

DEAN LAWRENCE CARTER SPEAKS IN LOS ANGELES
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Lawrence E. Carter, dean of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College in Atlanta, gave a bright and engaging lecture at the SGI-USA's Los Angeles Friendship Center on Dec. 10, 2000. More than 300 people gathered to hear Dean Carter, a Baptist minister, share his views on Buddhism's role in society and recount stories from his September 2000 visit with SGI President Ikeda in Japan.

"The SGI is perhaps the most outstanding example of Christian giving that I know of," Dean Carter said. "It's absolutely overwhelming. You are a wonderfully rich spiritual tradition. Just keep up the good work. Don't let anybody convince you that you're on the wrong path. The direct path is always a good path—where you don't have any intercessors, no mediators. You know it for yourself."

Dean Carter recently founded the Gandhi Institute for Reconciliation and will soon publish a book on ethics in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. King and President Ikeda. He has been an eager participant in the SGI-USA's Victory Over Violence project since encountering the SGI in early 2000, lecturing at VOV events in Puerto Rico, St. Maarten, Atlanta and at the University of Michigan. At Dean Carter's request, the SGI-USA's "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities" exhibition will show at Morehouse College during the month of January.

Praising President Ikeda for his work in the area of education, Dean Carter commented: "I just finished reading the educational proposal written by Dr. Ikeda in the *World Tribune* (Nov. 24, 2000). I have done my own content analysis of it, and I'd like to request more copies so I can distribute them to certain key educators around the country. I will also be quoting from it in my second speech at Harvard University on Jan. 15, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

Dean Carter also quoted from a letter he had written to President Ikeda, saying: "Your emphasis is clearly on practice and not on preaching. Your attention to suffering people and the oppressed is absolutely praiseworthy. I count myself as one of your disciples and foot soldiers in the cause of value creation. Your wonderful work is a sudden visitation that has lifted my life. I will help make sure that it does not vanish.

"As I continue to read your work with its clarity and far reaching implications, I feel both challenged and inspired to work more effectively and from a place of personal happiness. Your SGI is helping our chapel become more international."