



### EXPERIENCE

**With fearless faith, the Takaki family wins a long court battle.**

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FROM SGI-USA GENERAL DIRECTOR DANNY NAGASHIMA

# Thank You for Your Support!

**'Thanks to all of you, we in the American SGI organization have accomplished our first victory since May 3, 2001,' SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima says. 'All over the nation, our annual contribution activity has been an unprecedented success! Thank you — all of you — very, very much!'**

**T**hank you so much for your great efforts to support our annual commemorative contribution.

I have been so moved by how much SGI President Ikeda has been talking about

victory recently. In his many messages and poems that we have received, he encourages us over and over again that "we have won," and that "we will win in the future."

Thanks to all of you, we in the American SGI organization have accomplished our first victory since May 3, 2001. All over the nation, our annual contribution activity has been an unprecedented success! Thank you — all of you — very, very much! As general director, I deeply appreciate all you have done.

As President Ikeda has reminded us, this is the first May 3 of the new millennium. In accordance with the principle of consistency from beginning to end, this wonderful success is a great way for us to begin the new millennium, and is the first step in our momentous advance.

This steady succession of victories is built upon the individual successes and breakthroughs each one of us shows



Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima encourages New York members.

in our lives. I have been traveling all over the United States, and I have been hearing story after story of members showing such wonderful actual proof during this first May of the new century. Members are winning at work, overcoming illness and developing wonderful relationships. They are saying, with eyes full of joy, "I have won!"

And even those people I have met who are still working to accomplish their dreams are filled with the joy of faith, based on the conviction that "I will win!" All of us are building wonderful, happy lives, and on this basis, a vibrant, happy organization is being created, and a wonderful future of humanity is being constructed.

On May 3, President Ikeda

wrote a poem to start the second Seven Bells called "The Indestructible Power of the People," which is featured on pages 6–8 of this issue. In the final stanza, he expresses his conviction in the great victory of our movement, not just for this year but for the next century. Our victory is a victory of truth and justice, a victory of the people and the victory of humanity!

*Whatever happens,  
Our movement of 10  
million friends —  
Powerfully united  
In faith and spirit  
And the cause of truth and  
justice —  
Constitutes a great move-  
ment of the people  
That will go down forever  
in history.  
It is a true picture of the  
people,  
Ever-victorious,  
indestructible, fearless.  
What an inspiring  
And sublime sight it is!*

Congratulations! I thank each and every one of you for being such an important part of our movement, and thank you for your sincere and heartfelt contribution. **WT**

Photo by LINDA THORNBURG



Visitors view the 'Gandhi, King, Ikeda: A Legacy of Building Peace' exhibition during the opening ceremony of its run at Ohio State University, May 16.

## GANDHI, KING, IKEDA EXHIBITION

# Ohio State Welcomes Exhibit

By **JAMIE LIPTAN**  
STAFF WRITER

**T**he "Gandhi, King, Ikeda: A Legacy of Building Peace" exhibition made the first stop on its international tour at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, from May 14–28. More than 150 people attended the official opening ceremony May 16, held in the lobby of university President William Kirwan's office in Bricker Hall. The exhibition is scheduled to visit many prestigious American universities.

The mayor of Columbus, Michael Coleman, offered a Certificate of Recognition for

the event, and SGI President Ikeda donated 100 books on the lives of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the university's libraries.

In a letter of appreciation to President Ikeda, OSU's Director of Libraries Joseph Brantin wrote: "The Universities Libraries is proud of its role in preserving the record, represented in these books, of the inspiring and important work toward the building of human understanding...demonstrated by Mohandas K. Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and you."

"During the creation of this exhibition," said SGI-USA

General Director Danny Nagashima, "we learned that each of these men loved to read and how it became an intricate part of their lives. Now, their legacy continues to encourage young people to read."

Dr. Lawrence Carter, dean of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College and the man who conceived of the exhibition, also attended the event. "What we are doing here tonight," he said, "is what we are encouraging you to do in your organizations and clubs, and that is to encourage people who are trying to bring people together." **WT**

## JULY 3: MENTOR-AND-DISCIPLE DAY

# The Courage To Always Look Ahead

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

ON MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM AND THE SGI

By JASON HENNINGER  
LOS ANGELES



Early in the evening of July 3, 1945, Josei Toda was released from prison. His health had deteriorated during incarceration, his mentor, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, had died in prison, and his beloved Soka Kyoiku Gakkai (forerunner of the Soka Gakkai) was broken. Scattered and frightened, many members had gone into hiding, quit practicing Buddhism or turned against the organization. Japan in general was in a state of terrible crisis, and many thousands were on the brink of starvation. One way of looking at that July 3 is

to say he was released from prison into another nightmare.

But this was not how Toda saw his life that day. For him, it was not just the day he got out of prison—it was the day he began to reconstruct the organization. Amid the chaos of poverty, disease and foreign occupation, he had only his own wisdom and ferocious determination with which to resurrect the Soka Gakkai phoenix-

like from Japan's ashes. And he did more than just resurrect it: He transformed it into a vast, powerful movement for change, an organization with 750,000 households by the time of his death.

On July 3, 1957, just after 7:00 p.m., Daisaku Ikeda, Toda's disciple, was also arrested. He was charged with violating the election laws in support of a Soka Gakkai-backed candidate in the Osaka Upper House by-elections. By remarkable coincidence, it was at 7:00 p.m. exactly 12 years earlier that Toda has been released from prison.

Some members from Tokyo had been involved in election law violations in Osaka. Though prosecutors knew Mr. Ikeda was not involved, they threatened to arrest his mentor if he would not personally accept the charges. Toda was very ill at the time, and his youthful disciple knew that any time in

prison would be the same as a death sentence for his mentor. So he took on the charges of voter fraud and fought to prove his innocence in court. "If I take the blame, what does it matter if I am falsely accused, if it is for the sake of President Toda and the Soka Gakkai?" he thought (September 1991 *Seikyo Times*, p. 30). In the end, Daisaku Ikeda was cleared of all charges.

So why is July 3 celebrated as Mentor-and-Disciple Day? What do July 3, 1945, and July 3, 1957, have in common, apart from where they are on the calendar and having something to do with imprisonment? In both cases, it is clear the mentor's and the disciple's eyes were on the future. The spirit of this day is to work toward the future.

In *The New Human Revolution*, when Shin'ichi Yamamoto (President Ikeda's character) considers the possibility of jail and the reality of the court battle, he says to him-

self, "When viewed in terms of the long journey we have yet to travel to accomplish kosen-rufu, these troubles are trifling. They are like a spring storm" (vol. 4, p. 35). After his two-week imprisonment, President Ikeda went on to prove the righteousness of the Soka Gakkai and protected his beloved mentor. If Toda had been arrested instead, the still-young organization would have been dealt a possible setback.

Mentor-and-Disciple Day ultimately celebrates the courage and dedication shared by the Soka Gakkai presidents. Where would we be if any of them had been less than courageous? Where would we be if we as SGI members were not also determined, forward-thinking and brave? We, mentor and disciples together, see the future for all its promise, despite its difficulties. And because of that, we continue to advance. **WT**

# The Three Powerful Enemies

## Back to the Basics

By DAVE McNEILL  
WEST HILLS, CALIF.



Enemies. On the surface, the word seems so out of place in a Buddhist newspaper, more appropriate in a Superman comic or a John Le Carré thriller. Aren't we about the positive virtues of personal happiness and peace? Don't we try to see the good in everyone and respect their Buddha nature? How can we call someone something as negative as "enemy"?

In Buddhism, though, enemies aren't necessarily negative. In fact, depending on our reaction to them, enemies aren't enemies at all but our profoundest friends. As Nichiren Daishonin writes, "It is not one's allies but one's powerful enemies who assist one's progress" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 770). The Daishonin even calls his major persecutors, like Ryokan and Hei no Saemon, his "best allies" (WND,

770) and assures us that "only by defeating a powerful enemy can one prove one's real strength" (WND, 302). That's pretty positive.

Fortunately, we, too, can encounter the three powerful enemies. They're described in the Lotus Sutra's "Encouraging Devotion" chapter by bodhisattvas who have vowed to spread the sutra's message. These bodhisattvas know that because they will be doing such great good, people will arise equally dedicated to opposing them—as in every action has an equal, opposite reaction. Though not termed as enemies in the sutra, centuries later

Miao-lo of China coined the term appropriately because anyone hostile to the sutra's liberating message is indeed its enemy.

Ignorant lay people are the first described. They verbally and physically attack those who preach the Lotus Sutra, blindly following authority figures and never trying to discern truth or falsehood for themselves.

Arrogant and cunning priests, the second type, are ruled by conceit, twisting the Buddhist teachings for their own benefit. They cannot respect anyone who has achieved greater wisdom and cannot accept that any teaching may be superior to their own.

False saints are best characterized by condescension and greed and are the third and most powerful of the persecutors. They concoct lies to defame the sutra's votaries and work together with secular authorities to destroy them.

Though written centuries ago, we can all recognize these types of people easily today. Importantly, we should realize that these people aren't enemies simply because they don't like us. Buddhism doesn't concern

itself with such parochial or sectarian ideas. The significance of these enemies far exceeds such petty concerns. It goes to the heart of humanity's welfare, as it concerns the Buddhist imperative that we increase and strengthen the good and counteract and limit the evil within us and society.

As SGI President Ikeda writes: "The Lotus Sutra, which explains that all people can attain Buddhahood and that all people are Buddhas, embodies a spirit of supreme respect for human beings. By contrast, those teachings and ideas that seek to turn people into 'things' to be exploited embody ultimate disrespect for human beings. At root, such disrespect is an expression of fundamental darkness. On the level of the individual, practicing the Lotus Sutra means confronting the fundamental darkness in one's own life" (August 1997 *Living Buddhism*, pp. 42–43).

Buddhism emphasizes the three powerful enemies not so we can go around demonizing and labeling others as some cartoon archfiend. The concept's importance lies in our awareness of and reaction to such fun-

damental darkness and our willingness to continue to proclaim the truth over and over—for our own human revolution and for the sake of justice and human rights.

For more on the three powerful enemies, see President Ikeda's "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra" in the August 1997 *Living Buddhism*, available on the Pubs 97–98 CD-ROM and in the third volume of *The Wisdom of the Lotus Sutra*, available this summer.

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EXPERIENCE — CHIENO TAKAKI, TORRANCE, CALIF.

# USING PRAYER TO FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

**Facing possible eviction from their home, Chieno Takaki and her husband use their practice of faith to uncover a plan to defraud them.**

I moved to the United States from Japan in 1957. I then married my husband, Clarence, who was already here. The move was difficult for me and I was very homesick, crying almost every night. I was so distraught, I even tried to commit suicide. It was during this period that I was introduced to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and joined the Soka Gakkai. Quite honestly, I was not seeking out Buddhism. I was looking for a friend and companionship.

A month later, October 1960, my husband and I were able to meet SGI President Ikeda on his first trip to the United States. President Ikeda was very warm and encouraging to all of us. This was a turning point in my practice. My husband and I were appointed as men's and women's group leaders for the first district of Los Angeles Chapter. Without having a deep understanding of Buddhism or the ability to speak English well, we participated in SGI activities.

When we first moved to the United States, my husband and I grew flowers to earn a living, but in 1966, we began growing strawberries. We would begin picking, by hand, every morning at 2:00 a.m. and continue until 7:00 a.m. We knew that if we waited until sunrise, the strawberries could become damaged. We would even talk to our crops, telling them, "Good morning, strawberries!" and "Good night, strawberries!" When we shipped the strawberries out, we felt as though we were sending off our children. We put our entire lives into our work.

Some time later, in 1979, I began to experience pain in my abdomen. The doctors discovered that I had a tumor that had been growing for quite a while. While I weighed around 90 pounds, the tumor weighed eight. The doctor told us that I would have only about a 50 percent chance of surviving an op-



Clarence and Chieno Takaki in front of their new house in Torrance, Calif.

eration to remove the tumor, but the operation was our only recourse. My husband prayed sincerely, saying, "Gohonzon, if my wife is of any use for kosen-rufu, please cure her disease."

The surgery was a complete success. I believe that my husband's prayer was the main cause of my survival and recovery. His prayers saved my life.

In 1991, my husband had a stroke and was hospitalized. We then learned he would no longer be able to walk and would have to depend on a wheelchair. Because of this new turn of events, we decided to sell the farm and move. (My husband completely recovered, however, and was able to walk again in a few months.)

Three years later, we began to sense that something was not right. Since we had left the farm, we had not received payment from the person who bought our land. Around this same time, we received a notice from the bank to evict us from the home we were then living in. This was most unusual because we had purchased that house—in cash. We were shocked to say the least. After conferring with friends, we collected all our documentation and met with an attorney to

discuss our options.

Shortly thereafter, my husband decided to sue the bank. I was surprised by my husband's decision because he is usually rather reserved and not one to pick a fight. However, based on my prayer, I decided to support my husband's decision. This would be our joint struggle.

I remembered the encouragement we received from President Ikeda in 1960 when he spoke of his fearless faith in the Gohonzon. I truly believed that we were going to overcome this obstacle, no matter what.

I began to practice even harder than before. I often thought of the words of Nichiren Daishonin: "Those who believe in the Lotus Sutra are as if in winter, but winter always turns to spring" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 536). We chanted more, worked with the members and fought to strengthen our local SGI organization.

The case went to trial in 1997. No one thought that we would win. Even our attorney told us we were going to lose. However, through the course of the trial, it was revealed that we had been the victims of a scam. The person who bought our land, the real estate broker and the bank had conspired to defraud us. We won the case.

But, it did not end there.

The verdict was appealed and in 1999 the case was brought before the California Supreme Court.

For this case, I knew I would have to strengthen my practice more than ever. Yet the anxiety and stress were often too much to bear. I would sometimes wake up in the middle of the night so worried that I would start chanting daimoku.

During this trial, I was also

asked to take the witness stand; it was the first time I had been called on to do so. However, I was not shaken. Based on my prayers, I answered clearly and honestly, as I knew I had nothing to hide.

Again, we were victorious and this past July we received the money that was due to us. The man who initially bought the land from us was later convicted and sent to prison.

The day we won was also my birthday. I will never forget this day as long as I live. I felt a profound appreciation to the Gohonzon and the incredible power of daimoku.

After we learned of the verdict, I sent a letter to President Ikeda to report our victory. I was surprised when we received a response: "Congratulations for your victory! I sincerely pray for your great health and honorable prosperity."

All my sufferings and struggles over those seven years became the greatest joy when we received this encouragement from President Ikeda. I could not even speak through my tears. I was the happiest person in the world.

I have such gratitude for the Gohonzon, President Ikeda and all the members who have been continuously supporting us. My husband and I are determined to continue showing actual proof in our practice and doing whatever we can for the kosen-rufu movement. **WT**



Clarence and Chieno, pioneer SGI-USA members, started their strawberry farm in 1966.

Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI

## SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S SPEECH MAY 21 SPEECH — PART 1

# The Force of People Awakened

**'It is not those in positions of authority or famous people in society who possess the greatest power,' SGI President Ikeda says. 'It is the people.'**

Part 1 of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 6th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Toda Memorial Auditorium in Sugamo, Tokyo, May 21.

Today, SGI representatives from 15 overseas countries and territories, including Brazil, the United States, several European countries, Nigeria and South Korea, have joined us at this Headquarters Leaders Meeting. Thank you all for coming from so far away! I deeply appreciate your efforts.

A special congratulations to our unsurpassed women's division members, who will soon celebrate the 50th anniversary of their division [on June 10]!

The 21st century is the Century of Women. Let all of us men stand up and bow to the women as a sign of our deep respect and support!

Next year, 2002, will mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Victor Hugo. The great French author writes: "Ah! People! ... Deploy your unexpected stature. Show the world the formidable wonder of your awakening.... Arise! Arise!"

It is not those in positions of authority or famous people in society who possess the greatest power. It is the people.

Hugo was calling out to his fellow citizens, urging them not to think themselves unimportant. He encouraged them to show their foes the colossal force of the people awakened.

The Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin is the Buddhism for the sake of the people. "People, arise!"—this is the call of Hugo, the call of my mentor, Josei Toda, and the call of the Soka Gakkai.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, known as the father of modern China, says that while the power of government can produce immense good, it can also produce immense evil. He insists that bad government must be eliminated if we wish to secure happiness for the people and prosperity for the nation. It was in this spirit that he began the Chinese revolution.

**Because we are carrying out the widespread propagation of the Law, we have incredible lives.**

In Japan, we are now living in an age of democracy. So there is no one who is superior or inferior to anyone else. We should all be equal. "Even so," someone has said, "when you turn on the television, all you see are public figures, and they act as if they are somehow better than the rest of us."

Let us ask ourselves this question, then: "What kind of person is truly great?" The Daishonin cites T'ien-t'ai's words "Since the Law is wonderful, the person is worthy of respect; since the person is worthy of respect, the land is sacred" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 1097). The person who upholds the supreme Law deserves supreme respect. This is true humanism. How respectable, then, are all of you who are striving so hard to spread the Mystic Law!

Mr. Toda used to say: "You have all forgotten just how great you are! It may be true that when you go home, no grand banquet awaits you. Your house is not as spacious as a palace. So you put yourselves down, filled with self-pity at your impoverished circumstances, but that is ridiculous. It is you as a human being that is great. You can always buy a big house someday in the future. But just remember, after all, that those things will eventually crumble into dust." Mr. Toda also used to quote a passage from "On the Four Stages of Faith and the Five Stages of Practice." The Daishonin states that his disciples who chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo "surpass by a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times the founders of the ... various other schools of Buddhism." And he adds, "Therefore, I entreat the people of this country: Do not



SGI President Ikeda encourages Dirce Iwamoto, SGI-Brazil's education division leader, at the 6th Headquarters Leaders Meeting, May 21.

look down upon my disciples!" (WND, 788).

You are not only chanting the Mystic Law but also spreading it throughout Japan and the world. You are carrying out the widespread propagation of the Law. As such, you have an incredible stature.

The Daishonin calls on the people of Japan and the entire world not to look down on his disciples. Anyone who disregards his call will incur strict retribution in accord with the law of cause and effect.

If you should encounter criticism or ridicule arising from others' ignorance or lack of understanding about our movement, just laugh it off, telling yourself: "Why should I let such a person bother me? Am I going to let this little obstacle stop me?" and continue to live with pride and confidence.

**The soul of the student division is to take the initiative.**

On June 30, we will celebrate the anniversary of the student division's founding. Congratulations!

The soul of the student division is initiative. The future lies in the student division. I am absolutely confident that future presidents and general directors

of the Soka Gakkai, as well as excellent leaders in all fields of society, will emerge from the student division.

On June 30, 1957, the student division's inaugural meeting was held at the Azabu Civic Hall, Tokyo, with Mr. Toda in attendance. I sent a congratulatory telegram to the meeting from Yubari in Hokkaido. At that time, the Soka Gakkai was fighting violations of its members' freedom of religion by the Yubari Coal Miner's Union.

Mr. Toda had instructed me to go to Yubari immediately. And quick as a flash, I set off alone for the northern mining town. Consequently, when the student division's inaugural meeting was held, I was right in the thick of the dispute.

The Coal Miner's Union, which trampled on the human rights of our members, was known as one of the most powerful unions in Japan at the time. I resolutely fought against it and won a resounding victory.

In our struggles for kosen-rufu all over Japan, I built an unparalleled record of victory after victory. I am very proud of that. Those struggles are a golden memory.

Three days after the student division's inaugural meeting—on July 3, 1957—I was ar-

rested on false charges in Osaka. I was determined to protect Mr. Toda and my fellow members. If that meant going to jail, I was prepared to do so, to fight as youth is meant to fight.

**We need to foster capable leaders to protect the people from corrupt authority.**

At the student division's inaugural meeting, Mr. Toda said to the 500 bright young people assembled, "It is my wish that half of you will become company directors and the other half will earn doctorates." These are well-known words.

We need to foster capable individuals—capable leaders, in particular, in order to protect the people from the corrupt, cruel nature of authority. This was Mr. Toda's conclusion and his fervent wish.

The world of authority seethes with arrogance and intrigue. Those who dwell therein never know when they will be betrayed or brought down. It is a frightening world.

What is required to hold on to one's integrity and commitment to justice in such an environment? You cannot win simply by numbers or going through the motions. Strength and ability are important. No

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

matter how many people you have on your side, if they are not strong, they will vanish when a crisis arises.

That is why Mr. Toda trained me so rigorously. He would even summon me in the middle of the night. At 3:00 in the morning, he would telephone and say, "Come over here right away." And I went immediately. That is how intense our struggle for kosen-rufu was in those days.

I have described my years with Mr. Toda in my novel *The Human Revolution* and in numerous essays, but there is no end to my memories of him.

**The purpose of our faith is to win in life, in society and as human beings.**

As you all know, the MDs of our doctors division and the PhDs of our academic and science division are active all over Japan. We are living in a wonderful age. In the past, people with high academic degrees were a rarity in the Soka Gakkai, but now we have a great force of intellect marching forward with us.

Of course, having a doctorate has nothing to do with the realm of faith. Nothing could be more foolish than being preoccupied with social status, fame and fortune. Whatever one's profession or education, a life dedicated to kosen-rufu is the greatest and most noble life there can be.

The other day, I received some wonderful news from our Soka schools: "At this same time when our founder, President Ikeda, has received more than 100 honorary doctorates and professorships from uni-

versities around the world, the number of graduates of the Tokyo Soka School System alone who have earned doctorates has also passed the 100 mark, with the current total standing at 108.

"In addition, the Kansai Soka School System, which is newer than its counterpart in Tokyo, counts 24 graduates who have obtained doctorates. This makes for a combined total of 132. And many more of our Soka school graduates are scheduled to receive doctorates in the future."

Though I hesitate to speak of myself, I wish to report to you, as your representative, that with a soon-to-be-conferred honorary professorship by China's Fujian Teachers University, the number of honorary doctorates and professorships I have received will total 105. These wonderful honors are all thanks to you, and I humbly accept them on your behalf.

Incidentally, my wife, as a representative of the women's division, will also receive an honorary professorship from Fujian Teachers University.

I also wish to share that I have received notifications from several other academic institutions of their intention to confer similar honors on me in the near future. These include: an honorary professorship from China's Zhejiang University in Zhejiang Province, where Mount Tiantai [home of the T'ien-t'ai school of Buddhism and origin of the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai's name] is located; an honorary professorship from Moscow State University, which was the first university to

bestow an honorary doctorate on me [in 1975]; and an honorary degree from Morehouse College in Atlanta—the alma mater of that great champion of human rights, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Including those that are slated, the honors conferred on me by universities and educational institutions around the world now total 130. I have accepted these titles solely by the wish to pass them on, as a legacy of recognition from the leading seats of learning, so that you and your descendants will be bathed in their light.

June 6 this year marks the 130th anniversary of the birth of first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, who is the father of Soka education. The more we learn about his life and work, the more we realize what a truly great teacher he was. How mystic it is that we should be able to celebrate this auspicious occasion of the 130th anniversary of Mr. Makiguchi's birth with the honors I am scheduled to receive from academic institutions totaling 130 and also the number of graduates of the Soka School System to date who have doctorates totaling 130!

I should add, by the way, that 39 Soka University graduates have also obtained doctorates. And, just to show you how time flies, a graduate of the Sapporo Soka Kindergarten [founded in 1976] has earned a doctorate.

In any event, if educators have a firm commitment to students' welfare and development, they will succeed in producing many capable individuals. In contrast, people who are self-centered

and puffed up with their own importance will not be able to guide or foster others.

For what purpose should we cultivate wisdom? For what purpose is our faith? The answer is to win—to win in life, in society and as human beings. It is to win without fail, so that we may secure happiness and create peace.

People who have this fundamental sense of purpose and mission are strong. People who have forgotten their purpose are weak.

Graduates of the Soka School System and Soka University have earned doctorates in a wide variety of fields, including medicine, pharmacology, dentistry, engineering, agriculture, science, physics, bioscience, law, economics, literature, education, linguistics, anthropology,

religion, international relations, human-environment studies and peace studies.

Another wonderful piece of news is that a Soka kindergarten will finally open in Brazil, an event that many people in the South American country have long been waiting for. Members of the SGI-Brazil educators division who are involved in the planning and preparation for the new kindergarten have joined us today. Thank you for making the long trip! *Obrigado!*

I am certain that the new Soka kindergarten in Brazil will also produce many doctorates and outstanding world leaders for the 21st century.

*To be continued in the June 22 issue.*

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS**

# Respecting Ourselves

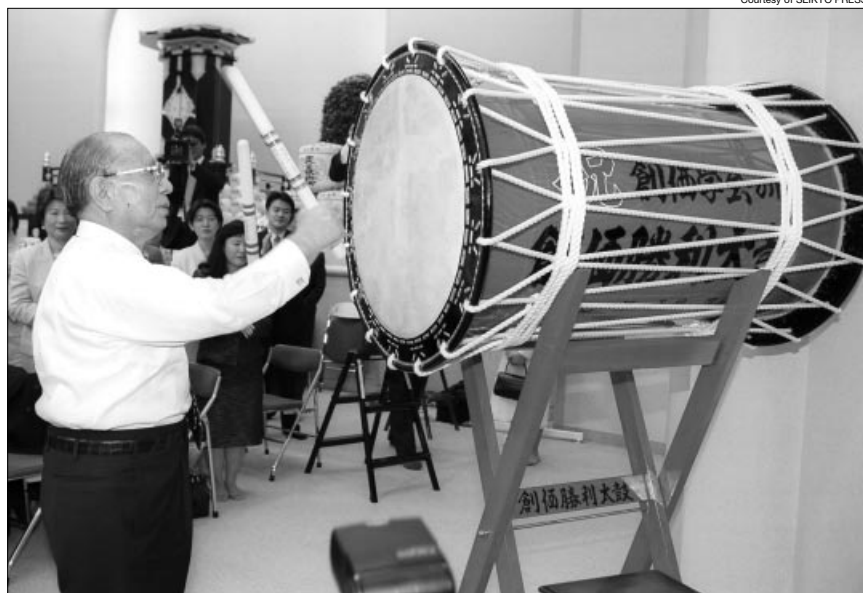
From This Speech:

**Second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda used to say: "You have all forgotten just how great you are! It may be true that when you go home, no grand banquet awaits you. Your house is not as spacious as a palace. So you put yourselves down, filled with self-pity at your impoverished circumstances, but that is ridiculous. It is you as a human being that is great. You can always buy a big house someday in the future. But just remember, after all, that those things will eventually crumble into dust." Mr. Toda also used to quote a passage from "On the Four Stages of Faith and the Five Stages of Practice." Nichiren Daishonin states that his disciples who chant Nam-myohorenge-kyo "surpass by a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times the founders of the ... various other schools of Buddhism." And he adds, "Therefore, I entreat the people of this country: Do not look down upon my disciples!" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 788).**

1) President Toda used to say, "You have all forgotten just how great you are!" What do you think Mr. Toda meant when he said this to the members? Why do you think it is sometimes difficult to remember your greatness?

2) Again Mr. Toda said: "You can always buy a big house someday in the future. But just remember, after all, that those things will crumble to dust." Where does Buddhism say real value in life lies? What do you think is the real meaning of actual proof? How does it manifest in our lives?

3) The Daishonin states that his disciples "surpass by a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times the founders of the ... various other schools of Buddhism." Why do you think chanting and spreading the Mystic Law is such an incredible benefit? Do you believe that you can attain absolute happiness by doing so? If so, why?



SGI President Ikeda beats a Soka Victory Drum presented by members of Nagano and Niigata prefectures, May 21.

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S POEM FOR THE START OF THE SECOND SEVEN BELLS

# The Indestructible Power of the People:

By Shin'ichi Yamamoto [the name President Ikeda uses for his character in the *Human Revolution* novels]

*The people,  
O, the people!  
How great and noble  
The indestructible mountain ranges  
Of capable people!*

*Therein lies  
The power to overturn  
The unscrupulous,  
The power to laugh dismissively  
At the arrogant.*

*The united hearts of the people  
Are like the sun.  
Nothing is stronger  
Than the people.  
The people are a great wave—  
No, a raging breaker.*

*Despicable tyrants  
Who scorn the people  
Will all fall and disappear.*

*They have been cast  
Into oblivion,  
Buried by the people's  
Fiery strength,  
Awesome and inexhaustible.*

*The world is too small  
For the colossus  
Of the people arisen.  
The ultimate power of destiny  
That will determine the future  
Of this Century of Humanity  
Lies in the people.*

*Beside the people—  
A human alliance  
Of monumental scale—  
All authoritarian forces  
Pale into insignificance.*

*The people, who are fearless!  
The people, who crush and  
destroy evil!*

*Those who sincerely value  
The people  
Are wise and praiseworthy.*

*Those who betray the people  
Wound themselves with their own  
swords  
And will be eternally despised  
By the people  
As ingrates.*

*When the people  
Unsheathe the sword of firm  
conviction  
Against treacherous authorities,  
The cruelest regime  
Will be washed away by crashing  
waves  
And perish in pitiful tears.*

*The power of justice and fairness  
Resides in the people.  
No matter what vicious daggers  
May assail them,  
The lifeblood they spill  
Will leave their names  
As exalted heroes  
And divine protagonists.*

*Striking a mighty blow  
Against depraved, scheming monsters,  
The noble people  
Will be bathed in resounding cheers.*

*Nothing can compare with the people.  
No one can surpass the people.*

*The people  
Are the true nation,  
A community of humanity  
That must be eternally celebrated,  
An everlasting community of justice  
and truth.*

*Those who are trusted by the people,  
Those who are loved by the people—  
Such individuals  
Are genuine champions of happiness;  
They are victors who proudly wear  
The crown of supreme humanity.*

*In isolation we are weak,  
But when we  
Go among the people  
And unite with the people,  
Our strength is multiplied  
A millionfold.*

*Popularity is not what matters,  
For that is fleeting;  
It has no substance.  
Popularity can be won by deception  
And manipulation.*

*We have finally welcomed  
The 21st century,  
For which we have waited  
For countless ages.*

*It is the century  
In which we will live  
The best possible lives,  
Energetically,  
Day after day,  
Bathed in the light of the sun,  
Embracing a clear philosophy  
That enables us to fully exercise  
Our right to be eternally victorious.*

*We have built  
A great path for kosen-rufu  
Into the infinite future.  
We have constructed  
A magnificent citadel  
Of humanism.*

*This path  
And this citadel  
Are the towering bastion  
Of all who possess the spirit of justice,  
Endowed with success, happiness and  
mission.  
This bastion is imperishable!  
No one can ever undermine  
Or destroy it.*

*Undaunted by what the new day may  
bring,  
Unperturbed by winter,  
This majestic, jeweled citadel,  
Will never crumble again.*

*As Rousseau says,  
"A mind given nothing to do  
Becomes heavy and sluggish  
Through inaction."*

*Those who vigorously take action  
Are filled with joy and courage,  
Their faces shining brightly  
With victory.  
Their lives are that of genuine  
humanity,  
Upholding as they do  
A lofty mission  
Like that of heavenly emissaries,  
Commended by all humankind.*

*Always uniting together as one,  
The stout hearts of those capable  
individuals  
Grow ever stronger  
And shine ever brighter,  
Creating a history of honor and  
triumph.*

*In such people  
And in the realm in which they are  
active—  
Together profoundly significant—  
Stretches a vast open road of glory  
That transcends all changes and  
transitions.*

*In tumultuous times,  
Where each day  
Is marked by ceaseless change,  
We are serene  
And undeterred.*

*We are always  
Staunch allies of the people.  
We are determined to warmly welcome  
With supreme compassion  
Those who have been driven to despair  
By the crass folly of those in power.  
And  
We have the power of friends  
United in a shared purpose—  
A power that can restore smiles  
To the grim, frozen lips  
Of many people  
And make them gentle friends.*



Photos by CONNI GUTELIUS, GREGORY NAKASUJI, NOELLE PRINCE SHEAR and JONATHAN WILSON

# A March of Joy and Tenacious Effort

*We wish to dedicate this precious life  
To bestowing on all  
Without exception  
The crown of happiness —  
Happiness that shimmers  
With the tranquil light of glory.*

*Truth!  
This is our lives.  
History!  
This is our struggle.  
Accomplishment!  
This is our victory  
Won through the causes we make.*

*The long history of humankind  
Has been dominated  
By the dark, destructive tendencies  
Of the human heart,  
By tragedy and sorrow.  
It has been a sad history  
In which so many souls,  
Treated like condemned prisoners  
By the arrogant authorities,  
Were destined to mount the execution  
block.*

*For the sake of those who suffer,  
We demolish  
Cruel authoritarianism  
And human despair  
With the mighty hand of the people,  
And eternally extend  
Our brilliant network  
That shines with our dazzling  
Victory and glory.*

*Here  
There are no sorrowful wails,  
No bitter tears  
Of suffering or regret.  
No coldly sneering  
Opportunists.*

*Our mission  
Is to bring hope to all.  
Do not be beaten by life!  
Do not be defeated in life!  
Do not cave in to despots!  
Let them hold  
The flag of infamy!*

*We will wave  
The scarlet banner of victory!*

*The world of these wretches  
Is a domain of cold brutality.  
They are doomed  
Without a doubt  
To receive lasting retribution  
And will crumble and vanish.*

*Ours  
Is a domain of happiness.  
Here  
There is no harsh retribution;  
It is a realm  
Of absolute happiness and security —  
Where the lights are all go  
And we can move ahead freely,  
Where truehearted heavenly deities  
Cheer us on.*

*In our society, every day  
The wings of evil  
Beat with fiendish fury.  
There,  
Enchanters wielding arcane powers  
Lead people down the path  
Of idle pleasure,  
Where only profuse regret awaits,  
And laugh scornfully  
As they watch them drown.*

*My friends,  
Be strong of heart!  
My friends,  
Be firm of heart!  
When you do so,  
You will stand tall with triumph.  
That is why we practice  
This great Buddhism.*

*Please do not lead a life  
Bereft of value or good fortune!  
Build your own fortress of happiness,  
Reactivating  
The truly profound spirit  
Of genuine humanity  
That has been deep within you  
From time immemorial,  
Sparkling with golden brilliance  
Beneath the tears.*

*And also  
Take resolute action  
Again today,  
For the sake of peace,  
For the sake of justice,  
And so that you may lead  
A fulfilling life  
Of complete satisfaction,  
Free of all regret.*

*My friends!  
Remember  
The vow you made  
That day,  
Along with  
The deep friendship forged  
That day!  
Life is short,  
But friendship  
That is bound by a pledge  
Is profound and everlasting.*

*Remember!  
My friends,  
If you do not strive  
For the undertaking  
You promised to fulfill,  
All that will remain  
Are regrets  
Instead of accomplishments.*

*My friends,  
Do not become cowards,  
Feeble and doddering!  
My friends,  
Do not become losers,  
Scheming and devious!*

*Stand up,  
Just as you vowed!  
Can you not hear  
The solemn reverberations  
Of that time  
Echoing in our hearts —  
Yours and mine?*

*Come!  
While gazing at the beautiful blossoms  
Of the vows we made that day,*

*Let us dedicate our lives,  
Blazing with passionate commitment,  
To the happiness of our fellow  
members,  
And for the sake of that day  
On which we announced to our friends  
Our lofty pledge!*

*And even more —  
Let us work energetically  
To respond to the noble mentor,  
Who, when we were near to drowning  
In delusion,  
Infused our lives  
With words of strict encouragement  
Based on the deepest compassion.*

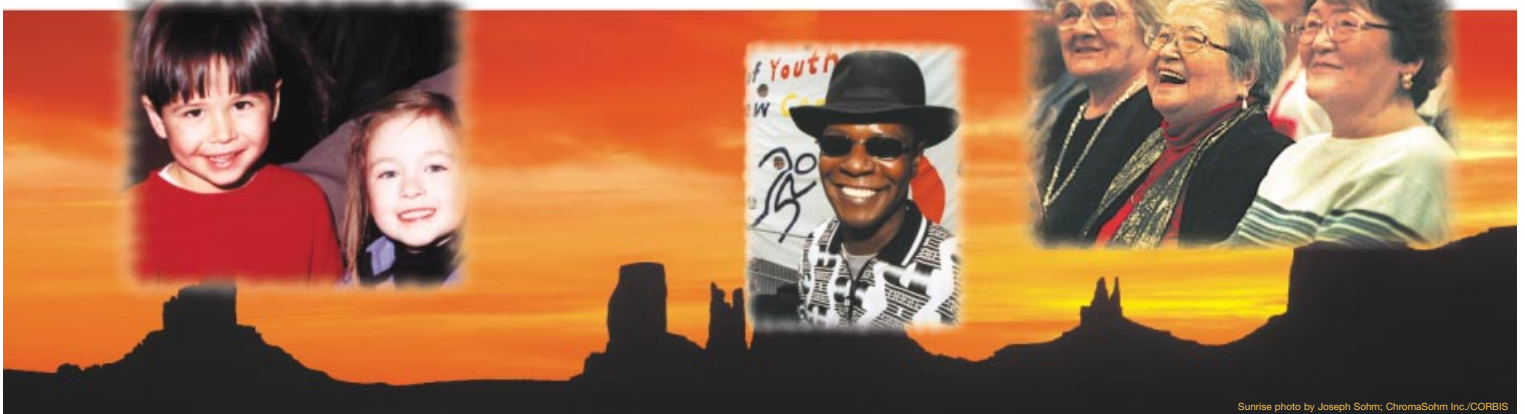
*Let us stand up!  
Let us stand up resolutely!  
My friends!  
We must move;  
We must act;  
We must win —  
This is our life's path.*

*My friends!  
Do not be swept away by your karma  
To foolishly walk a dark, unlit road!  
Our lives are dedicated  
To happiness  
And to realizing our mission.  
It is for these goals  
That we constantly strive and advance.*

*And  
We wish to die having proudly created  
A dynamic and noble history  
Of courage and victory  
As human beings.*

*The German writer Weisenborn,  
Who fought against the Nazis, says,  
"Justice — this is  
What must govern  
All our deeds and thoughts,  
And not animosities, not hate, not  
prejudice."*

PLEASE SEE POEM, 8



FROM POEM, 7

The sight  
Of young, hope-filled heroes,  
Of aged warriors,  
And the beautiful vision  
Of women striving  
Toward the horizon of happiness!  
The powerful, fresh advance  
Of the noble people  
Resounds far and wide,  
As they forge their way  
Through the dim light  
To a place beyond  
The strife and conflict  
And swirling intrigue.

These bright-hearted souls  
Press ahead buoyantly,  
Like immortal phoenixes,  
To a realm bathed  
In dazzling jeweled light.

We unleash our anger  
Toward injustice;  
We raze the cruelty  
Of tyrants and villains.  
We shatter innumerable terrors  
And triumph over fear.

While breaking through  
The unending stream of obstacles  
That bear down on us,  
We will definitely  
Build a giant stage  
Of immense, almost miraculous  
victory,  
From which triumphant  
Orchestral music resounds.  
And on that stage of ours,  
We will give full and free expression  
To our happiness.

We refuse to become  
Slaves of authoritarian leaders!  
We refuse to be fooled  
By corrupt big shots!  
We refuse to be exploited  
By dark-hearted, two-faced scholars.

Look at us!  
Nightmarish times  
Like those of the past  
Are no longer  
On our horizon.  
For ours is a grand stage  
Of genuine humanity  
That has been won by the people,  
For the people.

Friends, far and wide,  
Come join us!  
Tireless, hardworking friends,  
Come join us, for a refreshing respite!  
Anxious friends,  
Who have run aground  
On life's treacherous reefs,  
Come join us, quickly!  
Friends who have wept in despair  
At society's contradictions,  
Come join us, quickly!

Our great people's movement,  
Each and every day,  
Is filled with sunshine,  
With hopes and dreams.

My friends,  
Those hopes and dreams  
Infuse and animate your existence,  
Which brims with happiness.  
Your uninhibited laughter,  
Which makes the base and arrogant  
quake,  
Echoes high into the heavens.

Let us live our lives together!  
Let us drink toasts of celebration  
together!  
And together wielding the sword  
Of our commitment to justice,  
Let us lead shining lives of truth  
That will live on for all posterity.

My friends,  
My beloved friends,  
Let us enjoy life!  
That means being victorious.  
Let us live with a smile!  
That is the shining fruit  
Of effort and perseverance.

We refuse to be credulous  
And allow ourselves to be taken in  
By calculating pseudo-intellectuals.

Ah!  
Our beings reverberate  
With a dancing symphony.  
Happiness courses  
Vibrantly and joyously  
Through our veins.

We will win.  
You and I will win  
Without fail.  
And we will shout  
Our victory.

And we will greet  
The season of flowering triumph,  
Filled with hope  
And savoring life's joys to the fullest.

O, the people!  
You are certain to win.  
This is the unchanging  
Essence of history.

O, the people!  
The spirit of each of you  
Is that of a political leader,  
An actor,  
A soldier,  
A prosecutor,  
A judge,  
An educator,  
And a Dharma king who rebukes  
devils.

Do not forget  
This awesome, unlimited power  
Of the people!  
My friends,  
You must fight resolutely!  
And  
You must win resolutely!  
Leave behind a magnificent  
Personal monument of achievement  
That will endow this finite lifetime  
With infinite value and meaning.

Hurray for the people!  
O, the people,  
May you be eternally victorious!  
O, the people,  
May you be eternally happy!  
O, the people,  
May you be eternally endowed with  
glory!

The people are smart,  
Even if they are reduced to only one.  
The shrewdness of the people  
Is the wisdom of the heavens.  
The laughter of the people  
Is the laughter of the heavens.  
The weeping of the people  
Is the sorrow of the heavens.  
The voice of the people  
Is the cry of the heavens.  
And the actions of the people  
Are the commands of the heavens.

It is the people  
Who are the sovereigns of humanity.  
And therefore

There can never be for all eternity  
Anyone superior to the people.

Lift up your heads!  
Stand tall!  
The people  
Are the monarchs of humanity.  
The people  
Are not nameless weeds;  
They are a great forest  
That gives life to the world.

Even today,  
In that country  
And this country,  
The people  
Are toppling despotic rulers.  
The world is astonished at  
And filled with praise for  
Their power.

And if someday,  
Black-hearted tyranny should arise,  
We, too, will come out fighting  
With energy and passion  
In the grand theater of life.  
Doesn't everyone know this  
Deep in their hearts?  
This is the greatness  
And the philosophy of the people.

Whatever happens,  
Our movement of 10 million friends —  
Powerfully united  
In faith and spirit  
And the cause of truth and justice —  
Constitutes a great movement of the  
people  
That will go down forever in history.  
It is a true picture of the people,  
Ever-victorious, indestructible,  
fearless.  
What an inspiring  
And sublime sight it is!

May 3, 2001

— Proclaiming the start of the  
second Seven Bells

— With palms pressed together  
in reverence

SGI President Ikeda is recognized  
throughout the world as a poet laureate.



# the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

## 'JEWELLED SWORD'

VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 13-14

*'Shin'ichi Yamamoto was confident that the youth of the Soka Gakkai had the potential to become great world leaders. This confidence struck the hearts of the youth, galvanizing them, and they determined that they would develop into world leaders to meet Shin'ichi's expectations.'*

In 1963, Japan was preparing to host the Olympics in October the following year. This sparked a growing interest among the Japanese in internationalization and the world at large. Also in 1963, the English version of the Japanese pop song "I Look Up When I Walk" became a hit in the United States under the title "Sukiyaki." In June that year, it was No. 1 on the U.S. pop music charts.

Events such as these gave the Japanese people a sense of self-confidence and brought the outside world closer to home. However, even though people were becoming more aware of the bigger picture, no one in Japan was offering a way to create peace or thinking about what youth should be doing to contribute on the world stage.

Against this backdrop, Shin'ichi Yamamoto's editorial in the Soka Gakkai study journal *Daibyakurenge*, "Youth, Become World Leaders," set down concrete guidelines for the youth of the Soka Gakkai. His call was not limited to a se-

lect group; he urged all the youth division members to become world leaders, and clearly showed them how to achieve that goal. These guidelines revealed Shin'ichi's philosophy and convictions as a Buddhist.

Japanese society at the time was becoming more and more fixated on academic achievement and credentials, and people were beginning to think that one could not be a leader of society without having graduated from a "top" university. Shin'ichi, however, was not caught up in such an illusion. Of course, knowledge and intellectual ability are important, but academic background does not equal these things. Nor does it equate to one's competence as a human being.

Leaders need knowledge and intellect, but they must also have the wisdom to make the best use of these capacities. They also need courage, conviction, passion and initiative. More than anything, a true leader must possess character and humanity; he or she should be self-dis-

ciplined and genuinely concerned about others. These qualities are inseparable from the beliefs and philosophy such a leader upholds. As Nichiren Daishonin writes, "If the Law that one embraces is supreme, then the person who embraces it must accordingly be foremost among all others" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 61).

Shin'ichi was confident that the youth of the Soka Gakkai had the potential to become great world leaders. This confidence struck the hearts of the youth who read his editorial, galvanizing them, and they determined that they would develop into world leaders to meet Shin'ichi's expectations. The seed of a firm resolve, the source of remarkable growth, had been planted in the fertile soil of their young lives.



*Shattering the darkness,  
The powerful tolling  
Of the bell of revolution  
Heralds a new dawn.  
Wherever its voice may  
reach  
There we shall build  
A society humanity has  
longed for.*

As they sang their new "Song of Revolution," the student's voices reverberated throughout the Taito Ward Gymnasium in Tokyo. The 6th student division general meeting was held on July 14. The participants' faces were bright with excitement, and their fighting spirit energized the venue.

That was only to be expected. They had just reached their membership goal of 20,000, which had been set at the 5th general meeting the previous year. They had gathered from all over Japan to celebrate

their great victory. Those who work toward a clear goal in the endeavor to create peace based on the Daishonin's teachings, who strive to achieve it, and persevere until they win, shine with vitality and life force.

The student division members present had taken the lead in the struggle for kosen-rufu in the "essential phase" of the Soka Gakkai's development. At the meeting, standing secretaries were appointed for the Kansai, Tohoku, Chubu, Chugoku and Kyushu regions, securing the organization's foundation across the nation.

The members were spirited, ready and eager. Goro Watari, the head of the student division, addressed them enthusiastically: "We have surpassed our goal of 20,000 members that was set at our meeting last year, and as of today there are 20,316 student division members. Let us rejoice together at this victorious gathering!"

"I propose that toward next year's general meeting we aim for the goal of 40,000 members! What do you think?" Thunderous applause rocked the gymnasium. The goal meant doubling the membership, and would be next to impossible to achieve in one year without tremendous dedication and effort. Yet the members met this suggestion with an ovation of agreement.

Smiling brightly at this vigorous response, Watari continued: "All right then. Let us work together toward our new goal of 40,000 members."

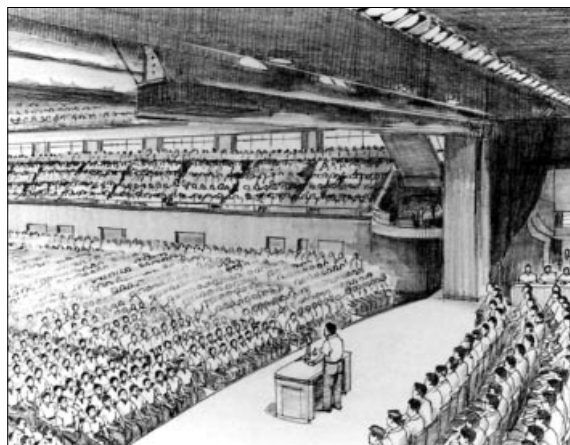
"Now, regarding our activities on campus. For students, your community is the university. I therefore think it is important that we conduct our activities with our respective universities as home bases. I propose that we form volunteer-led organizations on each campus through which we can actively promote our ideas. Do you agree?"

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1963.

### SGI-USA On The Web!

For information about SGI-USA, please visit our official Web site at [www.sgi-usa.org](http://www.sgi-usa.org). The site includes information on the organization's activities, history and publications, as well as an introduction to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

Illustrations by KENICHIRO UCHIDA



# Don't Wait: Now Is the Time To Win

## EDITORIAL

By JAMIE LIPTAN  
STAFF WRITER

**The first three Soka Gakkai presidents, along with countless pioneer members, created the beautiful movement we have today by always taking action, ignoring those who said, 'The time isn't yet right,' or 'Don't rock the boat.'**

The future is an infinite succession of present moments." On May 4 at Soka University of America's Aliso Viejo campus, Dean Lawrence Carter of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College shared this bit of wisdom. This reasoning is completely in harmony with the SGI's movement. The first three Soka Gakkai presidents, along with countless pioneer members, created the beautiful movement we have today by always taking action, ig-



Photo by JEAN PRITCHARD

norning those who said, "The time isn't yet right," or "Don't rock the boat."

"It's all about taking action, taking that first step," says SGI President Ikeda. "If your aim is to swim across a vast ocean, it will do you no good to get cold feet before you even take the plunge. Rather, you've got to make a move, keeping your sights on your distant goal" (*Faith Into Action*, p. 89).

There are so many ways we can stop ourselves from taking initiative. We may be overwhelmed at the enormity of a particular goal or dream, thinking, "I need to have this all figured out before I jump in." Or we might worry about the people around us, wondering, "Will they freak out if I do this?"

Of course, solid planning

and an understanding of where those around us are at are vital. But if such things prevent us from taking that first step, from opening a new opportunity, then they are just another obstacle to our growth. If we wait for others to let us know it is all right to act, we may never develop the kind of indestructible courage and happiness that Buddhism allows us to realize.

During his historic visit to America in 1990, President Ikeda said: "I always place a high emphasis on personal initiative. Spontaneity underlies the spirit of autonomy and independence; conversely, taking action because one is told to amounts to slavery of the spirit" (*Faith Into Action*, p. 88).

SGI-USA members were excited to welcome President Ikeda to the Grand Youth Culture Festival in 1999. Mustering all their strength behind the idea of his impending visit, the youth threw themselves into creating an unforgettable event and inspiring a new generation of leaders for peace. They displayed tremendous initiative.

As you know, President Ikeda was unable to attend the festival. But that took nothing away from those that completely transformed their lives through their Herculean ef-

orts. Not waiting for anyone or anything, with their mentor's spirit in their hearts, they accomplished something that many thought they could not. They proved themselves to be true successors through taking action with everything they had, without hesitation.

If our action is based first on our faith and our sincere prayer in front of the Gohonzon, we will not fail. The ride may get bumpy, but prayer allows us to build the confidence that, despite our present circumstances and self-doubt, our efforts will result in complete victory.

"Prayer becomes manifest in action, and action has to be backed up by prayer,"

President Ikeda reminds us. "Only then can we elicit a response from the Buddhist gods and all Buddhas. Those who pray and take action for kosen-rufu are the Buddha's emissaries. They cannot fail to realize lives in which all desires are fulfilled" (*Learning From the Goshu*, p. 93).

Whatever our goals this year or this century—getting out of debt, establishing a career, sharing Buddhism, reconciling with family members, creating a culture festival—let's not "get cold feet" before we have even begun. As impossible as it may seem now, we are closer to victory after we have taken that first step. **WT**

### How To SUBMIT AN EXPERIENCE

## Got an Experience in Faith? We Want To Hear It!

There is nothing that can explain the power of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism as well as someone sharing his or her experience. It makes Buddhist practice very real and tangible.

If you have had an experience that you want to share, or know of someone else who has had a great experience, please submit it to the *World Tribune*.

### Here is what you need to prepare:

- The experience should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words, or roughly four or five typed, double-spaced pages.
- You should include at least three good photos of yourself. These could include photos of yourself with friends or family who are mentioned in the experience.
- You should also include contact information: name, address, phone number, e-mail address, SGI-USA region.

### The experience needs to answer a few questions:

- What was the problem or obstacle you faced?
- How was the problem/ob-

stacle overcome with your Buddhist practice? What was the turning point? How did this experience revolutionize your life?

- What was the outcome?

### What you should expect:

- Due to the volume of experiences we receive, we cannot publish every experience submitted. But we will review them all and confirm receipt.
- We cannot promise that materials will be returned. Please do not send original pictures or documents of irreplaceable value.
- If your article is chosen for publication, we will contact you to go over edits and adjustments.

### Where to submit:

- Via e-mail: [wt@sgi-usa.org](mailto:wt@sgi-usa.org)
- Via U.S. mail: World Tribune Experiences, 606 Wilshire Blvd., 4th Floor, Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907

That's it. We thank you in advance for your submissions. We look forward to hearing from you and sharing your victories in faith.

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# 'Treasuring the Future' Exhibit Opens in Houston

By MAUDE T. O'DONNELL  
HOUSTON CORRESPONDENT

After several months of planning and preparation, 500 SGI-USA members and guests throughout Houston and neighboring communities gathered at Northwest Mall to celebrate the opening of SGI-USA's "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities," a hands-on exhibition.

Houston marks the exhibition's 23rd stop since its inception in 1996, as it continues to expand awareness and impart knowledge and information regarding the atrocities that plague children the world over.

The opening ceremony began with Malina Moore, SGI-USA exhibition coordinator, thanking Northwest Mall for hosting the exhibition as well as congratulating all performers and SGI-USA Houston members who gave their support in bringing the exhibition to their community.

Marleen Pedroza, representing U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, read a congratulatory letter addressed to SGI President Ikeda. It read in part: "I was pleased to learn that the exhibition has included Houston in its worldwide tour with the intention of educating the public of certain basic human

rights issues facing children around the world. I congratulate you for all you do to promote international understanding and peace through cultural and educational activities."

SGI-USA General Director Emeritus Fred Zaitzu extended his heartfelt appreciation to the members of Houston on behalf of President Ikeda. He expressed that, "Children are the treasures of the future and we must strengthen our dialogue with children."

Steven Stewart, age 13, who performed for the opening, remarked: "The exhibition was very inspiring to me. It is terrible that children suffer so much. I believe children should stand up for their rights."

The exhibition was a phenomenal success and served to foster greater harmony and



A girl enjoys the interactive elements of 'Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities' at the Northwest Mall in Houston, May 18.

unity among the SGI-USA Houston membership. The members and friends of the SGI in Houston hope that their ef-

forts will strengthen the foundation of their community through fostering, treasuring and protecting children. **WT**

## NEW FEATURES ON SGI WEB SITE

By CHEONG PAK YEE  
SGI OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

The SGI Web site has been given a total facelift. True to the organization's name, the new Web site is in three languages—English, Mandarin and Spanish. The increasingly multilingual nature of the Web site reflects the SGI's continued effort to reach out to a greater number of people throughout the world.

The Web site has two roles to fulfill. It caters to SGI members' need for material and information on the organization. It is also a site for others who wish to learn about Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and the SGI, including journalists, re-

searchers and the increasing number of people who are now conducting their own spiritual search via the Internet.

The content has been broadened with the addition of "Members Worldwide"—snapshots of members from different countries—and much more in-depth material about Buddhism and SGI President Ikeda's life and works. One colorful section features his poetry and photography.

Another new feature is the news section, where regular updates keep readers informed of the activities of SGI organizations around the world. Plans are now underway to also include more online exhibitions

that SGI organizations are conducting in different parts of the world, so that readers can get a glimpse of the exhibitions even though they cannot go to the venues themselves. A bulletin board for readers to share their thoughts and views is also on the drawing board.

The new site aims to attract more people and respond better to the needs of SGI members. Additional features such as a contact list for SGI centers in different countries has been introduced in response to frequent requests sent to the previous site. The *SGI Quarterly* can still be read online, both current and previous issues.

The SGI Office of Public Information encourages *World Tri-*

*bune* readers to get online to check out the new site at [www.sgi.org](http://www.sgi.org). As the site continues to grow and evolve, we invite you to be part of the process by sending us your comments. Every single one counts! **WT**

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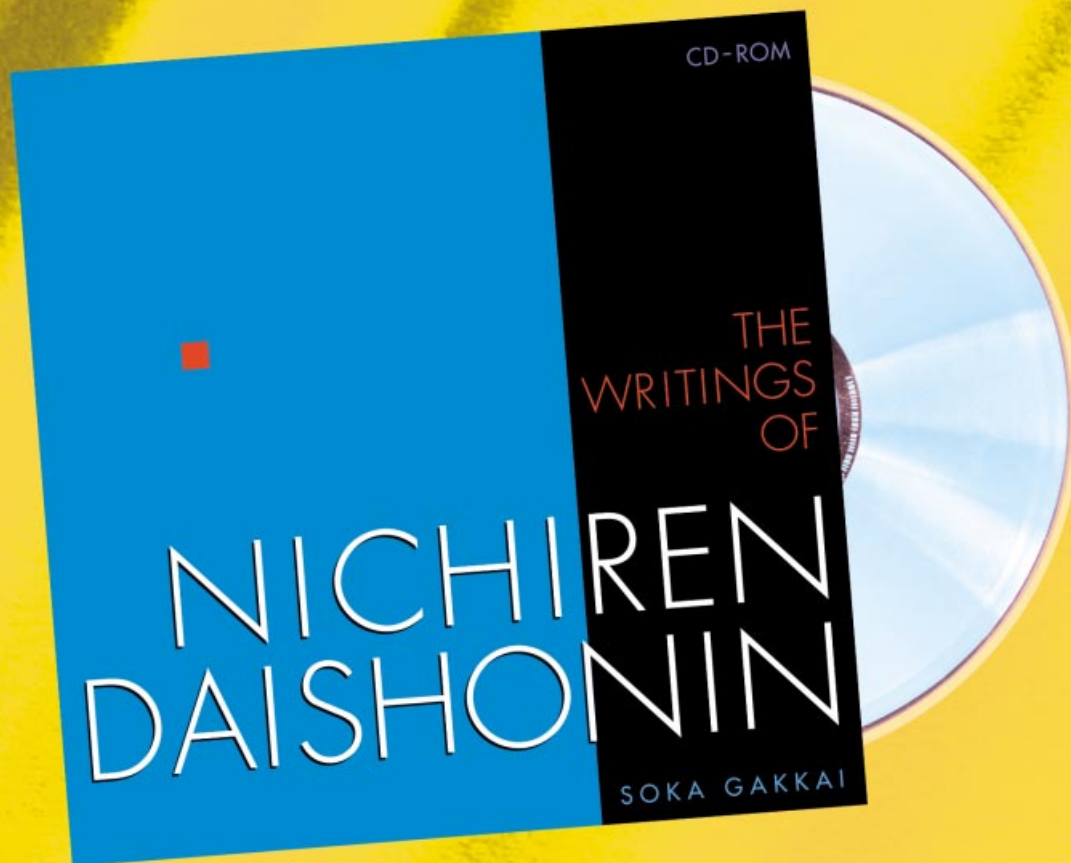
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