

# World Tribune

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THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

SEPTEMBER 12, 1997

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The business world can be hectic, like at Chicago's Board of Trade. But with the wisdom we gain from Buddhist practice, we can make the tough decisions and create value for all concerned.

## Taking Care of Business — as Buddhists

Chicago members raise important questions about faith and business at the first SGI-USA meeting for business people, entrepreneurs and executives.

By **BILL ENDSLEY**  
CORRESPONDENT  
Chicago, Aug. 17

What does it take to become successful? Can a person climb the ladder in today's business world without smooth talking and back-stabbing? Isn't a Buddhist supposed to be poor?

In a first for the SGI-USA, members from the business world met today at the Chicago Culture Center to develop a network of support and understanding. Nowhere do members have more contact with society than in the work world. And it is in this world of bottom lines, lay-offs and take-overs that the Buddhist ideals of wisdom,

compassion and courage often face their severest test.

"These people have a unique mission and there isn't yet an avenue for them to develop that mission," said Doris McCloskey, who was instrumental in getting today's conference off the ground. "These people need support and want an opportunity to talk to people who are dealing with the same problems they are. This is not a place to teach business or to make business connections but a place where people can encourage one another in applying Buddhism to business."

The idea for business people, entrepreneurs and executives to meet was proposed last year at a Central Executive Committee conference. Each area was invited to hold a special meeting this year as the first step toward developing programs to better serve this important membership.

One of the main topics explored today was the successive Soka Gakkai presidents' guidance on doing business among

members. "There is this whole idea that if it has to do with money, it's dirty," Mrs. McCloskey explained. "Many people have been told to avoid business dealings with members altogether." More questions were asked than answered today, but if the mystery and apprehension surrounding doing business with members is to be dispelled, then asking the right questions is the place to start.

Gail Dugas, who presented the topic, emphasized that it is important to understand the spirit and context of past guidances. When the Soka Gakkai was rebuilt in Japan after World War II, desperate times saw some members exploit other members for financial gain and saw others allow their faith to be tarnished because of business relationships with other members. And it was then that Josei Toda, the second president, first cautioned the membership about this. Today it is important

## U.S. Students Join Peace Awareness Survey

By **JEFF FARR**

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., Sept. 2

If young people have no knowledge of the horrors of war, it's likely that war will continue to happen. With this in mind, the Soka Gakkai student division's Peace Committee has been conducting a peace awareness survey every three years since 1985. Since the further we get from World War II, the fewer the people who remember its brutality, the Peace Committee is recording students' changing attitudes toward war and peace and making the results available to the media and academia.

This year's survey, the fifth in the series, marked the first time it was also conducted outside Japan. Forty SGI-USA student division members from around the country asked their classmates to fill out the survey questionnaires, eventually collecting answers from 500 students at 109 schools. The Peace Committee compared these results with those from 3,000 students at 60 universities in Japan. In the Aug. 15 issues of Japanese English-language newspapers like the *International Herald Tribune*, the SGI published the results in quarter-page advertisements with the headline "Remembering for the Future."

A unique feature of the survey is that in assessing students' attitudes about peace issues it asks many questions about how they perceive society and the future role they want to play in it. Questions on students' extracurricular activities and goals dig at the core values that ultimately inform their views on international issues, says Valerie Thomas, SGI-USA student division chief.

Ryuhei Hatsuse, a professor of international relations at Kobe University, commented on disturbing aspects of the results for the Peace Committee's website ([sgi.org/peace\\_edu](http://sgi.org/peace_edu)). Hatsuse focuses on how the results show that Japanese youth, although opposed to war, are less

PLEASE SEE BUSINESS, 5

PLEASE SEE SURVEY, 4

**VOICES**  
.....

**Why is the spirit of appreciation important to our Buddhist practice?**

Members from Rocky Mountain Joint Territory respond:



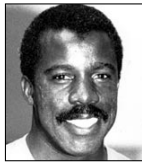
I think that appreciation and compassion are closely related. The more I practice, the more compassion I see developing in my life. As a result, I am becoming more and more appreciative of this practice and the people who support me. Thanks to their compassion, I can see my life expanding. And I'm grateful for the opportunity to show the same compassion for others.

— SANDRA WIEDER, Denver



Appreciation is important because it brings out our true selves and enables us to grow in compassion and humanism toward others, which are necessary to our enlightenment and the fulfillment of kosen-rufu.

— JIM WHITE, Denver



I believe that when we learn to appreciate life, our practice and everything around us, it helps to strengthen our character.

— ERIC TAYLOR, Arvada, Colo.



When I look at my fellow members, past and present, with appreciation for their qualities, there is no room in my heart for resentment, hurt feelings or, remarkably, doubt about my own worth and abilities.

— BILL JONES, Denver



My mentor, Nichiren Daishonin, took time to write a Goshu titled "Repaying Debts of Gratitude." He felt that we should somehow repay humanity, the environment, the individual or the group for the benefits we enjoy currently in life. I feel a great appreciation and debt of gratitude to all those people who have supported and encouraged me in my many years of practice, especially SGI President Ikeda. Within me the spirit of appreciation always motivates my daimoku to send the law to all humanity.

— DALE W. MEYERS, Fort Collins, Colo.



When one appreciates even the littlest things, i.e., the ice cream you just ate or just being alive, a whole new world is opened to you. In this way, appreciation adds to one's benefit. The spirit of appreciation allows not only one's practice but one's life to be used in a selfless, loving, understanding and compassionate way.

— COURTNEY NELSON, Littleton, Colo.

If you have suggestions for "Voices" or "Question of the Month" questions, please send them to us. Our address is in the box at right.

**It's All of Our Business**

**EDITORIAL**

Human relationships based on trust make our organization work. Anything that dilutes this trust weakens the bonds between members and can adversely affect people's faith and ultimately their happiness. Hence, the Soka Gakkai's long-standing cautions about the borrowing and lending of money and joint business ventures among members. As SGI President Ikeda has said, "When money is involved, people sometimes deviate from correct faith and capitalize on our organization."

In Chicago last month, the local organization held SGI-USA's first meeting for business people (please see p. 1). Similar events will be held in other areas as a first step toward devising programs to better serve this group. In Chicago, a crucial dialogue began and many important questions were raised about faith and business, specifically about the intent of the successive Soka Gakkai presidents' guidance on the subject.

Since the time of the first president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, business partnerships between members have been a cause of concern. Makiguchi's reasoning: When a business does poorly, the partners tend to blame one another, and when it does well, greed can jeopardize the partners' friendship.

Toda, too, a savvy businessman himself, saw many examples of this tendency. Because he rarely knew of such business partnerships bringing happiness to the parties involved, he discouraged joint ventures as a general principle and urged people to go it alone. He reasoned that if he didn't take such a stand, people might take joint business ventures too lightly, not understanding the potential negative effects that might arise if the partners were influenced by their baser natures.

"In the final analysis, however, if those with beautiful hearts and great conscience decide to go into partnership with their trustworthy and respectable friends who are members — and they have a strong determination — they can go ahead," Toda said. "And I want them to succeed" (*Toda Josei Zenshu* [Complete Works of Josei Toda], vol. 2, pp. 243-45).

He added that while it generally may be wiser for members to avoid partnerships with other members, the organization has no regulation or rule prohibiting joint ventures. "There is no such law in the Gakkai," he said (Ibid.).

President Ikeda, too, has reiterated this concern, urging us to keep our organization of faith pure. He's shared stories of leaders and members who've taken advantage of their positions or abused the organization in other ways for financial gain. He has strictly warned against money-lending or borrowing schemes or allowing anyone to abuse the members for profit. He has pointed out that we should be watchful for such people and use common sense to protect ourselves and our organization.

Plots and schemes differ from legitimate business, however. As they discussed in Chicago, financial relationships among members are not necessarily bad. Toda cautioned against joint business ventures — not against every possible exchange of money for goods and services. We all probably know, for example, members who are hairdressers, restaurateurs or sales people. There's no reason we can't get a haircut, a meal or a bottle of vitamins from them. But we might rightly question someone who passes out business cards at a world peace gongyo meeting or gives a sales pitch at a discussion meeting.

The SGI is an organization of friends. As friendships develop, the opportunity to do business together may naturally arise. Especially as more and more people are getting involved in home-based businesses. The SGI can't and doesn't want to control people's behavior or the human tendency to form networks. As Toda said, sometimes such partnerships work. And there are no mere rules that can cover every possible situation. Dialogue and reason are what are needed.

So long as we remember that faith and the happiness of people are the sole "business" of the organization, and we do everything with a determination to further that purpose, we will be on the right track.

**QUESTION OF THE MONTH:** *What has been the biggest change in your beliefs since you started practicing?*

Please be specific and limit your responses to 50 words or less. All responses are subject to editing. Please send your responses and a face photo of yourself to: "Question of the Month," World Tribune, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif., 90401, or e-mail us at: SokaNews@aol.com.

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**WORLD TRIBUNE  
MAILBOX**

**Let's Be 'Masters of Language'**

In the Aug. 29 issue, Ms. Phoebe Pnaigh decries the use of "censorship" and defends the use of what she terms "slang" (and most would term profanity) in our Buddhist newspaper. While I support her views on the First Amendment, I question the wisdom of your printing (or alluding to) language which many people really do find offensive.

There is no doubt that people have the "right" to say a wide range of things; and some will doubtless find it refreshing. But if we consider the responsibility we carry to introduce the greatness of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, which upholds the dignity of human life, to the broad spectrum of American society, I hope we'll realize the need to be wise and thoughtful in the words we choose. Words are indeed very powerful whether for good or for evil. They can invite our trust or they can repel us. As we follow along the path of such people as Shakyamuni, Nichiren and Daisaku Ikeda — all of them masters of language — I hope the *WorldTribune* will exercise similar consideration for the feelings of their readers.

— BILL AIKEN, Washington, D.C.

**NATO's Not So Bad**

Regarding Mark Anton's letter, "NATO's Not So Great" (Aug. 1 *WorldTribune*): I disagree with Mr. Anton's opinion that the *WorldTribune* served as "a propaganda outlet for the military industrial complex" and with his disparaging views on NATO....

NATO is a transatlantic partnership between European members of NATO, the United States and Canada, designed to bring about peace and stability throughout Europe. NATO is the only military alliance in the world that has bound itself to defend freedom, human rights and democracy.

Throughout the years of the Cold War, NATO focused on the development and maintenance of collective defense and on overcoming the fundamental political issues dividing Europe. Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has evolved with the changing circumstances. Its core mission remains collective defense, but its organization, military capability and structures have changed. It has also extended cooperation to new partners in Central and Eastern Europe to promote stability and security in Europe as a whole.

Since 1989, NATO has increased coordination and cooperation with international institutions such as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Western European Union and the European Union. NATO has also supported international peacekeeping operations....

I also question Mr. Anton's knowledge of current affairs. In his seemingly reactionary and ironic tone, he addresses NATO promoting the stability and security of Europe. He asks: "Where? Preventing ethnic slaughter in Bosnia?" As a matter of fact, it was NATO intervention that ultimately stopped the genocide carried out in Bosnia. Just last month, soldiers began round-the-clock protection for several hundred Muslim and Croatian refugees returning to homes in a Bosnian Serb area.

By supporting U.N. and diplomatic efforts, NATO broke the siege in Sarajevo and led it to a genuine cease fire and made negotiations possible in 1995....

NATO provided support services such as emergency accommodations, medical treatment and evacuation, vehicle repair, transport assistance and logistical support. NATO military engineers repaired and opened more than 50 percent of the roads in Bosnia and Herzegovina, rebuilt schools and hospitals, rebuilt and repaired more than 60 bridges, repaired railroads and opened up airports to civilians. They also restored gas, water, electricity and telecommunications.

— KRISTI LOMBARD, Bethesda, Md.

**In the Real World**

**PERSPECTIVE**

**By LIZ GOLDNER  
DETROIT**

The city of Detroit has been branded for the past 30 years as one of the nation's worst examples of urban decline. Yet today it is emerging as an example of a community pulling itself up by its bootstraps, as its visionary leaders reach out to business and industrial leaders, as well as to citizens.

Three years ago, while Detroit was striving to make itself into a world-class city, the Clinton administration announced the creation of nationwide Empowerment Zones. Detroit, along with many other cities, applied for Empowerment Zone status, which would grant it "a combination of tax incentives and block grants to implement 10-year, community-wide strategic plans to promote overall revitalization" (according to a booklet by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). In December 1994, Detroit, along with five other cities, was granted Empowerment Zone status.

The mayor of Detroit, Dennis Archer, and his staff, most of whom are African American, have been reaching out to the mostly Caucasian business leaders in the area and truly bridging the chasmic racial divide that has plagued the city for years. These business leaders — including executives with the Big Three motor companies and real estate investors — have been responding in spades by investing billions of dollars in inner-city businesses, many of which are minority owned.

Twenty-nine companies have announced plans to spend more than \$2 billion to open, expand or relocate their businesses in Detroit. The city has become the greatest success of all the Empowerment Zone cities and has been held up by the White House as a shining example of urban renewal.

The upshot of this is that the Motor City is leading the way, nationwide, in bringing industry back to the inner city. More business ultimately means more jobs, better schools and housing, and safer streets for Detroiters. These improved amenities will help the city's citizens achieve greater self-esteem and a sense of caring about their community.

This past April 14–16, the third annual White House Community Empowerment Conference was held in downtown Detroit, with Vice President Al Gore attending.

As a freelance journalist, I pulled strings, chanted a great deal and overcame some interesting obstacles to attend the conference. Along with meeting local leaders, federal officials and nationwide representatives, I was privileged to hear Al Gore address the conference. I was reminded of SGI President Ikeda's many remarks about the compassion of leaders, about the importance of a bottom-up organization, about the essential value of dialogue and unity. But most of all, hearing Gore's speech I realized that success in the real world frequently mirrors the principles that President Ikeda espouses.

Here are some of Gore's remarks:

"Hope has always empowered Detroit. With hope for bet-

ter things, communities are rising again from the ashes."

"This [Empowerment Zone] program is designed to be bottom up, not top down."

"For success, we need to listen to local people."

"It's very important to construct dialogue between the cities and the surrounding communities."

"It's important to move beyond racial barriers, to concentrate on what we have in common, rather than on what divides us."

"We are one. We are a national community. We have to connect to one another."

"Cities and regions, wherever they are in the country, are all connected to one another."

Gore inspired me and reminded me that the world is yearning for hope, compassion, empowerment by the people, human dignity and the unity of people of all races. All of these are qualities that President Ikeda and SGI-USA General Director Fred Zaitzu have been promoting. As Mr. Zaitzu wrote in the January *Living Buddhism*, "One further step we can take [to promote diversity] is to pray for people around us to live together in mutual understanding and respect, and that sincere dialogue will be followed by sincere actions."

The longer I practice Buddhism, the more I realize that my Buddhist practice and my life in the real world are inseparable. Just as Detroit is reaching out to its local citizens, training and empowering them to create a new, revitalized city, I am striving to achieve mutual understanding and respect in the real world, as well as in the SGI. **W**

**What Do You Think?**

Please write to us and let us know your thoughts on the World Tribune.

What articles do you like or dislike? Which types would you like to see more of, less of?

Do you have ideas to make the paper better? Do you have questions you'd like answered?

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Photo by BARBARA LAMBERT



The Mercury Music Corps plays during San Diego Joint Territory's Festival of Life in Oceanside, Calif.

## Youth Spearhead Music Festival

By BARBARA LAMBERT  
CORRESPONDENT

Oceanside, Calif., July 27

A sense of purpose infused the first-ever Festival of Life music festival, presented at the Shell Amphitheater in San Diego County. "The festival was a dream of mine," said Scott MacKenzie, a young men's division leader who spearheaded the event. "I want to reach out to the community and show them who we are and what we stand for. It was a tremendous challenge for me to spearhead this festival, working with performers and the sound people. With the support of my leaders and these wonderful performers and crew, we are winning today."

This was the first open-to-the-public festival in San Diego Joint Territory's history and the first festival spearheaded by the youth division here. From performers to behind-the-scenes support, young people each had their own reasons for participating.

Elaine Horrall, a saxophonist for the jazz band, had to overcome a health problem to participate. "I was very ill from bronchitis while I was rehearsing," she said. "I could not breathe at times." But thanks to the support of others and sincere prayer, she overcame. "I developed the faith to push through my illness," she said. "This is the most interesting day I've had."

Fife player Colleen Griffin struggled with self-confidence. "I did not believe in myself or my musical talent," she said. "And I could not play very well because I have no musical back-



Oceanside's Shell Amphitheater hosts the SGI-USA's music festival.

ground. This musical piece we are playing today is long and difficult. It took all my free time, but I learned it." She smiled and continued: "We all work together and help each other. This has taught me that I can accomplish anything when I try."

Chad Lutu, a young stage hand, hurried to get the heavy instruments on stage. Pausing for a moment, he said: "I was goofing off and got dropped from the Mercury Music Corps. My goal is to play with the band again. I learned that unity in this activity can help me shoot through my obstacles. Whether it's moving instruments and props or changing my life-condition, I am bringing unity to my life."

Men and women's division members also supported the event. One of the happiest people there was Irma Jackson. "I was determined from the first planning meeting to support this festival with my life," she said. She

is raising a 7-year-old daughter and three grandchildren, ages 11, 6 and 3 months. "Before every meeting and rehearsal, I have to pack up the clothes, diapers and food the children will need," she said. But she said all the work was worth it. "I am so happy to share in presenting all these talented people to the public," she said. "I wouldn't have missed it for anything."

As the festival came to a close with jazz and reggae, the walkway to the beach and pier was filled with families, fishermen and skateboarders. They were drawn by the contagious air of joy and spirit expressed in the music one could hear all along the beach. Many asked, "Who are you?" "Why do you do this?" The SGI-USA members who staffed the information, refreshment and face-painting booths replied, "We're SGI, and we want to share our dream of world peace." ■

## Student Attitudes

Here are some results from the U.S.-Japan student peace awareness survey conducted this summer. Answers are based on 500 American and 3,000 Japanese responses:

	U.S.	JAPAN
<b>What is your opinion about war?</b>		
Absolutely opposed to war .....	55%	74.7%
There are conditions in which we cannot avoid war.....	36.3%	19.4%
I don't know.....	7.1%	5.8%
No response.....	1.5%	0.1%
<b>Would you feel secure or insecure if all the weapons of every kind in the world were eliminated?</b>		
I would feel secure .....	51.5%	42.9%
I would feel insecure.....	24.3%	15.9%
I don't know.....	22.1%	40.9%
No response.....	2.2%	0.3%
<b>Which of the following do you think is the most serious problem/issue facing the world today?</b>		
The environment.....	28.3%	61.4%
Human rights.....	26.8%	7.0%
Economic imbalance between the northern and southern hemispheres...	12.5%	3.0%
Overpopulation.....	14.8%	11.5%
Food/energy.....	5.6%	14.9%
Other.....	9.6%	1.4%
No response.....	2.3%	0.8%

## U.S. Students Join Peace Awareness Survey

SURVEY, FROM PAGE 1

willing to work for peace than American youth. Only 5.1 percent of Japanese students said they have participated in peace activities, while 43.9 percent of American students said they have.

Dr. Hatsuse feels this apathy toward peace activities is related to Japanese students' preoccupation with hobbies and entertainment once they enter college. While 64.5 percent of U.S. students said their main concentration is their studies, only 18.1 percent of Japanese students said the same — they ranked having fun above studying.

At the same time, the results revealed that a larger number of U.S. students are willing to resort to violence than their Japanese counterparts. The percentage of students who believe, for instance, that there are "conditions in which we cannot avoid war" was much higher in the States (36.3 percent) than in Japan (19.4 percent).

Also, more U.S. students (9.7 percent) are willing to use nu-

clear weapons in an "unavoidable" situation than Japanese students (5.6 percent). More U.S. students also believe there will be a global nuclear war someday (U.S. 12 percent—Japan 8.4 percent).

When Yuko Olson, a student division member at the University of Minnesota, had classmates fill out the survey, she got the impression that people weren't optimistic about peace. "All the students replied that there are situations where they can't avoid war, which is sad," she said. "Also, I found they have a strong belief in nuclear weapons. However, regarding the role of the United Nations and the support for non governmental organization, they answered very positively and showed some motivation."

The complete survey results are available at the Peace Committee's webpage, which also features past survey results and World War II testimonials collected by the Soka Gakkai's Antiwar Publication Committee. The survey will next be conducted in 2000. ■

# Peace Organization Names Award After SGI Leader

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

The Mahatma Gandhi People's Welfare Trust, an Indian organization dedicated to the promotion of peace, welfare and education, recently announced the establishment of the Ramachandran-Ikeda Award.

The award commemorates the humanitarian achievements of Dr. G. Ramachandran, a direct disciple of Gandhi, and SGI President Ikeda.

Through the award, the Gandhi Trust, which is located in the southwestern Indian state

of Kerala, hopes to draw attention to young people and institutions that have realized outstanding accomplishments in the areas of nonviolence, human rights and peace, as well as in the sciences, technology and the arts.

Dr. Ramachandran, who died in January 1995, dedicated his life to translating Gandhi's thoughts and ideals into action.

His accomplishments include founding India's first "village university" in Tamilnadu, serving as a freedom fighter, cabinet minister, mem-

ber of parliament and editor, and founding numerous institutions dedicated to promoting Gandhi's teachings, including the Mahatma Gandhi People's Welfare Trust. Through his efforts to improve society through education and to promote peace with a focus on youth, he left an indelible mark on the creation of modern India.

In its literature, the Gandhi Trust describes the achievements of Mr. Ikeda as follows:

Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, the president of the Soka Gakkai Interna-

tional, is one of the greatest of the contemporary leaders who have been using education, culture and dialogue diplomacy to unify humanity by creating mutual understanding of our common heritage.... Dr. Ikeda, inspired by the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, has been adopting Gandhian methods to create a world without war and violence, a world without boundaries — in short a global human family.

In 1995, the Gandhi Trust presented Mr. Ikeda with the Gandhi Peace Award, a special

citation commemorating the 125th anniversary of Gandhi's birth.

And in 1988 he received the G. Ramachandran Award for International Understanding from the Development Education National Center, another Gandhian organization.

The first presentations of the Ramachandran-Ikeda Award will be made next year. The names of recipients will be announced annually on Aug. 15, India's Independence Day. And the presentations will be made on Oct. 2, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. W

## Taking Care of Business

BUSINESS, FROM PAGE 1

to make sure that business dealings reflect positively on the organization, Ms. Dugas said.

Many members may find themselves in the position to sell to other members or become their landlord. During the day's discussions, one dilemma raised was when a landlord needs to evict a tenant who is also a member. Should that tenant be given special consideration? What would be better in the long run, to throw the person out or to let him or her slide for another month?

The difficulty of practicing SGI principles in an environment where people use others and rule through fear and insecurity was the subject of Tom Friese's presentation. CEO of a multimillion dollar packaging company, Mr. Friese said: "I found the world of big business to be a world of jealousy, hatred and grudges. Executives were constantly covering for one another and in the end hurting people and the business. I put myself constantly in front of the firing squad because I refused to play along." He went through a suc-

cession of powerful positions in multinational companies before starting his own business.

"Even though I was constantly surpassing my sales goals, my bosses were always creating reasons to fire me because I spoke the truth," he said. "I have learned that only by bringing out the negative in people can you get to the positive. To create a business that is practical, productive and in harmony, you have to be willing to deal with negativity and divisiveness head on."

During the closing session, Senior Vice General Director Guy McCloskey reminded the group that a strong Buddhist practice can provide the wisdom to make tough decisions. He cautioned that while the organization is not a network for contacts — that we should not use the organization for personal profit — there is no need to avoid business dealings with members or to treat them differently, so long as we do business in a way that protects our organization and the members. He summed up by saying, "Common sense is good business sense." W



Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI

Children have their own seminar at a training course for Chinese members in Walnut, Calif.

## Chinese Group Training Held

By JUDY CHOW

CORRESPONDENT

Walnut, Calif., July 26

The number 13 may be deemed unlucky by many Westerners, but July 13 turned out to be a memorable day for more than 400 Chinese members who gathered at Mount San Antonio College for a summer training meeting sponsored by the Mei-Hwa Friendship Group.

The Mei-Hwa (literally, American-Chinese) Friendship Group was established in 1993 to organize activities for Chinese-speaking members. Since its inception, Chinese translations of SGI President Ikeda's guidance have been mailed to members throughout the United States each month.

The group has also held four summer training meetings and three Chinese New Year's festivals. Study meetings have also been held monthly at 10 locations in Los Angeles and Or-



An arts and crafts exhibit catches people's attention at the day-long event.

ange counties.

At today's meeting, 12 leaders from SGI-Taiwan attended, sharing experiences and offering encouragement. Separate classrooms for study sessions in Mandarin and Cantonese were set up, as well as an English-speaking one for younger people

who do not speak Chinese well.

After lunch, performances and an exhibition of arts and crafts provided the day's cultural events. In the week that followed, the Taiwan leaders visited members at home, conducted Goshu lectures and attended discussion meetings. W

## We Want Your FNCC Impressions!

What was your visit to the FNCC like? The *World Tribune* is about to start a new series of "FNCC Impressions" and we need your help. Please send a photo of yourself and your 200-word FNCC story (or poem) to the *World Tribune*, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

MICHAEL O. EWING, CHICAGO

## The Wind Beneath Our Wings

This is actually a story about my son, Masaaki, who was instrumental in changing the course of my life. The youngest of my five children, Masaaki was always a strong-willed child, which masked his warmth and compassion.

Growing up, he experienced everything from cuts and falls to a broken arm. He even ingested a lethal dose of cleaner when he was 1 year old. Given no chance of surviving, he did anyhow. The doctors said he would be brain damaged. Masaaki was observed by a specialist for a few years, but showed no signs of brain damage. He entered preschool and kindergarten under normal circumstances. In fact, he developed much faster than the other children.

Preschool was not a problem, and Masaaki adjusted well in kindergarten. However, first through eighth grades were pure hell. Masaaki was constantly involved in confrontations with other children and, at times, teachers. Visits to school for my wife, Valerie, were constant; her face became very familiar to teachers and administrators.

My job prevented me from getting involved in these school visits. Instead, I watched from the outside, wondering what should be the next step in solving these problems.

During these years, Masaaki went to every SGI-USA activity with my wife, and every now and then with me. He was kept busy during these activities by playing with toys and mostly by drawing and coloring. A member of the Junior Pioneers (now the Boys and Girls Group), he participated in each Columbus Day Parade in Chicago.

He chanted at meetings in a fashion that caused much attention — with great enthusiasm and passion, that is to say, very loud. He attempted to do gongyo as well. He made many causes during this time.

I saw his tremendous desire to win when I became a basketball coach for boys. Because Masaaki was too young for team competition, he had to watch while I coached his two older brothers. Whenever he got a chance to participate, he did so with passion. He did everything full-out, hating to lose.

But the times he did poorly or lost a game, he was unable to control his emotions. He would act out his deep disgust over not doing his best.

The one and only time he was on a team I coached, we won the



(Left to right) Valerie, Masaaki and Michael Ewing united as a family by challenging Masaaki's visual perception problem, which played out in behavioral problems at school and at home.

championship. I didn't realize how much my coaching affected him, but I feel that in a way I abandoned him. I coached other boys, but he really needed his dad. In most cases, I was unable to deal with his emotional outbursts. I did all I could think of, but my efforts were not effective. Instead of reaching out, I think the man in me pushed him away.

Many days I chanted really hard to solve this problem. I was constantly seeking guidance about it, and invariably the focus turned out to be me. It was very difficult to look in the mirror to truly see myself, but this was what I was encouraged to do. No matter how much I wanted this obstacle to go away, it wouldn't. Not being discouraged, I chanted with high hopes that I could change.

During the eighth grade we finally became aware that Masaaki had a visual perception problem, which was played out in behavioral consequences. He received treatment and completed eighth grade without further problems. Despite his troubled elementary school experiences, Masaaki made the honor roll for the first time.

High school began with a parent-teacher conference and a two-day suspension. During the next three years, what influence I had on him was lost. He felt closer to his "boys" than his family. He began to show the visible results of tobacco, marijuana and alcohol use, and his behavior became defiant and abusive. He appeared to want to

be the man of the house. Needless to say, he began to feel that chanting was for the weak, so he stopped practicing.

Because of an accident that left me with a herniated disc and caused long absences from work, I eventually received a severance package and left my job. I was finally available to attend parent-teacher conferences. But things grew more and more difficult. I had no idea what to do.

Then it happened.

During an abusive exchange with Masaaki, my wife and I grabbed him by the collar. He took it as an act of aggression and reacted. There I was, a 47-year-old man trying to remember high school wrestling techniques to control his 16-year-old-son. That was the straw that was too many.

I called the police; he was handcuffed and taken to the station, not permitted to return home. And later he was taken in by my parents.

This was the time to take action. We started with a drug test that turned out positive, and outpatient treatment was prescribed for Masaaki. Counseling for the family was addressed as well. But it was not until Masaaki resumed a 10-minute-a-day goal of chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo that things began to get better.

February 1995 found Masaaki struggling with a severe virus that cleansed his system — detox at home, so to speak. His daimoku

increased and he started to recite parts of gongyo for a few minutes before school. His attitude began to change.

But his newfound hope was suddenly dashed. Masaaki was involved in an incident that brought him before the Juvenile Court of Cook County. He was found delinquent, and before he could start serving his home confinement he exploded in court, tossing papers and other objects at the judge. This scene played out like an episode from *The Twilight Zone*.

That was when I really began to change. I chanted daily to see the benefit in all the craziness that was taking place. During the next five months, I immersed myself in the advancement of kosen-rufu — attending meetings, visiting members, encouraging anyone who needed it.

Most important, I began to reflect on my attitude that I had held for years about my son. I saw that he was giving me a chance to become a human being. The U.S.-Japan Youth Culture Festival was the grand opportunity for my entire family to get involved. We all worked hard and visited Masaaki in the detention center and hospital, never missing a visit.

Masaaki also began to practice more sincerely. He asked for a gongyo book and started doing morning and evening prayers. He eagerly read SGI President Ikeda's *Daily Guidance*, the *World Tribune* and *Seikyo Times* from cover to cover. He was very

impressed with *The New Human Revolution*, especially the parts about Shakyamuni's life and the imprisonment of Soka Gakkai presidents Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda.

Our family began to generate tremendous power, changing unbelievable situations into victories. My children began to have the same attitude I had — that Masaaki was a bodhisattva, not a troublemaker. We united, became closer and became more aware that when we practice the teachings as the Daishonin prescribes, we can change any poison to medicine.

When Masaaki's cousin called him, he ended up being encouraged by Masaaki! He immediately hung up the phone and composed a rap song, with help from his dad. The song's powerful story of drugs, violence and the relationship between father and son touched the hearts of all. It was performed at Chicago #2 Territory's February world peace gongyo meeting.

Masaaki is determined to continue his human revolution, his goal to graduate from high school and go to college, just like other children. He appreciates this organization as much as I do. He no longer feels this practice is for the weak. He realizes that this practice is for the strong and courageous, and that to practice is a true honor.

Immediately after being downsized from my job, my wife and I formed a corporation, Galerie Ewing Limited. We operate from our first home, which has been renovated into an art gallery. The business supports my wife's lifelong artistic endeavors and fulfills my dreams of being an entrepreneur. Located in our community, it is our dream that it will contribute to the cultural development of the neighborhood.

During his battle with his visual perception problem, Masaaki kept a journal complete with pictures, which, to our surprise, was published by the Optometric Extension Program Foundation. The problem Masaaki faced is common to many children but is difficult to diagnose. Masaaki, for instance, had 20-20 vision. His book, *The Rage*, is a bright light for other families groping in the darkness. Used by doctors, parents and children, it is being translated into nine languages.

Even though Masaaki now views his parents as the wind beneath his wings, he in fact has been and will be the wind beneath our wings. □

As he spoke, Eiji Kawasaki occasionally became choked with emotion. But he continued:

"The seeds of kosen-rufu that President Yamamoto sowed in countries around the world have in no time put down deep roots and begun to sprout. The year before last, when he visited the United States, the America General Chapter's membership was somewhere between 400 and 500 households — now it comprises five chapters and a membership of 3,000 households. Our friends in the United States have realized tremendous development.

"Also, the Southeast Asia General Chapter now has a membership of 5,000 households spread over two chapters. As for Europe, at the time of President Yamamoto's visit there were not more than 10 households practicing. But in the past six months, we have grown to 43 households.

"In Paris, we are holding regular discussion meetings, which are well attended by members from a wide variety of backgrounds and professions, including many artists. In West Germany, there are seven members who work for a coal mine and are showing fine results in their work, winning the trust of those around them.

"Through President Yamamoto's efforts, the curtain has opened on the era of worldwide kosen-rufu. I expect that our endeavors to pioneer new frontiers will entail unforeseeable trials, as well as much hard work. While in Europe, President Yamamoto said to me: 'It's hard being a pioneer. But that's what makes it so fulfilling and the benefits so great.' Taking these words deeply to heart, I pledge to exert myself further to develop our movement for the peace and happiness of humanity. Thank you very much."

Shin'ichi Yamamoto led the applause. He was delighted to see Kawasaki developing as a solid leader of kosen-rufu.

Shin'ichi was also determined to dedicate his life to blazing new trails for peace and friendship based on spreading the ideals of the Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the world. But unless there were others to advance with him along this path, to help solidify and broaden this path, the wilderness would soon reclaim it. Therefore, he was delighted beyond measure that Kawasaki had made a commitment to lead these efforts in Europe.

Shin'ichi was constantly preoccupied with the thought of what would become of kosen-rufu if he were no longer on the scene. Though he was only 34, he had been sickly much of his life. And given that he was constantly on the move, exerting every ounce of his strength, it would not be surprising if he were to suddenly fall ill.

## The New Human Revolution

By HO GOKU — ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Volume 6, Chapter 3

# Acceleration

Translation of parts 30–35 of the 'Acceleration' chapter, as printed in the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper. Ho Goku is the pen name of Daisaku Ikeda, who appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962.

That is why he so strongly hoped for capable people who could carry on in his stead. He channeled his greatest effort into finding and raising such individuals, cherishing each encounter as an occasion that might never come again, so putting his entire life and being into encouraging everyone he met.

Still, not even one other person truly understood Shin'ichi's heart.

Next on the program were short addresses by divisional representatives. Student Division Chief Goro Watari, Young Women's Division Chief Tokie Tani, Young Men's Division Chief Shoichi Tanida and a number of general chapter leaders gave their determinations for the coming year.

clared that enlightenment means believing — in thought, word and deed — in Nam-myoho-renge-kyo of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism of sowing, without having to extinguish earthly desires or cut ourselves off from the world.

In addition, he stressed that the place where we practice faith is itself the Pure Land of Eternally Tranquil Light. The Grand Reception Hall under construction at the head temple on President Yamamoto's initiative, he said, would epitomize this unsurpassed enlightened realm.

He added: "Looking over the architect's plans for this structure, I was quite unexpectedly struck that the overall shape of the reception hall resembles that of a traditional altar for enshrining the Gohonzon. Our gathering there to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, therefore, will precisely mirror the appearance of the Gohonzon itself.

"The Daishonin says, 'Abutsu-bo is the Treasure Tower itself, and the Treasure Tower is Abutsu-bo himself' (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 30). In the same way, the reception hall and those who gather therein will give form to the Land of Eternally Tranquil Light. The fact that construction of such a pure land is now proceeding steadily, day by day, is truly a cause for rejoicing."

He concluded by calling on the members to make further strides in accomplishing the great undertaking of kosen-rufu, with both clergy and laity uniting solidly. High Priest Nittatsu's comments on the significance of the reception hall filled the participants with a deep sense of pride and joy at having contributed to this wonderful project. The Gakkai members felt assured that the priesthood would eternally treasure the reception hall, which they had built out of their sincere faith as followers of Nichiren Daishonin.

A priest named Shinno Abe, who would later become the 67th high priest

Nikken — and order the Grand Reception Hall torn down — sat on stage at that meeting with Nittatsu. At that time, he was the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood's Study Department chief. It is impossible to fathom the thoughts that must have been going through Abe's head as he listened to the words of High Priest Nittatsu whom he, as a priest, should have regarded as his mentor and teacher.

After becoming high priest, Nikken methodically set about razing the buildings that the Soka Gakkai had donated to the head temple during Nittatsu's time, thus negating his predecessor's achievements. There can be no denying that this constitutes a serious betrayal of his mentor.

After High Priest Nittatsu's lecture, Vice General Director Kiyoshi Jujo and General Director Koichi Harayama said a few words. At last it was then time for President Yamamoto to speak.

"Now, an address from our president!" the master of ceremonies' voice rang out, followed by an explosion of applause. Everyone present had exerted themselves earnestly with Shin'ichi, valiantly following his lead and together sharing both the great struggles and joys of victory. Proud of the magnificent development their movement had achieved over the past two years, they waited eagerly for Shin'ichi to take the podium.

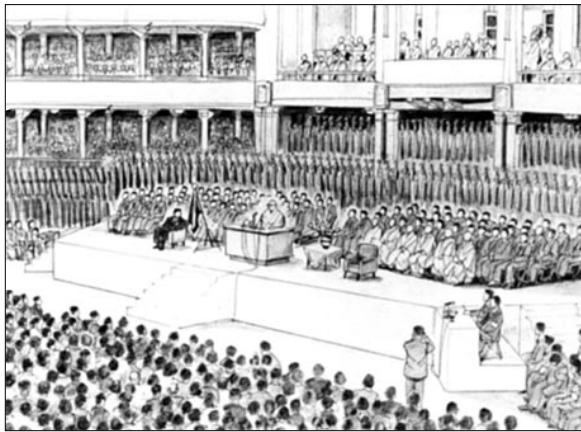
He began by thanking the members for their part in making the 24th General Meeting such a brilliant success. Then he made a pledge for his third year as president, his voice resounding with conviction:

"Setting my sights on May 3 next year, and engraving more deeply in my heart the golden words 'This I will state. Let the gods forsake me. Let all persecutions assail me. Still I will give my life for the sake of the Law' (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 174), I am resolved to work with all of you and do everything I can to lead the way to even greater victory. With the Gohonzon as our eternal foundation, let us make the Soka Gakkai the pillar of Japan and advance with indestructible unity for the happiness of the people and prosperity of society."

The audience responded to President Yamamoto's call for fresh progress with enthusiastic applause.

Shin'ichi next confirmed that the Lotus Sutra is the highest Buddhist teaching and that the Law contained in its depths, that Nichiren Daishonin revealed, is Buddhism's ultimate, supreme essence.

He then discussed the relationship of Buddhism to culture. He explained how, during the third century B.C.E., the Indian king Ashoka had built a nation that encouraged the flourishing of culture and the arts based on Buddhist principles. And how, in the second century B.C.E., during the reign of King Kanishka, another well-known supporter and protector of Bud-



Then, after greetings by several directors and the Study Department chief, High Priest Nittatsu delivered a lecture. He began by warmly congratulating everyone: "On this occasion of the 24th Soka Gakkai Headquarters General Meeting, I express my profound respect for, and offer my congratulations to, all Soka Gakkai members on the tremendous results of their propagation efforts."

He said that many people in Japanese society interpreted the Buddhist concept of attaining enlightenment to mean achieving a state of nonself (Jpn *muga*), necessitating the extinction of all earthly desires and worldly attachments. Refuting this view, High Priest Nittatsu de-

## ACCELERATION, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

dharma, Gandharan art and civilization had prospered in northern India.

Shin'ichi further mentioned how culture had flourished in Tang-dynasty China (705-905) with the dissemination of the doctrinal theory of a life-moment possessing 3,000 realms, as revealed in T'ien-t'ai's *Great Concentration and Insight*. And how Heian-era Japan (782-1185) had similarly seen a flowering of culture with the spread of Dengyo's revelation of the Lotus Sutra's theoretical teaching. Superlative culture blossoms, Shin'ichi explained, when the correct Buddhist teaching gains wide currency.

"These facts," he continued, "illustrate that when people make the correct teaching their foundation and actualize the principle of the fusion of the law of the ruler and the principles of Buddhism, the most wonderful culture will be born. The realization of a peaceful and harmonious society will be made possible.

"Moreover, Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, the teaching that can lead the way to happiness for all people of the Latter Day of the Law, is the essence of the Lotus Sutra and the very highest teaching. The purpose of our great kosen-rufu movement is to bring about, through the ideals and principles of Buddhism, an unprecedented, magnificent flowering of humanistic culture. And to enable all people to become happy and society to prosper."

**R**eading from the Gosho, Shin'ichi next described what a society in which the Daishonin's Buddhism had become widely established would be like:

"In 'On Practicing the Buddha's Teachings,' Nichiren Daishonin describes the time of kosen-rufu as follows:

In that time because all people chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo together, the wind will not beleaguer the branches or boughs, nor will the rain fall hard enough to break a clod. The world will become as it was in the ages of Fu Hsi and Shen Nung in ancient China. Disasters will be driven from the land, and the people will be rid of misfortune. They will also learn the art of living long, fulfilling lives. Realize that the time will come when the truth will be revealed that both the Person and the Law are unaging and eternal. There cannot be the slightest doubt about the sutra's solemn promise of a peaceful life in this world. (MW-1, 101-102)

"Indeed, when all people chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo together, they will no longer be troubled by natural disasters, as the Daishonin indicates when he says that the wind will blow gently without disturbing the branches, rain will not fall hard enough to break apart a dirt clod, everything will grow and flourish in a healthy way and the world will become as peaceful and prosperous as the ideal societies achieved by Fu Hsi and Shen Nung in legend.

"Changes in people's lives realized through the Mystic Law are unfailingly reflected in the natural environment. Also,

wisdom cultivated through faith will make possible a society in which, for instance, safety measures are taken to ensure that people will not suffer harm in the event of such natural disasters as torrential rains or typhoons.

"Furthermore, the Daishonin promises that people can attain the means to avoid disasters and lead long, healthy lives in this existence. He tells us that when we base our lives on the Mystic Law, we can enjoy boundless happiness and realize the profound truth that both our lives and the Mystic Law are eternal and unaging. The Daishonin further declares that when this happens, the passage in the 'Parable of the Medicinal Herbs' chapter of the Lotus Sutra that 'they will enjoy peace and security in their present existence' (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 99), will become a reality. The purpose of our faith is to build such a happy, peaceful society."

The French thinker and mathematician Blaise Pascal (1623-62), who described people as "thinking reeds," made the observation that "by space the universe encompasses and swallows me up like a mere speck; by thought I comprehend the universe."<sup>1</sup> This strikes a chord with the Buddhist perspective that a single life-moment or concentrated thought encompasses the universe.

Many members present had fought their way back valiantly from the edge of despair to rebuild their lives through faith. Shin'ichi now reaffirmed that their determination could effect a powerful change not only in their lives, but in the times, society and the entire universe. With this message, he hoped to awaken them to their mission as the true protagonists of history, propelling them to rise above the lesser self, to reveal the higher, greater self.

**T**he participants who packed the hall earnestly fixed their gaze on President Yamamoto, not wanting to miss a single word.

And Shin'ichi's voice resounded with conviction: "Japan's greatest misfortune today is that it lacks solid ideals or a sound philosophy that can contribute to people's happiness and create lasting peace. The country is deficient in a philosophy that upholds the sanctity of life and nurtures a spirit of compassion. The Japanese are bereft of any guiding principle for instilling basic values and teaching people the right way to live, leaving our society without a spiritual backbone.

"As a result, we find that in government, economy and even education, confusion and uncertainty reign. And there is no solid vision for the future. Japan may be enjoying increased economic prosperity, but if it continues on its present course it will grow ever-more spiritually desolate and surely meet an impasse in every sphere, including

government, the economy and education.

"I declare that Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism will become the spiritual backbone, the lofty ideal, the sublime philosophy that will save our country." Shin'ichi's words were met with loud applause. He had reaffirmed for the participants the profound social significance of their efforts to spread the Daishonin's teachings.

He went on: "When we consider Japan's future and the world in the 21st century, it is



clear that the time is definitely coming when our message and efforts will receive their due recognition and praise. In fact, things have already begun to move in this direction.

"That said, however, the more the Gakkai is applauded, the greater will be the jealousy of those who resent our success. The more strident the criticism arising from misconceptions and prejudice will be. There is no doubt we will also have to deal with plots by people seeking to obstruct our movement to spread the Law.

"Yet no matter what happens, let's resolve to never be defeated by any persecution or oppression by authoritarian power. Placing utmost faith in the golden words of Nichiren Daishonin and in the Gohonzon, let's continue to advance with courage and confidence, persevering on the lofty path of faith to the very end. I am praying for your continued efforts, your excellent health and the prosperity of your families. Thank you."

The members' enthusiastic applause reverberated through the vast, dome-ceilinged auditorium. Each participant's heart blazed with a determination to build a culture and society that existed for the benefit of its people.

The 24th General Meeting concluded with a jubilant Gakkai song and a formal closing announcement. The Soka Gakkai had now made its fresh start toward May 3 the following year.

**W**armed by early summer breezes, the members joyously resumed their spirited efforts to spread the Daishonin's teachings. They were ecstatic that they were practicing Buddhism not just to resolve their own small problems, but for the great, noble purpose of creating an ideal society of peace and security as described in the Gosho.

Faith cultivates character. And charac-

ter thus refined engenders a deeper awareness of one's mission to create a more humane society.

The evening of May 3, a terrible train accident occurred on the Joban main line between Mikawashima and Minami-Senju stations, both located in Arakawa Ward in northern Tokyo. Around 9:35 p.m., an outbound freight train ran through a red signal light just past Mikawashima Station, crashing at considerable speed into a bumping post and jumping its tracks. The locomotive was left leaning slightly to one side, partially obstructing the neighboring track of the outbound main line.

Then, moments later, an outbound passenger train for Toride came hurtling down the main line from Mikawashima Station and sideswiped the leaning locomotive. The passenger train's first two cars were derailed, obstructing another set of parallel tracks for inbound trains heading toward the main terminal, Ueno, in Tokyo.

Since it was a public holiday, the train for Toride was packed with people returning from leisure outings, carrying approximately 1,200 passengers, 50 percent more than normal capacity. Passengers climbed out of the derailed train and began walking along the inbound track back toward Mikawashima Station.

A short time later, a speeding passenger train inbound for Ueno came down that same track and crashed head-on into a car of the derailed train blocking its path, creating a massive three-train pileup. The front four cars of the third train were thrown off the tracks, three of them veering sidelong down an embankment about seven meters high, then smashing into a two-story warehouse beside it. More tragically, when this train collided with the derailed train, it struck passengers who had alighted and were making their way along the tracks, hurling many into the air.

One accident had led to another, giving rise to still another and culminating in a major tragedy. In all, the Mikawashima train crash resulted in 160 deaths and 325 injuries.

There had been another train accident earlier the same day. The morning of May 3, shortly after 1:00 a.m., a freight train had rammed a passenger train at Koga Station on the Tohoku main line, injuring 40 people. The accident was caused by the driver of the freight train dozing off and failing to notice a signal light.

May 3 is a national holiday in Japan, commemorating the day the constitution, which safeguards people's fundamental rights, came into effect. It was a sad irony that two train accidents, one before dawn and one after dusk, took place on this day — and that one, the accident at Mikawashima, turned into a disaster of nightmarish proportions.

### (To be continued)

1. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées: Notes on Religion and Other Subjects*, ed. Louis Lafuma, trans. John Warrington (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1960), p. 58.

A NEW CENTURY OF HEALTH

# Buddhism and the Art of Medicine



**Drugs and Medicines — Part 1 [26]**

*Participants in this installment: SGI President Ikeda, Soka Gakkai Doctors Division Vice Chief Yoshio Kanaya and pharmacists Hitomi Kodama and Yuriko Kato. They discuss the state of Japanese drugs and medicines.*

**Ikeda:** There is such a surge in interest in drugs and medicines that the current health boom in Japan might well be described as a medicine boom. In fact, there are many new drugs on the market, but many of us lack proper information about them.

I think that is a fair description of the present situation. With that in mind, we have invited three experts in this area to contribute to today's session.

**Kanaya, Kodama and Kato:** Hello.

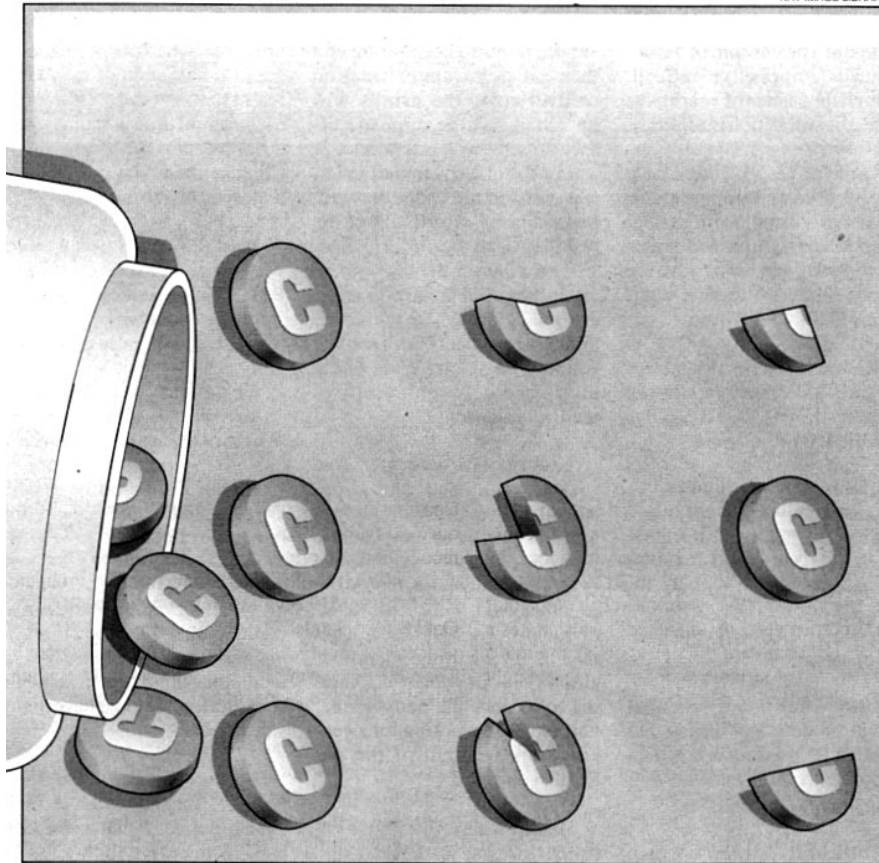
**Ikeda:** I remember once when we visited the Chinese city of Guilin, while we were all waiting for our boat, two girls selling medicine approached us. I asked them, jokingly, "Do you have any medicine to make me smarter?" And they answered without a pause, "We just sold out!" I was delighted with their fine sense of humor, their quick wit — just what one would expect from a country like China, with its culture and history.

**Kanaya:** If you asked that question in Japan, the peddler would probably just answer coldly, "There's no such thing!"

**Ikeda:** What exactly is medicine?

**Kanaya:** In China, they say that anything can be medicine.

**Kato:** In Japan, according to the Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Instruments Act, a medicine is anything that is used to treat, diagnose or prevent illness in humans or animals.



**President Ikeda discusses with pharmacists making informed choices on drugs and medicines. They clarify that drugs should only assist the human body in healing itself, not replace the body's natural healing functions.**

**Kodama:** Among all available drugs and medicines, those that receive the approval of the Ministry of Health and Welfare are classified as pharmaceuticals.

**Kanaya:** The basic function of drugs and medicines is to assist the body's powers of healing. A medicine is any substance that acts as an agent in stimulating the body's natural healing powers.

**Ikeda:** Yes, that seems like a good definition. The second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, used to say that the human body is one big pharmaceutical factory. Medical science and drugs, he said, should only be used to assist and enhance the body's ability

to heal itself.

**Kodama:** I think that is a very important point. Instead of becoming too dependent upon medication, it's important to try to achieve and preserve a physical condition in which, if possible, one can get well without resorting to drugs.

**Ikeda:** What are the differences between prescription drugs and over-the-counter remedies in Japan?

**Kodama:** Prescription drugs, of course, require a doctor's prescription, while over-the-counter drugs don't.

**Ikeda:** When we visit our doctor with a cold, he or she

often prescribes several different drugs. But when we go to a pharmacy, the pharmacist will usually recommend only one kind of cold medicine. Why?

**Kato:** Most prescription drugs are designed for a single purpose. If you have a fever, a cough and a runny nose, the doctor will prescribe one drug for each symptom.

**Kodama:** On the other hand, over-the-counter cold medicines are designed to treat a wide variety of symptoms, so they often contain several drugs.

**Kanaya:** To compare drugs to food, we might say that over-the-counter drugs are a sort of prepackaged meal, the same for

all, while prescription drugs are like a home-cooked meal of fresh ingredients, such as vegetables, meat and fruit, prepared just for the patient.

**Ikeda:** I see. The doctor writes a prescription that meets the specific needs of the patient.

**Kato:** Yes, though, of course, the actual preparation of the prescription is done by the pharmacist.

**Kodama:** The best thing about prescription drugs is that they are prescribed expressly to meet the needs of each patient. For example, one patient may have a cold, but no fever, while another has a fever. With prescription drugs, the doctor can prescribe according to the particular symptoms.

**Kanaya:** The doctor can also, respond to the patient's requests, such as for a drug that won't cause drowsiness. Such a choice sometimes isn't possible with over-the-counter drugs. When you buy a commercial cold medication, you're getting a drug that is designed to relieve a fever even if you don't have one, and all sorts of things you may not need.

**Ikeda:** What is the best way to use these two sources of medication?

**Kodama:** Over-the-counter remedies are useful in an emergency. For example, when you're traveling, or when your symptoms suddenly worsen, and you can't get to a doctor.

**Kanaya:** Even then, it's wise not to choose a medicine on your own. Tell the pharmacist your symptoms, and he or she will recommend the best medicine. And let your pharmacist know about any medications you may already be taking for chronic illness.

**Kato:** When your symptoms are different than usual or they persist longer than usual, you

PLEASE SEE DRUGS, NEXT PAGE

## DRUGS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

should definitely visit your doctor and get a prescription. In that case, you should also tell your doctor which, if any, over-the-counter remedies you have been taking.

**Ikeda:** Some people take over-the-counter medications and prescription medicines at the same time, don't they?

**Kanaya:** Yes, they do. And others take several types of over-the-counter medicines at the same time. It is important not to decide on your own what medicines you should take. Always seek the advice of a pharmacist or doctor.

**Ikeda:** Nichiren Daishonin said: "When giving medicine to a sick person, one should know what kind of medicine was administered before. Otherwise, different kinds of medicine may conflict and work against one another, killing the patient" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, pp. 28-29). The Daishonin was using medicines as a metaphor for knowing what philosophies or religions are already current before spreading the True Law.

**Kanaya:** Nichiren Daishonin was aware of the medical science of his time.

**Ikeda:** From the time of Shakyamuni, Buddhism has shown a strong interest in healing the sufferings of both mind and body, and many Buddhists have studied and written on medicine. I won't go into the details, but I think we can say that the art of pharmacy is the product of humanity's long struggle with illness. The history of medicinal remedies is as old as the history of our species. The oldest records of medicines are found on clay tablets from Mesopotamia, dating as far back as 2700 B.C.E.

**Kodama:** In Shakyamuni's India, many substances were used as medicines, including such plant materials as poppies, oleander, turmeric and sandalwood; animal substances such as the musk of musk deer; and minerals such as mercury. With the exception of mercury, which is highly toxic, all those substances are still in use today as medicines.

**Kato:** Drugs derived from living plants and animals are called natural drugs. Many modern pharmaceuticals have been produced from analyzing just why such natural drugs are effective.

**Western medicine focuses on disease and is designed to treat specific symptoms in specific organs, such as illnesses of the stomach, the eye or the ear. Chinese medicine, on the other hand, focuses on the individual holistically and treats the entire body rather than specific organs or symptoms, aiming to balance the body's inner harmony and working for a general improvement of the patient's condition.**

— Dr. Yoshio Kanaya

**Ikeda:** The wisdom of the ancients is impressive indeed. Though thousands of years have passed, it still benefits us today.

**Kanaya:** Yes. But there have also been some strange medicines. For example, in ancient Mesopotamia, horse manure was regarded as a remedy. I have no idea if it was effective, but it was used for a long time.

**Ikeda:** Japanese drugstores carry a wide variety of vitamin and health drinks. Are these classified as medicines?

**Kanaya:** Some are, and in that case they must be properly labeled. But the rest are really just categorized as soft drinks or health foods.

**Ikeda:** Are they effective even though they are not medicines?

**Kato:** They are of no direct help in treating any illness, but they can be used as nutritional supplements after an illness or when one has no appetite.

**Kodama:** When we are healthy and have an appetite, we get all the vitamins we need from our food, and such drinks are of little use. Any excess of vitamins ingested is just excreted through urine and feces.

**Kanaya:** Vitamins are very important, of course, but many of them, such as vitamins B and C, cannot be stored very long by the body. Daily servings of fruits and vegetables are the best and most balanced way to get enough vitamins.

**Kato:** Nutritional supplements can be effective when one hasn't had enough sleep or is suffering from fatigue. Of course, the best thing to do when you are tired is to rest.

**Ikeda:** But people today are so busy they often can't rest even when they want to. That's when they are likely to turn to health drinks, because they're so handy. But if we drink such

supplements to keep going and then get sick from exhaustion or overwork, the drinks will have had just the opposite effect of what was intended.

For the elderly, in particular, rest is important. I hope they will make special efforts to get the rest they need.

The vitamin drinks sold in Japan are based mostly on Western medicine, while the nutritional supplements are based on Chinese medicine. What is the difference between these two medical traditions?

**Kanaya:** Western medicine focuses on disease and is designed to treat specific symptoms in specific organs, such as illnesses of the stomach, the eye or the ear. Chinese medicine, on the other hand, focuses on the individual holistically and treats the entire body rather than specific organs or symptoms, aiming to balance the body's inner harmony and working for a general improvement of the patient's condition.

**Ikeda:** It's the difference between looking at the part and looking at the whole, then.

**Kodama:** Yes. For example, in Western medicine there is a specific drug for a specific symptom. Whoever the patient is, pain is treated with analgesics and hives is treated with antihistamines.

But that's not the case in Chinese medicine. The same medicine may be prescribed for both joint pain and hives. Or different medicines might be prescribed for different patients, even though they have the same symptoms.

**Kato:** That's why it's so difficult to answer when someone asks what a particular Chinese medicine is for.

**Ikeda:** Are there any other differences?

**Kanaya:** The drugs themselves are different. Most drugs used in Western medicine consist of a single substance, but the

drugs used in Chinese medicine are a combination of many different natural drugs. Of course, each natural drug contains many different substances, so a single Chinese medicine can contain hundreds of substances.

**Ikeda:** When I was a child, we were given a medicine called Bear's Gallbladder for an upset stomach, and it was quite effective. Is that a Chinese medicine?

**Kodama:** Bear gallbladder is an ingredient used in the preparations of many Chinese medicines.

**Ikeda:** Do the drugs of both Western and Chinese medicine have side effects?

**Kato:** Yes, they do. Western drugs affect not only the organ they are aimed at, but other organs as well. And when Chinese medicines don't suit a person's constitution, they can have many side effects.

**Ikeda:** It seems that both types of medicines have their strong points. What's the best way to decide which kind of medicine to turn to?

**Kanaya:** Sudden or acute illnesses and infectious diseases respond best to Western medicine. On the other hand, when one doesn't really feel sick, but is still not in good condition, or when the cause of the illness cannot be identified, or in the case of some chronic disorder, Chinese medicine is often effective.

**Kodama:** For example, anti-hypertensive drugs can effectively lower blood pressure. But when headaches, insomnia or numbness persist even after one's blood pressure drops, Chinese medicine can be very useful in relieving those symptoms.

**Ikeda:** Does that mean that we can use them together?

**Kato:** Yes, it does. In particular, those suffering from chronic illnesses and being treated with Western drugs can often use Chinese medicine to

help eliminate any adverse side effects caused by those drugs. And Chinese medicine can be used to improve general physical condition so the dosage of Western drugs can be reduced.

**Kanaya:** It is important to remember, however, that a preparation of Chinese medicine needs to be tailored for the unique needs of each patient, so we should consult a specialist.

**Ikeda:** There are many drugs, but all of them should only be used under the advice of a trusted specialist who can make the most effective use of them. Earlier I mentioned that Mr. Toda described the human body as one great pharmaceutical factory. The human body has a natural ability to heal itself. In Buddhism, this power is often described metaphorically as the function of Bodhisattva Medicine King. When we bring our lives in rhythm with the Mystic Law, the function of Bodhisattva Medicine King is strengthened and energized. And when that happens, drugs no doubt work better, too.

**Kodama:** I have seen many examples of that truth in other people and have experienced it in my life as well.

**Ikeda:** In our next installment, let's discuss the proper methods of taking medicines. ☸

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# My Recollections



Hassan Gouled Aptidon, President of the Republic of Djibouti

By SGI President Ikeda

Should there ever be a war between men and women, I would join the women's side immediately!" declared President Gouled with a warm laugh that transformed his face into that of a kindly grandfather. In the Republic of Djibouti, where he is the leader, he is lovingly called Uncle by the people.

"As a matter of fact, my wife is now attending the International Women's Conference in Beijing," he said. From that opening, our conversation turned to the rising power of women in the world. We met during President Gouled's visit to Japan in September 1995, when he conferred upon me one of Djibouti's highest honors, the Grande Etoile de Djibouti.

When I later mentioned President Gouled's remark about a war between men and women to Dr. Alexander Yakovlev, one of the founders of perestroika, he smiled at his wife, Nina, sitting beside him, and said: "For my part, I'd send up the white flag and surrender before the fighting even began. Men are no match for women. I have been losing to my wife for the last 50 years!"

The dawn of the age of women signals the end of an age of brute force — the beginning of an age of principle, culture and human rights. It is the dawn of an age when those who have been oppressed will rise up and cast off their shackles. And that, of course, makes me think of Africa.

The most oppressed and exploited continent in all of human history has been Africa. And that is why I hope that Africa will eventually become the happiest continent. The new century will not truly dawn until that happens.

In his greetings at Soka University, President Gouled declared: "Without peace, we cannot guarantee a better life for future generations. We must raise our voices higher in order to draw out the most profound qualities in the human heart — tranquillity, resolute-



SGI President Ikeda is honored by President Aptidon at Makiguchi Memorial Hall in 1995.

ness of mind and, especially, self-confidence."

President Gouled believes that people are people the world over. It was moving to see him shake hands with the Soka University students who welcomed him, cordially greeting each one.

After visiting Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Museum, he was deeply sorrowed and said, "I can't eat after seeing this." And in the guest book, he wrote, "This tragedy is the tragedy of all humankind."

Djibouti is a small country, only about 8,900 square miles. But the physical size of a nation is not important. The size of its people's hearts — are they generous or stingy? — that is what counts. How much greater a small, struggling, yet humane nation is than a large, proud, arrogant one.

The same is true of people. Being big and powerful aren't what make people great. What makes a nation great is determined by the goals its people and leaders are pursuing and the efforts they are making to achieve those goals. That is why a nation's spirit is so important.

Djibouti is sandwiched between two much larger nations, Somalia and Ethiopia, which clashed violently in 1977. In September that year, the conflict grew into a full-scale war, which created a tragedy — millions of refugees and devastating famine. President Gouled, who had just secured Djibouti's independence from France in June 1976, flew to Somalia immediately. "Somalia is a great nation with tremendous potential for future development," he cried out. "You should make peace."

Then he flew to Ethiopia. After years of seeking to persuade the leaders of both nations that peace was in their best mutual interest, they finally sat down to talk in Djibouti in 1986. And two years later, in 1988, a peace treaty between the two parties was signed.

But over those years, the number of refugees in Djibouti had grown. (Even today, 20 percent of the country's population consists of refugees from its neighbors.) Of course, this created a heavy financial burden, but the president declared that since the refugees had come to Djibouti seeking to escape war

and live in peace, it was the nation's duty to share its resources, no matter how limited, with the newcomers.

Djibouti has been called a generous nation. It is separated from the Arabian peninsula by a mere seven miles of water. From across the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, the Arab and Indian cultures have come to Djibouti, where they have blended with African culture. To that mix French culture was added, during the colonial period. President Gouled's motto is "Djibouti — a land of cultural exchange, encounter and peace."

When I saw him off at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall, President Gouled said: "This is a grand building. Its upkeep must be difficult." It was a simple remark, but I was moved by what it revealed: his concern for working people. It showed that he was no stranger to the pains and trials of hard work. My beloved mentor, Josei Toda, too, often expressed this practical turn of mind.

President Gouled was born in 1916. He is the oldest of all current African leaders. His family

members were nomads. At 14, he left home and worked as a street trader. His merits won him a following in several local political groups, and in his mid-30s he became the representative to the French Senate for French Somaliland (as the area was then known).

From that day on, he has devoted himself completely to Djibouti, including to its war of independence. He explained his philosophy of life in his speech at the United Nations (September 1977) commemorating Djibouti's independence. "What is a true democrat?" he asked. "A true democrat cannot be corrupted by money or power, and defends the rights of the poor. To him, democracy is not just a word. It is a desperate struggle to win equality for all. It is a battle against corruption, a battle against the degradation of the poor. It is not empty rhetoric [by those unwilling to fight]."

A battle against degradation. How true this is in Africa, with its history of oppression and exploitation. The entire continent was despoiled. The slave trade in African peoples began in the 16th century. And in the 19th century, Africa was colonized by Europeans. The African people, their wealth and advanced culture, were violated, plundered and torn out by the root.

It is estimated that some 60 million men and women were carried away by the slave trade. Innocent people suddenly found themselves hunted down, sold, branded with hot irons, shackled at the ankles and wrists, and loaded onto slave ships. They were treated worse than domestic animals. Packed into the ships so tightly they couldn't move, they were forced to endure appalling sanitary conditions. There were no toilets, the decks were filthy, and disease was rampant. So foul was the stench from the ships that people on other vessels several miles distant could smell it.

Some of the captives threw themselves overboard, hoping at least in death to be reunited with

PLEASE SEE APTIDON, NEXT PAGE

APTIDON, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

their beloved families. Some went insane. Some starved themselves to death. But slaves were no use dead, so the slave traders forced them to eat, resorting to torture if necessary. Those who still refused to eat were fitted with a device that forced their mouths open and force-fed.

This living hell killed many Africans before they reached America, after an average of five weeks at sea. But a new hell was waiting for the survivors. Those who arrogantly called their fellow human beings savages, unscrupulously hunting and rounding them up, were in fact themselves savages. Those who insultingly labeled Africa the Dark Continent in fact brought a cloud of darkness to Africa.

The slave traders perpetrated yet another evil. They encouraged rival ethnic groups to capture slaves, exchanging new captives for guns. Thus they set the stage for deadly, escalating hostilities where, unless a group captured more people than a rival group, their rivals would grow ever stronger and be rewarded for their captures with more guns.

We must never forget that the development of the modern European nations was based on these terrible crimes against humanity. The European cities that flourished due to the slave trade used African blood.

Then, devastated Africa fell under the heavy yoke of European colonization. The Berlin West Africa Conference

(1884-85), a series of negotiations among the major European nations, was called by some the Conference on the Division of Africa. The great powers divided the continent along arbitrary lines, never giving the slightest thought to the people who lived there.

As a result, peoples with shared cultures and customs suddenly found themselves in separate countries. And at the same time, peoples of completely different cultures and traditions were thrown together into new nations. This has been the source of much of the internal strife that has wracked Africa until today. In a further tragic irony, it is the great powers who supplied weapons to both sides in these conflicts, further enriching themselves, based on the African people's suffering.

First the Africans were enslaved, then their land was stolen, then their culture was destroyed, and finally they were forced to grow crops for the consumption of their colonizers. The Europeans established certain cash crops with which the African colonies were forced to pay their taxes: palm oil, cocoa, coffee, rubber, peanuts.

A forced monoculture — cultivation of a single crop in a given area — left the Africans unable to grow sufficient amounts of their own crops, since they were punished if they didn't meet the quotas set by the colonial regimes. In some countries, that punishment

***I am not talking about the patronizing attitude of helping countries that are backward. That is a colonial way of thinking — the idea of bringing civilization to savages. I am talking about living together as members of the same human family. As long as the African people continue to struggle with daunting challenges, then as fellow human beings and global citizens we should share their sufferings.***

— Daisaku Ikeda

was having your hands and feet cut off.

The farming villages were overworked and depleted. Tired to the core of their beings, the people lost all hope. And after bringing the Africans to this pass, the colonial powers told them if they were poor, it was because they were lazy.

Africa, O Africa! You are not a poor continent — you were impoverished! You are not an underdeveloped continent — your independent development was thwarted and disrupted! You once had the richest potential of all continents; it is as if your hands and feet have been cut off. But you were reduced to the poorest station of all.

This pattern continues today. Once we know the true history of Africa, it becomes the duty of all to aid this great continent. Until a new dawn of hope and prosperity rises over Africa, humanity's conscience will lie wounded and bleeding.

In October 1960, at the U.N. Headquarters in New York, I listened to committee and general assembly meetings from the visitors gallery. That year was the Year of Africa, 17 nations having declared their independence. The lively faces of the new African representatives to the United Nations made a deep impression on me. "It's time to build our countries!" their bright eyes seemed to say, reflecting a joy at finally being free of the chains that had bound them so many years.

At the time, I had just become the third president of the Soka Gakkai and begun my long journey toward the dawn of universal human rights. I expressed my overflowing emotions by declaring that the 21st century would be the Century of Africa, by saying that the world must nurture the young sapling of African independence and freedom.

By the Century of Africa I mean a century in which those who have suffered the most will be the happiest, a century in which those who have suffered the greatest humiliation and in-

dignity will walk proud and tall, with their heads held high. There will be new leading actors in the drama of human history. Those whom the world has oppressed the most will carry the world into the future. Those who have experienced the extremes of human cruelty have a mission to change humanity.

The Century of Africa will be a century of life in which all living beings are together in peace and harmony. The time has come for the entire world to learn from the energy, strength and wisdom of Africa, which never lost its pulse of joy in spite of all that was taken from it.

I am not talking about the patronizing attitude of helping countries that are backward. That is a colonial way of thinking — the idea of bringing civilization to savages. I am talking about living together as members of the same human family. As long as the African people continue to struggle with daunting challenges, then as fellow human beings and global citizens we should share their sufferings.

When President Gouled heard the news of the Kobe Earthquake (January 1995), he immediately made a personal donation of \$10,000 to the relief effort. That is three months' worth of his salary. He could not ignore the suffering of the disaster victims, since Djibouti is also subject to earthquakes. This is the true spirit of the 21st century, in which we share the hardships and the joys of all our fellow human beings. □

## GLOSSARY

**Buddha:** One who perceives the true nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature is inherent in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion, spiritual strength, hope and unshakable happiness.

**daimoku:** Literally, "title." Refers to the invocation, or chanting, of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.

**Gohonzon:** The embodiment of the law of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo and the life of Nichiren Daishonin in the form of a mandala. *Honzon* means "object of fundamental respect"; *go* means "worthy of honor." The *Gohonzon* takes the form of a paper scroll inscribed with Chinese and two Sanskrit characters. Together, these characters represent life in its highest condition: Buddhahood. "Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, Nichiren" is written down the center of the Gohonzon.

**gongyo:** Literally, "assiduous practice." In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, gongyo means to recite the "Expedient

Means" (2nd) chapter and the "Life Span of the Tathagata" (16th) chapter of the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo in front of the Gohonzon.

**Goshō:** Literally, "writing worthy of great respect": the writings of Nichiren Daishonin.

**ichinen:** Literally, "one mind." The life-moment, or ultimate reality, that is manifested at each moment in common mortals.

**karma:** Sanskrit word meaning "action." The life tendency or destiny that each individual creates through thoughts, words and deeds. One's actions in the past have shaped one's reality at present, and actions in the present determine in turn one's future. This is the law of cause and effect at work.

**kosen-rufu:** Literally, to "widely declare and spread (Buddhism)." To secure lasting peace and happiness for all humankind through the propagation of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

**Latter Day of the Law:**

The period beginning 2,000 years after Shakyamuni's death, when his teachings lose their power and the essence of the Lotus Sutra will be propagated.

**Nam-myoho-enge-kyo:** The fundamental component of Buddhist practice, which expresses the ultimate truth of life and allows each individual to tap his or her innate enlightened nature directly. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is revealed only through the practice of chanting it, there is a literal definition for each of the component words: *nam* (devotion) means to fuse one's life with the universal law; *myoho* (Mystic Law) is the fundamental principle of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *enge* (lotus flower) refers to the lotus, which blooms and seeds at the same time, symbolizing the simultaneity of cause and effect; and *kyo* (sutra, or teaching of a Buddha) broadly indicates all phenomena or the activities of all living beings.

**Nichiren Daishonin (1222-82):** The

Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law. *Daishonin* literally means "great sage" and is used as an honorific title for Nichiren. He inscribed the Gohonzon and established the invocation of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo as the universal practice to attain Buddhahood.

**Shakyamuni:** Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. The first historically recorded Buddha, he is the founder of Buddhism.

**Soka Gakkai:** Literally, "Society for the Creation of Value." The name of the lay organization of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

**Soka Gakkai International (SGI):** The umbrella organization led by President Daisaku Ikeda, which includes organizations in 128 nations. It was established in 1975.

**ten worlds:** Potential conditions of life inherent in each individual. They are: Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity, Rapture, Learning, Realization, Bodhisattva and Buddhahood.

## SIGN POSTS

APPLYING  
NICHIREN  
DAISHONIN'S  
WRITINGS TO  
DAILY LIFE

### One Basic Fault

By JEFF FARR


SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

**Rather than offering up ten thousand prayers for remedy, it would be better simply to outlaw this one evil doctrine that is the source of all the trouble!** (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 20)

Recently SGI President Ikeda presented this passage from the "Rissho Ankoku Ron" to youth division members of the United States and Japan. In a message to the 4th U.S.-Japan Youth Peace General Meeting on Aug. 17, he explained that only when we fight "this one evil" can we become lion kings.

Everyone wants to be a lion king, but just what is this one evil we have to fight? The first thing that comes to mind is the enemies of the SGI, who are trying to halt the kosen-rufu movement. That's correct, but at the same time President Ikeda said several months ago that this one evil is in our lives; it's the one thing in us that always holds us back. "Each of us has 'one fundamental evil' — one basic fault — that stands in the way of our personal growth," he said.

I've been thinking, then, how important it is to be sure what your basic fault is. Until you know what it is, you can't overcome it. A story from National Public Radio comes to mind: They once interviewed an elderly podiatrist from Miami who believed that shoes cause cancer. But, of course, even if this podiatrist convinced us all that shoes were evil, and we all threw our shoes out, it wouldn't stop cancer. I guess we all sometimes feel as confused about the root cause of our problems as this podiatrist was about the cause of cancer.

So how do we find what our one basic fault is? That's what Buddhist practice is for. Once we find that fault, we'll breakthrough whatever's holding us back. "If we can overcome our fundamental fault," President Ikeda stated, "everything will open up dramatically." I've realized that an important part of becoming a lion king is knowing my fundamental fault and overcoming it. 

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TEMPLE ISSUE

# Why Does the SGI Issue the Gohonzon?

**Q** Why did the SGI decide to issue the Gohonzon?

**A** In 1991, Nichiren Shoshu announced its refusal to confer the Gohonzon to any person belonging to the SGI. From this point on, all new SGI members throughout the world were forced to practice without it.

Clearly, the temple's intention was to entice SGI members to leave the organization and become direct followers of the temple. While most SGI members waiting to receive the Gohonzon saw through this ploy, their seeking spirit to receive the Gohonzon remained. Soka Gakkai leaders grappled with how to respond to the members.

Then, in 1993, the SGI agreed to a proposal from Sendo Narita, the chief priest of Joen-ji, a temple in Tochigi Prefecture, Japan, which had severed its ties to Nikken and Taiseki-ji. The SGI, in conjunction with Mr. Narita, announced it would start issuing Gohonzon to its membership worldwide. These would be reproduced from a Gohonzon at Joen-ji transcribed in 1720 by Nichikan, the 26th high priest of Taiseki-ji. Those who had practiced without the Gohonzon were overjoyed at the news.

The significance of the SGI's decision can be seen from two perspectives: First, Nichiren Daishonin inscribed the Gohonzon for the enlightenment of all people. His fundamental desire was to

## Key Points:

- Nichiren Daishonin inscribed the Gohonzon for all people to attain enlightenment. Making the Gohonzon available to sincere believers is an important responsibility entrusted to the Daishonin's present-day disciples.
- In 1991, however, the priesthood unilaterally decided to stop granting the Gohonzon to SGI members. Its intent was to disrupt the SGI's movement.
- The SGI decided to confer the Gohonzon in 1993 to fulfill its responsibility as a group of practitioners dedicated to spreading the Daishonin's Buddhism.

make the Gohonzon available to all who seek to practice his teachings, thus enabling them to establish indestructible happiness.

Second, with the development of the priesthood issue, Nikken Abe abused his position as high priest by arbitrarily stopping the granting of Gohonzon to SGI members with the express purpose of undermining the SGI. Nikken's use of the Gohonzon in this way runs completely counter to the Daishonin's fundamental intent and spirit behind inscribing the Gohonzon.

In light of these circumstances — and based on its responsibility as the body of believers harmoniously practicing the Daishonin's Buddhism in modern times — the SGI took responsibility to make the Gohonzon available to its membership. This decision was made solely to protect Buddhism, to reply to the sincerity of those seeking the Gohonzon, and to further promote kosen-rufu.

*Six in a series*

OCT. 5, 1960 — SGI-USA DAY

## On American Soil

### SIGNIFICANT DATE

By DAVE CORBETT

NORMAN, OKLA., CORRESPONDENT

**S**unrise is the gentle moment that proclaims a new world each day. "Sunrise" is also the first chapter of *The New Human Revolution*, SGI President Ikeda's chronicle of our movement for world peace. And chapter 2 is "A New World," which unfolds on Oct. 3, 1960, as President Ikeda [Shin'ichi Yamamoto] and his group travels from Honolulu to San Francisco to meet with waiting pioneers of American kosen-rufu.

After the first-ever discussion meeting on American soil, Oct. 4, the story shifts to the next day — Oct. 5. As the group is returning from a trip to Muir Woods National Monument, they stop at Telegraph Hill. Here they pose in front of the statue of Christopher Columbus for a commemorative photo, and President Ikeda makes a historic statement:


Like Columbus, we have now taken our first step on American soil. But we are engaged in a far nobler undertaking — for we are striving to create here on earth a new world where indestructible happiness and eternal peace reign supreme. With the passage of time — in twenty, fifty or a hundred years from now — today will without a doubt be remembered as a day of profound significance in the history of our movement. (p. 117)

Recently I spoke with two of the participants at this historic moment, Francis Garcia of the guidance division and General Director Emeritus George M. Williams, about their impressions of what President Ikeda said that day. Mrs. Garcia, or Mrs. Gilmore as she is referred to in the story, remembers most how President Ikeda's "voice was clear and calm as he spoke." However, she added: "I couldn't really imagine that what he said could ever come true. We were Japanese in America, and at that time I could barely speak English. But little by little it has come to be just as he said."

Mr. Williams related two important points about that day 37 years ago: First,

the underlying theme of the mentor-disciple relationship, which that day represents. President Ikeda had taken the first step toward fulfilling Josei Toda's deep desire to someday spread the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin to the whole planet.

Also, Mr. Williams painted the backdrop to President Ikeda's actions — during those momentous days in October 1960 the world was embroiled in the grips of the Cold War, with heated debates going on at the United Nations. Mr. Williams said that this is our legacy as SGI-USA members: To work for peace, for the future, in these troubled times. Mr. Williams added, "Oct. 5 is a day for the shining American pioneers of kosen-rufu — and everyone who has followed, regardless of position or length of practice."

As I listened to the voices of these two great pioneers of American peace, and imagined President Ikeda's clear, calm voice on Oct. 5, 1960, I recalled that Walt Whitman once wrote, "Surely whoever speaks to me in the right voice, him or he I shall follow." I was overwhelmed with an incredible, previously unknown sense of humility and joy. 



Young musicians, 162 strong, exchange ideas and share experiences at the Florida Nature and Culture Center. (Below) Playing the kazoo helps the youth understand principles of music. (Below middle) Breakout sessions are forums for people to get to know one another better. (Bottom) Saturday night is a time for the groups to play for one another.

# Music Faith AND Friends

Members of Fife and Drum Corps, Brass Bands and Youth Bands from across the United States gather at the Florida Nature and Culture Center to create a nationwide family of musicians.

By JODY BENJAMIN  
CORRESPONDENT  
Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Aug. 7-10

For 162 music group members, it was a time to play music, laugh, learn and deepen their understanding of Buddhism.

Young musicians from across the United States and from Puerto Rico attended the three-day conference at the Florida Nature and Culture Center this weekend. It was the youngest group of conferees ever. The average age was 21. But many of them were as young as 13 and away from home for the first time.

They shared a vast array of stories — from Portland, Ore., where the Youth Band is mushrooming in size and has outgrown available space in the local community center, to Puerto Rico, where members are just hoping to start up a regular activity.

The Youth Bands created in different areas are relatively new co-ed formulations of the Brass Band and Fife and Drum Corps. SGI President Ikeda established both groups in Japan — in 1954 and 1956, respectively — and challenged them to create a cultural movement based on faith that would inspire all people. Some areas of the country maintain a separate Brass Band and Fife and Drum Corps, while other areas have been performing in the coed Youth Band for a few years now. Members in those areas say they prefer it that way.

“It impacts the spirit and how we perform on tunes,” said Andy Matsuda, of Chicago. “Before when we were separate there was this competition thing going on. But now we’re really starting to



PLEASE SEE FNCC, 15



Sessions on 'Mission and Unity,' 'Happiness in this World' and musicianship are featured during the music groups weekend at FNCC.

FNCC, FROM PAGE 14

mesh. That's been really good."

As part of the weekend's activities, the young men's and young women's division held separate, informal roundtable discussions. The sometimes emotional, two-hour conversations ranged from how to encourage better musicianship to relationships, from losing a loved one through death to war.

"If I'm drafted into a war and I kill someone, is that wrong or against my religion?" asked 13-year-old Andrew Cody of Demarest, N.J. He said that he remembered his father's stories of the Vietnam War and had worried about whether he would ever be drafted during his lifetime. Mr. Cody said he did not want to be put in that position. He wanted to live for peace.

"Basically, I learned that if I chanted more, I would be protected from that situation," he said. "It makes me feel a lot better."

On the young women's side, 17-year-old Desiree Wilson of Seattle shared her experience of using faith to overcome a painful physical condition — a kidney infection. On the weekend before Thanksgiving 1996, Wilson had terrible stomach pains. There was blood in her urine. She could hardly eat without vomiting and couldn't sleep.

"Everything that happened in

my life up to that point was normal," she said. "It was scary."

But Ms. Wilson told the group that she got round-the-clock support from her mother and other members who chanted with her in her hospital room. Despite an initial gloomy prognosis from doctors, Wilson fully recovered two weeks later. "For me, it was actual proof."

Marcellus Harper, 20, and Nicole Smith, 22, shared their experiences as leaders of the Washington, D.C.-area Youth Band. The group, which has a large, active membership, has players as young as 10, 11 and 12 years old, they said.

"With the younger ones, words aren't always effective," said Mr. Harper. "You have to try to show by example through your life."

Ms. Smith agreed. "There's hope for the future when we have that passion to encourage other people to play," she said.

The schedule of activities included sessions on strengthening technical skills, such as how to read music, improve rhythm and arrange compositions. And then there was time to chant.

"This weekend was the first time I chanted on my own without anybody asking me to," said Adrienne Fournier, 14, of Puerto Rico. "I went down to the lake by myself and chanted for half an hour." W



Brandon, shown here with his mother, discovered the secret to success in Brass Band is having compassion.

## EXPERIENCE

# The Secret of Success

By BRANDON NICHOLSON,  
OAKLAND, CALIF.

I am 14 years old and am entering the ninth grade this fall. I was born into this practice and started doing A-and-C gongyo every day when I was 8. I joined the Brass Band when I was 11 but participated on and off. I could only participate in the fall and winter because I played baseball for the rest of the year. Last fall, I quit baseball to join the band full time because I was having so much fun.

The more I practiced, the more I realized the importance of Brass Band. We performed five or six times this past February and March, so that we could encourage the members. The more we practiced and performed, the more obstacles we faced. We didn't sound good, it seemed that nobody could get along and we had a recital for Brass Band Day coming up in May. After much practice and a lot of daimoku, Brass Band Day was successful — but something was missing.

After the recital, we started to prepare for our trip to the Florida Nature and Culture Center. Shortly thereafter I was accepted to, and offered scholarships for, all four high schools I had applied to. Every Sunday, we practiced for almost eight hours. I was determined to perform for the other Brass Bands and Fife and Drum Corps across the country, who would be at the FNCC. I was fortunate enough to be placed on the list of people to go.

But I faced financial obstacles. I chanted about what to do and was able to put in the first deposit with money from my savings account and graduation presents. I still had no idea how I was going to get the second half of the money. My work time was cut down at my job, and I wouldn't be able to pay for my trip with my paycheck.

I continually chanted for the success of the performance and conference and that each person who was chosen to go would overcome his or her obstacles. I wrote to my grandmother to see if she would lend me the money. After she received the letter, I spoke to her on the phone. She told me that she never lends money to anyone but that she would give me the money and I wouldn't have to pay her back. I was very

grateful.

I became more determined than ever. Especially after having performed at a community festival where nobody clapped for us except the other members who were there. I was so determined that I decided to do 10 minutes of daimoku every day with my morning and evening gongyo.

I wanted to move the hearts of the other members when we performed. I didn't want to settle for token applause or, as fellow Brass Band member Michael Reichle would say, the "gratuitous Buddhist applause."

We continued to practice eight hours every Sunday, and we chanted a lot of daimoku. During this time, I visited the doctor, and she told me that I had completely overcome a heart murmur that I'd had for five years. I was also able to play on my high school's varsity basketball team.

On Aug. 7, we arrived at the FNCC. With the help of great experiences and great guidance, we all became a nationwide family of musicians. When the time came to perform, we were all excited about playing in front of the other Brass Band and Fife and Drum Corps members. We all wanted to encourage them.

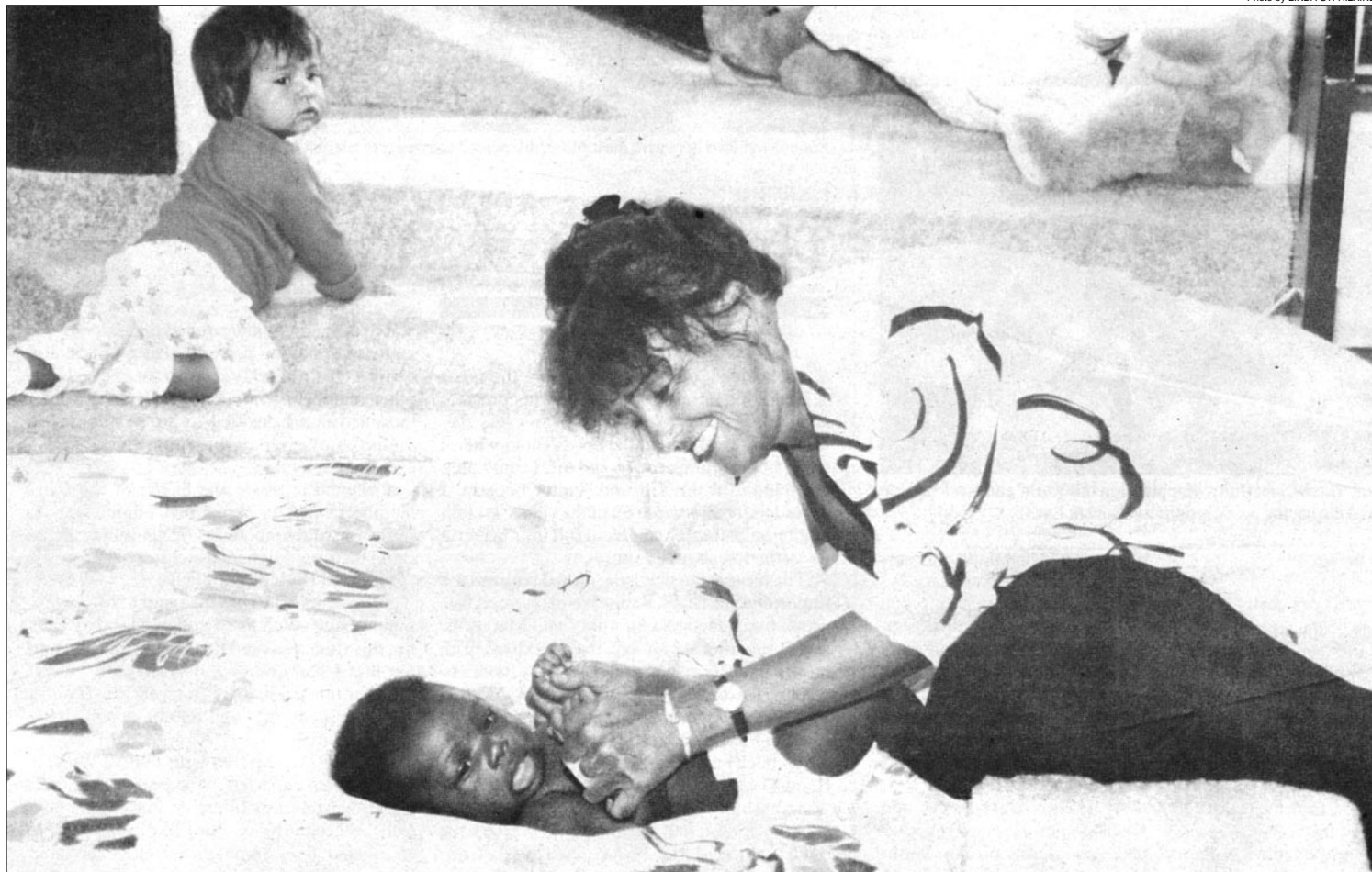
We played three songs, and our performance was a total success. Many people said that they wanted to use us as models for their own achievement. It wasn't until later that night when I spoke with some other band members, that I realized what had been missing from our recital in May. We hadn't shown enough compassion for one another. But since then, we had become like a real family as opposed to a dysfunctional one.

After going to the conference, I feel very fortunate to have so many community centers in Oakland and San Francisco that the band can play at. Many band members in other areas have to cross state lines just to go to world peace gongyo.

Being in Brass Band has been a great experience for me. I have learned a lot, and the band has strengthened my practice. I thank all of my fellow band members, especially my band leader, Paul Wallace. They have helped me a lot, and I hope to one day become a band leader myself. W

# Healing Touch

Photo by LINDA ST. HILAIRE



At the Touch Research Institute she founded, Dr. Tiffany Fields gives a daily 15-minute massage to the children. It relaxes them, makes them more alert and helps them sleep better.

By TERRY ELLIS  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

**T**iffany Fields, Ph.D., has been talking about the healing and nurturing power of touch regularly to journalists for 10 years. The first coverage chronicling her research on the benefits of massage to premature babies appeared in 1986, in the science section of the *New York Times*. Since then, she's done *Today*, *Good Morning America*, and most recently the August cover story for *Life* magazine.

She keeps on talking, and never appears to tire of the subject, because that's the only way to get the message out to the public — the only people she believes can change the medical, educational and economic tides that have risen against the ideas she has proven scientifically.

"We do about 18 magazine articles a week, four television interviews and eight radio spots," says Fields, whose home base is the Touch Research Institute in

Miami. Last week she was off to Indonesia to speak about her favorite topic at conferences there.

Fields was in the middle of her master's thesis on massage and premature babies at the University of Massachusetts 22 years ago when she gained her own experience with its benefits. Her daughter, Cory, now 21, was born premature. Fields' research has shown that premature babies who are massaged three times a day for 10 days gain weight 47 percent faster and blossom overall in alertness and responsiveness compared to babies who don't receive the treatment. She even translates that into dollars and cents: An average savings of \$10,000 per child by reducing the hospital stay six days. With 470,000 premature babies born in the United States each year, that amounts to \$4.7 billion.

Now her ongoing research has shown the benefits of massage in an A to Z roster of illnesses, she says, including asthma, HIV, hyperactivity, autism, diabetes and severe burns. Fields even discovered that grandparents who volunteered to massage premature babies reaped health benefits themselves. Since

many older people are uncomfortable with receiving a massage, giving one actually was more relaxing to them.

"It benefits them for the same reason it benefits everyone: It relaxes them, causes them to produce more endorphins [naturally occurring pain suppressors], and their immune systems functions better," says Fields.

An even wider application of Fields' research is in the area of promoting health and development, especially for children.

At the nursery school affiliated with TRI, children enjoy a daily 15-minute massage that relaxes them, makes them more alert and helps them sleep more deeply. This practice runs counter to the trend in many schools, even preschools, where teachers and officials fear lawsuits, says Fields. For example, the National Education Association, which represents 2 million teachers, adopted the slogan "Teach, don't touch."

Fields disagrees. Her research comparing different cultures has convinced her that what America needs is more warm, human touch. **WT**