

Advance in Triumph

The eyes of the whole world
Are fixed upon you,
My magnificent friends of America,
Eager to see your splendid work.

Forge your solidarity
And advance in triumph,
Creating in America,
A paradise of benefit and victory.

With my palms together in prayer for the excellent health and successful endeavors of my supremely beloved and cherished American friends.

*On the morning of June 17, 1998
Daisaku*

THROUGH a recent phone call from Japan, I was asked to meet Hiromasa Ikeda at the Los Angeles airport the following day as he would be in transit to Brazil and had a gift from his father. Much to my surprise, the gift turned out to be the two poems above written by SGI President Ikeda for all the American members shortly before his son left Japan.

I read the poems immediately. As you can see, the verses are very short, but by the time I had finished the first stanza I felt goose bumps rise on my arms. I went over the poems several more times, looking for what it was that struck me so profoundly in these simple, but elegant words. And there it was—the simplicity—so clear and to the point, yet so profound.

“The eyes of the whole world / Are fixed upon you,” reads the first line. I’ve known that to be true for quite some time. I sense, when I talk to SGI members from other countries, that they really are “eager to see our splendid work.” So a question arose in my mind—what kind of work will we do in our organization, in our homes, on our jobs, or at school to actually contribute toward world kosen-rufu? That, I realized, is what the world is waiting to see.

Especially when so much of the world is suffering from war, civil disturbance, famine, drought and disease—three young boys recently burned to death in Ireland; hostilities between neighbors in Kosovo; Indonesia in chaos; thousands starving in the Sudan—what else is there to do but forge our solidarity and advance, to be the source of hope that powers the world? I feel I have come to understand that now is just like the light of a new dawn, and our potential ready to burst forth.

That President Ikeda would use these words at this crucial juncture in history is testimony to how great are his expectations of us and how crucial it is that we act. So what must we do?

“Forge your solidarity / And advance in triumph, / Creating in America, / A paradise of benefit and victory.” He is urging us to forge solidarity, encouraging us to create a “paradise of benefit and victory” by building harmonious unity in our organization. When we center on the Gohonzon, unity can be created. When we center on our goal of kosen-rufu, surely great harmony is created. When we center on President Ikeda’s heart, definitely solidarity can be created. On the contrary, if we center on our own small egos or interests, we cannot expect unity to be actualized. President Ikeda is telling us that now is the time to unite, further our expansion movement and advance kosen-rufu here in America.

We should awaken to our mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth and stand up courageously toward propagation. Through carrying out joyful activities, I am sure that we will receive tremendous benefit with total victory in our lives. Then our organization of the SGI-USA will become a true paradise filled with happiness.

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