

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S JUNE 1 SPEECH ETERNAL FORTUNE, ETERNAL BENEFIT

'I want you to win by all means,' says SGI President Ikeda. 'Your earnest struggles now will become good fortune and benefit that will adorn your life eternally.'

SGI President Ikeda's speech on accepting an honorary professorship from China's Fujian Teachers University at the Soka International Friendship Hall in Sendagaya, Tokyo, June 1.

Members of the Tokyo women's division and the student division—from the bottom of my heart, thank you for your efforts to be here today!

The Chinese characters for the name Fujian mean to build good fortune or construct a palace of good fortune and virtue. What a wonderful ring it has!

Historically, Fujian Province, which is in southeastern China, has produced a succession of leaders who have selflessly fought for the happiness of the people. One of these, the youth Lin Juemin, died a martyr in 1911 at the age of 24, during the popular revolution to open the way to a modern China.

Even now, the letter that Lin penned to his beloved wife prior to the desperate uprising in which he was resolved to die continues to stir people's souls. At the time, his wife was pregnant with their second child.

This youth of Fujian wrote: "Even if I should die today, I will have no regrets. As to whether the work of revolution will be accomplished, because of my trusted comrades I have no worry. You must instruct the young child I will leave behind and the child yet to be born so that they carry on their father's spirit as their own." The great country that is modern China has been constructed through the transmission of such a supremely noble, heroic spirit.

Fujian Teachers University has been a powerful driving force behind China's modernization. It is a palace of education that over the course of nearly a century has raised 100,000 capable people who have gone on to contribute to society.

The role of women is decisive in achieving world peace.

Respected Vice President Zheng Yishu, esteemed members of the faculty of Fujian Teachers University, Dr. and Mrs. Sun Li Chuan, distinguished guests: It is an extraordinary privilege for my wife and I to be named honorary professors of your distinguished university, which is carrying on work of profound significance. Our most sincere gratitude.

This year marks the 130th anniversary of the birth of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the first Soka Gakkai president—a great predecessor, who gave his life for the cause of peace. As a young man, Mr. Maki-guchi taught at a school in Tokyo for students from China called the Kobun Gakuin. There were some 68 youth from Fujian Province registered at the school. Lin Juemin, whom I mentioned a moment ago, was one of those who had studied at this academy that had such a close connection with President Makiguchi. In view of these ties, my wife and I dedicate this crown of wisdom from your university to our great mentor and predecessor President Makiguchi.

My wife's family joined the Soka Kyoiku Gakkai [forerunner of the Soka Gakkai] at a time when President Maki-guchi was standing up against the country's militarist

1

Title: Eternal Fortune, Eternal Benefit

Subject: World Tribune 08/17/01 n.3359 p.6 WT010817p06 Sendagaya, Tokyo, Japan 06/01/01

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: 06/01/01 Benefit Encouragement Eternal Fortune Guidance Ikeda Japan July Leadership
Messages Peace President Proposals Sendagaya September Speeches through Tokyo Tribune World+more...

authorities, who were perpetrating a war of aggression in China. It was exactly 60 years ago this summer. She has been in the Soka Gakkai longer than I have. [On Aug. 24, it will be 54 years since President Ikeda joined the Soka Gakkai.]

My wife and her mother have regarded it as their great pride and joy to practice as members of the Tokyo women's division, the main force of kosen-rufu. Accordingly, my wife expressed the strong wish to share this supreme honor with all the members of the Tokyo women's division, with whom she has shared so many joys and struggles.

Members of the Tokyo women's division, I sincerely congratulate you on holding this meeting today, which will set the pace toward future victory!

Fujian Teachers University has been a great pioneer in opening the path of education to women. Today, women are becoming an indispensable force for peace. The role of women is decisive.

Twenty-one years ago, my wife and I had a discussion with the prominent author Madam Xie Bingxin, who was the pride of Fujian. Traveling together with a delegation of Chinese writers headed by the great author Ba Jin, she paid us a visit at a training center in Shizuoka Prefecture on April 5, 1980.

Sadly, Ms. Xie died two years ago. Professor Wang Wending, dean of the Literature Department at Fujian Teachers University, who is here with us today, is a leading expert on Ms. Xie's works.

Ms. Xie consistently appealed to the women of Japan to play an active role for peace. "The men of the world may again lust for war," she wrote. "But when that happens, we women must not allow them to bear arms.... Japan and China must join hands; that is our solemn destiny.... War must be prevented by the hands of us women."

As long as leaders are arrogant, the people will remain miserable.

We have with us today a number of representatives from the neighboring country of South Korea. A warm welcome to all!

How numerous are the cultural blessings that Japan, an island country, has received since ancient times from China and Korea, from which it is separated by only a narrow strip of water. A familiar example of culture that was transmitted to Japan from Fujian Province is karate, which is a martial art of peace. There are also a number of popular foods that Japan acquired from Fujian Province, including *karinto* (fried dough cake), *somen* (thin wheat noodles) and *oolong* tea. And that is just to name a few — you could go on and on.

Unless Japan sincerely respects and works to deepen trust and friendship with China and Korea, to which it has such an enormous debt, it will enjoy neither peace nor prosperity. This is the true path along which Japan must advance. I am convinced that only if Japan does so can the country repay its great debt to Asia.

Politicians who fail to understand this are disqualified as leaders. We citizens have to strictly supervise their actions on this point.

As long as leaders are foolish and arrogant, the people will forever remain miserable. And their misery will spread to the neighboring countries as well.

The Japanese, because they lack a solid philosophy or set of principles, tend to be easily swept away by the current of the times. Many people have voiced concern that Japan is now at a dangerous juncture. We absolutely must not allow Japan to stray again along the path of nationalism. We have to prevent that at any cost.

It is by women tirelessly and fearlessly speaking out for justice in society, while building

their circles of friendship and expanding their solidarity, that we can lay a solid foundation for peace in the 21st century. I hope the members of the Tokyo women's division, standing in the vanguard of this effort, will cheerfully advance, resolutely and wisely pioneering the expansion of humanism and democracy in society.

This is the Century of Women. And you, the members of the Tokyo women's division, are the model for such an age. When the Tokyo women's division moves, the entire country moves. You have the power to muster to action women in all spheres of society.

Buddhism is victory or defeat. Life, too, is victory or defeat. When you win, there is buoyancy and pride. When you are defeated, everyone feels sad and forlorn.

Therefore, I want you to win by all means. Your earnest struggles now will become good fortune and benefit that will adorn your life eternally. And this good fortune and benefit will be passed on to all your descendants. That is an absolute principle of the Mystic Law.

Ordinary people are truly a force to be reckoned with.

A poem by Ms. Xie, Fujian's "mother of poetic spirit," resonates in my heart:

*Blades of grass that do not stand out!
Have confidence in yourself.
This world is adorned by your universal power.*

I think we could read this passage as encouragement for the Soka Gakkai women's division, which has been blazing the way for the past 50 years.

Ordinary people, those who make up the grass roots of society, are the strongest. Vain people might appear strong but are in fact weak. Such people are bent on trying to make themselves appear strong. It is ordinary people, it is people of belief and conviction, who are truly a force to be reckoned with.

An "unadorned" person, free of vanity and pretension, a person who has a great objective, a person who embraces justice—what a brilliant light is emitted by the life of such a person! Such a person has thousands, tens of thousands of times, the power of the vain and pretentious.

Nichiren Daishonin teaches that the eternal essence of life is "neither created nor adorned but remaining in its original state" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 759). A life inherently endowed with the three enlightened properties is supremely respectable. That is the revelation of the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Ms. Xie further sings:

*Pioneer!
Once you establish your
objective,
absolutely never look back!
For if you should look back,
the cowardly life within
your heart
will bring a halt to your
advance.*

It is exactly as she says. From our standpoint, this means that once we determine to set

out on the struggle for kosen-rufu, which is the cause of supreme justice, we must not harbor doubts about our decision.

I hope you will have a sense of honor and pride in knowing that women are truly pioneers in this struggle. Let us always continue advancing—this is the true path of the Century of Women.

When we busily take action for others, our misfortune quickly disappears.

Ms. Xie also writes:

Idleness brings sorrow.

*Being busy eradicates
suffering.*

My friends, joy is found in unflagging activity.

She is saying that not doing anything only brings misery. When we busily take action for others, misfortune disappears. Joy is found in continuous activity.

The message of this poem is that as long as we live, we should work joyously for others, for society, for the cause of justice. This means resolutely speaking out for justice, vigorously living our lives and advancing.

Otherwise, we will just grow old without accomplishing anything. Regret is all that will remain. We absolutely must not lead such a pointless existence.

One step at a time, one stage at a time, one day at a time, please continue working with boundless tenacity until you are victorious in constructing an unshakable self and accumulating eternal good fortune.

The Daishonin, citing an example from Chinese history, explains that a group that has perfect unity will be victorious (see *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 618). I hope the honorable members of the Tokyo women's division, becoming still more harmonious and forging an even stronger spiritual unity, will create a drama of complete victory that astounds our fellow members throughout Japan and the world.

To construct an ideal society, we must make the people ever stronger.

The school seal of Fujian Teachers University includes the images of a brilliant sun and sprouting leaves. I am determined to work together with the distinguished faculty of your university—which is the sun of the Century of Education—to illuminate the future, so that the youth of China and Japan can thrive like young leaves.

I thank all of the young men and young women of the student division from 78 universities in the Tokyo metropolitan area, including Soka University, for their attendance today.

Under the leadership of President Zeng Minyong, Fujian Teachers University will next year mark the 95th anniversary of its founding. My heartfelt congratulations also on the school's upcoming centennial in 2007, a milestone that shines brilliantly in the annals of education. I pray for the eternal glory of your university as it embarks on its great new voyage of peace and friendship from Fujian, which once served as an important foothold along the Marine Silk Road. May the school enjoy glory that endures a hundred generations.

My profound prayers for the excellent health, and boundless good fortune and wisdom of our esteemed guests and of all those gathered here today, so full of vitality and hope for

the future.

The outstanding Fujian thinker Yan Fu declares: “To construct an ideal society, first arouse the power of the people! Second, develop the wisdom of the people! Third, elevate the humanity of the people!”

It is truly as he says. I am confident that these are words of complete truth and justice. They are powerfully resonant with the SGI spirit. I conclude this speech of deep gratitude by confirming together with all of you this heartfelt cry for the victory of the people.

Xie Xie! (Thank you very much!)