

World TRIBUNE

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

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Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SOLIDARITY AMONG THE WORLD'S PEOPLES

SGI President Ikeda is dedicated to bringing cultures together through the power of education. As founder of Soka University, he continues to meet with outstanding intellectuals from every corner of the world. See page 8 for his recent meetings with visiting lecturers to Soka University from China, Africa and India, and Dr. Allen Lee Sessoms, president of Queens College of the City University of New York. **WT**



SGI President Ikeda meets on May 27 with a group of visiting lecturers from China, Africa and India, who are doing research at Soka University through an academic exchange program.

'The Way of Youth' Now Available

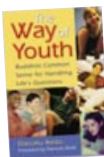
By **DAVE McNEILL**

SGI-USA BOOK PUBLISHING DIRECTOR

The demand for copies of *The Way of Youth: Buddhist Common Sense for Handling Life's Questions* by SGI President Ikeda has been far greater than expected, and in many areas that demand has far exceeded the supply. If you've been frustrated in your attempts to acquire the book, we sincerely apologize. And we can assure you all efforts have been made to open up the distribution channels.

This dynamic resource for teenagers and their parents, which touches upon issues of family, friendship, love, dreams and goals in an easy-to-read Q-and-A format, is now available at many neighborhood bookstores, bookstore chains and through the Internet.

Not every bookstore will automatically stock *The Way of Youth*, and those that do may only have one or two copies on hand. Even though



it may be a little hard to come by at first, as more and more people ask for the book, stores will stock extra copies.

If your bookstore has sold out its copies of *The Way of Youth*, you can usually order the book by asking one of the sales clerks. Tell the clerk the name of the book and the author, and the clerk will look it up on the store's computer for you. (You usually don't have to pay for the book until you pick it up.)

We thank you for your support of SGI-USA's newest endeavor, Middleway Press, and we are determined that it becomes an indispensable tool for our activities in the United States and the world. As Middleway Press gets better known in the bookstore business, the supply lines will work more efficiently. Our future books will not have such a slow initial distribution. Thanks for your patience! **WT**

New York Marks 'Beijing +5'

By **LESLEY WINES**

NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT

A large, joyful and diverse contingent of women, along with a small band of men, poured into the New York Culture Center on June 10 to hear electrifying updates on the condition, treatment, health and future of the world's women.

Earlier in the week, all of the speakers had participated in the United Nations' "Beijing +5" gathering, a series of meetings that studied the progress—or lack thereof—achieved by the world's women in the wake of the historic Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

SGI-USA in New York sponsored the June 10 "Dialogue With the Women of the World," while SGI, as a non-governmental organization affiliated with the United Nations, had participated in the "Beijing +5" conference.

The speakers were as diverse as the audience and ad-



Photo by KATHY CONDON and GEORGE OHARA

During breakout sessions, participants discuss issues such as domestic violence, women in politics and empowerment at the 'Dialogue With the Women of the World,' sj9

dressed a wide array of women's matters, noting some recent breakthroughs for women, as well as disturbing incidents of regression.

UNESCO official Ingeborg Breines spoke about the organization's work to promote the

theme of "Women and the Culture of Peace." She noted that while industrialized Northern states have long sought equality for women, and Southern hemisphere nations have pur-

PLEASE SEE BEIJING, 5

Sixty Thousand Visit SGI Anti-Nuclear Exhibition in Argentina

On June 16, the SGI's "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World" exhibition opened at the Universidad Nacional del Nordeste (University of the North-East), Corrientes, Argentina. Guests included: University Rector Adolfo D. Torres and Vice Rector Mart'n Edgardo Ayala, and government officials from Corrientes and neighboring Chaco State. To date, more than 60,000 have visited the anti-nuclear exhibit in Argentina; it first showed in Argentina in Buenos Aires in 1997, then in Nequen at the National University of Comahue in February 2000. The exhibition has been designated as an official event by the Chaco Education Agency, Chaco Lower House Assembly, Corrientes Education Agency and Resistencia City.

Five Items from the Victor Hugo House Collection Named National Treasures

The Victor Hugo House of Literature, Bievre, France, founded by the SGI in 1991, celebrated its ninth anniversary June 21. Five items from the museum's collection were recently named national treasures by the French Ministry of Culture by unanimous vote of a 40-member council of historians and other culture specialists. Formerly owned by Hugo's friend Bertin L'Aine (1771-1841) and frequented by influential figures during the Age of Romanticism, the Victor Hugo House contains a permanent collection of approximately 1,900 items of the author's memorabilia.



Italian City Sponsors Lecture: Peace Builders Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Daisaku Ikeda

On July 1, Grugliasco City, Turin Province, Italy, sponsored a 30-panel exhibit and lecture on "Peace Builders of the 20th and 21st Century," which introduced the ideals of three pacifists, Mahatma Gandhi of India, Martin Luther King Jr. of the United States, and Daisaku Ikeda of Japan, and their message of peace to the world's citizens. Pointing to the multi-faceted peace activities of Mr. Ikeda, including his ongoing dialogues with world leaders, President Giovanni Salio of the Domenico Sereno Regis Studies Center stated his belief that Mr. Ikeda was the very individual who fulfills the role of a "soldier of peace" with the mission of carrying and spreading the message of peace and nonviolence taught by his predecessors, such as Gandhi and King. One thousand five hundred city residents attended the event at the Grugliasco City Culture Center.

SGI-Hong Kong Chorus Performs at Third Anniversary of Hong Kong's Return to Chinese Rule

On July 2, the SGI-Hong Kong chorus performed, together with 23 other

choruses, at a choral recital at the Hong Kong Culture Center to celebrate the third anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of China. The Hong Kong Culture and Art Foundation and the Hong Kong Chorus Association sponsored the event. The SGI-Hong Kong chorus had also been selected to perform for a televised show at the Hong Kong Culture Center during the historic handover celebrations on July 1, 1997.

SGI Members of French Overseas Departments Attend Study Session at the Newly Renovated Charterettes Center

On June 28 through July 1, SGI-France representatives of the French Overseas Departments — French Guiana, Guadelupe, Martinique and Reunion — gathered for a four-day study session at the newly renovated SGI-France Culture Center in Charterettes, France. Currently, approximately 500 SGI members practice in the French Overseas Departments, and 35 were present at the summer session. Study material included "On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime," a treatise Nichiren Daishonin entrusted to Toki Jonin, one of his followers. The group also toured the Victor Hugo House of Literature in Bievre.

'Dialogue on Humanism' Exhibit Opens at Universidad Columbia del Paraguay

The SGI's "Dialogue on Humanism: Network of Hope" showed at the Universidad Columbia del Paraguay (Columbia University of Paraguay) from June 26 through June 30. The university, which cosponsored the exhibition with SGI-Paraguay, recognized the exhibit as an official event promoting education of peace and justice. The exhibit introduces universal, humanistic ideals centered on respect for the dignity of human life and SGI President Daisaku Ikeda's dialogues with world leaders.

Dr. Daisaku Ikeda Library Room Completed at University of Ghana

A library bearing the name of SGI President Daisaku Ikeda was recently completed at the University of Ghana. Vice Chancellor Ivan Addae-Mensah notified Mr. Ikeda's office of the completion in early May of the Dr. Daisaku Ikeda Library Room, which is housed in the International Students Dormitory. The library is replete with books on various subjects, private reading rooms and computers for extensive academic study and research. In September 1996, University of Ghana and Soka University formalized an educational exchange agreement. Mr. Ikeda received an honorary Faculty of Law doctorate from the University of Ghana in August 1996, and was appointed an honorary visiting scholar in March of last year.

Courtesy of Seikyo Press

PLAQUE UNVEILED AT GANDHI INSTITUTE

By **JAMIE LIPTAN**
STAFF WRITER

A plaque commemorating the founding of the Gandhi Institute for Reconciliation was unveiled June 13 at the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel



Dr. Walter E. Massey (right) receives Soka University's highest award from Dr. Daniel Habuki.

at Morehouse College in Atlanta. The inscription of the plaque includes quotes by SGI President Ikeda, whose name is listed alongside that of Mahatma Gandhi and Chapel Dean Lawrence Edward Carter Sr. as authors of the "Litany for the Founding of the Gandhi Institute for Reconciliation." The plaque has been installed prominently in the Martin Luther King Jr. International Hall of Honor. President Ikeda

has stated that the mission of the Institute is "to heal and revive human hearts and minds deeply wounded by violent ideologies and open the way for a new chapter in human history," and honored Ma-



(L-r) SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima, Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel Dean Lawrence E. Carter Sr., Morehouse College President Walter E. Massey and Soka University of America President Daniel Habuki.

hatma Gandhi as someone who had tapped into "the eternal rhythm of life that animates all people, every society and the universe itself."

In addition, Soka University of America President

Daniel Habuki presented Morehouse College President Walter E. Massey with Soka University's highest award for his contributions to the ideals for which the university was founded. **WT**



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Taking Action for the Earth

New England Celebrates Earth Day

Waltham, Mass., and New England Region observed Earth Day on May 6. At Waltham Common, SGI-USA members introduced people to the Earth Charter, handed out sunflower-seed bookmarks and provided children with materials for Earth Day refrigerator magnets. At the SGI-USA New England Culture Center, landscaping was taking place, including preparation for a children's butterfly garden.



Photo by LIZ CARTER

—FLETCHER DALTON A butterfly garden for children is prepared on May 6 at the New England Culture Center.

Orlando, Fla., SGI-USA members sponsored a cleanup of Lake Mullet on May 21 in association with Eco-Action, a local environmental action group. While most members picked up bottles, cans, fishing wire, plastic bags, Styrofoam and other toxic and non-biodegradable trash on

Orlando Joins Lake Cleanup

the shore, others ventured out in canoes with the same mission.

—DEBORAH MULLIS

Photo by GLABISI FOWLER



Orlando, Fla., youth clean up Lake Mullet, May 21.

BUDDHISM IN DAILY LIFE

The Three Realms of Existence

The concept of the three realms of existence first appeared in the "Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom," written by the Indian sage Nagarjuna. The concept was adopted and developed by the Chinese scholar and priest T'ien-t'ai, as a component part of the theory of three thousand realms in one moment of existence. The three realms are the dimensions in which the Ten Worlds (the life-conditions possessed by all phenomena) and the ten factors (the aspects common to all life) are manifested.

The three realms are: the realm of the five components; the realm of living beings; and the realm of the environment. These correspond to the individual, society and the physical environment. Let's look at each of these in more detail.

The five components are the elements that unite temporarily to form an individual living being. They consist of: 1) form, the physical aspect of life, which possesses shape and color, and includes the five sensory organs; 2) perception, the function of receiving external information from the five sen-

sory organs and the mind, the sixth sensory organ, which integrates this information; 3) conception, the function by which life creates thoughts, or ideas, about what has been perceived; 4) volition, the will to take some form of action about what has been perceived and conceptualized; 5) consciousness, the function of discernment that makes value judgments, distinguishing good from evil, sweet from sour, hot from cold, etc.

Form defines the physical aspect of life; the other four components define the spiritual aspect. However, Buddhism teaches that the spiritual and physical aspects of life are essentially one and inseparable. Therefore none of these five components can exist on its own without the other four to support and sustain it. Their mutual interactions make up the complete living being, and in turn allow us to interact with each other.

A living entity is endowed with the five components from the moment it is conceived. How these components function will depend entirely upon the karma this particular life-entity has accumulated during

its past. Take form, for example. Will the life-entity be male or female, what will its racial characteristics be? The karma that governs these physical attributes will also govern exactly how the other four components function, all of which are unique to that person because no two people's karma is exactly the same. Every human being is therefore spiritually and physically unique. This karmic influence also has a direct bearing on the society and environment into which the life-entity is born.

The second of the three realms, the realm of living beings, is, quite simply, society as a whole. This includes all forms of sentient life: animals, birds, insects, and so on. Although every human being is unique, because we all possess the Ten Worlds, we find that we have much in common with other people. We also find that we tend to be drawn to people whose predominant life-state is the same as our own. The way in which we perceive our society depends upon our karma, since this determines our sensory perception.

The third realm, the environ-

ment, is the location inhabited by sentient life-entities. It includes all inanimate life forms such as grass, trees, rivers and mountains. Our perception of this realm, too, is dependent on our karma.

In his book, *The Buddha in Daily Life*, Richard Causton explains why the social and physical environment of each individual is uniquely different: "...the scope or extent of the realms which we inhabit depends upon our dominant life-state...as we manifest each of the Ten Worlds in the way that is unique to our personality, through the actions of the five components, so the realms of sentient beings and the environment alter accordingly. Thus, the three realms can be seen as the theoretical basis for the concept of the inseparability of the self and its environment (ibid., p. 204).

A good example of this is seen in the destruction of the Brazilian rain forests. People — whose greed and blindness to the effects of their actions, stemming from the world of Hunger — destroyed huge tracts of forest. This not only resulted in the denudation of the

land, and the near annihilation of some Indian tribes, it also resulted in global warming. This affected the weather patterns of the entire world, in turn causing soil erosion in other, far distant parts of the globe.

By chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with faith in the Gohonzon, we are able to access the energy of life itself, Buddhahood, a force that exists within all life and is untainted by karma. Our repeated efforts to draw forth our Buddhahood enable us to purify our karma, and to make Buddhahood our predominant life-tendency. This enables us to affect our world differently, as Daisaku Ikeda points out: "The fundamental law of life is the Mystic Law, and, with faith in the Gohonzon, you can harness it as the driving force for happiness. This is why the land where you practice faith becomes the Buddha land, and why society itself becomes the Buddha land. Through faith, you can transform the land where you live into a land of victory and happiness (Daisaku Ikeda, *Buddhism in Action*, vol. 4, pp. 327-28).

Courtesy of UK Express

EXPERIENCE — JACQUELINE HOEGER, WHITE PLAINS, N.Y.

Expanding My Role As a Mother

Jacqueline Hoeger designs creative projects for her daughter's school and unites her community.

If we are to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with children.
— Mahatma Gandhi

In 1991, I quit my job to be at home full time with Katarina, my first child. I was very happy as an at-home mother and chanted for her development into a responsible and independent person.

The following guidance from SGI President Ikeda helped me define my mission as



Photo by SVEN HOEGER

campaign by writing a poem, which he enlarged on a 6 feet-by-30 feet fabric scroll. His dream was to have all the people in the community sign it. The campaign included sending letters to President Clinton and having a program in which all the schools in the district would participate in song,



a mother: "Avoid prejudging people at all cost. Any person we meet may be an outstanding individual who possesses tremendous potential that we have no inkling of" (March 1990 *Seikyo Times*).

Three years ago, I asked myself the following question: "What can I do in my commu-



nity to start to fulfill my role as an SGI-USA member?" That is when I got involved in the "Promise of Unity" campaign at my daughter's school, the Lee F. Jackson School. Terry Pavone, a parent and former schoolmate of Mr. Jackson, began the "Promise of Unity"

dance, music and poetry, with the highlight being the signature signing.

I realized that by joining the "Promise of Unity" project, I could act as a catalyst for the creation of peace in the community.

I suggested to Terry that the children create a group project. I showed him photos of past paintings done by the SGI-USA children. Terry wrote a song called "Together We Have a Dream," and thought of children's faces of all different colors singing his

song. I came up with the idea of the children painting self-portraits on handkerchief-sized fabric, sewn together into a quilt.

Although people supported my idea, it seemed impossible to them to finish the quilt in time for the ceremony. Through

my faith and experience in the SGI-USA, I knew that it could be done if everyone worked together as a team. I chanted every day to show the power of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and to involve all the children, parents, teachers and volunteers. Weeks before the program was scheduled, the quilt process began.

Approximately 400 5- and 6-year-old

children took on the task of selecting their skin tones, then drawing and coloring their self-portraits on paper. The parents and volunteers drew 400 ovals onto 100 handkerchiefs, painting them with the selected skin colors, and transferring each child's portrait. Each portrait took up to 25 minutes. With the help of everyone, the 18 feet-by-7-1/2 feet Promise of Unity Quilt was presented to more than 300 people in the community. Everyone stood in silent amazement before giving an emotional applause at what was accomplished in just 22 days.

In January 1998, the Promise of Unity Quilt was presented at the State Education Department's Early Childhood Conference in New York City by a team from the Lee F. Jackson School that included the prin-



Photo by DARYL GRAVES

Jacqueline Hoeger with her husband, Sven, their children, Katarina, 9, Lars-Olaf, 8, and Johan, 5, and her in-laws Iris and Thomas with Jana, 8, and Lukas, 5.

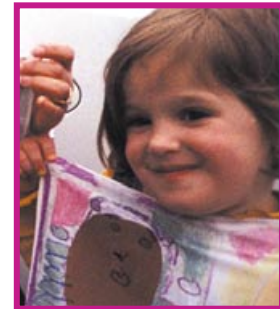
icipal, art teacher and myself. This conference was attended by more than 3,000 people.

In April 1998, Terry, inspired by our first meeting, wrote a song called "Hands Across My Town," and asked that I contribute another of my ideas for the upcoming 1998 Unity Day program.

I was excited, and after chanting, thought of handprints from all the children in our school district — from the preschool to the high school — overlaid with a map of our school dis-

trict, showing the locations of each station, the library, police center, the community center, town hall and street.

With a team of parent volunteers, and SGI-USA members, I went to work taking the donated art materials from school to school, getting handprints. More than 1,200 children, ranging in age from 3 to 18, participated in the creation of the 9 feet-by-14 feet high Hands Across My Town Map for Unity Day in May 1998.



Photos by JACQUELINE HOEGER



Approximately 400 5- and 6-year-old children worked on the 18 feet-by-7-1/2 feet 'Promise of Unity Quilt,' which was completed in just 22 days.

For 1999 Unity Day, the theme "Face of America" was based on creating a canvas of a child's face that had features of every ethnic group living in our school district. More than 1,200 enthusiastic children from kindergarten to high school painted a portion of the Face of America.

Due to the success of the Promise of Unity Quilt and the Hands Across My Town

Map presentations and the fact that the quilt was recognized at the New York State Education Department's Early Childhood Conference in New York City, both the Unity Quilt and Hands Map processes were presented at the Society for Inter-Cultural Education of Training and Research's Annual Conference in Chiba, Japan, on Nov. 21, 1998. With the added success

of the Face of America, our team this year was invited to present the unity projects at two international early childhood conferences.

The Face of America, Hands Across My Town, and the Promise of Unity group projects have all been a product of my desire to fulfill my role as a mother and peace-maker while actively involving the children, parents,

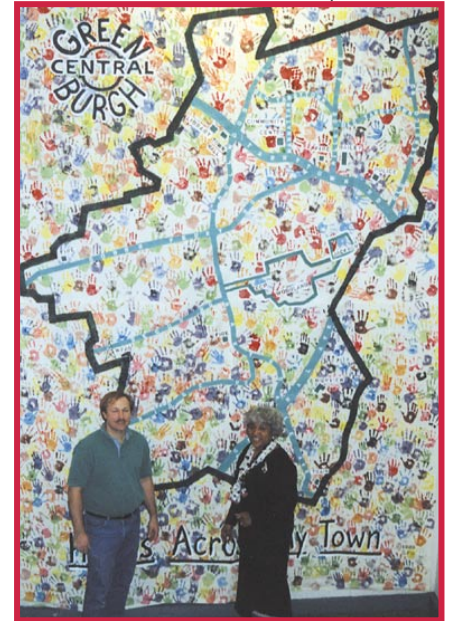
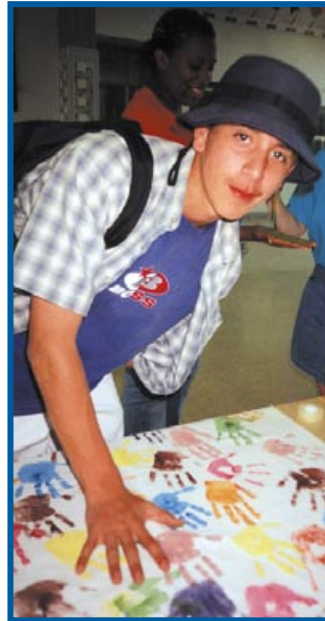
teachers, volunteers and community in the cause for world peace.

More than 1,000 district children participated in the unity projects that exemplify how an idea or dream can come true when people work together. Their dedication and unity, along with the parents, teachers and volunteers, made these projects a reality.

Because I am proud to share

the inspiration I get from my Buddhist practice, I must express my deepest appreciation to President Ikeda for his guidance, which enabled me to define my mission as a mother; to my children and other SGI children, who initiated my group art project concepts; and to the children in my community, who contributed their art, dance and song for peace. **WT**

Photos by JACQUELINE HOEGER



The 1999 Unity Day Face of America is a canvas of a child's face that has features of every ethnic group. More than 1,200 enthusiastic children from kindergarten to high school painted a portion of the Face of America. All three unity projects will be presented at two international conferences.

More than 1,200 children, ranging in age from 3 to 18, participated in creating the 9 feet-by-14 feet Hands Across My Town Map for Unity Day in May 1998. Jacqueline Hoeger and a team of parent volunteers and SGI-USA members took the donated art materials from school to school, getting the students' handprints.

FROM BEIJING, 1

sued women's development, there is little focus on women's efforts for peace.

Within UNESCO, peace is not construed merely as the absence of war. "We need systems for peace education as sophisticated as those currently in place for military training," Breines said.

The speaker noted that it will be necessary to elect more women to political office to secure a culture that values peace.

She also praised women who have made concrete efforts for peace, including Russian mothers who have gone to Chechnya to fetch their soldier sons, saying they "... prefer a living son to a medal."

Panelist Mu Sochua, the Cambodian Minister for Women's and Veteran's Affairs, mesmerized the audience with her accounts of the rebuilding of her nation following the car-

nage of the Pol Pot regime. "I'm really sorry to talk about war, but war is all I have known in my 47 years," she said.

Ms. Sochua thanked the SGI for sending 300,000 radios to



Mu Sochua, the Cambodian Minister for Women's and Veteran's Affairs, speaks about rebuilding her nation following the carnage of the Pol Pot regime.

Cambodia, a gift that enabled many rural citizens to learn about human rights and participate in the nation's first democratic elections in 1993.

She, too, cited the key importance of democratic politics in advancing the status of women, noting strong efforts currently underway in Cambodia to elect women to higher-level offices. Placing women in senior Cambodian government positions is critically important now because the nation has a serious problem of the trafficking of girls into prostitution, and women leaders most likely would work hard to end the problem, she said.

Mavluda Shirinova, the founder of Uzbekistan's first crisis shelter for women, spoke about the cultural upheavals her country has undergone since it achieved its independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991.

Ms. Shirinova noted that although Uzbekistan's law guar-

antees basic rights for women, its cultural traditions undercut such freedoms, making physical and emotional abuse of women far too common.

She said securing women's rights in Uzbekistan may take a long time, given the deeply ingrained belief in male superiority and a husband's right to use force against a wife.

Astrid Bant, the Latin American program officer for the International Women's Health Coalition, described the great difficulties involved in making health services accessible in that region.

Ms. Bant also called for new definitions of the concept of women's health, noting that "Health in Latin American is still discussed in terms of mortality and the availability of medicines."

"But you can also look at how you produce healthy people," she said.

Panelist Abena Busia, a poet

born in Ghana, read sections from her own work.

Ms. Busia encouraged the audience to take a positive view of any difficulties women are undergoing in their efforts to achieve progress.

In a remark oddly reminiscent of the Buddhist concept that obstacles precede victory, she said: "We should celebrate the resistance because it really is a sign of our success." **WT**

Read the WT E-mail Express

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- 2) Enter to (first line): ListManager@sgi-usa.org
- 3) Enter message text: SUBSCRIBE wtexpress

Family Days at SUA — You Are Invited!

Here is your opportunity to see the Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo campus, meet faculty and staff, and get your questions answered! SUA will be hosting Family Tour Days on Aug. 5, Oct. 7 and May 5, 2001. Everyone is welcome, but please send in the registration form below to help the SUA staff with their planning.

Family Tour Day Schedule:

9:00 a.m.: Tour begins. Come to SUA's main entrance at 1 University Drive (located off of Wood Canyon Drive just south of Pacific Park in Aliso Viejo). Follow the signs to the Family Tour parking area in front of the Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda Library. Tours will leave continuously. The last tour leaves at 11:30 a.m.

These are 40-minute walking tours around the campus construction site. If you or a family member cannot use stairs or need special assistance, please let the SUA staff know on your registration form, so that they can accommodate you. Wear hard-soled walking shoes (no open-toed sandals, please!), a hat and sunscreen. Cameras are welcome!



Courtesy of SUA



Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

A family enjoys SUA's Millennium Trail, June 3.

12:00 p.m.: Barbecue lunch (\$5 per person — please pay with your reservation form). Or...bring your own picnic!

1:30 p.m.: Student session with Ed Feasel, Ph.D., dean of students. General Q-and-A session for prospective students.
Parent session with Eric Hauber, Ph.D., vice president of academic affairs. General Q-and-A session for parents.

2:30 p.m.: Financial aid workshop for parents.
Information technology overview for students.

3:00 p.m.: Family ice cream social/informal discussion.

SUA will hold three Family Tour Days — Aug. 5, Oct. 7 and May 5, 2001.

SUA Family Day Reservation Form for:
 Aug. 5, 2000 Oct. 7, 2000 May 5, 2001

Please return to:
 Family Tour Day Reservations
 Soka University, Aliso Viejo
 1 University Drive
 Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

Name _____
 Address _____
 Phone number _____
 E-mail address _____

Number of other people attending with you? _____
 How many prospective students will be in your group? _____
 Lunch reservations requested (at \$5 a person) _____
 (Please enclose a check made out to Soka University for this amount.)
 Will anyone in your group need special assistance for the tour? _____
 If so, please let us know how we can assist you: _____

SUA Application Dates To Remember

Oct. 15, 2000
 Deadline for early admission applications

Dec. 15, 2000
 Early admission decisions announced

Jan. 15, 2001
 Deadline for regular admission application

March 15, 2001
 Regular admission decisions announced

Contact
 SUA Admission at admission@soka.edu or information@soka.edu or 1-888-600-SOKA

New university permanent address:
 Soka University, Aliso Viejo
 1 University Drive
 Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

Web site address:
www.soka.edu

SUA Construction Update

• The campus is about 80 percent complete. (Eighteen buildings are under construction.)

• The first trees are being planted at the campus entry and residence halls.

• Four residence halls are complete, and furniture has been ordered.

• Light posts have been installed throughout the university grounds. **WT**



Courtesy of SUA

The first trees are now planted on the SUA campus.



Eric Hauber speaks with students.

Introducing Eric Hauber, Ph.D.

SUA Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Cell Biology

Eric Hauber came to Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo from Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, where he was an associate vice president for academic affairs and an associate professor for 15 years. Eric was also a faculty member of the School of Medicine at State University of New York at Stony Brook from 1973–1981, where he received a number of excellence in teaching awards.

“Coming to Soka is for me the culmination of 18 years of both Buddhist practice and academic work,” he says. “I’ve always thought that the best hope for the future is to help raise young people, to nurture, encourage and inspire...so it was natural for me to choose educa-

tion as a profession. It was even more natural to choose Soka.”

Eric has served as SUA, AV’s vice president for academic affairs since 1995, when he was appointed to head up the establishment of the new private liberal arts campus in south Orange County. “When I came we had 103 acres of bare land and one small office without a desk,” laughs Eric. “I’ve had the privilege of watching our staff and faculty grow to a group of dynamic, committed individuals who are excited about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a truly unique student-centered university founded on the Buddhist principles of peace, human rights and the sanctity of life.”

Eric is responsible for the academic development of SUA’s liberal arts curriculum. “Our great vision is for students to graduate from SUA to become truly humanistic leaders within society, in their home

countries and in their professions,” Eric says. “SUA students will be able to put their heart and wisdom into action in the area in which they live.”

“The great philosopher-teachers throughout history have always put the concerns of their students first,” he adds. “We have an opportunity here to create an educational experience that encompasses our core values of love for humankind, development of character and realization of peace through education—and to make it real. We’re very excited about the outstanding faculty and staff we have recruited who share these values.

“I believe we are at a point today where many young people are looking for a college experience like SUA. Students are looking for a place where the individual is celebrated, where the value of others is taken seriously and education is not just the development of the mind but the whole person as well. That’s SUA.” **WT**



Send in your own questions, and we’ll share the answers!

Question:

Will I be able to dance or play music or perfect my art at SUA?

Answer:

Absolutely! In the beginning, we will not be offering a major in dance or music, but we will sponsor those activities through Student Affairs based on student interest. SUA has constructed wonderful facilities in which students with professional help can participate in dance, music and art. Also, the surrounding communities offer a wide variety of cultural activities, in which students can participate if they desire.

Question:

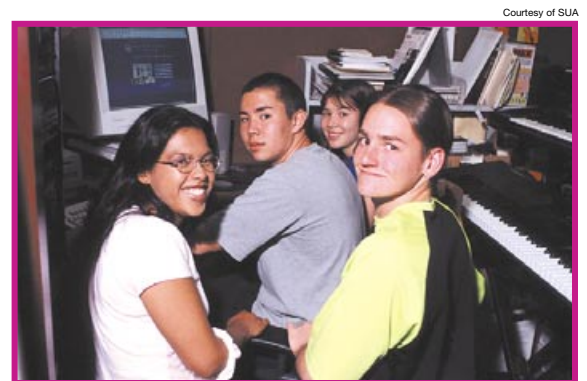
I really want to play sports in college. Can I do that at SUA?

Answer:

Yes, you can. We have constructed state-of-the-art athletic facilities that will sup-

port almost any college sport, with the exceptions of football and track. We are prepared to support those team sports that sufficient numbers of students are interested in. We expect to join our regional NCAA Division III conference around the third year, when our student body has grown sufficiently in size. Until that time, we will play intercollegiate sports on an independent, non-league basis with surrounding colleges and universities. SUA will support equally both men’s and women’s athletic teams. In addition, our Student Affairs people will organize a well-developed intramural athletics program.

If you have questions of any kind about SUA, please send them to SUA at either admission@soka.edu or info@soka.edu. We will use this World Tribune column to share our answers with others who might have the same questions.



Courtesy of SUA



Students participate in a tree planting at Sage Hill School, June 23. SUA has donated 400 oak trees to Sage Hill.

SUA Becomes Part of Orange County Community

- SUA has donated 400 oak trees to Sage Hill School, the newest independent, non-parochial high school in Orange County. Sage Hill students and prospective SUA students participated in the June 23 tree planting at the Newport Beach campus.

- The May 17 *Orange County Register*, California’s second largest daily

newspaper with a circulation of more than 300,000, ran a front-page article and full-page graphic on SUA. The *Register’s* article (inserted in this *World Tribune*) outlines the campus mission, goals, philosophy and motto, and points out that SUA will be an international campus, open to students of all nationalities and beliefs.

- The Baha’is of Orange County presented a Model of Unity award to SUA on May 6. SUA, the Baha’is believe, is working hard to promote inter-group unity.

- The Aliso Viejo Community Association commended SUA on June 3 for its new Millennium Trail, which will be open to the public when the campus is completed. **WT**

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S RECENT ACTIVITIES

SGI President Meets With Exchange Lecturers

On May 27, SGI President Ikeda, founder of Soka University, met with visiting lecturers from China, Africa and India, who are doing research at Soka University through scholarly exchange programs.

Welcoming the academics to the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall, adjacent to Soka University, Mr. Ikeda said he was delighted to have a discussion with such a group of outstanding intellectuals, whose countries he predicted would lead the world in the 21st century. Observing that it was the anniversary of the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first president, the SGI leader shared how Nehru called out for solidarity among the peoples of Asia and Africa, whose lands had been invaded by foreign powers.

On behalf of the lecturers, Dr.



SGI President Ikeda welcomes a group of visiting Soka University lecturers from China, Africa and India to the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, May 27.

Li Fengwu of China's Jilin University thanked President Ikeda for creating Soka University.

"When we come to Soka University," he said, "we feel a sense of homecoming." **WT**

Dr. Sessoms Discusses Human Rights with SGI President

SGI President Ikeda met with Dr. Allen Lee Sessoms, president of Queens College of the City University of New York, on May 31 at the Seikyo Shimbun Building in Shinanomachi, Tokyo. President Ikeda thanked Dr. Sessoms for accepting an honorary doctorate from Soka University the previous day. Citing the educator's statements in his acceptance speech that wisdom is necessary for distinguishing between good and evil and that nurturing such wisdom is the mission of education, the Soka University founder said that Dr. Sessoms' view completely accords with that of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the first Soka Gakkai president.

Mr. Ikeda then quoted Mr. Makiguchi as saying: "Evil people band together, while good people tend to isolate themselves. If this state of affairs continues, evil people will become domineering and good people will recoil in fear, and society will grow even darker. Therefore, the forces of good



SGI President Ikeda meets with Queens College of the City University of New York President Allen Lee Sessoms at the Seikyo Shimbun Building, May 31.

must unite and grow stronger so that they may triumph." The SGI leader talked about how Martin Luther King Jr. repeatedly emphasized that victory

for human rights, humanism and nonviolence can only be achieved by a proactive organization, whose members are bound together by trust. **WT**



The main office of the IOP is in Tokyo.

INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The Universal Value of Buddhist Thought

By JAMIE LIPTAN
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to bridge what is often viewed as an unbridgeable gulf between Western and Eastern thought, the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP) is dedicated to making Asia's rich philosophical heritage accessible to people throughout the world. A non-profit organization established in 1962, the IOP conducts independent research on topics such as Buddhist thought, comparative religion, and the interrelations between religion and science, as well as religion and society.

The Tokyo-based IOP has offices and centers in India, France, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Russia (St. Petersburg). It sponsors original research, and a variety of exchanges between Western and Eastern scholars through seminars, symposiums and public lectures. In addition to compiling a 25,000-volume library of primary source materials on Indian, Chinese and Japanese thought, philosophy and religion, the IOP also catalogued its reference works collection on a computerized database system.

The Institute's stated purpose is "to advance scholarly inquiry on Buddhist thought so as to clarify its universal value and make it a part of humankind's rich spiritual her-

itage." Toward this end, the Institute publishes *The Journal of Oriental Studies*, focusing on the application of Buddhist thought to today's society.

In volume six of *The Journal of Oriental Studies*, Dr. David W. Chappell of the University of Hawaii writes on the Lotus Sutra's significance in the modern world: "The significance of the Lotus Sutra for the coming century is not an abstract question, but involves the visions, decisions, and work of these who are devotees of the Lotus Sutra. For it to be a guiding life for the dawn of a new age, it must become 'the light that shines in the darkness' of our world. Certainly there are perennial forms of darkness that are shared in all ages by humanity, such as sickness, old age, and death, that the Lotus Sutra will continue to alleviate.

"However, there are also specific challenges that dominate each historical period, and already it is clear what some of these major problems will be for the twenty-first century: namely, religious pluralism, the environment, economics and the need for global ethics. How devotees of the Lotus Sutra are responding to these problems in the present can serve as a barometer to measure the significance of the Lotus Sutra for the future." **WT**

PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Gregory Thomson, project director at the St. Maarten Central Agency for Joint Financing Development Programme, has become the treasurer of the Victory Over Violence Foundation on St. Maarten.* Jamie Liptan, World Tribune staff writer, and Jeff Farr, associate editor, talked with him June 11 about his hopes for the VOV movement there.



Gregory Thomson, treasurer of the St. Maarten Victory Over Violence Foundation.

World Tribune: Why did you become involved in SGI-USA's Victory Over Violence campaign?

Gregory Thomson: When I was approached about getting involved with this project, I immediately became excited because it focuses on youth. That is one of the areas that right now we are concentrating our energies on in St. Maarten.

I see a foundation such as VOV playing a major role in combating the problems that our youth are facing now.

WT: What kinds of problems regarding violence are youth on St. Maarten facing?

Thomson: I think that St. Maarten, relatively speaking, has not had much violence as compared to Curacao, which is part of the Dutch Antilles, or some of the big islands and Puerto Rico. The violence here is not at that level.

For us, it is prevention, more of making sure that violence doesn't happen here.

WT: What are the biggest social challenges facing St. Maarten?

Thomson: Especially as far as the youth are concerned, we have a major outflux — youth going to Holland, for example. Some of them are going for academic reasons, and they may or may not return. So we have that well-known phenomenon of "brain drain" affecting us.

We also have youth leaving because of the difficult economic times that we are going through at the moment. We have had five or six hurricanes in just the last five years. The core of our economy is tourism, and our hotels have been severely damaged.

WT: In America, people know the Caribbean as a vacation spot, but they don't normally think of it as a place located between the continents, a

land with just a line separating us into two, it is still two different cultures, really. And if you want to take it further, as far as integration of the Caribbean as a whole, then it becomes even more complicated.

WT: As you know, the purpose of VOV is to bring people together, to teach people to respect one another more. VOV points out that there are lots of other kinds of violence besides physical violence — disrespect is a form of violence, for instance. Do you see that on St. Maarten?

Thomson: I know that the youth wing of the local VOV Foundation has been having activities in the schools using the Quest for Peace videotape, and they have given us briefings that they are meeting children who have been through psychological abuse, or passive violence as it is described. It does happen here.

I don't think that this is yet well documented. Perhaps this is an area where some research could be done, so that we would be able to answer that question from more of a professional standpoint. But, yes, it does exist, and the youth involved in VOV have been pointing it out to us.

We are talking on the foundation's board about having a significant presence on St. Maarten and being able to keep pushing this whole cause of the VOV ideals. We may even eventually offer counseling, assistance for battered wives and shelter for abused children.

WT: You seem to get a lot of fulfillment out of being socially involved. How would you encourage others who want to make a difference?

Thomson: I would say keep an open mind and be flexible. And try to avoid dogmatism and prejudice.

There is much to gain from being socially involved. I have worked with the Red Cross dur-



Orlando Cepeda visits the St. Maarten Little League Stadium on June 5. He spoke with 200 young athletes and coaches about developing a healthy, nonviolent lifestyle.

ing the five years of hurricanes around here, where people have lost their roofs and their homes. There's always a sense of victory when you can secure the funds to help these people out.

Last year, however, I was no longer active with the Red Cross. And when the hurricane came, I was at home. My house got flooded, and I had to evacuate the premises. I could not live in my house for three or four days, until the water dropped.

I was, for the first time, personally a victim of the hurricanes. Since I was not actively involved in disaster preparedness and relief, for the first time I personally knew how people can feel when this happens — really unmotivated.

It took me a month or two before I could recover from that feeling. I got a new perspective on the importance of the work I had done with the Red Cross, on what a difference it can make to people.

One thing you see immediately after a hurricane is that there's definitely a sense of "Let's help each other." There's no question about that. People who may be neighbors but really don't have much interaction start helping one another.

Of course, it really doesn't last too long. But overall, the five years of hurricanes have left us with more of a sense in St. Maarten of "Let's help each other."

Recently, we had the pleasure of signing two financing agreements for St. Maarten, in which a local foundation will be constructing a recreational center for the elderly and the St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation will be constructing

36 apartments for the elderly.

There was one elderly lady who told me that they had been working on this project for 11 years. In the meantime, she said, many of the elderly that started it had died. She was very happy that it had finally become a reality. I think that once in a while, you need to hear something like that. It was really touching. And that is really what reminds you why you are doing what you are doing — that's the satisfaction.

It is easy to forget that people are really benefiting from your work. But that's what keeps you going. Once in a while, you get a little comment like that lady's, and — boom! — you have energy again.

WT: In your dealings with the VOV Foundation, you've come into a lot of contact with the SGI-USA. What are your impressions of the SGI-USA members and the organization as a whole?

Thomson: I feel really comfortable with the people in the SGI-USA. They have a very relaxed, adult kind of approach. And Nestor Torres, Orlando Cepeda — these are wonderful people! You would hardly believe that they are international celebrities because they are so down to earth. The whole cause of the SGI-USA is one with which I agree.

**The Victory Over Violence Foundation of St. Maarten is a non-profit organization established to promote the principles of nonviolence for youth on the island. Although founded by an SGI-USA member, its directors and advisory board represent a cross section of the island's cultural, religious and civic leadership.*

THE SGI AND THE U.N. NGO FORUM

NGO DELEGATES SHARE VIEWS ON THE UNITED NATIONS

By JOAN ANDERSON
AND CONGDON SMITHSGI OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPUTY
DIRECTOR and SGI OFFICE OF PEACE AND
CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIRECTOR

As a nongovernmental organization affiliated with the United Nations, the SGI participated in the NGO Millennium Forum at the U.N. Headquarters in New York during the week of May 22–26. SGI representatives joined more than 1,000 other NGO delegates from more than 100 countries invited by the United Nations to share their views on how the United Nations could best meet the challenges of the 21st century. There were two facets to the SGI's involvement in the forum: One was the dispatch of a delegation to the forum itself, and the other was the sponsorship of two public symposia in its support.

Together with other NGO delegates, SGI representatives discussed the pressing global issues of peace, poverty eradication, human rights, sustainable development, globalization and the need to strengthen and democratize the United Nations. Of particular significance for the SGI is that the final forum report, the Millennium Forum Declaration, included ideas from SGI President Ikeda's 2000 peace proposal, "Peace Through Dialogue: A Time to Talk." The Forum Declaration is to be presented to the Millennium Assembly of U.N. member-states and the Millennium Summit of heads of state to be held at the United Nations starting Sept. 5 and 6, respectively.

The declaration's section on peace, security and disarmament embraces an idea of the SGI president, calling on the United Nations to create a Conflict Prevention Committee within the Security Council to serve as a mechanism for "conflict prevention and early warning."

Regarding the issues of sustainable development and the environment, the document urges civil society "to adopt and disseminate the Earth Charter as a tool for promotion of values and actions which will create sustainable development." It reflects another of the SGI leader's ideas, stating that the best way to transform the prevailing consumerist culture is to work for change in human values first.

During the forum, partici-

pants heard speeches outlining the significance and role of civil society organizations in the new century. Addressing his global audience, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that NGOs bring the concept of "We the People"—the first words of the U.N. Charter—to bear on discussions on global issues. "The people are the new superpower" and governments have to be held accountable to them, Mr. Annan said.

Stating that the role of civil society is now more important than ever, the secretary-general expressed his wish for NGOs to be good partners to the United Nations on the one hand while leading it on the other. The U.N. chief went on to urge NGOs to work with, and not against, businesses, governments and the World Trade Organization to overcome problems presented by globalization.

An active figure in the NGO community, James Garrison of the State of the World Forum, clearly defined the often vaguely understood role of civil society organizations. He did this by first noting that government derives its power and legitimacy from territory and taxation, while business obtains power from its ability to create wealth. Civil society, meanwhile, gets its power and legitimacy from the recognition that "all life is sacred" and because it "represents the conscience of the world, expressed with compassion." The implication of Mr. Garrison's observations was not lost on the audience: The role of civil society is to be active in areas in which government and business are unable or unwilling to take action.

Two public events were cosponsored by SGI in support of the Millennium Forum. Each enabled participants a chance to think about the role they would want to play in the effort to create peace.

On May 23, a symposium entitled "From a Century of War and Violence to a Century of Peace and Hope" was hosted by the SGI at Columbia University Teacher's College—the same location at which President Ikeda spoke in June 1996.

This event kicked off with a moving presentation on the culture of peace by the Renaissance Players, third and seventh graders from C.S. 197M and Frederick Douglas Academy, coached by their teacher, Joan-

nie Weisberger, a member of SGI-USA's New York East Region. Quoting from President Ikeda, Martin Luther King Jr., Walt Whitman and Mahatma Gandhi, the children spoke of their dream of peace with more sincerity and passion than most adults are capable of. The children prepared all the material used themselves, reminding the audience that

"No child is a mere child."

The first speaker was Miyoko Matsubara, who was a 12-year-old schoolgirl in Hiroshima, Japan, when the atomic bomb was dropped on her city on Aug. 6, 1945. She described her anguish at not being able to save her best friend, and how only 37 of her 250 schoolmates survived. For her, she said, every day is Aug. 6, 1945. Her cry of "I hate war" pierced listeners' hearts. Mrs. Matsubara says that she is deeply inspired by President Ikeda's words "A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation, and further, will enable a change in the destiny of all mankind."

Gouri Sathwani, director of The Hague Appeal for Peace, then spoke about the momentum for peace stemming from the historic gathering of 10,000 peace activists at The Hague in the Netherlands last year. She clarified that peace is not just the absence of war. Peace must include the absence of social injustice, of environmental degradation and of poverty. She described how The Hague Appeal for Peace intends to see that peace education reaches every school in the world.

Majid Tehranian, director of the Toda Global Peace and Policy Research Institute, then described the 20th century as that of death by design. He urged that in the 21st century be one of peace by design, describing the Toda Institute's programs that promote a dialogue of civilizations.

On May 25, a large audience gathered at the New York Cul-



On May 25, a discussion on 'Creation of Violence-Free Communities' takes place at the SGI-USA's New York Culture Center. The event was held the same week as the NGO Millennium Forum at the U.N. Headquarters, May 22–26.

ture Center for a discussion on "Creation of Violence-Free Communities" featuring Yvette Edmond, co-chair of the SGI-USA Victory Over Violence program and Youth Peace Committee, with guest speakers.

Nickolai Parker, from the World Movement for Nonviolence, outlined that organization's programs to reach schools with the message of King and Gandhi. Dr. "Raj" Ramanathapillai of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence then spoke of Gandhi's philosophy and how violence comes from ignorance of our interconnectedness.

The audience was captivated by Dr. Raj's account of a bomb attack in his native Sri Lanka. Terrorists aiming at a military camp had failed to reach their target, and their bomb had exploded in a crowded bus just yards from the entrance to the camp. Witnessing the explosion, Dr. Raj debated whether to approach the soldier on guard at the entrance to the camp for help, aware that this soldier could start shooting, thinking that he was a terrorist.

He walked towards the soldier with his hands up, maintaining eye contact, and then asked the soldier if he could call a military truck to take the injured to the hospital. After a moment in which Dr. Raj said "my whole life changed," the soldier agreed. This was Dr. Raj's first experience of positive nonviolence in action.

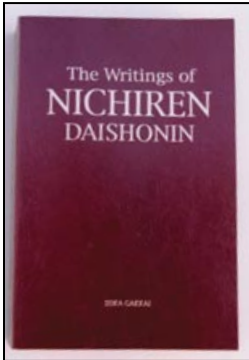
Yvette Edmond described the incredible success of the VOV project, which addresses violence, including passive vi-

olence like name-calling or putting people down, on a person-to-person level. More than 3,000 VOV discussion meetings have been held, and more than 100,000 people have signed the VOV pledge. Requests from schools and education authorities in many areas are pouring in, and VOV urgently needs a bigger pool of trained youth facilitators in order to respond. VOV is now working in partnership with other groups addressing youth violence, such as Passages to Peace, a group for former gang members, and Global Network.

The final speaker was the charismatic Dr. Paul Smith, civil rights movement veteran and pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. He urged everyone to start with personal transformation and deal with his or her hate, fear and prejudice. He asked the audience to take action and not be afraid of making mistakes, to "think outside the box" and make what we hunger for real. Dr. Smith endeared himself to the SGI-USA members by encouraging them to chant whenever faced with difficult or violent situations. "This is New York," he said. "Everybody's talking to themselves or singing. If someone next to you has a bad attitude, chant!"

These thought-provoking evenings, which also featured lively Q-and-A sessions, helped the SGI-USA members to see that they really are part of a global movement of citizens working for a better world. Their Buddhist practice and principles equip them perfectly to work for peace. **WT**

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COMBATING GLOBAL VIOLENCE:

The Human Spirit Knows No Borders

By CONGDON SMITH

SGI OFFICE OF PEACE AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Youth violence knows no borders. It happens in Japan just as it happens in the United States. The weapons used by youth to commit acts of violence might differ in each country, but the result is the same: People are harmed, sometimes fatally.

Why is there such violence? What can a person do to prevent it in one's immediate environment? These are some of the questions considered by panelists and participants at the SGI-USA-organized symposium "Creating Violence-Free Communities," held at the SGI-USA New York Culture Center on May 25, co-sponsored by the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence.

Commentary abounds in the media, linking youth violence to what young people see on television and on the Internet. It also cites the two-generation nuclear family living in comfortable but increasingly impersonal suburbs as another cause. If these might be "micro-level" theories, what are some "macro-level" reasons?

"Homelessness in the hearts of youth" is how Yvette Edmond, co-chair of SGI-USA's Victory Over Violence pro-

gram, accounted for global youth violence. One explanation for this is the lack of love at home and in society. Young people strike out in violent ways to obtain the attention they need—even if it is infamy. Why do families and societies become this way, particularly in prosperous, industrialized societies, in which one would expect more civility?

Dr. "Raj" Ramanathapillai of the M.K. Gandhi Institute shared the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, commenting that "overconsumption leads to violence." According to Dr. Raj, acquisitiveness makes people more likely to disregard the humanity of others, and more prone to violent acts. It follows that while capitalism and industrialization have enabled entire societies to achieve unparalleled material abundance, this has not happened without cost to the human spirit. Dr. Raj added that Gandhi would often say that people make the mistake of hating the person and not the act, and saw unconditional forgiveness as a sacred path.

A legacy of the American civil rights struggle was shared by Dr. Paul Smith, who observed that his mentor, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "was always making himself vulnerable." Dr. Smith advised that to over-

come serious hatred, individuals need to do this repeatedly.

Nonviolence activist Nickolai Parker suggested that one needs a release for hatred and pointed to spiritual practice as the means that enables individuals to connect with their higher selves.

Yes, the human spirit is ailing. But the human spirit—which knows no borders—is also undaunted in the face of inhumanity. The philosophy of nonviolence traveled from India to the United States to inspire the civil rights movement. It is once again gaining in importance as the philosophical backbone of the human rights movement that is SGI-USA's VOV project.

In like manner, the song "We Shall Overcome" was first sung during the nonviolent Indian struggle for independence. The hymn then became a rallying cry of the civil rights movement. It has recently returned to its native India, where downtrodden (low-caste) Dalits are singing it to gain inspiration in their struggle for equality. The song today is a shining international symbol of human resilience. Violence may know no borders, but the human spirit is equally unfettered by boundaries in its struggle to overcome inhumanity. **WV**

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Cherry Blossoms on a Pond

There is a pond that each spring turns into a flowered mirror. Flower blossoms scattered, petal by petal, gently covering the water's surface like a delicate silk scarf scented with sweet fragrance. To the koi-fish in the pond, they must have looked like clouds spreading across the sky. Again, the pink flower-petals on the water's surface must have resembled scaly-pink clouds at sunset. Blown by the breeze, the shape of this mass of cherry petals shifted and changed like a school of fish, an ever-moving kaleidoscope image. The pond, which is in a corner of the Soka Gakkai Headquarters complex, was lit by the brightness of a beautiful spring day.

The fish and the entire spring scene were like finely decorated brocade. Cherry blossoms adorned the water's surface like a dotted pattern of inlaid mother-of-pearl. The reflections of hanging cherry branches danced amid ripples on the water; the clear-blue sky seemed to reflect up from the pond's very bottom. The small pond was not small at all. Encompassing heaven and earth, nothing was lacking. It was its own fully expansive universe.

Looking up, spring clouds streamed across the sky, always in motion, like flower blossoms of the heavens. Don't people live in their own small ponds?

*Many things past are
Brought back to my memory
By cherries in bloom*

This haiku by the famous poet Basho may well express the sentiment of most Japanese. We live out our years recording another ring of growth with each season of cherry blossoms.

When I was a boy, our house in the Kojiya district of Tokyo's Ota ward had a wide yard in which grew a large cherry tree. Each spring, both ground and sky were awash with flowers, our house an abode of blossoms. After we sold our house, the cherry tree was cut down. During the war, the lot became a munitions factory. Under daily bombing, Tokyo was a burned-out ruin.

One day I went for a walk in a section of Kamata district that had escaped destruction. It was in the spring of 1945, the last year of the war, but the war was still under way. As I strolled along, lost in thought, something bright appeared before my eyes. A few cherry trees had been spared and were in full, brilliant bloom. This colorful scene stood out like a point of light amid the ashen landscape of a ruined city. Life filled each blossoming branch, each treetop. At that moment those cherry trees stood for the richness of life. At the same time, however, the nationalist military rulers of Japan were using the cherry tree as a symbol of death. With the motto "Gallantly [give your lives] like scattering blossoms," they sent several million blossoming youth to their deaths. My friends and my brothers scattered themselves in this way among distant southern seas.

*Ah, cherry blossoms—
Some scatter, while some remain
To fall in the end*

At 17, I remained, without scattering in the winds of war. Year after year, blossoms bloom and fall — cherry blossoms of life. People often reflect on their lives with the falling blossoms.

President Toda loved the cherry blossoms. About this or that he would say, "When the cherries are in bloom," and "Let's walk the path of cherry blossoms." On occasion, we would walk together from Ichigaya to observe the cherry trees in full bloom. Standing on the bank of a moat, my teacher would say, "These cherry trees have endured the bitter cold of winter to bloom yet again!" Their image mirrored the blossoms of happiness that had accumulated in Mr. Toda's heart, having endured the bitter winter of imprisonment during the war.

"Winter will turn into spring without fail!" he would declare. He also said, "I want to die when the cherries are in bloom." That wish came to pass. Having filled the hearts of many people with the fragrant spring of happiness, gal-

lantly, with serene dignity, he scattered his life to the wind along with the cherry blossoms. And like the falling blossoms, my mentor's life ended with dignity and splendor.

The koi leapt and splashed in the water, and the raft of flower petals changed its form. Newly fallen blossoms danced in the breeze. Each petal seemed to glow with new life, descending joyfully toward the "skies" of the pond. Though fallen, they seemed to bloom again on the water's surface. Now, at the height of their lives, they offered themselves as a gift to the earth. Their scattering was not an end but an outpouring of life.

I took this picture on April 7, 1994. That evening, I greeted a delegation of the Chinese People's International Friendship Association. They had come to open an exhibit of modern masterpieces of painting and calligraphy by renowned Chinese artists. The exhibit was being held to commemorate the institution of friendly relations between our two countries. This was art of the "Hundred Flowers Movement," fragrant with the spirit of peace. Friendship Association Vice President Wang Xiaoxian spoke of my relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Zhou Enlai and the season of cherry blossoms.

Mr. Zhou had recalled to me that he left Japan [after studying there] 50 years before when the cherries were in bloom. I had invited him to "please come again when the cherries are blossoming." Later, fulfilling Mr. Zhou's wish, his wife had visited Japan in the season of cherry blossoms. "When the cherries are in bloom"—these were Mr. Zhou's last words to me.

Just as layer after layer of petals fill a flower basket, the blossoms of memories I have created over the years decorate my life. I pray that it will be the same for all of my friends. A monarch of flowers, the cherry blossom symbolizes the spirit of a champion of life, living fully to the end.