

## An Indomitable Spirit

*The following is SGI President Ikeda's message to the opening of the "Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century" exhibition, which opened Sept. 20 in San Francisco. The message was read by SGI Vice President Hiromasa Ikeda.*

It is with a profound sense of joy that I join you today in celebrating the opening of this exhibition "Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century." I would like to thank, from the bottom of my heart, all those whose support was indispensable in realizing this exhibition. Dr. and Mrs. Linus Pauling Jr. and all the members of the Pauling family. Our many friends from Oregon State University, Dr. Linus Pauling's renowned alma mater. I also wish to express my heartfelt sentiments of gratitude and respect to the many distinguished guests, who represent the light of the world's intellect and wisdom.

I first met Dr. Linus Pauling in February 1987 on the newly opened campus of Soka University of America, in the suburbs of Los Angeles. Despite his advanced age of 86, Dr. Pauling traveled, by plane and by car, the great distance from San Francisco to meet with me. And although he was old enough to be my father, he offered to cooperate in any manner possible toward our shared objective of a peaceful world, voicing his conviction that those who work for peace are worthy of the highest respect. He embraced me with an extraordinary generosity of spirit and compassion.

Truly, he was a man of vast stature. He was a genius of towering intellect. And at the same time, he was a man of indescribable warmth and magnanimity.

We continued to meet on a number of occasions after that, and our discussions were eventually published as a book. I will treasure always the memory of each precious opportunity I had to share thoughts with and learn from this great man.

It was in March 1993, at what proved to be our last meeting, held here in San Francisco, that I proposed to Dr. Pauling the organization of an exhibition about his life. To my great joy, he readily accepted this proposal and suggested that I confer with his son, Linus Pauling Jr., regarding these plans. Since that time, we have enjoyed the unstinting assistance of the Pauling family and many other supporters.

Permit me to add here a few words about my own motivation, what it was that moved me to propose the holding of this exhibition. Very simply, it was because I am convinced that the lofty example and extraordinary life of Dr. Pauling is filled with lessons of inexpressibly profound value for humanity now and in the coming century.

Everyone who views this exhibition is certain to come away with a renewed sense of respect — even awe — for the remarkably varied and global achievements of a man who lived with utmost energy and commitment through the turbulent years of the 20th century.

Dr. Pauling is known as the father of modern chemistry, and his contributions in that field are without parallel. Yet his passion for knowledge and truth knew no limit as his research and endeavors extended to such fields as physics, medicine, biology and health. He left an indelible imprint on the history of scientific advancement in this century.

At the same time, together with his inseparable partner and ally, Ava Helen Pauling, he struggled tirelessly for peace and justice, undaunted by any and all forms of harassment or persecution. He was thus a complete person in the truest sense of the word, a veritable giant of humanity.

The glorious drama of his life is symbolized by his two Nobel Prizes, for chemistry and for peace. The example of his indomitable spirit holds boundless stores of hope, self-

confidence and philosophy that may be mined by the young people who will bear the burdens of the new century.

I am fully confident that the work of sharing with the world his life — and the messages and lessons contained therein — is humanistic education, is peace education, on a grand scale.

Another aspect of Dr. Pauling's life that we cannot overlook is his courage. This was the courage, even in then darkest hours of the cold war, to call without cease for humanity to unite and coexist peacefully.

When we met for the second time at Soka University of America, in February 1990, Dr. Pauling spoke with truly youthful enthusiasm about the end of the cold war. Humanity, he said, has finally begun to move in a direction that accords with reason and right. He expressed his intense joy that a clear global trend toward peace had emerged, from which there would be no turning back.

We must never betray the strong and profound trust that Dr. Pauling had in humanity and the human future.

He expressed his creed in these words, and I believe that they point clearly to those most basic values and perspectives to which we must return: "I believe that there is a greater power than the evil power of military force, of nuclear bombs — there is power of good, of morality, of humanitarianism. I believe in the power of the human spirit."

Dr. Pauling and I agreed on the need to make the 21st century a "century of life," an era in which the dignity of human life will be accorded fullest respect, in which all people will enjoy lives of happiness and peace. I would like to reconfirm here my commitment to making this vision a reality.

To that end, I hope, as one who was privileged to know Dr. Pauling, to work with our distinguished friends gathered here today, and to work as Dr. Pauling did — with vivacious energy to the last moment of life.

I would like to close these words of greeting by offering my prayers for the continued health and well-being of all our friends gathered here today and for the eternal glory of the Pauling family, Oregon State University and my beloved city of San Francisco.

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