

**SIGNIFICANT DATE: Aug. 15, 1964: The First 'World Tribune'  
New Ideas Dancing in My Head  
By LEIGH KENNICOTT, Los Angeles**

On a hot night almost 30 years ago, in August 1969, I volunteered to proofread the *World Tribune* at the plant on Second Ave. in Los Angeles.

It happened to be the Aug. 15 issue celebrating the fifth anniversary of publication.

Staff member Joanne Murad showed me the ropes and told me of the newspaper's purpose: to serve as a diary of kosen-rufu in America, recording the events, dreams and accomplishments of individual members and providing them with clear and concise explanations of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

As I read the paper, Mrs. Murad and I discussed the viability of words or phrases, which led to deeper philosophical discussions that lasted into the night.

I left at 1:00 in the morning, exhilarated from the many new ideas dancing in my head.

As we celebrate the 34th anniversary of the *World Tribune's* founding — on Aug. 15, 1964 — it's a time to reflect on the maturation of the SGI movement for peace in the world as seen through our newspaper.

Former editor-in-chief George M. Williams recalls that SGI President Ikeda first suggested the newspaper in May 1964 while visiting Australia en route to India and Sri Lanka: "President Ikeda said the timing was right for an English-language publication in the United States as a vehicle to educate the people on the importance of kosen-rufu, the meaning and greatness of Buddhism, and the greatness of the Gohonzon," Mr. Williams said. President Ikeda was even involved in deciding on the name *World Tribune*, which indicated the newspaper's purpose to serve as a champion of the world's people.

The first issue was produced on the significant anniversary of the cessation of hostilities with Japan that ended World War II, another indication of the newspaper's function to unite people everywhere to the common cause of peace. Printed as a four-page tabloid and set in old-style hot type, the newspaper had a first run of 3,000 copies. In his message for the first issue, President Ikeda expressed his wish that the *World Tribune* would grow to be the greatest newspaper in the world.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the *World Tribune* and its 3,000th issue in 1994, President Ikeda said: "The number 3,000 is profoundly significant in light of Buddhism.... The figure 3,000...denotes the entire world and universe as they appear in the Buddhist term 3,000 worlds."

In the last several years, the *World Tribune* has taken giant steps in transforming itself into a true newspaper for the common people. With a variety of pages and special features, it has strived to become a newspaper that celebrates diversity, recognizes accomplishments both in and outside of the organization, and transcends differences in age, language and region.

Responding to the voices of people, the *World Tribune* continues, as President Ikeda described, "our challenge...to harmonize strictness toward the Law with a tolerance toward humanity."

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