

## The New Human Revolution, Volume 7, Chapter 2, Parts 11–12

### 'FRESH GROWTH'

By DAISAKU IKEDA, SGI President

***Shin'ichi Yamamoto explains to the Hawaii Chapter members the importance of supporting the central figure in the organization. He also says that 'leaders exist to serve the members. Those who work for kosen-rufu are all Bodhisattvas of the Earth. They are all Buddhas.'***

The Hawaiian members had progressed by leaps and bounds. For example, after a discussion meeting during Shin'ichi Yamamoto's first visit, a woman had asked Katsu Kiyohara, "Can chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo make me taller?" Her name was Katsue, and she was the wife of S. G. Rike.

A petite woman, she had moved to America after getting married. Suddenly finding herself among many tall, large-framed people, she developed a strong sense of inferiority. Seeing that Ms. Kiyohara was also on the small side, she felt certain that Ms. Kiyohara would understand how she felt; this gave her confidence to pose the question.

When he heard about the question, Shin'ichi suggested that Ms. Kiyohara explain how, by chanting, we can become happy just as we are — without changing our form. When Katsue Rike heard this, she was somewhat disappointed. "So there are prayers that all the chanting in the world won't fulfill," she thought in dismay.

Katsue's height had not changed any. But she was joyfully exerting herself in Gakkai activities and had realized enormous growth in her faith and practice. At this meeting, she was among the new district leaders being appointed.

After the appointments, each new leader spoke briefly, expressing firm resolve to work hard for kosen-rufu.

Shin'ichi then spoke: "Congratulations on the formation of Hawaii Chapter! The Hawaii members have now stood up in earnest! Hawaii is the place where I took the first step for worldwide kosen-rufu. My Hawaii friends, I sincerely hope that, for the sake of peace and the happiness of humankind, you will join me in working to expand our movement to spread Nichiren Daishonin's teachings, that you will lead the way for people throughout the world. What do you think?"

The members who understood Japanese immediately responded by voicing their assent and applauding. After Masaki interpreted Shin'ichi's words into English, there was a second, even more exuberant burst of cheers and applause.

"When I joined the Soka Gakkai, the youth division essentially comprised only seven people," he said. "At that time, I made a vow in my heart to President Toda: 'Someday, I will make this the foremost gathering of young people in all Japan. I will see to this, even if it means having to do everything myself.' Today, with the young men's division alone numbering 560,000 members, the Soka Gakkai youth division has in fact become the largest youth gathering in Japan.

"If there is even just one person who awakens to his or her mission and earnestly advances in faith," he went on, "if there is just one person with the dauntless spirit of a true lion, then, from that one person, everything will unfold.

"With regard to propagation, introducing others to the Daishonin's Buddhism is a noble act of compassion," he added. "It is to share with others, based on a sincere prayer for their happiness, the supreme teaching, the supreme way of life that we embrace. Consequently, when we properly carry out propagation, genuine friendship and trust are born. Moreover, our true Buddhist practice and human revolution lie in propagation," he added. "That's

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Subject: World Tribune 12/04/98 n.3220 p.4 WT981204p04

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Keywords: Chapter Fresh Growth History Human Kosen-rufu Revolution Tribune Volume World

because propagation begins with the inner struggle to defeat one's cowardice or inner weakness."

Shin'ichi urged the participants to redouble their efforts to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism in society.

"When we wholeheartedly talk to friends about Buddhism," he continued, "joy wells forth, and our state of life expands. This is because the moment that we engage in Buddhist dialogue, the immense life of a Bodhisattva of the Earth pulses within our being.

"Through our practice of propagation, we can carry out our human revolution," he emphasized. "Propagation is the direct path to transforming our destiny and that of society, and to establishing lasting peace and happiness. I therefore appeal to you: Unfurl the great banner of propagation of the Law here in Hawaii!"

Everyone's spirits soared as they listened to Shin'ichi. His guidance filled them with the desire to devote themselves to their noble mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

Shin'ichi continued: "The key to expansion is unity. Mitsuru Kawakami has now become the Hawaii Chapter leader. If there is anyone here who cannot support him as the central figure, please raise your hand now."

No one stirred.

"That puts my mind at ease," he said. "The Daishonin uses the Nirvana Sutra passage 'Rely on the Law and not upon persons' to explain the proper attitude in faith. Our faith must always be based on the Law. To achieve the lofty goal of kosen-rufu, it is necessary that we unite in a single purpose to promote our activities.

"Those who are unable to practice in unity with the central figure because of a personal dislike or because they have been practicing longer or for some such reason are basing themselves not on the Law but on their emotions toward that particular person," he explained. "That is egoism, and *egoism* means to be defeated by one's mind, to deviate from the correct path of faith as a result. Ultimately, such people will become miserable. On the other hand, when we protect the central figure, we will also be protected. That is the law of cause and effect.

"Meanwhile, I hope that those who become leaders will really care for the members in their organizations, and that they do so without putting on any airs or behaving in a highhanded fashion," he went on. "Leaders exist to serve the members. Those who work for kosen-rufu are all Bodhisattvas of the Earth. They are all Buddhas. We can accumulate great benefit only to the extent that we strive to encourage and exert ourselves on behalf of our fellow members.

"Please respect and trust one another as comrades, compensate for one another's shortcomings, and support each other," he concluded. "Through so doing, you will create iron unity. And this unity will be your greatest strength. The Daishonin writes, 'If *itai doshin* [many in body, one in mind] prevails among the people, they will achieve all their goals, whereas in *dotai ishin* [one in body, different in mind], they can achieve nothing remarkable' (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 153). When you unite in oneness of mind and purpose for kosen-rufu, you will be victorious in every effort. With this determination, please vigorously advance the kosen-rufu movement here in Hawaii."

*To be continued*

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