

# World TRIBUNE

**INTERNATIONAL ISSUE**  
Our monthly focus on  
SGI's movement of  
peace, culture and  
education.

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## A WORLD WITHOUT WAR BEGINS WITH DIALOGUE

Achieving a world without war has been the cherished goal of the SGI since its inception. SGI President Ikeda has traveled the world and met with many of the world's leading thinkers, policymakers and scholars toward this end, including Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev, Linus Pauling and Rosa Parks. In this issue, please see pages 6 and 7 for his recent activities for peace.



SGI President Ikeda holds a discussion Feb. 10 with British physicist and Nobel laureate Dr. Joseph Rotblat (center), their first meeting in 11 years, at the Okinawa Training Center in Onnason, Japan. Director Majid Tehranian of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research is seated at left. (See story, page 6.)

### SCHOLARS RECOGNIZE THE SGI

# Building Bridges of Trust

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

By AL ALBERGATE  
SGI-USA DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Headline in the July 2, 1999, *World Tribune*: "Soka Gakkai in America' Authors To Sign Books." Headline in the March 3, 2000, *World Tribune*: "Buddhist Scholars Launch Books at New England Culture Center."

These stories heralded a new era for those seeking current information on the Soka Gakkai International. Within just the past four years, 10 books on Buddhism containing significant material on the SGI have been published by authors from the academic world who are not members of the SGI (see box, p. 3).

Ten years ago, you could not have produced such a list. Any

journalist, student or researcher looking for literature about the SGI written by those with academic credentials could not find much, and what they did read contained significantly out-of-date information.

So what changed? There seems to be two main answers. We became more open as an organization and, at the same time, American society was becoming more interested in Buddhism.

Nowhere, perhaps, was this revival in society's interest more widely proclaimed than on the cover of *Time* magazine on Oct. 13, 1997, where a photograph of actor Brad Pitt, star of the movie *Seven Years in Tibet*, stares out over the headline: "America's Fascination With Buddhism."

*Time's* fascination with the SGI brand of Buddhism was rel-

atively low, judging by only one passing mention in the eight-page survey of Buddhism in this country. By contrast, people in the academic field of religion seem to have found plenty to write about.

But why the SGI and why now?

Rob Eppsteiner, SGI-USA vice general director and director of academic relations, said that when he started speaking with professors of religion a decade ago: "There was little interest because we were not an open organization when we were together with the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood, so we could not create bridges of trust. Over the past 10 years we have been able, as an organization, to become more open, engaged.

"We have allowed scholars to do research. SGI President



A meeting with Neil Rudenstine, president of Harvard University, 1991.

Ikeda has encouraged us to become that kind of organization. Once we start to develop avenues of trust, scholars can do objective research on us."

Bridges of trust are built;

they don't just spring up by themselves. And the voice does the work of the Buddha. Mr. Eppsteiner and other SGI-USA

PLEASE SEE SCHOLARS, 2

### Toda Peace Institute Sponsors Human Security and Global Governance Conference on Cyprus This Month

From May 27 through 29, the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research will host "International Security and Cooperation in West Asia," in Nicosia, Cyprus, in collaboration with the Center for World Dialogue. The Toda Institute's Human Security and Global Governance (HUGG) project seeks to alleviate tensions between democracies and hegemonies with respect to problems of global governance and human security. The May conference on Cyprus is the second of three conferences. HUGG I took place in Okinawa in February 2000, and HUGG III is planned for 2001 in Moscow.

### SGI-Taiwan Youth Host Festival for Peace and Culture

On May 6 and 7, SGI-Taiwan youth held a peace and culture festival with the theme, "Renaissance! Creating a New Century of Peace With the Spirit of Revival." With a sincere desire for Taiwan's full recovery from the devastating earthquake that ravaged the country in September 1999, 10,000 SGI-Taiwan youth performed in the music festival, as well as guest performers from various performing arts genres and the Chinese Culture University's orchestra. The musical extravaganza was covered by five major newspapers as well as seven television stations. Two television stations aired the show live.

### 'The Lotus Sutra and the Silk Road' Opens in Wolfenbuettel, Germany

On May 5, "The Lotus Sutra and the Silk Road" opened at the Herzog August Library in Wolfenbuettel, Germany. The 30-item exhibit includes rare and ancient Lotus Sutra manuscripts in Sanskrit, Chinese and other languages, from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies (IOS), St. Petersburg Chapter of the Russian Academy of Science. The exhibit, one of the most extensive collections of Eastern religious texts, traces the development of the Lotus Sutra over the centuries as it traveled along the Silk Road and the journey of Buddhism eastward toward Asia.

### Saipan Chapter Established; Northern Mariana Islands Honor SGI President and Mrs. Ikeda

On May 3, Saipan Chapter was newly established as part of the SGI-USA, and includes members on Saipan and Tinian Islands. Mr. Joseph O'Rayeh and Ms. Leann Zweber were appointed chapter leaders. On May 3 and 4, Saipan and Rota Islands of the Northern Mariana Islands presented



SGI President Daisaku Ikeda and Mrs. Kaneko Ikeda with honorary citizenships. On May 2, Tinian Island commended them for their myriad contributions to peace.

### SGI's 'World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition' Opens in Caracas, Venezuela

On May 4, the SGI's "World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition" opened at the Venezuelan Education Ministry's exhibition hall in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. Artwork by 200 Venezuelan children, as well as 300 paintings and drawings by children from 161 countries and regions, are displayed. The Venezuelan Children's Orchestra performed at the opening, which was aired on local television stations and reported in national and local newspapers. The exhibit is designated as an official state event of the Education Ministry, and is co-sponsored by the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry and Education Ministry, Venezuela Central University, Carabobo University and the SGI. Miranda State and 25 other organizations are supporting the exhibit. More than 600 guests, including Venezuelan Education Minister Hector Navarro Diaz, attended the opening.

### SGI-Hong Kong Sponsors Lecture on Daisaku Ikeda and Contemporary Chinese Writers

On April 16, Dr. Sun Lichuan, vice general editor of Cosmos Books, Hong Kong, presented a lecture titled "Dr. Ikeda and Lu Xun, Ba Jin and Jin Yong - A Dialogue With Chinese Literary Writers of the Century" at the SGI-Hong Kong Culture Center. Dr. Sun explained that Mr. Ikeda and these three contemporary Chinese writers share a love of people, and each one took up his pen on behalf of ordinary people. Dr. Sun is also the translator for *Quest for a Bright New Century*, a dialogue between Hong Kong literary scholar Jin Yong and SGI President Daisaku Ikeda published by Cosmos Books.

### SGI's Amazon Exhibit Opens in Londrina, Brazil

On April 14, the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) exhibit, "Symbiosis and Hope: The Amazon - Its Environment and Development," opened at the Londrina Cataui Shopping Center. The exhibit illustrates the contributions of the Amazon rain forests to the global ecosystem and promotes humankind's harmonious coexistence with the earth through non-destructive, sustainable economic development. More than 250 guests attended the opening, including educators and government officials. To date, the exhibit has received over 150,000 visitors on its Brazil tour.

*Courtesy of Seikyo Press*

## SITE OF FIRST SGI-USA DISTRICT FORMED ON THE EAST COAST IN 1960

# Highland Park, N.J. Bestows Honorary Citizenship on SGI President

By ELLEN SCHICK  
NEW JERSEY CORRESPONDENT

On April 24, SGI President Ikeda was made an honorary citizen of Highland Park, N.J. Mayor Meryl Frank presented a proclamation of citizenship and a key to the city to the SGI leader in recognition of his efforts for world peace and in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of his inauguration as the third president of the Soka Gakkai.

The ceremony was attended by Highland Park District leaders, other leaders from the area, as well as Tariq Hasan, SGI-USA men's leader, who received the proclamation and key on behalf of President Ikeda.

As narrated in the first volume of *The New Human Revolution* (vol. 1, p. 194), it was in Highland Park, N.J., in 1960, during President Ikeda's

first overseas visit, that he created the first district on the East Coast. At that time, members traveled from New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and as far away as Canada to attend what is now a historic event. At that meeting President Ikeda encouraged the members and guests, saying: "This Buddhism has the power to transform your suffering into happiness, to change the tears you have shed into glittering jewels of good fortune.... My purpose in coming to the United States is to help you turn that into a reality." From this seed planted 40 years ago, we have seen the extraordinary growth of the organization in the northeast and the movement of scores of capable youth out into society.

During the ceremony in the borough council chambers, Mayor Frank said that it was through her relationship with local members that she recently learned about President Ikeda

and that she was struck by the similarities in their visions. Citing his efforts and encouragement, she mentioned her struggle to create a government based on open dialogue, an atmosphere of mutual respect and the inclusion of all voices in this uniquely diverse community.

It is with a deep sense of pride in their history that the members in Highland Park District and the surrounding districts have challenged themselves over the years to reply to President Ikeda's dream. They have developed many capable leaders, including strong youth, many of whom have been students at nearby Rutgers University, and they have shown actual proof in their own lives.

With this event, they feel they've had the opportunity to show their appreciation and to further the bonds of friendship between the SGI and their community. **WT**

Other awards and proclamations presented recently to President and Mrs. Ikeda include: honorary citizenships from the cities of Cerritos, Calif., Memphis, Tenn., and Walnut, Calif.; a commendation from the City of Santa Monica, Calif., to Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda for their dedication to spiritual and cultural values; Los Angeles County's commendation to Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda as Ambassadors of Peace; the proclamation of Soka Gakkai International Day (May 3) by the City of New Orleans, La.; the proclamation of Daisaku Ikeda and Kaneko Ikeda Day (May 3) by the City of Las Vegas, Nev.; and Certificate of Recognition for Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda as Emissaries of Peace (May 3) from the City of La Puente, Calif. **WT**

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Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI President Ikeda talks with Dr. David W. Chappell, professor of religion at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, at the Seikyo Shimbun Building, April 1996.

#### FROM SCHOLARS, I

representatives let it be known to scholars that they were more than happy to cooperate with their research projects.

At the same time, the religious organization began to reach out to the community in new ways, sponsoring educational exhibits on environmental problems, children's rights, the life of renowned scientist and peace activist Linus Pauling and the Soka educational system, which have crisscrossed the 50 states. Books were donated to Africa and Victory Over Violence and the Earth Charter became themes for nationwide awareness-raising activities. Photographs of nature scenes by President Ikeda comprise an exhibit now embarking on its second tour of the United States. All of these exhibitions and activities are free to the public.

Scholars became interested in our members in part due to their social engagement, according to Mr. Eppsteiner, but also "because we are not only one of the largest lay movements in the United States, but the most diverse."

Our cultural and ethnic diversity sparked the interest of Dr. David W. Chappell, who studied our membership in 1997 and wrote: "In a country of immigrants like America, religion often reflects and reinforces the distinctive ethnic heritage of its members, and Sunday morning is said to be the most segregated time in America. In contrast, Soka Gakkai came to the United States in 1960 and attracted a greater diversity of races and classes of people in the first three decades than any other Buddhist organization."<sup>1</sup>

These comments by Dr. Chappell, a professor in the Department of Religion at the University of Hawaii, appear in one chapter of *Engaged Buddhism*

in the West, edited by Harvard's Christopher Queen, who included the SGI in two other recent books he co-edited, *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia and American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship*.

In a book he himself edited, titled *Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace*, Chappell decided to include an essay by President Ikeda, "The SGI's Peace Movement"; in addition to contributions by the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, Robert Aitken and about a dozen other respected Buddhists. The preface to this book was contributed by Virginia Straus, executive director of the SGI-affiliated Boston Research Center for the 21st Century.

Just who our members are and what led them to Buddhism was the subject of a sociological survey resulting in the only book on the list of 10 com-

pletely devoted to the SGI, *Soka Gakkai in America: Accommodation and Conversion*, by Phillip Hammond and David Machacek of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Among other conclusions, the authors said the SGI-USA "promises to be a lasting presence in the United States."

So significant to academics has been the work of the Boston Research Center, which was founded by President Ikeda, that it apparently inspired Richard Hughes Seager to include a brief profile of Ms. Straus in his book, *Buddhism in America*. Mr. Seager, an associate professor of religious studies at Hamilton College, especially was interested in the 1991 split between the SGI and the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood and focused on it in one chapter titled "Soka Gakkai and Its Nichiren Humanism." He concludes, "As the dust settles from the break between NST and SGI-USA, the latter appears to be in a very good position to play an important, ongoing role in the creation of American Buddhism."<sup>2</sup>

This transformation of the



A meeting between SGI President Ikeda and Honorary President Alfonse Dupront of the University of Paris IV (Sorbonne), June 1981.

SGI-USA, which began a decade ago, continues today and, in Mr. Eppsteiner's opinion, likely will continue to interest scholars into the new century. **WT**

1. David W. Chappell, "Racial Diver-

sity in the Soka Gakkai," in *Engaged Buddhism in the West*. Edited by Christopher S. Queen; (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 184.

2. Richard H. Seager, *Buddhism in America*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 88.

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## BUDDHISM IN DAILY LIFE

# The Enlightenment of Women

In many Buddhist sutras, it was taught that women could never become Buddhas. The Silver-Colored Woman Sutra reads, "Even if the eyes of the Buddhas of the three existences were to fall to the ground, no woman in any of the realms of existence could ever attain Buddhahood" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 96). This no doubt reflects the prevailing view of women in India in the fifth century B.C.E., where they were considered more or less the property of their husbands. However, it is said that in response to requests from his aunt and other women, Shakyamuni allowed women to become nuns and carry out monastic practice after establishing eight rules that they should follow.

According to Indian studies specialist Dr. Hajime Nakamura, "The appearance [in Buddhism] of an order of nuns was an astonishing development in world religious history. No such female religious order existed in Europe, North Africa, West Asia or East Asia at the time. Buddhism was the first tradition to produce one."

However, in the following centuries, prevailing perceptions of women began to reassert themselves and it was commonly believed that women would have to be reborn as men and carry out endless painful practices before being able to attain Buddhahood. The *bhikshuni sangha*, or order of Buddhist nuns, declined and nearly disappeared.

Nichiren Daishonin, the 13th-century Buddhist monk whose teachings SGI members follow,

was a firm believer in the equality of men and women. He wrote, "There should be no discrimination among those who propagate the five characters of Myohorenge-kyo in the Latter Day of the Law, be they men or women" (WND, p. 385). This was a revolutionary statement for his time, when women were almost totally dependent on men. The "three obediences" dictated that a Japanese woman should first obey her parents; then she should obey her husband; and finally, in old age, she should obey her son.

Nichiren Daishonin sent letters of encouragement to many of his female followers and gave several the title of "Shonin," or saint. The strength of faith and independence of spirit shown by these women impressed him deeply. To Nichimyo Shonin, he wrote: "Never have I heard of a woman who journeyed a thousand *ri* in search of Buddhism as you did.... You are the foremost votary of the Lotus Sutra among the women of Japan" (WND, pp. 324-25).

In the 12th or "Devadatta" chapter of the version of the Lotus Sutra cited by the Daishonin, Shakyamuni demonstrates that Buddhahood is within reach "even" for women. It is revealed that an 8-year-old female dragon has been able to attain Buddhahood quickly by practicing the Lotus Sutra.

This girl, often known as the dragon king's daughter, appears and dramatically demonstrates her attainment of Buddhahood, illustrating the principle of becoming a Buddha in one's present form. She overturns the prevailing belief that enlightenment could only be attained after carrying out painful



Photo by JOYCE HOWARD

## Tiger lily.

practices over an extremely long period of time. The dragon girl has the form of an animal; she is female; and she is very young. That she should be the very first to demonstrate the immediate attainment of Buddhahood is striking, even shocking.

The Daishonin stresses that "among the teachings of the Lotus Sutra, that of women attaining Buddhahood is first" (WND, p. 930). And, in another letter he writes: "When I, Nichiren, read the sutras other than the Lotus Sutra, I have not the slightest wish to become a woman. One sutra condemns women as messengers of hell. Another describes them as great serpents.... Only in the Lotus Sutra do we read that a woman who embraces this sutra not only excels all other women, but also surpasses all men" (WND, pp. 463-64). The Daishonin vowed to share the Lotus Sutra's hopeful message with all the women of Japan.

Buddhism views distinctions of gender, race and age as differ-

ences that exist in order to enrich our individual experience and human society as a whole. The Lotus Sutra is sometimes called the teaching of nondiscrimination because it reveals that the state of Buddhahood is inherent in all phenomena. There is no difference between men and women in terms of their capacity to attain Buddhahood, as both are equally manifestations of the ultimate reality. If we consider the eternity of life, it is also clear that we may be born as a man in one life, and as a woman in another.

SGI President Daisaku Ikeda states: "The important thing is that both women and men become happy as human beings. Becoming happy is the objective; everything else is a means. The fundamental point of the 'declaration of women's rights' arising from the Lotus Sutra is that each person has the innate potential and the right to realize a state of life of the greatest happiness."

Courtesy of SGI Quarterly

## Children's Rights Exhibit Visits Guam

By HELENE ANDERSON  
GUAM CORRESPONDENT

The SGI-USA exhibit "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities" made its way to the island of Guam May 12, when a grand opening and ribbon-cutting took place at the Micronesia Mall.

The ceremony opened with deaf and hard-of-hearing students from Tamuning Elementary School performing the song "I Hear Your Hand" in sign language. There was also a moving song by Ronnie and Tabitha Espina, 6 and 8 years old, titled "Touch the Hands of Tomorrow."

This song was originally written for teachers, and it describes how the children's voices are reaching out to their teachers to be understood. It reminds teachers of their responsibility to help, nurture, protect and reach their students.

Everyone then had a chance to explore the exhibit. Dream Flower Trees were displayed, where hundreds of students from throughout the island's schools had written their dreams for the future on flowers. Also, Pepsi Bottling Co. donated bottle caps for a Treasure Chest,

PLEASE SEE CHILDREN, 5



Children explore the SGI-USA exhibit 'Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities' at Guam's Micronesia Mall, May 12.

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DAVID TAN, PERTH, AUSTRALIA

# TAKING 100-PERCENT RESPONSIBILITY

**Through his Buddhist practice and SGI activities, David Tan has learned to never give up.**

David Tan's family emigrated to Australia from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1985 when he was 10 years old. The family moved because David's father, a chef with a major hotel chain, had been transferred to the hotel's newly opened branch in Perth. Life in a new country was exciting for young David, and even the difficulty he had communicating in English did not detract from his happiness in his new home. His two sisters and his parents were also content, and his life was relatively carefree until 1990 when, in his last year of secondary school, he was forced to think about the future. His fellow students were choosing subjects for the university entrance exams. However, due to his poor academic performance in secondary school, David was ineligible to take exams in many of the subjects he wished to pursue.

Faced with this situation, he became very depressed. He lacked direction and had very little confidence. It was at this low point in his life that David joined the Soka Gakkai International Australia (SGIA).

After three years of grueling study and a lot of chanting, he was able to graduate in 1997 with a major in accounting and finance. However, he was disappointed because he had not received any employment offers during his last year at university when companies were recruiting accounting students. Reflecting on this situation, he saw that he felt weak and powerless.



David Tan

He set about challenging himself to change this attitude because he saw that it not only affected his ability to find a job but also undermined his attitude toward life in general. He recalls: "It was a very difficult time for me, especially because I received so many rejection letters from employers. My Buddhist practice definitely helped me get through this period. I was frequently encouraged by the experiences of other members and by the guidance of SGI President Ikeda, and I became determined to change my pessimistic attitude and overcome my tendency to give up when faced with a challenge. Because I was unemployed at the time, I was able to devote much of my time to preparing for the SGIA Friendship Festival—the first nationwide SGIA event to be held in the city of Perth. The preparation activities were challenging, and I was so busy preparing for this event that I had no time to worry about not having a job; I simply kept applying for jobs and was determined to find one before the start of the festival."

About one month prior to the event, David succeeded in finding an accounting position. He feels that his fundamental change in attitude was also reflected in other areas of his life: "I saw that no one else but me could change my life and that I was really the only one who could make things happen in my life, including finding a job. As a result of working closely with youth

## FROM CHILDREN, 4

where children could write their names and wishes on the caps. The chest symbolized how children are our treasures, and how we should cherish them.

Gene Polk, a teacher in the deaf and hard-of-hearing program, said: "The kids deserve one day [of honor]. This is also a chance for them to learn new things. Even if they have disabilities, they're just children—they're the same as anyone else." Tara Acquiringoc, 9, said through her sign-language

translator that the exhibit inspired her toward her dream of becoming a teacher someday.

Marie Nelson, a University of Guam Board of Regents member, said: "There needs to be more education and awareness to protect children's rights. This exhibit is a start for us to take action in our community." The event was honored with a proclamation presented by Acting Governor of Guam Madeline Z. Bordallo designating May 12–19, the week of the exhibit, as "Kids Have Rights Too Week." **WT**



With SGI members from Perth at the opening ceremony of the World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition in Sydney, May 1999.

and other members of SGIA in preparation for the Friendship Festival, I came to see what a selfish attitude I had previously. Taking part in this event really helped me broaden my perspective on many things."

David is currently the Western Australia headquarters young men's leader of the SGIA. He feels that he has become a more confident, optimistic and capable person as a result of participating in SGIA activities. He has been inspired by President Ikeda's advice that "Rather than try to move others, you must set yourself in motion, like an engine. Herein lies the driving force of victory." David says: "I used to have the tendency to expect others to make things happen. My attitude was: 'Why don't you do this, or why don't they do that?' I became frustrated when people wouldn't take action to produce the results I expected. Now I see that I was actually frustrated about not being able to make things happen or take action myself.

Through my practice of Buddhism, I have been able to see my shortcomings and see that it is not others but myself who must make things happen, and I can do this by making changes in myself."

David is now studying to become a CPA (certified public accountant)—not only to advance in his career, but also to show actual proof of the practice of Buddhism in his daily life.

In 1999, Sydney hosted the "World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition." This SGI-sponsored event featured the drawings and paintings of children from around the world based on the theme of global citizenship. In commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the establishment of SGIA, the members in Perth created a short multimedia CD-ROM based on the exhibition. This CD-ROM, intended to foster awareness of global citizenship, was shown to 400 guests who attended the anniversary celebrations. Among those present was Mike Board, minister for citizenship and multicult-

tural affairs.

David says the CD-ROM was so well received that, with the encouragement of Mr. Board, SGIA has decided to redesign it for use in schools. He says: "We are hoping to finish this project in early 2000. The CD can be used by individuals at home as well as by teachers in the classroom. The diversity of artistic expression on the CD can be used to spark discussion around questions such as: 'What country do you think this painting comes from?' 'Why do countries have wars?' and 'What would you do to heal the world?'"

At work and in his Buddhist activities, David now takes 100-percent responsibility to work for people's happiness without relying on others. He says: "I think that youth, especially, must follow this spirit. We must never forget our goals and never be afraid to muster the fighting spirit to overcome the negative forces inherent in our lives. We must never give up."

*Courtesy of SGI Quarterly*

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# DISCUSSION HELD WITH DR. JOSEPH ROTBLAT

**SGI President Ikeda praises Dr. Joseph Rotblat, a pioneer of the anti-nuclear movement, for living the life of a bodhisattva.**

SGI President Ikeda held a discussion Feb. 10 with the noted British physicist and Nobel laureate Dr. Joseph Rotblat, 91, their first meeting in 11 years. The two talked at the Okinawa Training Center in Onnason, Japan, about Dr. Rotblat's pioneering efforts in the anti-nuclear movement and his lifelong dedication to peace and science. Earlier that day, in commemoration of the centennial of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's birth (Feb. 11), the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research conferred its first Toda Prize for Peace Research on Dr. Rotblat.

The SGI leader said that he was impressed by Dr. Rotblat's acceptance speech, in particular by the powerful commitment and will for peace that resonated in his words. Thanking Mr. Ikeda, Dr. Rotblat stressed that it is imperative for the world to find a way out of the grave situation it finds itself in today. He called on the SGI president to lead the way.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Rotblat recounted that in 1957, shortly after the first Pugwash Conference was held, he visited Hiroshima to see for himself the

scars inflicted there by the atomic bomb and to give a lecture in Tokyo. He noted that this was around the same time that Josei Toda made his Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons at the Mitsuzawa Stadium in Yokohama, Japan.

Dr. Rotblat said in his speech that he regretted not having had the opportunity to meet the Soka Gakkai's second president, who died the year after he made his declaration. The peace activist also stated his determination to work with President Ikeda toward the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons and war in the 21st century.

Born on Nov. 4, 1908, in Warsaw, Poland, Dr. Rotblat is presently a professor emeritus of the University of London. Growing up in poverty, he educated himself and later gained admission to the Free University of Liverpool in Britain. Meager scholarship funds, however, forced him to leave his wife in Poland. And when Germany invaded the country, it became impossible to obtain an exit visa for her. Tragically, she perished in the Holocaust.

After finishing his doctorate in physics at the University of Warsaw in 1939, Dr. Rotblat went to study at the University of Liverpool in Britain. Meager scholarship funds, however, forced him to leave his wife in Poland. And when Germany invaded the country, it became impossible to obtain an exit visa for her. Tragically, she perished in the Holocaust.

President Ikeda asked Dr. Rotblat whether he had suffered harsh repercussions as a result of his departure from the Manhat-

tan Project, under which he worked on building the first atomic bomb. Admitting that this was indeed the case, the physicist explained that he was suspected of being a spy for the Soviet Union. These accusations were very difficult to refute.

Wanting to work for the benefit of humanity, Dr. Rotblat returned to the University of Liverpool in early 1945 to research radiation therapy for cancer patients. Eight months later, atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From that point, Dr. Rotblat, who describes this event as altering his entire view of life, began working to generate dialogue among scientists.

His medical research opened the way for radiation therapy to begin in the United Kingdom. The radioactive element cobalt 60 that he discovered in 1934 is still used today in treating malignant tumors.

President Ikeda praised Dr. Rotblat for living the life of a bodhisattva and presented him with a lengthy poem paying tribute to his tireless struggle



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI President Ikeda presents British physicist and Nobel laureate Dr. Joseph Rotblat the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research's first Toda Prize for Peace Research, Feb. 10, in commemoration of the centennial of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's birth (Feb. 11).

for peace. The SGI leader also expressed his wish to plant a cherry tree dedicated to Dr. Rotblat and his late wife in the garden of the Kansai International Friendship Center, where he and the physicist first met.

The new Toda Prize for Peace Research has been inaugurated to honor individuals who have made distinguished contributions to peace studies and the realization of world peace. Dr. Rotblat, president emeritus of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, a forum for researchers devoted to abolishing nuclear weapons and finding peaceful solutions to international conflicts, was chosen because of his many peace activities.

Dr. Rotblat distanced himself from the Manhattan Pro-

ject when it became known that Nazi Germany would never manage to build a competing bomb. Of all the scientists involved, he was the only one to withdraw before the atomic bomb was tested.

Dr. Rotblat spent the next five decades speaking out on the dangers of nuclear weapons. He has visited some 100 countries in his crusade for the elimination of nuclear weapons. He is the last surviving member of the 11 original signatories to the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, an anti-nuclear appeal launched by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein. The manifesto led to the inception of the Pugwash Conferences in 1957. In 1995, Dr. Rotblat and the Pugwash Conferences were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. **WT**

## French-Speaking Members Meet

By ALAIN BERGER

LOS ANGELES CORRESPONDENT

French-speaking members from every part of Los Angeles converged on the Los Angeles Friendship Center May 14 to hold their monthly meeting. "Le Groupe Foncophone," as it is called, comprises French-speaking members from all around the world, including Africa, Europe, North and South America and the Caribbean.

The group truly exemplifies SGI President Ikeda's description of America as a multiracial nation integrating diverse cultures in leading the way toward world kosen-rufu. As a tribute to this diversity, the theme of the meeting was "Discovering

our True Identity."

The meeting got off to a spirited start with Fabrice Vignat playing the guitar and singing Aznavour's "Formi/formidable," transporting the assembly, so to speak, back to a little bistro in Marseilles.

After an explanation of the practice by Tobias Maxwell for the several guests in attendance, everyone was treated to a delightful recounting of Anne Fiser's experience of how she first landed on these shores as a young woman with no knowledge of the English language, and how horrified she was at not being able to find Evian or pâte anywhere. She did find the SGI though, and after surmounting numerous obstacles,

she was able to show tremendous actual proof of her practice and raise a wonderful family. Her adult children now practice, as does her mother who was in the audience.

A study presentation on our "true identity" by Simone White and Chantal Cangi was followed by a rendering of President Ikeda's poem "The Sun of Jiyu" translated into French. LA/Coastal Region Women's Leader Melanie Merians closed this very spirited reunion by using the words of the French anthem "Allons les Citoyens" to exhort everyone to rush to the Gohonzon rather than to the barricades.

It was evident from the high energy dialogue afterwards that the guests were determined to



Photo by JEAN PRITCHARD

Commemorative photo taken in the courtyard of the Los Angeles Friendship Center, May 14.

investigate this philosophy for themselves. The members left refreshed and with a renewed sense of determination to expand the circle of friends belonging to the wonderful world of the SGI. *Au mois prochain*

(until next month)!

For more information on the French-speaking group, please contact Renu Jiandani at SGI-USA membership services by phone at (310) 260-8942 or by e-mail at [rjiandani@sgi-usa.org](mailto:rjiandani@sgi-usa.org) **WT**

# World Figures Sign Disarmament Appeal

SGI President Ikeda joined many Nobel peace laureates and world figures in signing an appeal for nuclear disarmament sponsored by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. Published by the NAPF in the April 24 *New York Times*, the appeal coincided with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty 2000 Review Conference held at the U.N. Headquarters.

"Ten years have now passed since the end of the Cold War, and yet nuclear weapons continue to cloud humanity's future," the appeal reads. "The only way to assure that nuclear weapons will not be used again is to abolish them."

The signatories then outline five steps that they feel the leaders of nations need to take: 1) Commence good faith negotiations to achieve a Nuclear Weapons Convention requiring the phased elimination of

all nuclear weapons, with provisions for effective verification and enforcement; 2) De-alert all nuclear weapons, and de-couple all nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles; 3) Declare policies of No First Use of nuclear weapons against other nuclear weapons states and policies of No Use against non-nuclear weapons states; 4) Ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and reaffirm commitments to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty; and 5) Reallocate resources from the tens of billions of dollars currently being spent for maintaining nuclear arsenals to improving human health, education and welfare throughout the world. **WT**

To view the entire "End the Nuclear Weapons Threat to Humanity!" appeal and a list of the signatories, visit the NAPF's Web site, [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org).

# Nuclear Age Peace Foundation Honors SGI President and Mrs. Ikeda

Receiving the NAPF's World Citizen Award, SGI President Ikeda says that a world citizen is someone with the willingness to learn from the world, someone who makes efforts for and works on behalf of society.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation on March 16 conferred its 1999 World Citizen Award upon SGI President Ikeda, and bestowed the title of Peace Ambassador upon Mrs. Kaneko Ikeda. The conferment ceremony was held in Tokyo at a joint graduation ceremony for the Soka Elementary School and the Soka junior and senior high schools of Tokyo and Osaka.

In his acceptance speech, President Ikeda thanked NAPF President David Krieger, who was in attendance, for bestowing such honors on him and his wife. President Ikeda stated their determination to continue their efforts for peace, opening the way forward for the students of the Soka Schools and the youth of the world.

He went on to explain that, for him, a world citizen is someone with a willingness to learn from the world, someone who makes efforts for and works on behalf of society. In any age, he added, a person who takes action and champions justice will have a great presence, naturally becoming the target of envy and persecution by those in positions of authority. We see proof of this throughout history—this may be the fate of those with a global perspective, he said.

The SGI leader mentioned that Dr. Krieger has suffered much criticism in his struggle against nuclear weapons and war. During his youth, Dr. Krieger opposed the Vietnam War and refused to enlist in the army, inviting harsh criticism. However, with his wife Carolee's support, Dr. Krieger has stayed true to his convictions, the SGI leader stated. (Mrs. Krieger also attended this event.)

President Ikeda concluded by



Nuclear Age Peace Foundation President David Krieger presents the NAPF's World Citizen Award to SGI President Ikeda, and bestows the title of Peace Ambassador upon Mrs. Kaneko Ikeda, March 16, at a joint graduation ceremony for the Soka Elementary School and the Soka junior and senior high schools of Tokyo and Osaka.

saying that true happiness means to create hope even when it does not exist. He encouraged all the students to establish hope in their lives, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the determination to keep pressing toward peace, hope and victory, no matter how bleak the situation may seem. Advance with an invincible spirit and live a life of value-creation, the SGI leader urged.

In Dr. Krieger's congratulatory speech, he asked the students to work to realize second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's and President Ikeda's ideal of a world without war, voicing his confidence that they had the ability to do so. He referred to Mr. Toda's 1957 "Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons," in which President Toda asked the youth to take the lead in creating a better world.

When the Earth is viewed from outer space, Dr. Krieger continued, it becomes apparent that national borders exist only on maps and in the minds of human beings. The truth, he said, is that the world is one, and we are all one people.

But this is not what we have been taught in school, he explained. We have been educated to be loyal to one country, as citizens of that one country, which constitutes only a small fraction of the whole planet. Such education for the purpose of benefiting the nation, not all humankind, does not unite, but divides, Dr. Krieger said. In order to become global citizens, individuals need to be reeducated,

coming to understand their inherent rights as human beings.

Dr. Krieger said that the SGI leader was chosen as the recipient of the foundation's World Citizen Award, which has previously been presented to CNN founder Ted Turner, in recognition of his life as a world citizen and the SGI's gathering of more than 13 million signatures in a petition to abolish nuclear weapons. Dr. Krieger explained that the SGI president has traveled around the globe, transcending borders and holding dialogues with world leaders, opening the door to mutual understanding. Further commending President Ikeda, Dr. Krieger said that the SGI leader has planted and carefully nurtured the seeds of peace and worked to create a future in which all people can live with human dignity.

The title of Peace Ambassador, meanwhile, praises Mrs. Ikeda for her contributions in "creating a world community based on international law, justice and human dignity." Previous recipients of this award include former U.N. secretary-general Boutros-Boutros Ghali, former president Jimmy Carter, Czech President Vaclav Havel and President Ikeda, who received this honor in 1997.

NAPF is a Santa Barbara, Calif.-based international education and advocacy organization that focuses on issues of international peace and security. It is also a nongovernmental organization affiliated with the United Nations. **WT**

## A CALL TO ACTION

from  
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### END THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS THREAT TO HUMANITY!

We cannot hide from the threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity and all life. These are not ordinary weapons, but instruments of mass annihilation that could destroy civilization and end all life on Earth.

Nuclear weapons are morally and legally unjustifiable. They destroy indiscriminately—soldiers and civilians; men, women and children; the aged and the newly born; the healthy and the infirm.

The obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament "in all its aspects," as unanimously affirmed by the International Court of Justice, is at the heart of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Ten years have now passed since the end of the Cold War, and yet nuclear weapons continue to cloud humanity's future. The only way to assure that nuclear weapons will not be used again is to abolish them.

We, therefore, call upon the leaders of the nations of the world and, in particular, the leaders of the nuclear weapons states to act now for the benefit of all humanity by taking the following steps:

- Ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and reaffirm commitments to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.
- De-alert all nuclear weapons and de-couple all nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles.
- Declare policies of No First Use of nuclear weapons against other nuclear weapons states and policies of No Use against non-nuclear weapons states.
- Commence good faith negotiations to achieve a Nuclear Weapons Convention requiring the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons, with provisions for effective verification and enforcement.
- Reallocate resources from the tens of billions of dollars currently being spent for maintaining nuclear arsenals to improving human health, education and welfare throughout the world.

### JOIN US IN ENDING THIS THREAT!

The danger has not ended. There are still more than 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Some 4,500 of these remain on hair-trigger alert, and could destroy civilization in 30 minutes. Is this the kind of world we want to leave to future generations?

Urges our government to provide leadership to end the nuclear weapons threat to humanity. Raise your voices! Let us join together to lessen nuclear dangers today and secure a nuclear weapons-free future. Together, we can make a difference on this most important issue of our time.

If you would like to know more about reducing nuclear dangers and what you can do, please visit our website at [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org) or contact us at the address below.

**Nuclear Age Peace Foundation**  
[www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org)

SGI President Ikeda signed the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's appeal for nuclear disarmament, which appeared as an advertisement in the April 24 'New York Times.' Ten years have now passed since the end of the Cold War, and yet nuclear weapons continue to cloud humanity's future; the appeal reads. "The only way to assure that nuclear weapons will not be used again is to abolish them."

BOSTON RESEARCH CENTER'S PANEL AT PSA/COPRED CONFERENCE

# What Part Do Religions Play in Building Cultures of Peace?

Photo by MASAO YOKOTA

By HELEN MARIE CASEY  
BOSTON RESEARCH CENTER

The setting was a university campus in Austin, Texas. Members of the Peace Studies Association (PSA) and the Consortium of Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) were assembling for their annual meeting at the University of Texas. Working together, conference chair Lester Kurtz and Boston Research Center staff Amy Morgante organized as the culminating session of the conference a plenary panel, "Religions Building Cultures of Peace." They asked panelists to consider the question, "How does one translate religious teachings and theory into the action of peacework?"

With the Boston Research Center's newest book, *Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace* (Wisdom 2000), as a starting point, the four panelists, all of whom have devoted their adult lives to the achievement of world peace, set to the task of sharing insights and experiences that have made a difference. Global futurist, author, and lecturer Linda Groff, a professor of political science and future studies at California State University, spoke of the need to deal with human rights, social justice, the environment and intercultural learning in our activities for peace. Dialogue on how we can unite has intensified, she said, due to the influence of the Internet, the global economy and a new focus on diversity. People are understanding, she underscored, "that we need to reach out and connect with each other."

Speaking of the importance of interfaith dialogue, she summarized some of the operative principles in the global interfaith dialogues now occurring: no one is making an effort to convert anyone else; there is no hidden agenda of creating a single world religion; no one usurps the right of any individuals to speak for their own religions; we enrich our own lives by being sensitive to other religions; and one of the ways we can exhibit respect for other religions is by honoring the festivities of different religions.

Lester Kurtz, professor of sociology and Asian studies at the University of Texas at Austin, spoke of the doubts so many people continue to have about the actual efficacy of nonviolent ac-

tion. Yet, he said, citing the overthrow of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, it was the actions of people of faith who came together in peaceful protest that accomplished the ouster of Marcos. They fasted. They prayed. They provided training in nonviolent action. Then, employing nonviolent methods, it took four days for what had started in the churches to culminate in success. Marcos was out.

The answer, he continued, to whether we are teaching violence or peace is found in the way we teach one another what to do to solve problems. There are extraordinary institutional resources in faith traditions, he asserted, indicating that the infrastructure for social change already exists in religious traditions.

David Chappell, co-founder of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies and editor of *Buddhist Peacework*, began his remarks with a riddle: "When can you see the farthest?" Participants guessed, "When you come to Texas," and "From an airplane on a clear day." The answer, Professor Chappell said, is at night "because then you can see the stars." This riddle reflects a fundamental truth, namely, when life is darkest, when we think we have lost everything, then we discover those things that we can never lose.

The Buddha left home, David Chappell explained, and distanced himself from society in order to see those deeper truths that are normally hidden from our eyes and that can never be lost. But having gained the assurance of these deeper truths, he returned to society and made a point of meeting people from many social strata. "He was deeply engaged in society," Dr. Chappell explained. Even though the Buddha said that the way to get peace is to be free of greed, hatred and ignorance, his social message emphasized kindness. In English, *kinship* is at the root of *kindness*, which is not just an emotion: "We will not evoke kindness until we see how we are kin with everyone else." To make peace, he emphasized, we must see our interconnectedness.

"Universal consensus-making is the principle of Buddhist social peace activity," noted Chappell, the graduate chair of the Department of Religion at the University of Hawaii. The Buddha's consensus-making approach is one where individuals

meet regularly and frequently, always assemble in harmony, meet in harmony, and leave in harmony. This requires, the author observed, "a lot of listening to know where people are coming from based on their personal experiences."

Ela Gandhi, a member of the African National Congress in the South African Parliament, shared successful peace-making strategies. As a means of opposing apartheid, she explained, religions in South Africa organized and planned many activities to learn how to work together. Out of this interfaith networking, groups like the Detainees' Support Organization were formed. The organization disseminated information and helped to gain some access to prisoners to prevent murders for which no one would be held accountable. Later, the interfaith organizations went on to form the Crisis Network support families that were being victimized and to conduct night vigils to protest the atrocities of the apartheid government. The interfaith culture that was estab-



Panelists (l-r) Virginia Straus, Linda Groff, Lester Kurtz, David Chappell and Ela Gandhi address the question 'How does one translate religious teachings and theory into the action of peacework?'

lished helped to bring about reforms that have now been incorporated into the constitution. In addition, an outgrowth of the interfaith activity has been the production of a book, *Epochal Transformation*, which is a statement on the moral renewal of the nation.

The granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi reflected on her grandfather's religious insights. His association with Christians and Muslims in South Africa caused Gandhi to examine the Bible and the Koran more thoroughly than he had ever done before. He maintained that each of us should know about our own religion and also know what other religions are saying. Speaking of her own girlhood, Ela Gandhi said that "in my

home we had interfaith prayer daily, so we always respected all traditions. There is no contradiction among them." The South African interfaith movement has developed out of this kind of profound interfaith understanding.

Virginia Straus, moderator of the plenary panel, urged participants to sign Manifesto 2000, a pledge to work toward a culture of peace and nonviolence. The document was drafted by a group of Nobel Peace Prize laureates and is being circulated by UNESCO. Due to the wide scope of this campaign—a goal of 100 million signatures worldwide—UNESCO is encouraging everyone to sign MANIFESTO 2000 on line at [www.UNESCO.org/manifesto2000](http://www.UNESCO.org/manifesto2000). **WT**

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# Earth Charter Update

By AL ALBERGATE

SGI-USA DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Active interest by SGI members in the Earth Charter movement continues into a fourth year and may even be growing here in the United States and around the world.

The final version of the 16-principle charter was approved by the Earth Charter Commission at a meeting in Paris in March. This provided members with material to continue the campaign of education and awareness as Earth Day 2000 approached on April 22.

The charter sets forth fundamental principles to guide us toward a secure and sustainable level of existence. Although originally conceived out of concern for the destruction of the natural environment, the charter also deals with broader issues such as social and economic justice, the health of women and children,

rights of indigenous peoples, democracy, education, nonviolence and peace. In short, the charter attempts to take a broad and balanced view of what is necessary to sustain healthy life on this planet.



Huge balloon representing the Earth is tethered to the Washington, D.C., Mall in midst of the 30th annual Earth Day 2000 festivities.

Bolstered by SGI President Daisaku Ikeda's support for the Earth Charter process in three successive peace proposals (1997–99), SGI-USA members

had sponsored more than 35 meetings, involving nearly 2,000 participants, up until this year. Many were inspired by the opportunity to provide input on the language of the charter to the international drafting committee. During the same period, the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century sponsored Earth Charter- and ecology-related seminars, as well as publishing three books on the subject. SGI-USA also has a representative on the Earth Charter USA National Network, the coordinating group for the United States.

Armed with the finalized version, some members took the opportunity to kick off another round of education by using the Earth Charter at their

discussion meetings in April and beyond. Although reports are still coming in, it is known that meetings were held in Florida, Oregon, Minnesota, California and Iowa.

At the same time,

at least two reports were made about our members' efforts.

A recently released international Earth Charter status report further recognizes the activities of SGI members in their communities in Uruguay, Holland, South Korea, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

The final paragraph of the charter perhaps best sums up the goal of the above-mentioned efforts to pursue dialogue: "Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life." **WT**

To read the entire charter and background information, go to [www.sgi-usa.org](http://www.sgi-usa.org); [www.earth-charter.org](http://www.earth-charter.org) or [www.earthcharterusa.org](http://www.earthcharterusa.org); or contact Al Albergate at (310) 260-8958.

Photos by AL ALBERGATE



SGI-USA members (l-r) Al Albergate, Anne Porowski and Leanne Smith Nurse participate in the Earth Charter USA 2nd Annual National Conference, April 20–22, in Alexandria, Va.



The Capitol looms behind the stage from which speakers and entertainers try to warm up the crowd gathered on a cool spring day on the Washington Mall for Earth Day 2000 activities.

## Portland, Ore., Members Hold Conflict Resolution Workshop

By LEAH STENSON

PORTLAND, ORE., CORRESPONDENT

On March 4, nearly 20 members from all four divisions of the SGI-USA membership in Portland, Ore., turned out at their community center for a conflict resolution workshop facilitated by Karen (Gila) Stephens, a graduate student at Portland State University who is doing her master's thesis in education on conflict resolution. Leah Stenson, office manager for the Oregon Peace Institute, spoke about the mission of the peace institute, a nonprofit organization that promotes conflict resolution, and provided resources

on that topic and related topics such as anger and nonviolence for distribution and purchase.

The idea for the workshop came about after Ms. Stephens attended several workshops sponsored by OPI. Both she and Ms. Stenson wanted to give SGI members an opportunity to learn some new techniques that would enable them to deal with conflict more effectively.

Ms. Stephens, who is also an artist, incorporated several exercises that involved drawing in the workshop. In one exercise, the participants were told to draw their conflicts on large sheets of paper. After the drawings were complete, each participant paired up with a partner

and attempted to decipher the other's drawing, i.e., conflict. Later, participants who had the desire to do so had the opportunity to share their drawings and their reactions to the exercise with the rest of the group.

Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the exercises, and although not everyone in the room knew each other well, there was a pervading feeling of warmth and camaraderie by the end of the workshop. One participant said that "the workshop made me realize that others perceive things differently than I. I was floored with the positive feelings this created in me and the rest of the group."



A conflict resolution workshop is held at the Portland Community Center.

In the process of examining their conflicts, the participants had not only learned some new

techniques and perspectives for dealing with conflict — they had also made some new friends. **WT**

THE TODA INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND POLICY RESEARCH

# Dialogue of Civilizations for World Citizenship

**The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research aims to build lasting bridges of international dialogue and understanding.**

**By JAMIE LIPTAN**  
STAFF WRITER

The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research is a new kind of institute for a new kind of world, a world endowed with expanding channels of communication yet sorely in need of dialogue. Founded by SGI President Daisaku Ikeda on Feb. 11, 1996, the Institute honors the life and work of the second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda.

The Toda Institute is an in-

dependent, nonpartisan and nonprofit organization committed to the pursuit of peace through peaceful means and a complete abolition of war. In cooperation with other peace organizations that resist injustice and resolve conflict, the Institute aims at maximizing the efforts of peaceful people of all colors and creeds everywhere. In helping to promote peace initiatives at national, regional and international levels, the Institute encourages and proposes concrete strategies that can be translated into action.

The Institute brings peace researchers, policymakers and community activists into communication and collaboration on selected projects in conflict resolution. In an effort to incorporate research into policy, planning and implementation processes, the Institute fosters dialogue among all three types of stakeholders by bringing them into collaborative, learning communities.

Based on its motto of "Dialogue of Civilizations for World Citizenship," the institute has sponsored conferences in Iran, the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, Northern Ireland, Germany, Turkey, the United States and Japan over the past two years. These conferences bring together the world's foremost thinkers and activists in a variety of fields in an effort to produce research, publications and recommendations that can contribute to the resolution of world conflicts.

In addition to Peace and Policy, the Institute's journal, a book series resulting from conferences on the theme "Human Security and Global Governance" has reached four volumes.

Josei Toda was a staunch anti-militarist whose uncompromising declaration against nuclear weapons in 1957 became and remains the driving force for peace, justice and education in the Soka Gakkai's international movement. The Institute works toward what Toda called "global citizenship."

President Ikeda, in a dialogue

Photos courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS



Toda Institute Director Majid Tehrani meets with SGI President Ikeda in Tokyo, Feb. 19, 1996.

with Majid Tehrani, director of the Institute and a professor at the University of Hawaii, said: "Our [SGI] movement focuses on the promotion of peace, culture and education based on Buddhism. To encourage cultural exchange, I founded the Min-On Concert Association and the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum. To promote education, I founded Soka University, the Soka Junior and Senior High Schools and a number of other educational institutions. With the establishment of the Toda Institute, I can now say we have a firm foundation in each area of peace, culture and education."

The Institute serves the principles for which Toda stood; protection of all human life, safeguarding all of the natural environment and harmonious development of all human communities. In the new millennium, many new as well as old problems and conflicts plague the world. The end of the Cold War resolved some conflicts but unleashed others. Despite efforts of the United Nations and others, testing and proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons continue. The arms trade has taken on new dimensions. Military expenditures, even among poorer nations, have increased. The arms race has now spread to all regions of the world, augment-

ing the danger of conflict among ethnic groups within and between countries. Nonviolent intervention and peace-making are not yet sufficiently developed instruments to be effective in settling disputes. At the same time, specters of hunger, destitution, forced migration, ethnic cleansing and homelessness haunt even advanced nations. The new century dawns with limited prospects on the horizon for achieving a truly peaceful and cooperative international order. The Toda Institute hopes to contribute toward building a practical and durable world peace in the 21st century.

"A Planet Earth torn by the rancor and discord of us and them cannot survive under the emerging conditions of global markets and communications," says Professor Tehrani. "The challenge before the Toda Institute and all of us is to face these realities and engage in a genuine effort to build some lasting bridges of international dialogue and understanding. It is possible to live in peace, as Gandhi constantly reminded us, if we understand." **WT**

*For more information regarding the Institute's events and publications, please visit its Website at [www.toda.org](http://www.toda.org).*



Participants take a commemorative photo at the 1997 Human Security and Global Governance Conference at Taplow Court in the United Kingdom.



Participants of the 'Dialogue of Civilizations: A New Peace Agenda for a New Millennium' conference in Okinawa, Japan, on Feb. 11.

**Editor's note:** Each month the last issue of the *World Tribune* will focus on the SGI's activities for education, peace and culture. Some of our regular series, like "The New Human Revolution," will not appear. We hope that you will find this special issue refreshing and that it will appeal to our growing international readership.

# Working Together As Young People

Photo courtesy of FREE THE CHILDREN

Marc Kielburger, 23, is the director of Free the Children USA's national and international programs. Jeff Farr, World Tribune associate editor, talked with him about how to inspire young people to take leadership in peace at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation in Santa Barbara, Calif., April 15.

**Jeff Farr:** You and your younger brother, Craig, have created an incredible movement called Free the Children, based on the principle of children saving children. When I was reading your brother's book, *Free the Children*, something that struck me was how he calls you his mentor. I think that it's important for youth to mentor youth—this is one of our focuses in the SGI, the Buddhist organization that I'm involved with. Based on your experience, what do you think are the most important ways that young people can mentor other young people?

**Marc Kielburger:** It starts with our profound sense of responsibility to ensure that the next generation of young people are youth peacemakers, that young people are concerned about human rights and are socially involved.

The basis of Free the Children is twofold: We free children from child labor, and we help free kids from the idea that they can't do anything in society, that they're powerless. The way that we do that is through mentoring.

We now have 100,000 members in 27 countries, but the key is that these young people need to be a team. And then we have older youth who are not "members," but are extremely involved in the mentorship aspect.

Basically, they help coach young people in the areas of public speaking, awareness, leadership skills, getting involved in issues, inspiring others and running meetings. All of these are skills that older youth may have more experience with, but younger youth need to have.

Young people can raise young people because they are the ones who can relate to them. An adult standing up saying, "You know, when I was your age, I walked uphill both ways"—those kinds of things—is not effective. That's the old paradigm.

The new paradigm is young people saying: "Look, I've been able to do this. I've learned this. I don't have all the answers, but I know that I can make a difference, because I've done it. What I want to do is ensure that you guys have the power, ability and confidence to achieve the goals that you have set as well."

The results can be phenomenal

with this kind of dialogue, because there is a sense in the younger people of "Wow, somebody a little bit older than I am has done it—this is where I want to be in my life. Let me follow my peer." This is different from "Let me follow this adult. Let me follow my teacher." Not to say that the latter is necessarily wrong or negative. It's different.

As young people, we want to look cool. We want to be hanging out with the young people, as well as the cool crowd. Who better relates to other young people than young people themselves?

**Farr:** Both you and your brother have a strong determination to fight injustice. This is so encouraging to see in young people. How can we instill in more young people a sense of justice—plus the confidence that they can achieve justice?

**Kielburger:** First, adults have to believe in the power of youth. If adults dismiss young people and think that they should be seen and not heard, or heard and not seen, that's the old paradigm. The new idea is adults believing that they can create an intergenerational dialogue.

Second, again, is mentorship. We think that maybe once a month in the schools, we can highlight heroes like Martin Luther King Jr., like Mother Theresa. And also local heroes, like the baseball coach, like the Boy Scouts leader. It's important for parents to instill in their children the idea that you don't have to be a head of state to be a leader. You don't have to be leading an organization with 17 million members. You can be a leader in your own right.

Third, it is most important to identify young people's gifts. Every young person has a gift. My brother is very well versed in public speaking, for instance, but other young people are very good at organizing. Others are very good in art. And others are extremely good in sports. It is necessary to ensure that young people are aware of their gifts, that they know that they are special, that they are unique. They need to have a sense of self-confidence and self-respect based on those gifts.

Young people are always told no. "Don't talk to strangers." "Don't do drugs."

How often are young people told yes? "Yes, you're unique." "Yes, you're amazing." "Yes, you're special." "Yes, you can achieve the things that you want to." That positive reinforcement, even though it sounds so basic, is so key.

My brother and I are working on a book called *A Generation Stuck on Fastforward: How to Inspire a New Generation of Young*



Marc Kielburger (left) and his brother, Craig, are founders of Free the Children, a movement based on the principle of children saving children.

*People.* It's a guide for Boy Scouts leaders, parents, adults, teachers, educators—anybody who works with young people—on how to inspire a new generation of leaders. There are a million books out there written by psychologists, and they probably are very authoritative in all of the theories. But it's different when you are working with young people on a day-to-day cycle. And it's different if you are able to do it.

I'm not trying to pat myself on the back, but we've been able to inspire a generation of young people to free the children. You guys have been able to inspire a generation of young people through the SGI. The tools that you guys have used and the tools that we have used are amazing and should be shared.

**Farr:** Now you are involved with the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, too. Why do you feel that young people should take responsibility for the nuclear weapons issue?

**Kielburger:** I feel that this issue is extremely pressing. I work on the issue of children, but of course if we have a nuclear holocaust, the whole of humanity—our entire future—will be eliminated. The children are our future, so it really is all tied into this web.

I feel that young people can get involved in a number of ways. It's important for us to understand the issue and to do research on it. We have to become peace leaders and peace builders on a local, national and international level. After all, the situation of nuclear weapons is

international.

My opinion is that society in general recognizes that we don't need this type of weapon. That's where we need to start—from the grassroots. Everyone needs to say: "We don't need this kind of thing. We can live in peace." And the way to get there is to create a new generation of peace builders.

Young people can take actions in their everyday lives—very simple actions—that will enable them to take peace leadership. They can become more active in conflict mediation, more active in peace building on a local level. That tiny drop in the pond sends out the ripple, and the ripple will, in my opinion, enable us to ensure that our world is more peaceful and eventually free of nuclear weapons.

**Farr:** With all of your social involvement, I am sure that you and your brother have experienced many obstacles. What was the worst one? How did you overcome it?

**Kielburger:** Our worst obstacles have been adults, to be perfectly honest with you. Some adults believe that young people should not be active decision-makers in society, and it's hard to break down that idea.

There are a lot of adults out there who say: "OK, young people, who's pushing you? Who's behind you? You must have a secret agenda." And we say, "We don't, actually."

The way they figure it is that just because we're doing something good means that we're being pushed by a political agenda. That makes me upset. Just because

we're young people does not mean that we shouldn't have the power to influence positive change. We change their minds through showing them what we can do. We don't necessarily sit down with them and talk to them until we're blue in the face. We change their mind through action.

Basically, we say: "Look, we could spend an hour sitting here talking to you or spend an hour talking to 100 young people in a school gymnasium. Those 100 young people then can go on a fundraiser and build a school in a place like Nicaragua. That school can provide an education for 40 children. Those 40 children can break the cycle of poverty."

I'm not going to sit there and beg people to believe that I'm trying to influence positive change. I'd rather just go around and do it. If they want to see what we're doing—wow, that's great! If not, we'll eventually impact their community and their lives. Young people will show them that we're actually doing what we want to do.

Of course, it's always challenging for young people to work together—especially young people from around the world. I'm just kind of realizing that my way of doing things isn't the international way of doing things. And in order for us to actually have an international movement and an international impact, we need to have an international point of view and consciousness. But the best thing that we think to do is continue to work together as young people and to stay focused. **WT**

## THIS BEAUTIFUL EARTH: PHOTO ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA



The moon at twilight in Miyazaki, Japan. Mr. Ikeda's first published photograph was that of the moon from this vantage point in Miyazaki, taken in 1970.

# Moon Over Miyazaki

**A**n anticipated moonrise. A mirror-like silver orb floats in a rose-colored sky above a blue horizon.

I stand near my camera tripod by the main building of the Miyazaki Training Center. My wife has pointed beyond the silhouetted palm fronds and said to me, "Look, it's risen!"

There it is, the moon, regarding us with its smiling gaze. It slices across the flagpole bearing the SGI tricolor flag, moving upward and to the right as it aims for mid heaven, tracing its silver-white orbit through the twilight. Its light increases, showering the Earth in its delicate white glow.

The scene of the celestial play gradually shifts from a dazzling drama of sunlight and heat to a stately garden of cool serenity.

The Tale of the Bamboo Princess tells of a capital on the moon, a wonderland basking in the light of love and compassion.

To the moon I call out: "God of the moon! May you watch over my friends around the world for another night! Gently illuminate the footsteps of those who day and night walk our noble path! Please give peace to

all people whose hearts are aching."

With this, I snap the shutter. I want to imprint in the scrapbook of eternity the image that is momentarily reflected in my heart.

It was March 1, 1999, the night before the full moon. Still waxing, the yet incomplete disk was a divine display of "imperfect perfection."

I had flown to Miyazaki from Okinawa by small plane three days before. My first visit to Miyazaki Prefecture in eight years was also my first to the island of Kyushu — of which the prefecture is part — in four-and-a-half years. Much time had passed.

When I arrived at the training center, I immediately joined some fellow members for a walk in the garden amid a light drizzle.

In one corner of the garden, I noticed some elderly people, members of the group of volunteers who assist with the gardening and upkeep of the facility's grounds. I told them: "Please take good care of yourselves and don't catch cold. You are most important to me. Please live long." They had long been supporting the training

center, working steadily and inconspicuously.

It is always my desire to express deep gratitude and respect to those who work and toil behind the scenes, more so even than to those who work in the limelight. That is why I wanted to take a picture of the moon. The moon is like a mirror, clear and pure. The sun and the moon are like the two eyes of the heavens, observing all. The great moon-god sends its light into peoples hearts, a symbol of the Buddhist principle of "inconspicuous observation" — that the law of causality records all our thoughts and actions.

The moon calls out to all on Earth: "Are you living with a broad mind and an open heart?" "Are you kind?" "Are you being true to yourself, walking the correct path?" Though no one may be watching, the moon knows these things, for it dwells also in the firmament of our hearts.

The moon is like a ship that ferries our spirit to the heavens. Its pristine light soothes and purifies hearts tired from a day's work. It invites us into its sublime, cool serenity, beyond the reach of authority, vanity or greed.

How often since my youth have I received silent encouragement from the elegant yet stern light of the moon? It has inspired me to work by day with the energy of the sun, and to reflect by the moonlight at night upon my self and my humanity. It has encouraged me to consider the wonder of my existence here and now set amid eternity and the limitless vastness of space.

And so, at five that evening, I stood before my tripod awaiting the moonrise. The Kyushu Executive Conference was soon to begin; everyone was waiting. There were manuscripts I had to complete. Despite this, I wanted to seize the moment and converse with the moon; through the moon, I wanted to communicate my thoughts to my many friends.

Palm fronds wave gently as the SGI tricolor flutters in the spring breeze of this southern province. Once called "Hyuga," or "sun-facing," it is a mythological land of the sun. Beneath the moon the blue Pacific rolls and roars as it has since time immemorial.

While spring comes as it has since antiquity, and the moon rises today as always, the human world is constantly changing. In

each age, people sing, plead, laugh and cry. The moon watches serenely over the frail impermanence of people's lives. Transcending time and distance, unperturbed by clouds of confusion or winds of change, the enlightened moon moves quietly and intently along its orbit in the heavens. Sometimes gentle, sometimes cold and aloof. At times, it is the compassionate white light of the cosmos, embracing all living things. At others, it is a lightning bolt of causality, the strict light of the Law permeating the three thousand realms of life.

Gazing at this palace of light, my mind seems to extend and disappear into space; my life, now enfolded by the cosmos, struggles to return the embrace. I once again call to the moon: "From your high place in the origin of time, please illuminate us on Earth! Shine your light of philosophy upon the troubled and wandering human race! May you shed your golden light on the future of my friends, princes and princesses of the cosmos, who are everywhere emerging from the earth!"

*Twelfth in a series*