

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION
'AT THE HELM'
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The Soka Gakkai breaks its record for the number of new households to join in one month. 'The members simply could not stand by and watch in silence while their friends suffered and were deadlocked by their problems' — they had to share Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

The next morning, Feb. 21, Shin'ichi Yamamoto attended the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Kansai Headquarters Annex in Osaka, which would serve as the No. 2 Kansai Headquarters. He expressed his boundless hopes for the region's great advancement, emphasizing that this day marked the "beginning of the second era of Kansai."

That afternoon, he attended the first Kansai women's division leaders meeting, held at the Amagasaki Municipal Gymnasium in Hyogo Prefecture, adjacent to Osaka. He declared that the Soka Gakkai women's division was the foremost women's organization in all of Japan dedicated to a new vision of women's liberation. And he encouraged them to keep studying and learning, so that they would become leaders not only of the Soka Gakkai but of society.

He emphasized having a firm grasp of the Eastern philosophy of Buddhism, a teaching that elucidates life's ultimate truths, and of sharing it with friends and fellow members in a way that they could easily understand and accept. Furthermore, since Buddhism is manifested in society, Shin'ichi asked the women to turn their gaze to all aspects of society and acquire knowledge on a wide range of subjects by reading top-quality magazines, newspapers and books.

On Feb. 22, Shin'ichi flew to Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands. During the day, he had a look at the new temple in the city of Takamatsu that was scheduled to open in March. In the evening, he delivered a lecture on the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings" at a joint leaders meeting for Shikoku's three general chapters at the Takamatsu Community Center.

The following day, he took the ferry across the Inland Sea back to the main island of Honshu to visit the Chugoku region. At 2:00 p.m., he attended a joint leaders guidance meeting for Chugoku's three general chapters at the Okayama Civic Hall.

After that, he returned to Tokyo, where the February Headquarters Leaders Meeting was waiting for him on the 27th.

The month's propagation results announced at that meeting set a new Soka Gakkai record—more than 160,000 new households in a month. With total membership in excess of 3 million, the momentum of the Soka Gakkai's drive to realize kosen-rufu knew no bounds.

The members weren't exerting themselves to propagate the Daishonin's teachings because of orders from above. What spurred them on was the conviction they gained through their own experiences of triumphing over hardship based on faith and the pure joy of devoting their lives to the mission of kosen-rufu.

The members simply could not stand by and watch in silence while their friends suffered and were deadlocked by their problems. Filled with a strong desire to help such people become happy, the members couldn't help but tell others about Buddhism.

These efforts brought them greater and greater joy, which in turn gave them increased

energy to spread the Mystic Law. Moreover, they could see that their daily endeavors to share Buddhism with others were steadily changing their society.

The tide of a great new religious movement dedicated to reinvigorating modern society had begun to flow rapidly into the ocean of humanity. Silver waves of hope rippled out to create a dynamic symphony of life.

In March, the Komei-kai parliamentary group planned to hold regional meetings nationwide, starting with Nagoya on the 3rd and moving on to Yokohama, Kita-Kyushu, Kawaguchi, Sapporo and Sendai.

The Komei-kai was formed as an independent parliamentary group after the Upper House election in July 1962. At that time, nine candidates backed by the Komei Political Federation were newly elected, which, along with six previously elected councilors, brought the Federation's total membership in the Upper House to 15. [This fulfilled the minimum requirement of 10 members for establishing such a parliamentary group.]

On Dec. 6, 1962, a National Convention for the Establishment of the Komei-kai was held at the Taito Gymnasium in Tokyo. And on Dec. 16, an Osaka Komei-kai convention was held at the Chuo Civic Hall in Nakanoshima, Osaka. The regional meetings scheduled for March were to be a continuation of those meetings.

Koichi Harayama, chairperson of the Komei Political Federation and secretary-general of the new Komei-kai, had asked Shin'ichi to speak at the national conventions. As Soka Gakkai president, Shin'ichi had carefully refrained from involving himself in the political organization. While the Soka Gakkai, the Komei Political Federation and the Komei-kai should all share the same fundamental goal of realizing world peace and happiness for humanity, religion and politics ultimately operate on two different dimensions.

At the very least, an appropriate structural distance should be established between the two realms, and each should function independently of the other. Based on such reasoning, Shin'ichi at first decided not to attend the Komei-kai's conventions.

But Harayama tried hard to persuade him. Both the Komei-kai and the Komei Political Federation originally were offshoots of the Soka Gakkai, Harayama pointed out, and Shin'ichi was the founder of both of them. In addition, most of the supporters of these political associations were Soka Gakkai members, so it would be appropriate for Shin'ichi to appear as a representative of those supporters.

There was truth to Harayama's argument. Furthermore, some Soka Gakkai members still did not have a clear understanding of the relationship between the Soka Gakkai and the two political groups. Some even believed that the purpose of the Komei-kai and Komei Political Federation was to promote policies favorable to the Soka Gakkai.

This was, of course, a terrible misconception. The aim of the Komei-kai was the true happiness and prosperity of all the people of Japan and, on a broader scale, lasting peace for all humanity.

Nationwide local elections, including those at the prefecture level, were coming up in April. Shin'ichi felt that now would be a good time to clarify once again the Soka Gakkai's relationship with the Komei-kai, as well as to promote a correct understanding of that relationship in society. With this in mind, he finally accepted Harayama's invitation to speak at the regional Komei-kai conventions.