

New Horizons of a Global Civilization
PEACE PROPOSAL
By Daisaku Ikeda, President of Soka Gakkai International

THE DAWN OF A NEW millennium and the beginning of the twenty-first century is now less than 1,500 days away. As we make the great transition to this new epoch, I recall with nostalgia my conversations with the late Michel Baroin. In January 1987, when Mr. Baroin visited Japan as the President of the Commission for Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the French Revolution and Declaration of the Rights of Man, we shared our thoughts about the future of humankind from the perspective of the "thirtieth century," one millennium ahead of us.

Baroin expressed his determination, as the responsibility of one individual toward humanity, to make the celebrations a fitting opening for the thirtieth century. For myself, I reflected that although Buddhism speaks of the "latter day of the law," the perspective of the thirtieth century is a very important one. And I spoke to him of my conviction that now is the time to build a new age that shines with the glory of humanity and culture by focusing again on the sanctity of life.

Ten years have passed since then and today humankind is faced on every side by inescapable dilemmas: the threat of nuclear armaments and other weapons of mass destruction, the intensification of ethnic discord, damage to the Earth's environment from the effects of global warming and destruction to the Earth's ozone layer, the widening of the economic gap between North and South, the spread of psychopathological phenomena and brutal crimes. The gravity of the crisis, which casts its dark shadow over the path before us, is multilayered, affecting not only individuals and societies, but ethnic groups and nations, as well as the ecosystem and even the survival of the Earth itself. There is no longer any doubt that this shadow is a symptom of the deadlock that grips contemporary civilization.

It is precisely because of this deadlock, I believe, that a thorough reappraisal of the history of humankind, viewed from a very broad perspective, is indispensable. We need to review the whole history of modern civilization as it has unfolded over the past few centuries, and take a bold new look, one millennium at a time, through a macroscopic, bird's-eye view of human history.

What is the nature of the tasks we currently face? How should we envisage the character, systems and order of the "global civilization" that will inevitably shape the world of the twenty-first century? Many and diverse approaches are being taken to these questions, each resonating against those around it as they build a crescendo leading into the coming century.

Each and every approach leads to a specific and important statement, yet none seems to be based on a firm grasp of what the coming century will be, so that all in all we have not moved beyond the stage of groping in the darkness.

This is perhaps only to be expected. For the murk of uncertainty and unpredictability of our fin-de-siecle is that dark, and the scale and quality of the aporia that bear down upon us are that utterly new. They are dilemmas as never experienced or heard of in the history of humankind. To describe them with such a positive adjective as new, however, could be misleading, for they are the source of foreboding signs that tell us in no uncertain terms that failure to find real solutions could mean the end of human history.

"New" reminds me of my encounters last year with the concept of the "new middle

ages" (see box p. 9) advocated by philosopher Alain Minc and University of Tokyo professor Akihiko Tanaka. Their observations of the forces propelling international society gave me a palpable feeling for the changes in our times. It is now more than fifty years ago that self-exiled Russian philosopher Nicolas A. Berdyaev sought the advent of a "new middle ages in which multiple agents of change would operate, under an over-arching principle," sounding the alarm for the future of contemporary civilization as the forces of secularization gained momentum. As I recall, I found myself in strong sympathy with his sense of crisis.

Toward a New Millennium of Hope

BERDYAEV'S WARNING WAS aimed at the trend toward secularization in modern times from the viewpoint of Christian existentialism. It was an inductive, metaphysical conclusion he reached:

Self-realization is a process of permanent auto-creation, an elaboration of the new man at the expense of the old. When we speak of the emergence of the "new man," we do not imply subservience to the temporal or the repudiation of man's eternal content, but we invoke rather the fulfillment of that eternal content.¹

These words express his desire to see the correction of the conceits and errantry of the godless age and the empowerment of a new brand of human being religiously inspired to usher in a new world of the spirit.

By contrast, the ideas of Minc and Tanaka were more realistic. Faithfully going with the flow of modern and contemporary history, they sought an inductive but empirical positioning at the great turning point faced by modern civilization.

Whatever the case, we will have to grasp this turning point, not as a matter of several decades, but as the whole of modern civilization; otherwise we will not be able to negotiate the change of directions smoothly and without error.

Regardless of what is happening in the realm of the spirit, however, in the diverse and interlocking endeavors of people to overcome the current crisis, there does seem to be a common recognition: that the modern nation-state, that progeny of modern history that ran rampant especially during the twentieth century, is changing. It might be extreme to describe it as a "hollowing out" of the state, but certainly its presence is less formidable than it once was.

While the status of sovereign states may have sunk somewhat, it is unreasonable to think that the structural frameworks they provide will easily give way. It would be foolhardy to quickly establish a world federation or global government system to replace them; in fact it could be quite dangerous. The world has learned all too well, through the breakup of the former Soviet Union and its aftermath, how the forced dismantling of an existing framework can lead, far from ushering in a new order, to anarchy and chaos.

Currently I am engaged in a continuing dialogue with Hong Kong author Jin Yong, who is known as the contemporary Dumas. In our conversations, he expressed his hope that it would become possible for people to move back and forth between Hong Kong and Japan without visas after the return of the British colony to China. Of course, I said I was very much in favor of the idea. However, a dream is a dream, and I fear that it will be a very long time before all peoples of the world can bypass familiar

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

frameworks and freely move back and forth from one country to another without visas.

Transcending “National Interest”

NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE that the age in which the sovereign nation-state was the strongest, virtually the only agent of decision-making power in international society will gradually fade with the passing of the twentieth century into history. We cannot afford to lose sight of this mega-trend.

The trend is inevitable for several reasons. To cite the negative factor first, it is because none of the global problems I mentioned at the beginning of this appeal, including damage to the Earth’s environment and overpopulation, can be solved within the framework of sovereign states alone. Remedies can only be found through the close and coordinated efforts of all actors in the international arena.

In terms of the positive reasons, a crossnational trend is now the unarguable development in almost all realms of human activity, brought about by tremendous strides made in information, telecommunications and transportation technology. The greatest indicator of the borderless age can be seen in the economy. As data from many sources tell us, developments such as the emergence of transnational corporations are threatening even such paramount prerogatives of the nation-state as tax collection. And, unless some completely unforetold circumstance should occur, it is unlikely that this trend will ever be reversed. Peter F. Drucker is among observers who go so far as to say that the nation-state has not become unnecessary, but decisions must now be made not so much on the national level as on the global and corporate levels.

Further reflecting these changes, people are now beginning to argue that the words *global* and *transnational* are more suitable than *international* when discussing the world systems of the twenty-first century. Indeed, while *international* assumes the primacy of relations between individual sovereign states, it does seem more in tune with the times to speak of the *global*, which does not necessarily assume the existence of sovereign states, or of *transnational*, which refers to movements that transcend national boundaries.

I completely agree. We may call ourselves Soka Gakkai International, but the movement we lead to foster solidarity among world citizens on the private level and build the infrastructure for world peace is global and transnational in the true sense of the words.

The late scholar of international politics, Takehiko Kamo, spoke eloquently to this point in an article contributed to the *Seikyo Shimbun* in 1985.

Economic interdependence has deepened, but it is by nature subject to the market mechanism. We need to stress transnational relations in the more fundamental areas of human endeavor that do not necessarily generate profits: ideas, lifestyles, sports, the arts, and so forth.

Kamo had high expectations for our movement, which aims to invigorate in new ways NGO activities in the international arena.

The Limits of “External Reform”

AS WE OBSERVE THIS mega-trend that is irrevocably binding the world into one, beyond all national boundaries, beyond ethnic differences, for better or for worse, we are

seeing that the term *global civilization*, which if not purely fantasy once carried a mostly utopian ring, is now suddenly ready to take on a realistic image.

We need to know what is most essential to give global civilization some clarity of image. If we do not endeavor to fulfill this task, even in the roughest outline, we may find that global civilization turns out to be no more than a pipe dream. This would be a most regrettable—not to mention irresponsible—legacy to leave to posterity. We must not allow ourselves to depart the twentieth century with sighs of regret and resignation.

In December 1970, I wrote a long poem dedicated to young people. The reverberations of the fierce student demonstrations that erupted in Japan and other countries in 1968 and 1969 had still not subsided, and only a month before, the outspoken novelist Yukio Mishima had shocked the nation with his death by suicide following traditional rituals. It was, in sum, a time consumed by deep emotions and widespread turmoil. I wrote the poem as a gentle, thoughtful call to young people, including in it my broad vision of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries:

What the people long for
to carry them through the twenty-first century
is no reorganization of external forms alone
They desire a sound revolution
carried out within themselves
gradually and in an atmosphere of peace
founded upon the philosophy and beliefs of each individual
This calls for farsighted judgments
and a profound system of principles
This is what I would name a total revolution
and it is this
we call *kosen-rufu*²

Admittedly my ideas here are not fully developed, partly due to the restrictions of the poetic form, but it does point to the historic tasks of humankind as we face them at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The twentieth century has thus far been a time of obsessive and reckless pursuit above all of solutions to contradictions through social reform, that is, through remodeling of “external forms.” Now the primary task we cannot avoid as we enter the twenty-first century is to attend to the revolution within ourselves, what I described as “a sound revolution carried out within ... gradually and in an atmosphere of peace.” I entrusted to this poem my strong belief that the point of departure for everything we attempt from now on must be the redirection of our primary goal.

In this poem I call on young people to shift the vector of their youthful energies. Instead of starting with the external, in the belief that changes there would bring about internal change, I made my case for a bold shift to change from within as the key to changing the world outside. Engineering this shift, I believe, is the unavoidable concern we will carry from our century to the next. Although it is not my intent to tout my horn, I believe that this task has during the past quarter century become the urgent demand of our times.

In that year, 1970, the leftist movement of which the student movement was a part, at long last began to show signs of slackening and decline in response to the disillusionment brought on by the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact

troops (see box p. 10). Still the urge to remake the world through social revolution of external forms clung on stubbornly within the halls of academia. That well-known thesis of Marxism, though now at its lowest ebb—"consciousness does not determine existence; rather, existence determines consciousness" and "consciousness is nothing but the existence one is conscious of"—at that time still held strong sway among the leftist camp of opinion leaders.

Amid all the turmoil of the times, I could not but catch the telltale scent of nihilism and decadence stealing in to the momentary fervor of anarchy. (I later learned in my dialogue with French author Andre Malraux that he, too, saw the shadow of nihilism in the atmosphere of the times of the "May Revolution" in Paris (see box p. 13). I felt that I had to appeal to the young for a bold redirection of their thinking and actions.

The decades since witnessed immense tragedy. The century that validated revolution only of external forms has been essentially a century of wars and revolutions, and its devastating and cruel toll is now exposed for all to see. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellites is a particularly pitiful sight: partly because socialism sought to legitimize social upheaval of external forms with theoretical flourishes that distinguished it from the vandalism of the Nazis, and partly because socialism attracted so many young and conscientious idealists indignant at the inherent contradictions of capitalism.

The words of novelist Chingiz Aitmatov of the former Soviet Union, with whom I had held a dialogue, were unforgettable. He said:

Second, a piece of fatherly advice: revolution is riot. Young people, put no trust in social revolutions! For nations, people, and society, it is mass sickness, mass violence, and general catastrophe. We Russians have learned this fully. Seek instead democratic reformation as the way to bloodless evolution and the gradual rebuilding of society. Evolution demands more time and patience, more compromises than revolution. It requires the building and cultivating of happiness, not its forceful establishment. I pray to god that the younger generations will learn from our mistakes!³

But even the liberalist societies could not rest easy and dismiss the tragedies of socialism's demise as "fires on the opposite shore." The collapse of socialism might be interpreted as evidence of the relative superiority of liberalism and capitalism, and yet conditions in the free societies themselves were not exactly shining with the glow of victory. I believe that it must be said that, although liberalism may not have been as extreme in ideological terms as socialism, it was equally obsessed with the revolution of outward forms.

The Free Society on Trial

TSUNEARI FUKUDA, DRAMA- tist and literary critic, once said that the paramount concern of modern society is security in the most secular sense of the term. I believe this is an appropriate summary and description. For the liberalist's slogans of "freedom" and "democracy" as well as "peace" and "human rights," at least in Japan's case, all boil down to that one point: secular security.

After all, external forms are important, it is true. A country like Japan, which fed the engines of its modernization process with all manner of values and institutions introduced from the West, ultimately suffered from profound cultural indigestion. And with no sign

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

of any cure for its ailment in sight, it can only carry on an endless struggle against the forces that threaten human dignity. Indeed, if we do not we will never be able to change the bad habit of what first Soka Gakkai president Makiguchi called Japan's servile and fragile spiritual ethos, which so easily buckles to the pressures of the strong.

In his well-known essay, "Being and Doing," the late intellectual historian Masao Maruyama pointed out that "Like freedom, democracy by its very nature can become democracy only through the ceaseless process of democratization."⁴ As is true of all modern values, freedom and democracy are not givens; you have to fight for them to make them your own. In Japan, however, modern values have more or less been "given" from above by the authorities, be it the emperor or the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. That is why the task of "winning" values holds special significance in Japan, and for the same reason our Buddhist movement has had to take on the strong characteristics of the broader struggle for human rights.

This is all the more reason that I wish to declare that the struggle to defend the sanctity of life must never be aimed only at "secular security"— what I have called "the revolution of external forms alone." In order to make outward reforms thorough and genuine, I believe, it is crucial that we turn our eyes inward, toward our inner selves, once again. Legal and institutional guarantees of "freedom" and "democracy" as well as "peace" and "human rights" are indispensable, but they alone are not enough to preserve human dignity.

Indeed, as the situation in the liberal democracies in these final years of our century so clearly portrays, we will never arrive at our goal by pursuing simply secular security and external reforms alone. We will end up neglecting the human spirit and cultivation of human character. When that happens, the movement to defend human dignity will degenerate into one that casts down and harms humanity.

"Life is struggle," as Johan Huizinger wrote, incessant struggle between good and evil, between, in the words of Buddhism, the Buddha and the Devil. Freedom and indulgence, democracy and mobism, peace and complacency, human rights and self-righteousness are qualities that are as close to each other as two sides of a coin. To slacken even the slightest in this struggle is to risk succumbing to the other side of that coin.

Looking back over the past fifty years of democracy in Japan since the end of World War II, I am sure there is no one who would boast that we have been immune to disgraces to modern values. The shocking corruption of high-ranking bureaucrats and wretched and unprincipled behavior of our political leaders are only the tip of the iceberg that debases the character and integrity of our people, from adults to children. Far from striving to polish and refine themselves, they brandish their ugly egotism, revealing nothing of the shine of the finer qualities of humanity. They are the epitome of what Spanish thinker Jose Ortega y Gasset decried as "conceited spoiled brats" (*Revolt of the Masses*). Anyone would despair to think that it is this kind of human being that has been created by the postwar democratic educational system.

This is why, now as nearly thirty years ago, I continue to appeal to the young "to desire a sound revolution/carried out within themselves/gradually and in an atmosphere of peace/founded upon the philosophy and beliefs of each individual." I urge them to practice self-discipline and cultivate their inner selves. My mentor and second president of Soka Gakkai Josei Toda used to tell us, "When young, you ought to experience all sorts of hardships, even at a price," and as I look back on my youth, I can see that maxim is also my unshakable creed. It is the internal revolution that will lay the bridge of hope to the twenty-first century, overcoming all the numerous tragedies of the twentieth century that

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

were caused by our obsession with external reforms.

I believe that it is religion (at least those that are worthy of the name) that will provide the strong supports and the propelling forces for the building of such bridges. I believe that many of the world's most brilliant intellectuals, going all the way back to Arnold Toynbee and Andre Malraux, have honored the SGI movement with their understanding and encouragement precisely because they know the historic significance of what we are doing.

The concept of the "new middle ages" requires an approach to the spiritual dimension of humanity, a dimension all the more urgently needed because of trends toward globalization and transnationalization of the market economy. Without some sort of centripetal force, leaving matters up to the centrifugal forces of the world market (globalization of the market is, after all, motivated by the pursuit of profit, and such globalization by its nature is not conducive to strong centripetalism), we may find that what is created is not cosmic harmony, but uncontrollable, barren anarchy and chaos. Any approach to the spiritual dimension of humanity has to be made from a broad perspective of one hundred, perhaps two hundred years.

I must say that I can understand why Francis Fukuyama, author of the sensational book calling the collapse of socialism the "end of history," entitled his new work *Trust* (New York: Free Press, 1995). In the earlier work, he argued that, with the triumph of liberal democracy vis-à-vis socialism, history as we know it came to an end. Yet the liberalist societies carrying the banners of freedom and democracy have hardly been in a position to present themselves as worthy of the honor of being called victors.

Indeed, as we have seen from the endemic turmoil, decay and stagnation of liberal democracies and liberalist societies in the years since, their "victory" is not something that leads by any easy road either to peace and order or prosperity and vigor. Japan is by no means the only country where freedom has degenerated into indulgence, democracy into mobism, peace into cowardice and complacency, and human rights into self-righteousness. In varying degrees, it is a trend to be found in all the industrially advanced nations.

Key for Carrying on the Eternal Spiritual Struggle

HOW CAN WE TRANSFORM the chaos thus generated into an orderly and dynamic cosmos? Francis Fukuyama tells us that the key lies in "trust." This is a virtue of quite a different hue from the pursuit of secular security that consumed modern societies for so long.

The liberal democracy that emerges at the end of history is therefore not entirely "modern." If the institutions of democracy and capitalism are to work properly, they must coexist with certain premodern cultural habits that ensure their proper functioning. Law, contract, and economic rationality provide a necessary but not sufficient basis for both the stability and prosperity of postindustrial societies; they must as well be leavened with reciprocity, moral obligation, duty toward community, and trust, which are based in habit rather than rational calculation.⁵

I do not intend to discuss the content of this book at length. Fukuyama makes almost no mention of religion, but in the broad sense, "trust" is not a phenomenon simply of secular concern. Obviously it is linked in some way to the realm of the transcendent and the religious. What is noteworthy about his thesis is that it presents what seems at first glance

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

to be an earthy, even primitive, quality in a familiar, straightforward fashion, as the key for opening up the “postmodern” age. I might add here that the notion of “spontaneous sociability,” which Fukuyama considers the key to forming and regenerating trust, resonates strongly with our own movement’s slogan “Human revolution first, and then social reformation!”

However, to the extent that trust is rooted in traditional culture and custom, it is only practical among those who share certain traditions, in what Bergson calls a “closed society.” What is important is how to open up such societies. Our task is not to set in motion all sorts of cultural friction, but to find ways trust can be used to release the lubricants that smooth the functioning of the open society. And we must by all means build relations of trust that are strong enough to sustain the borderless, globalist age. Herein, I firmly believe, lies the original mission of world religion. The vision expressed in my poem cited above, calling for

...a sound revolution
carried out within themselves
gradually and in an atmosphere of peace
founded upon the philosophy and beliefs of each individual
This calls for farsighted judgments and a profound system of principles

does not have to be realized in a day. As Mahatma Gandhi put it, “Good travels at a snail’s pace.” I wrote it simply out of my fervent wish that our young will come forward and meet the task of building the bridges to the twenty-first century with courage, resolution and patience.

Now I would like to explore the means for changing the norms that are required to create a new global civilization or “human civilization,” focusing on environmental issues that have emerged, demonstrating the limits of contemporary civilization. Today, ecologists are telling us that if radical changes are not made, the Earth itself might not survive another century. The greatest threat to human existence, therefore, is our failure to deal properly with environmental problems.

People have warned for a long time that science and technology are like a “two-edged sword.” But their voices have been overwhelmed by the rapid succession of advances making what was once thought impossible possible. Economic growth and prosperity brought about by technological advancement have so captured people’s imaginations that the progress and spread of the civilization of science and technology has known no limits and no barriers.

But now the triumph has been found to be marred, with damage to the Earth’s environment inflicted by the side effects of that civilization, telling us that a progressive view of history is an illusion and declaring that progress may in fact turn out to be our downfall. Air pollution, water pollution, pollution of the soil, indiscriminate cutting of vast forests, desertification, damage to the Earth’s protective ozone layer and the resultant effects of global warming: none of these issues can be simply left to resolve themselves.

Fairness in Society and for Future Generations

IN 1972, THE CLUB OF ROME issued the first statement recognizing these problems as tasks of global concern in its report, “The Limits to Growth.” That same year, the United Nations Special Conference on the Environment was held in Stockholm, known for its

catch phrase, "our only one Earth." That conference ended with announcement of the "Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment," which states that environmental problems posed a real and serious threat to the survival of humankind and calls on the international community to contribute to their solution.

A great deal of research has since been conducted and numerous projects and initiatives undertaken to remedy the causes of environmental destruction, and the United Nations Special Conference on the Environment (the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 drew the world's close attention. This summit was successful to a certain extent, marking the signing of a number of declarations and agreements, including the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; "Agenda 21," an action plan aimed at achieving what came to be known as "sustainable development"; adoption of a set of principles for the protection of the world's forests; a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992).

The Convention on Biological Diversity went into effect in December 1993 and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in December 1996. The remarkable progress made in establishing restrictions on the use of chlorofluorocarbons in order to protect the Earth's ozone layer is testimony to the significance of consensus and concerted effort within international society (see box above).

This year, five years since the Rio Earth Summit, the next United Nations Special Conference on the Environment will be held to evaluate and discuss what has been done and what progress made in the interim. Attention is centering on the third conference of countries signatory to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Japan as the occasion when specific conclusions will be reached about measures on reduction of carbon dioxide emissions to be implemented in the year 2000.

Despite the steady advances being made in international society on these issues, many reports point out that they are far outpaced by the speed with which conditions of the Earth's environment are worsening. In April 1996, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) issued a statement prior to celebrations of Earth Day declaring that the Earth's environment had reached a critical state in so many areas that if major changes were not made it would soon become meaningless to celebrate Earth Day. The 1996 white paper published by the Worldwatch Institute stated that "The world today is faced with an enormous need for change in a period of time that is all too short." It also stressed that "if we fail, our future will spiral out of control."⁶

Indeed, it is now clear that the problems of the Earth's environment cannot be resolved merely as the extension of approaches adopted in the past. I believe that there is a growing awareness that cataclysm will occur if reforms are not made that will drastically change current trends and without efforts to fundamentally reevaluate the nature of civilization.

Many and diverse efforts to scrutinize and reexamine the ideas and values that have sustained the modern technological civilization from this viewpoint have begun, and the field of environmental ethics is now becoming well established as an academic discipline. The theory of accountability of one generation to its successors proposed by Hans Jonas, that the present generation ought to limit its freedoms for the sake of coming generations, is certain to be the subject of close scrutiny from now on. The discussion unfolding on this topic involves not only a fundamental reexamination of

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

the concept of "freedom," as it has been understood until now, but also a reevaluation of the synchronic approach to decision-making based on interests and consent of contemporary people alone. This debate is extremely instructive in appraising not only the validity of the "science-is-superior" persuasion but the implications of the progressive view of history extolled throughout the modern and contemporary eras.

In addition to fairness and responsibility among generations, of course, we must also pursue social fairness in our own time, as symbolized in the North-South problem. Any efforts we make to consider "sustainable development" as the keynote in dealing with environmental problems will be meaningless if we do not pay careful attention to these two dimensions of fairness. As many opinion leaders have pointed out, it is the conspicuous patterns of consumption of the nations of the "North" that lie at the core of today's environmental crisis, and I do not believe this charge can be denied.

It is fantasy to think that the kind of conspicuous consumption of resources by the mass-producing, mass-consuming North could be "sustainable" much longer. More importantly, it is very shortly going to be something that global society will no longer condone. A vicious circle plagues the nations of the "South," our close neighbors on this one-and-only Earth, linking poverty, population growth and environmental destruction. As many observers have pointed out, the harsh realities of the so-called PPE (poverty, population growth and environment) problem are directly attributable to the North-South disparities that have resulted from the structure of the international economy.

With regard to the polarization of the hemispheres, the yearly report of the United Nations Development Programme published last year, Human Development Report 1996 (Oxford University Press, 1996) warns that "If present trends continue, economic disparities between industrial and developing nations will move from inequitable to inhuman." The report describes the distortions of economic growth under five patterns: 1. jobless growth (growth without an increase in job opportunities); 2. ruthless growth (growth that does nothing to redress the disparity between rich and poor); 3. voiceless growth (growth not accompanied by democratization or the advance of individuals in society); 4. rootless growth (growth that infringes on the ethnic identity of individuals); and 5. futureless growth (growth through wasteful consumption of resources that will be needed by future generations), summing them up as "patterns of growth 'that perpetuate today's inequalities [and are] neither sustainable nor worth sustaining.'"

Attention at last year's World Food Summit focused on the plight of the more than 800,000,000 people who suffer from starvation or malnutrition in the world today, and the Declaration of Rome and a related action plan were adopted aiming to decrease the numbers of the starving by half by the year 2015. I might add that 1996 is year one of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006).

In furthering international endeavors such as these, I believe, it is crucial to establish an environment in which the inner resources with which each and every human being is endowed can be amply displayed. Eliminating starvation and eradicating poverty cannot be achieved through stopgap measures that simply supply material goods and financial support. Alleviating these problems depends, rather, on securing empowerment for the long term, which can be achieved by creating environments in which individuals can realize their inherent potential and by establishing the conditions where self-reliance can thrive.

In many cases, the causes of the devastating conflicts occurring in various parts of the world are deeply rooted in economic problems. All of us, I believe, must recognize our

responsibility, as fellow members of a global society, to contribute in any way we can to break the vicious circle mentioned above.

It hardly need be said that environmental problems are not simply political, economic or technological issues that can be eliminated or alleviated by merely establishing wise methods of using valuable resources. I believe a way will be found out of our difficulties if we probe much deeper, questioning and redesigning the relationships of human beings to each other, of human beings to the environment, and of human beings to society as a whole. Now is the time to transform our civilization into one based on values premised on the principle of human dignity in the true sense. It is time for a shift in the fundamental perspective of each and every person in the world.

The clues to a view of life and the world that will lay the philosophical foundations for that revolution can be found in the wisdom of Buddhism. The Buddhist canon gives us a beautiful parable of the cosmic view of history, showing how all the phenomena of the universe interrelate, producing a perfect, subtle harmony: "Suspended above the palace of Indra, the Buddhist god who symbolizes the natural forces that protect and nurture life, is an enormous net. A brilliant jewel is attached to each knot in the net. Each jewel contains and reflects the image of all the other jewels in the net, which sparkles in the magnificence of its totality.

A Fundamental Shift in Perspectives

THIS POIGNANT IMAGE illustrates the concept of "dependent origination (Jp. *engi*)."
Dependent origination is the fundamental Buddhist doctrine that teaches the coexistence of all things in the universe, including human beings and nature, in interdependent relationships. It expounds the symbiosis of the micro-cosmos and the macro-cosmos that unite as one organism.

The idea goes far beyond the mechanistic view, of the world removed from humanity, that formed the background for modern science. What I would like particularly to emphasize is that Buddhism sees the relationships of all things in the universe not as a still, static image but as the dynamic pulsing of creative life.

Buddhism sums up the dynamism of life as follows: "Without life, environment cannot exist, even though life is supported by its environment." "Life" here refers to the subjective life (Jp. *shoho*) and "environment" to the objective world (Jp. *eho*) that surrounds it.

The point I would like to make is that this passage conveys not a static image by simply giving two sentences showing that life and environment are the same thing. The first and second parts of the sentence cannot be reversed. By saying first, "Without life, environment cannot exist," it is clear that the subjective display of human life that embraces the universe comes first. Yet that expression alone constitutes an idealism, or indulges in the Faustian arrogance of the moderns. The second part of the sentence—"even though life is supported by its environment"—is added, therefore, to remind us not to forget that human beings, too, are part of nature.

This Buddhist doctrine of the oneness of life and environment (Jp. *esho funi*) is a dynamic, volitional concept seeing human life as the initiator of reform while referring to the impact environment in turn can have on it. It is in its relations with humanity in this fashion that environment is viewed.

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

The Path From Human Revolution to Global Revolution

THE WORD *SYMBIOSIS* IS often heard in our time, but I believe that real symbiosis can be achieved only through the well-balanced interaction of “life” and “environment,” which requires firm determination to carry out reform—a resolve demonstrated in the phrase “Without life, environment cannot exist”—while at the same time maintaining close consideration toward the environment as the sustenance of our lives.

For that reason I feel a strong interest in and affinity with Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset’s idea of life. The theme that he himself said epitomizes all of his philosophical speculation is, “I am myself plus my circumstance, and if I do not save it, I cannot save myself.”⁸

Just as stated in “Without life, environment cannot exist,” by saying “I am myself and my environment,” Ortega meant that there can be no environment that simply exists, that environment does not idealistically or conceptually exist within one. One lives within environment, and environment, moreover, is a kind of objective entity that will continue to exist even after one’s death. That is why he was thoughtful enough to add, “If that environment cannot be saved, I cannot be saved,” like the second sentence of the above passage of the Buddhist canon, “life is supported by its environment.” He placed the essential and acting “I” at the fine intersection of “I” and “environment.”

Ortega’s concise and profound proposition, reminiscent of Descartes’ *Cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am), keenly expresses the crisis of modern civilization. As distinct from the Cartesian and mechanical or dualistic model of the world, it is apparently oriented to dualistic monism or monistic dualism. His question was: When will we awaken to the realization that definitive existence in this world is not material or spiritual, but essentially a matter of perspective?

I cannot help thinking that by implication this “perspective” shares the same principle as the “subjective and dynamic display of creative life,” the principle that runs through the Buddhist doctrine of the oneness of life and the environment.

I mention these similarities because the dilemma—or perhaps I should say “trilemma” (destruction of the global environment vs. injunction to economic growth vs. the energy and resources crisis)—that confronts contemporary civilization on all sides presents such a pessimistic outlook as to cause people to lose all hope. I believe that we will not be able to muster the indomitable courage and confidence it will take to chart a firm path toward resolution of these problems without the support of a strong philosophy of action.

It is out of this conviction that I argue that we must begin with revolution within the individual heart—the human revolution—through which we can then realize a revolution in the human relationship with the environment and thereby a revolution of “global civilization.” It is indeed with this awareness that we at Soka Gakkai International have approached our endeavors to raise consciousness about environmental issues through exhibits and other activities.

In 1992, in conjunction with the Earth Summit, we mounted an exhibition entitled “Toward the Century of Life: The Environment and Development.” That exhibit toured throughout Brazil after the summit ended. At Brazil SGI’s Amazon Natural Environment Research Center, we are also engaged in a joint research project on reforestation of the

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

Amazon rain forest. Since 1993, our "Ecology and Human Life" exhibit has been touring major cities of the United States and in 1996, we also opened an exhibition on "The Amazon—Its Environment and Development" in Bolivia.

These exhibitions have been aimed at clarifying the sources of the problems and foster a firm determination among people to act in unison toward their solution. And, as I have declared many times, if we are ever to solve global problems of this kind, we must move beyond outmoded thinking based on national interest and seek approaches based on the interests of humankind as a whole.

Global environmental problems require that we reorient our perspective. We have to come to grips with the realization that the age has ended when we can afford to think of our concerns and responsibilities as limited by national boundary lines drawn from narrow, even arbitrary motives.

Human Solidarity Through United Nations Reform

HERE I WOULD LIKE TO present a number of proposals for the consideration of the United Nations, which will play a pivotal role in the solution of global environmental problems.

One of the achievements of the Earth Summit was establishment in 1993 of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) under the auspices of the U.N. Economic and Social Council. This commission will supervise the implementation of Agenda 21, the action plan adopted in order to achieve sustainable development, and will oversee and coordinate the related programs being carried out under different U.N. agencies.

The United Nations Environmental Programme was established back in 1972, and to policy in this field. Already the CSD is involved in follow-up activities for implemented projects by theme. However, as symbolized by the complicated debate over finances in the United Nations, there are many hurdles to overcome. In addition, even if the CSD is able to achieve a well-coordinated U.N. environmental policy, it will take considerable executive power to assure that it can be transmitted into action.

Toward a Permanent "Global Forum"

PART OF THE LIMITATIONS which the United Nations labors today derives from its organization founded on the assembly of sovereign nation-states. It will not be able to release itself from those limitations unless nations become able to think in terms that transcend national interests. I believe that efforts must be made on the global level to realize the creation of a system for promoting cooperative relations on global issues through the kind of voluntary restraint on sovereign rights being pursued in the European Union in environmental and other areas of policy.

Although the founding of the CSD has considerably ameliorated the problems of policy coordination, certainly there is an urgent need for an organization that can wield the strong leadership required to make final decisions and clarify the distribution of responsibility among different organizations with regard to global environmental problems. There ought to be an "Environment and Development Security Council," such as I have been advocating for some time, to serve as a forum for international decision-making regarding urgent problems of this kind.

Various groups have presented plans for the reform and reorganization of the United Nations, and many seek changes to a system that emphasizes a response to environmental

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

issues. I believe that expert opinion should be widely sought and the options for the form and powers of the institution broadly studied in the process of determining the proper course for U.N. reform.

Another matter that should be studied is a framework for broad reflection of popular opinion in the changes made to the United Nations. Finding ways to take advantage of the constructive energies of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will not only help to solidify the directions of policy but contribute to the formation of the support base that is indispensable for implementation of policy.

Considering the relative diminishing status of the sovereign state touched on above, I am convinced that within the United Nations as well, its character as a federation of sovereign states will gradually fade, with the faces of individuals gradually taking precedence over the faces of states. In that process the network of NGOs will certainly grow stronger and larger.

If there is a broad support base on the popular level, I believe it will open the way for obtaining the financial resources needed to execute policy, a matter which is now the greatest priority. At present, while it has become possible to procure funds for environmental protection through the Global Environment Facility, the available support remains small in scale, so it has yet to function as a full-fledged world system (see box page 20). Meanwhile, proposals have been advanced for securing working funds through environment taxes or fees for use of common international territories (such as for use of seaways and airspace). I believe the international groundwork will be laid for realistically considering such proposals as participation on the popular level expands.

I would therefore like to propose that an assembly along the lines of the Global Forum held in parallel with the Earth Summit five years ago be created to convene once a year (see box above). This forum could play a number of roles: as the "antennae of the people" channeling information from NGOs for the benefit of discussion at the regular and special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, to pool voices from the grass roots, and to provide a certain overall direction to the outcome of discussions.

The Wave of Disarmament and Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

IN MY VOLUME OF DIALOGUES with founder of peace studies, Dr. Johan Galtung, he proposed the founding of a United Nations People's Assembly (UNPA) as a second assembly to function in parallel with the current U.N. General Assembly. While it may take time to realize a people's assembly, I believe it will be meaningful to establish the regular functioning of a system like the above-mentioned Global Forum as an assembly that could bring to bear on decision-making in international society a certain amount of influence from the standpoint of the people.

This proposal should be considered not only in order to assure that the United Nations is permeated with the spirit, symbolized by the opening lines of its Charter, that each and every individual is an important actor in the global society, but in order to enhance the United Nations as an "assembly of humanity" in fact as well as in name.

All of these proposals will be difficult to realize, but I believe that, as we grapple with the problems and continue to search for the best possible measures for resolving the global environmental crisis, the new character of the United Nations that the times demand will gradually and naturally make itself manifest.

Now, let me go on to discuss two other themes for which solutions must be charted, alongside those for the global environment, in preparation for the twenty-first century:

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

disarmament and the abolition of nuclear arms. The mood in support of disarmament and nuclear weapons abolition has improved since the end of the Cold War, and quite a number of efforts are being made in this direction throughout international society. In 1996, these efforts bore fruit in the realization of several landmark events.

In the field of disarmament, the Convention on Chemical Weapons (CCW), which had been signed in 1993, finally will go into effect this April. This convention is thorough enough to be considered a genuine "disarmament treaty" because it outlaws existing chemical weapons as well as the production of chemical weapons of any kind from now onward. It not only orders the abolition of all chemical weapons including those that are obsolete or abandoned in other countries' territory, but the demolition of facilities for the production of chemical weapons in order to assure the cessation of their manufacture.

The important aspect of this treaty is that it is binding on all signatory nations, thereby resolving the inequities that were an issue with regard to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Also, in order to prevent violations, the treaty approves a system for inspections of related industrial facilities as well as inspections without prior notice when requests are made. These features make it an extremely good model for the disarmament treaties to be drawn up in the future.

How effective such an epoch-making treaty will prove to be, however, depends on the attitude of the twenty countries that possess or are believed to possess chemical weapons. Particularly regarding the countries which hold most of the chemical weapons in the world but have yet to ratify the treaty, international society must unite in urging them to sign the treaty as soon as possible.

I believe that the success of this treaty, with its highly reliable and broad-ranging verification systems, is an extremely important landmark in the movement toward disarmament of other kinds of weapons as well. As each signatory nation conscientiously performs its responsibilities under the treaty and trust is restored through the transparency attained under its verification procedures, the number of signatory nations will increase until it becomes established as an effective international institution. If success can be achieved even in this single area of chemical weapons, I believe it will have a great impact on endeavors in other areas of disarmament where a consensus has been reached but little real progress made, such as in the case of the Biological Weapons Convention, whose effectiveness, despite the fact that it was put into force in 1975, has been drastically lowered because it does not include verification or inspection clauses.

Another such example is the problem of the proposed treaty restricting the use of anti-personnel land mines, which saw some progress in 1996. In a review conference on the Convention on Conventional Weapons held last May, a new agreement was reached on the complete revision of the protocols included on the tightening of restrictions on anti-personnel land mines. However, a grace period of a maximum nine years before the restraints would come into effect was approved and, since the introduction of an inspection system was put off for future discussion, some have voiced fears that it may end up being no more than a "moral law" that carries no real clout.

In order to attain the goal of total abolition of anti-personnel mines being sought by the various U.N. agencies and by the NGOs, I propose that, apart from the CCW which requires agreement on a ban by all signatory nations, we should work toward a separate framework aimed at the enactment of a ban on anti-personnel land mines.

As indicated by the adoption of the first resolution seeking the formulation of a treaty completely banning land mines introduced in the United Nations General Assembly's First Committee in November 1996, a consensus in this direction is

rapidly building, convincing me that it would not be impossible to create a framework for land mines similar to that of the Chemical Weapons Conventions. According to studies by the International Red Cross, some 800 lives are lost each month and countless people are gravely injured by the 100,000,000 live land mines that remain strewn about different parts of the world.

The vast majority of the victims of land mines are civilians, especially children. The perils of undetonated land mines remain long after the horrors of war are over. I strongly urge that international society move as quickly as possible toward the total abolition of the land mines that imperil the lives and activities of innocent people every day.

International society, as we have seen, is very gradually and slowly moving in the direction of disarmament. Some important steps forward were made in 1996 in the area of nuclear weapons.

One of them was the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty banning tests and other detonations of nuclear weapons. Its adoption by an overwhelming majority in the U.N. General Assembly in September 1996 after an arduous process of deliberation has been criticized because it permits testing by computer simulation not accompanied by nuclear explosions, thereby allowing possessor countries to maintain and improve their nuclear weapons capabilities. But I believe it is still quite significant, as a clear indication that nuclear testing is banned by international law, compared with the complete lack of any kind of constraint that reigned before.

Nevertheless, no clear date has yet been set for the enactment of the CTBT. In order for it to go into effect, it is required that forty-four nations stipulated as possessing or suspected of possessing nuclear weapons ratify the treaty. These include a few countries that have yet to indicate they will sign, which means the treaty could hang in limbo for some time.

It is the common understanding in international society that signatories to a treaty should not engage in actions in violation of its intent or purposes (Article 18 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties) even before it goes into effect. I therefore believe that the CTBT, which has been signed by most of the countries, including the five major nuclear powers, already serves a substantial restraining role in international society.

In that sense, it is important to take further steps toward disarmament, building on the lessons learned by problems not overcome in the CTBT, particularly in consensus building toward a conscious commitment to disarmament among the nuclear nations. Ways must be found to overcome the matter of "quality," where the CTBT fell short, by setting firmer measures to put a stop to maintenance and improvement of nuclear arms capabilities of nuclear nations. In order to address the problem of "quantity," efforts have to be made to assure the actual reduction of the numbers of existing nuclear weapons. One focus of effort should be the early signing of the "Cutoff Treaty" that would prohibit the production of radioactive material which is used to manufacture nuclear weapons. Talks on this treaty are expected to be difficult, but because agreement is indispensable in order to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons that is the basic premise of nuclear disarmament, the nuclear-arms-possessing nations are duty-bound to work toward an early consensus.

Another area of effort is to create the environment for actual reduction of nuclear arms. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty negotiations between the United States and Russia are bogged down by the latter's unwillingness to ratify START II. I urge the two countries

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

to break through this prolonged stalemate in talks so that they can proceed to plans for carrying out the terms of START II, and immediately proceed with START III talks to lay the groundwork for the next stage of disarmament negotiations among all the nuclear powers—including the United Kingdom, France and China.

Spreading Impact of International Court Opinion

EFFORTS HAVE BEEN GOING on for a long time among the non-nuclear nations to establish non-nuclear zones. In addition to the Tlatelolco Treaty in Latin America and the Rarotonga Treaty in the Southern Pacific region, the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty was signed in December 1995, and in April 1996 the Pelidandaba Treaty was signed in Africa. If the Antarctic Treaty is included, these treaties realize the establishment of nuclear-free areas stretching over the entire terrestrial area of the southern hemisphere and large portions of the southern part of the northern hemisphere.

As demonstrated by the documents adopted at the conference held for reexamination and extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in 1995, global and regional peace and security can be strengthened through the establishment of non-nuclear zones, and I believe it is important to encourage this concept in other areas such as the Middle East and Northeast Asia in order to expand non-nuclear zones even further.

At the same time, in order to make effective the non-nuclear zones that have been set up, the guarantees and cooperation of the nuclear nations are indispensable. As with the establishment of a structure of cooperation by all the five major nuclear powers seen in the signing of a supplementary protocol to the Rarotonga Treaty in March last year by the United States, United Kingdom and France, it is hoped that the nuclear nations will also show readiness to pledge such cooperation for the other treaties as well.

I believe it also urgent to conclude treaties guaranteeing the non-nuclear nations that they will not be attacked with nuclear arms and prohibiting the preemptive use of nuclear arms. Given the conclusions of the NPT and CTBT, it is all the more important that the nuclear nations show their commitment by taking the initiative in furthering negotiations toward conclusion of such treaties. At the very least it will be a significant step toward eliminating the inequality between the nuclear haves and have-nots.

Indeed, the voices of those who seek a world without nuclear arms have risen to the point where the members of the nuclear club must listen. They can no longer afford to act only with their own interest in mind.

In July 1996, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued its “advisory opinion” on the use of nuclear weapons, and it is now well known that the efforts of NGOs were instrumental in the adoption of the resolution passed in the December 1994 U.N. General Assembly, which sought this opinion. While the opinion avoided judgment regarding the use of nuclear arms for self-defense, its statement that “the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law,” is significant indeed. The ICJ opinion also stressed the justices’ unanimous opinion that the nuclear nations are obligated to work conscientiously toward nuclear disarmament. It is notable that this point was made as an expression of opinion of the Court itself, not in response to a question from the General Assembly.

I believe that the vigorous debate around the world that unfolded concerning the illegality of nuclear weapons as a result of this statement is truly momentous. Even though, like the resolutions adopted by the U.N. General Assembly, the advisory opinion

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

of the ICJ does not hold legal binding power, I believe it will have a strong moral and political impact in the creation of a consensus in international society aimed at the abolition of nuclear arms. Indeed, in the debate in the U.N. General Assembly concerning adoption of the CTBT, a number of countries cited the ICJ's advisory opinion, suggesting that it has contributed to a new rationale upon which to pursue the goal of disarmament. The resolution adopted in the U.N. General Assembly First Committee last November also made note of the ICJ opinion, and called for the opening of negotiations for the early adoption of a total ban on weapons and providing for their elimination within the current year.

As these developments show, the world is steadily moving in the direction of a non-nuclear world. In order to strengthen the course of that trend I urgently call on people to discard the kind of thinking that calls the existence of nuclear arms a "necessary evil" for the sake of protecting the "national interest," and embrace the conviction that "the interests of humankind" take precedence over all, making use of nuclear weapons an "absolute evil," whatever the reason.

40th Anniversary of Toda Anti-nuclear Declaration

THIS YEAR, 1997, MARKS the fortieth year since Josei Toda made his landmark declaration denouncing the satanic nature of nuclear weapons and pronouncing them to be an "absolute evil."

In September 1957, rallying from the fatal illness he suffered, Toda summoned the strength left to him to appeal to the young. He challenged the mounting threat of nuclear arms that portended the advent of "the death of death," and issued his heroic cry for the right to existence for all people of the world. He said:

We, the citizens of the world, have an inviolable right to live. Anyone who tries to jeopardize this right is a devil incarnate, a fiend, a monster...

Even if a country should conquer the world through the use of nuclear weapons, the conquerors must be viewed as devils, as evil incarnate. I believe that it is the mission of all Japanese youth to disseminate this idea throughout the globe.⁹

As is clear from the passage cited above, Toda's idea was an unconditional ban on the use of nuclear arms. In order to make his will reality, I have stressed the urgency of specific steps to be taken to achieve a treaty banning the development, possession and use of nuclear weapons. The declaration against nuclear arms he made—independently of all ideological or national interests and rising above all arguments based on power politics such as nuclear deterrence and limited nuclear war—shines with eternal radiance.

The declaration is imbued with his ardent wish to establish the right to live in peace as a fundamental right for every human being. He earnestly wished that people would not only be kept from the tragedies of nuclear destruction and human sacrifices but also would never again suffer from war.

Foresighted Call for Human Security

TODA'S DECLARATION, THE crystallization of his earnest wish to "eliminate all tragedy from the Earth," embodies a foresight that shares much with the central

concepts of human security increasingly being called for today. What I would like to stress here is that his declaration—as he expressed it, to “tear away the hidden talons”—was intended to urge those of us of the younger generations to wage an uncompromising fight with the evils part of human life, the invisible enemy responsible for the existence of nuclear arms.

The abolition of nuclear weapons is more than a question simply of their physical riddance. Even if all nuclear arsenals are removed, a serious question will remain as to how to deal with the knowledge of nuclear arms production that has been acquired by humankind. This is why I say that the only real solution to the issue of nuclear arms is to struggle incessantly against that “evil of life” that threatens the survival of humanity. And this is why Josei Toda entrusted younger generations with the task of disseminating the idea of the “dignity of all life” as the overarching ethos of our times.

Nichiren Daishonin, the thirteenth-century Buddhist sage whose teachings we at SGI follow, said, “Life is the most important of all our properties.”¹⁰ This respect for life is the essential inspiration of the Toda declaration. Herein lies the reason we at SGI aspire for the inner revolution of all individuals—the human revolution—that will establish the respect for all life as the basic norm of human society. Life is the world’s supreme treasure. There is no value that is worth preserving at the sacrifice of life. The human revolution movement is the basis upon which SGI has held various exhibitions (such as “Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World” and “War and Peace”) designed to raise awareness of nuclear and other global issues, and through these activities we have worked to expand a network of solidarity among people worldwide. Our efforts are inspired by the conviction that we cannot sit by and overlook the crises occurring everywhere on the Earth.

The initiative in building a “world without nuclear arms” and a “world without war” lies in the hands of each and every individual. We have to embrace that conviction and be cognizant of our responsibility in that task.

Realistic measures for eliminating nuclear weapons are included in a very provocative report compiled in August 1996 by a group of specialists called the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (see box below). Based on plans of this kind, I believe we should move on to the next step, which is to mobilize global public opinion and pool the wisdom of people from around the world in the endeavor to achieve consensus on more detailed procedures, as well as a specific timetable, for the eradication of nuclear weapons.

In February 1996, the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research was founded, an organization originating in Josei Toda’s philosophy of peace. I am eager, knowing that this year, the fortieth anniversary of his nuclear disarmament declaration, to see the Toda Institute launch its research program with nuclear disarmament as its top priority.

Concerted efforts on the popular level should be encouraged to formulate and then implement constructive plans for a better world, alternatives that will reorient the world toward peace based on the interests of humanity. I believe that expanding such popular solidarity worldwide is the only feasible path toward constructing a world free from nuclear arms and the cataclysm of nuclear war.

In my January 26th peace proposal two years ago, I commented on the importance of strengthening and establishing an international law for peace as the correct course for international society toward the twenty-first century. I discussed the necessity of enlarging the international laws for peace by augmenting current international humanitarian laws

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

and establishing a system that will have binding force. Toward that goal, I urged a close link between the development of international laws of peace and the United Nations in facilitating the laying down of rules for peaceful relationships among countries.

There are signs of that development recently, as symbolized by the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice concerning the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. These developments are the product of popular movements worldwide. I believe, therefore, that it is not enough to set up international laws and systems based on government-level dialogue among countries. Individual commitment to building a new order for peace as propelled from the grass roots is indispensable to the establishment of genuine international laws of peace.

International laws have been effective only in settling problems *ex post facto*. Much, much more must be done, considering that the ultimate objective of international law is to achieve peace in its broadest sense. Moreover, such global issues as the environment and nuclear arms were not taken into consideration at the time of the founding of the United Nations, as is clear from the U.N. Charter.

The concept of peace today is not limited to the state of no war, but is becoming more focused on "human security" in the broader sense. I would like to urge that aggressive efforts transcending the limitations of international society and institutionalizing peace as the foundation for the new millennium begin through initiatives at the grass roots.

An "Earth Charter" for the Third Millennium

ATASK I WOULD LIKE TO propose is a grass-roots endeavor that lays down a new set of principles, what can be called an "Earth Charter," that will provide a clear vision for the third millennium.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the crystallization of the wish to guarantee human existence for all people based on the resolve not to repeat the tragedies of World War II. Likewise, the Earth Charter should be a distillation of the spirit of coexistence and the resolve not to pass down the evils perpetrated by modern civilization to subsequent generations. Realization of such a charter will certainly involve many difficulties, but we have no choice but to break the path toward it by sharing responsibility for our common struggle against global crisis and by building trust through sustained dialogue.

The late Austregésilo de Athayde (former president of the Brazilian Academy of Letters), recalling his involvement in the work of formulating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, said in his dialogue with me that the declaration, created after a process entailing much clash of doctrines, creeds, interests and ideologies, would survive forever as a milestone of hope along the arduous path of development of the human race.

He also said that economic and political ties were too fragile to unite people, and that there must be a kind of bond that links people together on a dimension that is noble enough, broad enough and strong enough to determine the fate of humanity.¹¹ The same kind of spirit, I believe, is required for the drafting of the Earth Charter.

I urge the establishment of such an Earth Charter with the support of people around the world as proof that human beings possess the courage and wisdom as well as unshakable solidarity to determine our own destiny. I would like to propose that SGI, too, devote itself to that endeavor, centered around such organizations as the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century in the United States.

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics

Opening of a New Century of Solidarity

THE FORCES OF DIVISIVENESS that tear at the human heart are the greatest source of the crises imperiling humanity and all life, whether it be the issue of Earth's environment or dilemmas of nuclear and conventional weapons of mass destruction.

Believing that divisiveness is inherently evil and unity is good, I have consistently argued that we can prevent the tragedies of human history from being repeated in the twenty-first century if we wield the power of good to allay divisive forces. This is my iron rule. I have expressed my belief in this rule in the dialogues I have engaged in and the friendships I have cultivated with many people around the world. I have sought therein a way to further the common struggle of humankind.

Encouraging solidarity is also the basic spirit that runs through the SGI Charter, which was inaugurated in the autumn of 1995 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the founding of SGI. As discussed in detail in my January 26th peace proposal last year, the essence of Buddhism as expounded by Nichiren Daishonin is to build solidarity among human beings, to forge unity among humanity, so as to block out the evil forces of divisiveness.

Looking back over the course of history shows that people of good were always divided, and so their movements calling for social reform lacked effectiveness and often ended in failure. I want this unhappy recurrence in human history to cease. If we do not address this problem, people's feelings of helplessness and resignation will only grow and the chance for them to rally their courage and resources to rise together to overcome the crises will be lost forever.

Humankind is at a major turning point: Will it simply extend the existing course of history and wait for self-destruction? Or will it open up a new horizon and create a truly "global" and genuinely "human" civilization?

We must choose the latter. The crux of our challenge is whether to simply be a passenger on the ship of fate, leaving everything to others, or to take the helm and be responsible for that ship ourselves to search, with the help of all, for the most desirable course.

In a talk in February 1996, Club of Rome president Dr. Ricardo Diez Hochleitner told me that the more serious the reality is, the more urgently people need hope. He also stressed the importance of efforts not only to find out where problems lie but to find out how to solve them. What he said following this is indelibly etched in my memory: "I believe the wisdom needed to solve all our problems comes from the people."

Indeed, every one of us should realize that we possess the nobility of spirit to be the main actor in changing the course of history, and with that conviction, to undertake the task we share of solving the global issues of our time.

We at SGI, firmly committed to that conviction, will further expand the network of solidarity based on renewed humanism through our Buddhist-oriented movement fostering peace, culture and education. Working together with people of good throughout the world, we will rally courage and pool our wisdom to overcome the crises of civilization, the greatest challenges humankind has ever faced, and open the door to a third millennium where the sanctity of every individual life shines with hope and glory. □

©1997 by the Soka Gakkai. All rights reserved.

1. Nicolas Berdyaev, *Solitude and Society*, p. 200 (London, Geoffrey Bles: The Centenary Press, 1938).
2. Daisaku Ikeda, *Songs from My Heart*, pp. 21–22, translated by Burton Watson (New York: Weatherhill Inc., 1990).
3. Daisaku Ikeda and Chingiz Aitmatov, *Oinaru Tamashii no Uta* [Poems of the Great Spirit], translated by Richard L. Gage, vol.1, p. 81 (Tokyo: Ushio Shuppan-sha, 1995).
4. Masao Maruyama, *Maruyama Masao shu* [Collected Works of Masao Maruyama], vol. 8, p. 25 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996).
5. Francis Fukuyama, *Trust*, p. 11 (London, Penguin Books, 1996).
6. Lester R. Brown and others, *State of the World 1996*, p. 18 (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996).
7. Nichiren, *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, p. 146, (Tokyo: NSIC, 1986).
8. Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Quixote*, p. 4 (New York: W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1961).
9. Josei Toda, *SGI Newsletter Monthly*, No. 126, p. 62, p. 65 (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1993).
10. Nichiren, *Letters of Nichiren*, p. 515 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
11. Daisaku Ikeda and Austregésilo de Athayde, *Nijuisseiki no jinken o kataru*, p. 129 [Human Rights in the Twenty-first Century] (Tokyo: Ushio Shuppan-sha, 1995).

Title: New Horizons of a Global Civilization

Subject: Living Buddhism 04/97 v.1 n.4 p.6 LB9704p06

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Civilization Discussion Global Horizons Ikeda Peace President Proposal Society Topics