러나 '빛처럼 어떠한 어둠도 차단할 수 없다. 우리들은 '부처의 군세' 어떠한 것도 두려워할 것은 없다. 한번밖에 없는 금세의 인생 - 그러므로 불멸의 '영광의 태양'이 빛나는 인생을. 한점 후회도 없는 '승리의 인생'을 그리고 최후에 단연코 이기는 '상승의 인생'을. 그런 인생을 전원이 상쾌하게 장식합시다! (대박수) - W/T 6월 18일, 1999

법화경(法華經)의 지혜(智慧)

- 제 41회 테마 · 여래신력품 ① -

사이토 교학부장: 드디어 이번부터 '여래신력품(제 21장)'입니다. 법화경의 「클라이맥스」입니다. 잘 부탁드립니다. **이케다 SGI회장:** 니치렌 대성인께서 용출품, 수량품과 함께 가장 중요시한 것이 바로 이 「신력품」입니다. 그것은 여기에 말법만년의 「광선유포」를 말기는 의식이 설해져 있기 때문입니다. **사이토:** 광선유포 - 이 이상 중요한 것은 없습니다. **SGI회장:** 도대체 법화경이란 무엇인가. 그것은 「석존의 유언」입니다. 석존이 가장 말해두고 싶었던 것입니다. 그렇다면 석존의 으뜸가는 「비월」

은 무엇이였을까요. 그것은 '살아있는 모든 생물이며, 행복하여라!'라는 바램입니다. 우리들은 조석근행에서 언제나 「일체중생의 행복」을 기원하고 있다. 「일체중생」이란 살아있는 모든 것을 말한다. 그 행복을 기원하고 있다. 「승고한 경지」입니다. 기원만으로는 안된다. 행동하고 있어야 한다. 그 기원을 실현하기 위해 「광선유포」에 움직이고 있다. 말 그대로 「승고한 경지」입니다. **엔도 부교학부장:** 본존님과 학회 덕분에 조금이기는 하지만 어느 사이엔가 그러한 경지에 다가가고 있습니

다. 더욱이 몇 백만명이나 되는 사람들이 - 불가사의하고, 대단한 일이라고 생각합니다. **스다 부교학부장:** 이 자체가 광선유포의 위대한 실상이지요. **SGI회장:** 지용의 보살이 아니라 할 수 없는 일입니다. 그 지용의 보살에게 말법의 광선유포를 부탁해오라고 말기신 것이 신력품입니다. **사이토:** 「부촉」의 의식이군요. **스다:** 「부촉」이란 부처가 가르침을 제자에게 맡겨 이 법을 흥통하라는 사명을 부여한 것입니다.

SGI회장: 「부촉」이 없으면 불법은 사장의 일대에서 그치고 맙니다. 그래서 아무리 위대한 「법」이라 하더라도 아무것도 안됩니다. 인간을 구제할 수가 없습니다. 살아있는 모든 것을 자비로 감쌌다 하더라도 괴로움을 구제한다는 것은 관념론입니다. 「법」을 가르쳐서 「인간」을 구제하는 것이 불법입니다. 도다선생님은 감옥에서 나오시어, 은사를 그리워하며 홀로 밤하늘을 쳐다보면서 이렇게 노래하셨습니다.
여의보주를 내가 가졌노라
이것으로 모두를 구제하리라
나의 마음이 이렇게 외치니
은사는 씨익 미소지었다

욕사하신 사장 마키구치 선생님의 「마음」을 이어서 오직 홀로 「광선유포」에 일어서셨

던 것이다. 더욱이 마키구치 선생님으로부터 도다 선생님의 바톤터치가 이루어진 곳은 옥중에서였다. 1943년 9월 마키구치 선생님이 경시청에서 스가모의 도쿄 구치소로 이감될 때가 최후의 헤어짐이었다. 두 분 모두 죄수의 몸이었다. 자유롭게 입을 여는 것도 쉽지 않았을테지요. 도다 선생님은 「"선생님, 부디 몸 건강하세요"라고 말씀드린 것이 제가 할 수 있는 모든 정성이었습니다. 당시는 대답 대신 고개를 끄덕이셨습니다. 그 모습, 그 눈에서 무한한 자애와 용기를 느꼈습니다.」고 술회하고 있다. (마키구치 선생님의 3회기에서) **사이토:** 옥중의 바톤터치 - 너무나도 숭고하며 엄숙합니다. 도다 선생님으로부터 이케다 선생님의 바톤터치

가 된 「3. 16」 <1958년 3월 16일>의 의식도 탄노사건, 오사카사건과 그 뒤의 재판이라고 하는 「권력의 마성」과의 장렬한 싸움의 와중에서였습니다.

스다: 엄숙합니다.

SGI회장: 물론, 그것은 신력품의 부촉의 의식과는 차원이 다릅니다. 다만 「사제」가 없다면 「불법」은 없는 것이라고 말할 수 있겠지요.

사이토: 맞습니다. 석존 자신은 「묘법」을 깨닫게 되었습니다. 자기 생명의 오저에 있는 「우주대의 생명력」을 깨닫고 「환희중의 대환희」를 맛보았습니다. 그러나, 그것을 어떻게 전인류에게 전해갈 것인가. 나는 괜찮다. 내가 살아있는 동안도 또 괜찮다. 그러나 내가 없어진 뒤에는 어떻게 할 것인가. 여기에 불교 그 자체의 중대한 테마가 있다고 생각합니다. 불법은 철두철미한 「인간종교」입니다. 인간을 떠난 초월신이라든가, 우주를 혼자서 창조한 창조신이라는 것을 설하고 있지 않습니다. 끝까지 「인간」에게서 떠나지 않은채 인간에게 「그대 자신이 각성하라!」고 호소해 가는 것이 불교입니다. 그러므로 신의 의지하고는 별개입니다. 모두가 인간의 의지로 결정됩니다. 그러므로 인간으로부터 인간으로 향한 「사제의 계승」이 없어진다면 불법은 생명을 잃어버리고 맙니다. 「부촉」이 중요한 이유입니다.

엔도: 사제가 없어지면 「법멸」입니다.

SGI회장: 그렇습니다. 「법멸」이라 하더라도 본래 「법」 그 자체는 영원입니다. 실제로는 교법을 바르게 계승한 「사람」이 없어진 때가 「법멸」인 것입니다.

사이토: 지금의 중문이 마치 그렇습니다.

스다: 사제가 없어졌습니다. 그렇기 때문에 불법도 없어졌습니다. 정법이 없어졌는데도 저런 모습으로 뽐내고 있는 것은 「마물」입니다.

SGI회장: 석존은 자신의 사후의 사람들의 행복을 생각한 나머지 「어떻게 할 것인가」라며 고민했으리라고 생각합니다. 그것의 결론으로서 석존은 자신의 사후에는 자

기 자신을 부처로 만들어 준 「석존의 사장」인 「영원한 묘법」 그 자체를 스승으로 해서 수행하라고 제자에게 가르쳐 준 것은 아니었을까요. 작년에 「발적현본」에서도 논했습니다만 그 「유언」을 만년에 들어서며 그때마다 석존은 말했다. 그것이 훗날 현재와 같은 「법화경」으로 모아져 정리된 것은 아닐까요.

엔도: 석존의 스승이란 「영원한 묘법」, 즉 「영원한 본불」입니다. 우리들은 현대적으로 알기 쉽게 「우주생명」이라고 부르는 경우도 있습니다. 이 「영원한 법」을 스승으로 해서 수행한다면 누구나 자신과 같이 부처로 된다는 뜻입니다. 「살아있는 모든 것」을 행복하게 하는 「대양약」이 이 「영원한 묘법」 즉, 「영원한 부처」입니다. 이것을 가르쳐 줄터이니 이 대양약을 복용하고 이것을 흥통하여라 - 이것이 법화경이며, 수량품의 마음입니다.

SGI회장: 초점은 완전히 석존 입멸 후에 있습니다. 미래에 있었습니다. 미래의 「광선유포」에 있었습니다. 이 점을 놓쳐버린다면 법화경의 마음은 알 수 없게 됩니다.

사이토: 신력품, 아니 법화경 전체가 「부촉」을 중심테마로 하고 있는 것입니다. 특히 허공회의 의식에서 그렇습니다. 즉, 보담품(제 11장)에서 거대한 보담이 출현한 것도 용출품(제 15장)에서 무수한 지용의 보살이 대지를 가르치고 춤추며 나온 것도 수량품(제 16장)에서 「영원한 부처」가 설해진 것도 모두 부촉을 위해서였습니다.

스다: 어의구전에서는 「妙法蓮華經」을 상해보살에게 부촉하시는 것은 보담품시에 일이 일어나서 수량품시에 일이 나타나고 신력촉투의 시에 일이 끝났느니라(어서 770쪽)라고 말씀하셨습니다. 부촉의 의의를 모른다면 이 사리가 맞지 않는 허공회 의식은 옛날 이야기에 불과할 뿐입니다.

엔도: 그러면 신력품의 줄거리를 보도록 하겠습니다. 「여래신력품」이라는 이름 그대로 여래가 우주를 뒤흔드는 것과 같은 심대신력을 보입니다. 먼저 이 장의 첫머리

부분에서 지용의 보살의 「맹세」가 시작됩니다. 「석존멸 후의 사바세계」에서 또 「다른 제불의 입멸후의 국토」에서도 법화경을 흥통하겠습니다」라고 맹세를 합니다.

SGI회장: 모든 부처의 「입멸 후」에 광선유포를 하겠습니까 다라는 맹세입니다. 여기에 「지용의 보살」의 중대한 또한 불가사의한 의의가 있습니다. 결론을 앞질러 말하는 것 같지만, 부처라고 하는 「한사람」으로부터 「진진중」에 대한 정법 광선유포를 책임진 것은 어떠한 국토에서도 항상 「지용의 보살」인 것입니다. 그것은 왜 그럴까. 「지용의 보살」이란 내중의 경애가 「부처」와 똑같이면서 어디까지나 「보살」로서 행동하기 때문입니다. 말하자면 보살불입니다. 경애가 「부처」와 사제불이가 아니면 정법을 바르게 흥통할 수가 없습니다. 여기에 덧붙여 현실의 타세를 무대로 세간 속으로, 인간군속으로 동화해서 들어가지 않으면 광선유포는 할 수 없습니다. 이 두 가지 조건을 충족하고 있는 것이 「지용의 보살」인 것입니다. 그렇기 때문에 신력품의 맨끝에 「이 사람 세간에 행하여라」고 있는 것이 아닐까요. 「세간」입니다. 인간 속입니다.

스다: 신력품이 계속되는데 첫머리의 「맹서」에 응해서 부처가 모여 있는 문수보살을 비롯하여 무량의 보살들 앞에서 신통력에 의한 불가사의한 현상을 나타냅니다. 이것이 소위 「심신력」입니다.

SGI회장: 심신력의 설법을 들으니 너무나도 황당무개한 느낌이 들지도 모릅니다. 그러나 어디까지나 「생명의 세계」의 진실을 상징적으로 나타내려고 한 것입니다.

스다: 예. 우선 「1. 부처가 넓고 긴 혀를 내밀자 하늘까지 닿았다」 이것은 고대 인도에서는 혀를 내미는 것은 「거짓말을 하지 않습니다」라는 의미였던 것을 근거로 하고 있습니다. 법화경이 모두 진실이라는 의미입니다.

SGI회장: 대성인은 혀가 「넓다」는 것은 심계의 모든 중생을 넓게 구제한다는 의미이며, 혀가 「길다」는 것은 구원 이래의 묘법이라는 의미를

나타내는 것이라고 하셨습니다. <어의구전 「신력품 8개의 대사」속에 「제 2 출방장설지사(어서 770쪽)>

사이토: 이어서 「2. 석존의 전신의 모혈에서 빛이 나와 모든 색의 빛을 발하여 사방세계를 비추었다. 제불도 마찬가지로 '넓고 긴 혀를 내밀어' '무량의 빛을 발했다」고 있습니다.

SGI회장: 우주 속에 빛과 빛이 찬란하게 편만하였다. 장대하고 화려하였다. 광선유포의 세계입니다. 우리들도 빛을 내며 가는 것이다. 「신심」의 마음이 진정으로 불태우면 전생명이 빛나는 것이다. 인격이 빛난다. 지혜가 빛난다. 희망이 빛나는 것이다. 그리고 사람에게도 비추는 것이다.

엔도: 다음은 석존과 제불이 혀를 거두고 「3. 일제히 헛기침을 하고 4. 일제히 손가락을 통겨 소리를 낸다」입니다. 손가락을 등글게 말아 통겨 소리내는 것은 인도의 풍습으로 「진실하다는 증거」라고 합니다.

스다: 제불의 「소리」와 「손가락의 소리」가 전우주에 울려 퍼집니다. 그러자 그 소리로 「5. 사방제불의 세계의 대지가 육중에 진동」합니다.

SGI회장: 전우주가 환희로 세계 흔들렸던 것입니다. 국토까지도 성불한다는 말입니다. 일일삼천입니다. 광선유포의 커다란 드라마를 상징하고 있습니다.

사이토: 국토가 기쁨에 흔들리게 되자 이번에는 「6. 거기에 있는 모두 살아있는 것이 사바세계의 부처의 모습을 볼 수가 있었다. 석가불과 다보불이 보탐 속에 계신 것도 보였다. 제불은 모두 사자좌에 앉아 석가불을 무량의 보살이나 출가, 재가의 사람들이 에워쌌다. 이런 것을 보고 모두 아직 예전에 맞보지 못했던 대환희를 얻었다」

SGI회장: 그들의 눈앞에 제불이 가득 있다. 게다가 「사자좌」에 앉아 있다. 사(師) 「사장(師匠)」, 자(子)란 「제자(弟子)」 사제불이가 있으면 어떠한 세계라도 적광토로 바꾸어 나갈 수 있다는 말입니다.

스다: 법주가 앉는 「예좌」도

본래 「사자좌」의 의미입니다. 말하자면 「사제불이」의 실천자의 자리입니다. 선사에 위배하는 인간은 앉을 자격이 없습니다.

사이토: 이와같이 사방세계가 - 심계의 중생 모두가 사는 세계라고 해도 좋으리라고 생각하는데 모두 대환희에 충만되었을 때 「7. 공중에서 커다란 소리가 울려 퍼진다」 라는 불가사의가 일어납니다. 제천이 이렇게 소리질렀습니다. 「사바세계라고 하는 곳에 석가모니불이라고 하는 부처가 계셔서 지금 보살을 위해 妙法蓮華經을 설하고 계신다. 너희들은 크게 수희하고 석가불을 예배하고 공양하여라」고.

엔도: 그 부름에 응답하여 「8. 모든 중생이 합장하고 석가모니불에게 귀의」합니다.

SGI회장: 대성인은 이 「석가모니불」이란 「인육의 마음」을 말하는 것이라고 말씀하셨습니다. 대단한 생명론입니다. 사바세계는 「인내의 세계」입니다. 참고 견디는 세계입니다. 나쁜 기근의 중생이 모인 국토이며 바른 것이 빠르게 받아들여지지 않습니다. 도리어 박해를 당하고 맙니다.

스다: 일본은 그 전형입니다.

SGI회장: 내 몸을 던져서 민중을 구제하는 사람이 도리어 핏박을 당하게 됩니다. 「전도의 세계」입니다. 그 「난」을, 또 「모욕」을 참고 견디어 그래도 역시 묘법을 흥통하는 것이 「인육의 마음」입니다. 박해를 당해도 또 박해를 당해도, 그것보다 나은 불굴의 집념으로 마군을 되물리치고 또 되물리치며 싸워나가는 것입니다. 그 「인육의 마음」이야말로 「불계」이며, 「석가불」이라고 대성인은 가르쳐 주셨습니다. 사방세계의 중생이 그 「불계」를 예배했다. 즉 「광선유포해 나아가는 마음」을 예배한 것입니다. 지금 광선유포를 위해 싸우고 있는 우리들을 그 신심을 반드시 전우주의 불보살이 찬탄하고 계심에 틀림없다.

스다: 법화경이 설해지기까지 사바세계는 구제하기 어려운 극악인의 모음이었던데 이와같이 해서 완전히 바뀌고 맙니다. 「9. 사방세계로

부터 여러가지 꽃과 향, 그리고 온갖 보물이 사바세계에 보내지고 구름과 같이 모여져 하나의 커다란 보물창막으로 되었다. - 커튼이나 칸막이라든가 혹은 천개, 커다란 우산과 같은 것이라고 상상해도 좋으리라 생각합니다. - 그것이 시방의 제불을 덮었다는 것입니다. 그리고 「10. 시방의 세계와의 간격이 없어져 하나의 불국토로 되었다고 설해져 있습니다.

엔도: 이미 수량품에서 「사바세계」야말로 구원의 옛부터 석존의 「본국토」라고 설해져 있습니다. 그 「사바즉적광」이 출현한 것입니다.

SGI회장: 사바세계 - 가장 괴로워하고 있는 사람이 있는 곳에 가는 것이 「부처」입니다. 함께 괴로움을 나누어 갖는 것이 진정한 「부처」입니다. 그외에는 없습니다. 승려가 훌륭한 것인가. 결코 그렇지 않습니다. 정치가나, 유명인사가 훌륭한 것인가. 결코 그렇지 않습니다. 역적이 높은 사람이 훌륭한가, 절대로 그렇지 않습니다. 가장 괴로워하고 있는 사람 곁으로 달려가는 사람이 가장 훌륭한 것입니다. 남편이 신심을 반대하여 구박을 당하고, 모두에게 욕설을 들으면서도 참고 견디어가면서 타인의 행복을 기원하며 광포에 움직이고 있다 - . 그러한 최일선의 부인부님들이 훌륭한 것이다. 「부처」란 그러한 분

의 「인육의 마음」인 것입니다. 하여튼 도다 선생님은 「사바즉적광」에 대해 「여기에 와서 불법이 뒤집혀졌다」고 말씀하셨습니다. 지금까지 설해진 것과 같은 어딘가 먼곳에 「정토」의 유토피아가 있는 것은 아니었다. 언젠가 훌륭한 「별세계」에 도달하는 것도 아니다. 영원히 이 고뇌가 소용돌이치는 세계에서 끝까지 살면서 「광선유포에」 「광선유포에」라며 영원히 전진한다. 그 「인육의 마음」말고 「부처」는 다른데 없다는 것입니다. 사바즉적광은 「국토」에 입각해서 한말입니다. 그것을 「사람」에게 입각해서 말하면, 실은 부처란 현실 속의 「보살불」 이외는 없습니다. 석존도 실은 「보살」이며 동시에 「부처」였습니다. 애당초 「보살」이란 석존의 수행시절의 모습이 모델로 된 것입니다. 그러나 수행시절만이 보살이었던 것은 아닙니다. 말하자면 성도 후에도 석존은 스스로 깨달은 대법을 흥통하기 위해 보살의 행동을 계속하였던 것입니다. 안으로 넘쳐흐르는 「영원한 생명」을 자수범락 하면서 사람들에게 그 법을 흥통하기 위해 행동했습니다. 「보살불」입니다. 「지금까지의 불법이 뒤집혀졌다」는 것은 여기입니다. 요컨대 성도 후에도 어디까지나 「인간」으로 계속했다는 것입니다. 「인간으로 돌아가라」는 것이 법화경입니다.

사이토: 생각해보면 수량품에서 부정한 「시성정각」이라는 사고방식에는 극히 위험 요소가 있었던 것은 아니었을까요. 즉, 석존이 가야성 근처의 보리수 아래에서 「비로소」 깨달았다 - 이 시성정각의 「이전은 범부」, 「이후는 부처」라고 생각한다면 「인간, 석존」은 보기 어렵게 됩니다. 실제로는 「인간으로서」 열심히 바른 길을 구했기 때문에 「나의 불계」에 눈을 뗀 것이고 그렇게 해서 눈을 뗀기 때문에 「인간으로서」 최고의 삶을 구가하였다. 즉, 「인간 석존」으로서 일관한 셈이다. 「시성정각」은 이 일관성을 단절해 버리는 위험성이 있을 것이라고 생각합니다.

엔도: 시성정각 이후에는 「인간을 초월」한 무슨 특별한 존재로 되었다는 그런 착각에 빠지기 쉽습니다. 석존이라는 인격을 눈앞에서 보아 온 석존 재세의 사람들은 그렇지 않다 하더라도 석존 멸후의 사람들에게는 아무래도 그렇게 생각하기 쉬웠을 것으로 생각합니다.

스다: 거기서부터 석존을 신격화하거나 자신들은 「범부일 뿐이다」라고 비하해 버렸다. 이것은 겸허한 것 같으나 실은 오만이 뒤집어진 것입니다. 「인간(범부)」의 존귀함을 알지도 못하면서 아는 척하고 인간불신으로 된 셈이기 때문에.

SGI회장: 「범부일 뿐이다」 -

그렇게 말하는 것은 어처구니 없는 잘못입니다. 그러한 착각의 흑운을 양풍으로 불어 날려 버리는 것이 법화경입니다. 「범부일 뿐이다」이기는 커녕 「범부야말로 부처」인 것이다. 「인간이야말로 최고 존귀」한 것이다. 이 「법화경의 마음」을 구구까지 표현하신 것이 니치렌 대성인의 다음 말씀입니다. 「범부는 체외 삼신으로서 본불인 것이며, 부처는 용의 삼신으로 적불이나라. 그러므로 석가불은 우리들 중생을 위해서는 주사친의 삼덕을 갖추었다고 생각하였으나 그런 것이 아니라 도리어 부처에게 삼덕을 갖게 해 드린 것은 범부이나라」(어서 1358쪽) 「본불이라 함은 범불이고 적불이라 함은 부처이나라」(어서 1359쪽) 참으로 「지금까지의 불법이 뒤집혀졌다」는 말씀입니다. 범부가 「본불」, 부처는 그 「그림자」인 「적불」에 지나지 않는다고 말씀하시고 있습니다. 「부처가 있음으로서 범부가 있다」고 생각했었는데 그렇지 않고 「범부가 있음으로써 부처가 있다」고. 불법에서 뿐만 아니라 전종교사상 경전동지의 선언입니다. 어떠한 종교라도 신불등의 「절대적인 존재」가 위, 인간은 그 아래라고 생각하는 것이 통례이다. 그것을 부정하고 절대적인 존재라고 생각하는 신불은 실은 범부즉인간의 「그림자」이며 「용<작용>」이며, 「인간을 위한 수단」에 불과하다 - . 이러한 선언은 이외에는 없습니다. 참으로 「인간을 위한 종교」의 대선언인 것입니다. 참으로 「인간을 위한 종교」의 대선언인 것입니다. 역사상 「인간을 위한」이어야 할 종교가 언젠가부터 「권위를 위한」 종교로 변모하였다. 그 사상적인 밑받침에는 「신불이 위, 인간이 아래」라는데 있다고 말해야 하지 않을런지요.

스다: 성직자가 「보통 사람보다 위」라고 되어버린 구조도 거기에서 생겨난 것이라고 생각합니다. 신불이 인간보다 「위」에 있기 때문에 신불의 「옆」에 있는 성직자는 일반 신도보다 「위」에 있는 것처럼 착각하게 됩니다.

사이토: 그런 의미라면 대성

인의 불법에서는 본래 「출가가 위, 재가가 아래」라는 발상은 나올 수가 없는 것입니다.

SGI회장: 그건 그렇다고치고 「사상」도 모두가 「사람」으로 결정된다. 니치렌 대성인의 불법이라 하더라도 「사람」이 사제의 마음을 잊어버리면 「인간을 위한」은 커녕 「인간 책임을 위한」으로 사용되고 만다. 그것은 여러분들이 잘 알고 있는대로이다. 하여튼 대성인의 말씀이 전종교 사상 획기적인 선언이었다는 것은 아무리 강조하여도 지나치지 않는다. 우러러 보는 대상이었던 「부처」가 「적」에 지나지 않는다고 했기 때문에 - . 그렇다면 왜 그렇게 말할 수 있는가 - . 실은 여기에 신력품의 「급소」가 있습니다. 석존으로부터 「지용의 보살」에 대한 「부촉」이란 「범부야말로 본불」이라는 의의를 포함한 의식입니다. 그러나 너무 앞질러 나가면 모두 잘 모를테니(웃음) 단계를 쫓아 배워갑시다. 하여튼 「심신력」과 같은 「특별한 인간」이라는 설법을 니치렌 대성인은 모두 「인간생명의 현실에 입각해서 설명해 주시고 있습니다. 생명론으로 말하자면 「여래신력」의 「여래」란 「우주생명」 그 자체이며 따라서 「일체중생의 생명」 그 자체이다. 「여래」란 일체중생이며, 수량품과 같다(어서 770쪽)입니다. 그리고 「신력」이란 「혼의 힘」이며 「생명의 힘」이다. 그중에서도 「불계의 대생명력」이라는 것이다. 살아있는 모든 것에 본래 갖추고 있는 우주대의 생명력을 「여래신력」이라고 한다. 이 대생명력을 지용의 보살이 발휘하여 「광선유포」를 해나간다. 그 광선유포라는 것도 이 「여래신력」이라는 대생명력을 일체중생에게 자각시키는 일입니다. 즉 「지용의 보살」의 확대이고 「인간혁명의 연쇄」이고 행복확대의 운동입니다. 그 광선유포의 모습을 앞서 나타낸 것이 「심신력」의 설법입니다. (법련 98년 8월)

한국어 페이지를 위한

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