



EXPERIENCE

With the sudden death of his wife, Iain Coggins gains a new perspective on life.

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THIRD STAGE

What's the key to living well? President Ikeda discusses this in the 'Third Stage of Life' series.

pages 10-11

No. 3205

AUGUST 21, 1998

Photo by JEAN PRITCHARD



By **DAISAKU IKEDA**
SGI PRESIDENT

'NO ONE IS MORE TALENTED AND ABLE THAN A PERSON WHO CAN DISCOVER AND NURTURE INDIVIDUALS OF PROMISE AND ABILITY,' SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA WRITES IN THIS ESSAY. THE YOUNGEST OF OUR YOUTH ARE WAITING TO BE NURTURED.

The future division was established at my proposal many years ago. When Mr. Toda was president of the Soka Gakkai, several chapters around the country had organized groups and activities for children, but there was no structured future division for the Soka Gakkai as a whole like there is today. Watching the growth and development of these younger members with great joy, I cherished a vision for expanding and strengthening the organizational framework for their activities in the future.

Then, in 1964 — a few years after I became president and the Soka Gakkai embarked on a new phase in spreading the philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in society — I decided to establish the junior high school and high school divisions to ensure the future of our movement. The high school division was founded first, and its inaugural meeting was that June.

At that time, I remember turning to then-Youth Division Chief Einosuke Akiya (now president of the Soka Gakkai) and asking him to appoint the most capable members of the youth division to lead the newly established division.

I wanted to create an environment in which our next generation of promising youth could receive inspiring direction, guidance and leadership from reliable older youth, so that they could develop their fullest potential while giving first priority to their studies.



Thirty-four years have passed since the establishment of the high school division, the

PLEASE SEE ESSAY, 7

Lion cubs are raised by lions. People of courage are fostered by people of exceptional courage.

The special month for promoting the growth and activity of the future division has arrived again, starting on July 20. [In the Soka Gakkai organization in Japan, future division comprises the Boys and Girls Group, the junior high school division and the high school division.] I extend my most heartfelt appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the leaders of the future division who, on top of their own Soka Gakkai activities and busy work schedules, are taking time to help nurture our precious younger members.

Three years ago, I bestowed the name 21st Century Mission Group on the leaders of the future division [in Japan]. Since they are working to foster the leaders of kosen-rufu in the 21st century, their mission and their contributions to the development of our movement are immense.

Each of the divisions within

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STUDY

Why do we hold prayer beads when we chant — and what do they signify?

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CHINESE

Study Department leader Ted Morino answers the question, 'Why do we need the Gohonzon?'

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Decisive Moments

By MAIA GUEST

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

Here is where you will cross the Uji River. Here is where you will ford the Seta. This event will determine whether you win honor or whether you disgrace your name. ("Reply to Yasaburo," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, p. 235)

Though the Uji River and the Seta, both famous strategic points of battle in Japanese history, may seem geographically and even metaphorically distant from the



In My Life

NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S WRITINGS IN ACTION

cafe where I am sitting with my husband, John, it is, in fact, here that I find myself, over a Key lime pie, appealing to their reverberant names in a moment of struggle.

Nichiren Daishonin calls upon the significance of these two battle sites to illustrate

those decisive moments of victory and defeat that arise in our lives. He is encouraging Yasaburo, a disciple preparing for a debate with a priest from the Pure Land sect, asking him to not be swayed by any outside influences but to "simply make up your mind" (MW-6, 235). I call upon the Daishonin's words as I attempt to overcome my lower, fear-filled self and, with John, meet such a strategic moment in our lives.

John's making his first feature film, a daunting task in and of itself — the challenges seem endless. Today we are deciding whether or not to continue with the project. We have often reminded ourselves in times of duress that we are both actively pursuing our dreams in the producing of this movie (I'm acting in the picture). But our financial circumstances are telling us to give up on our shared dream.

This is where we cross the Uji River, so to speak. This is where we must put ourselves behind our lives and proceed with total commitment despite fear, despite criticism, despite doubt. After all, what is life if not pursuing your dreams in the face of fear? The Daishonin is speaking directly to the two of us and to all of us, and his words ring true and clear. Of course, we're taking a risk. But we're determined to use our faith to surmount all obstacles that come up. ❏

WHAT A Concept

ON THE BASIC IDEAS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM

By LISA JONES

STAFF WRITER

How *myoho*!" some SGI-USA members say when something inexplicable happens. "I hadn't seen him in years...I was just thinking about him...then, all of a sudden, he shows up at my door. Isn't that *myoho*?"

Yes, in a way, it is. On one level, *myoho* connotes mystic — in the sense of being mysterious, beyond human comprehension, or filling one with wonder or awe.

More specifically, *myoho* denotes the Mystic Law, the Middle Way or Myohorenge-kyo. Mystic of Mystic Law means wonderful — it's wonderful because the Law enables all beings to attain enlightenment.

Nichiren Daishonin explains: "What then does *myo* signify? It is simply the mysterious nature of our lives from moment to moment, which the mind cannot comprehend nor words express.... Life is indeed an elusive reality that transcends both the words and concepts of existence and nonexistence, yet exhibits the qualities of

both. It is the mystic entity of the Middle Way that is the reality of all things. *Myo* is the name given to the mystic nature of life, and *ho* to its manifestations" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 5).

It has also been said that *myo* means death and *ho* means life. Also, *myo* signifies enlightenment or the world of Buddhahood, while *ho* indicates fundamental darkness and the other nine worlds from Hell to Bodhisattva.

Although these two syllables mean seemingly opposite things, the significance of *myoho* is that these opposites are united in a single concept. *Myoho* implies that life and death exist in a dynamic relationship, as do darkness and enlightenment. They go together. The components are ultimately inseparable and essentially one.

It can be said that human beings are a microcosm within the macrocosm of the universe; we are component parts of a larger whole. But in light of the Lotus Sutra, each of us contains the entire universe — so the "part" is the whole. This idea is central to the concept of the mutual possession of the ten worlds, which holds that all living beings, whichever one of the ten worlds they inhabit or manifest, are themselves the entire universe. This is the true aspect of life, i.e., *myoho*, that a Buddha perceives. SGI President Ikeda explains that "the concept of the true aspect of life, from the standpoint of which the part is itself the whole, cer-

tainly transcends our ordinary way of thinking. That's why it's called inscrutable or mystic."

This inscrutable truth is also referred to in Buddhism as the region of the unfathomable. "But this 'region of the unfathomable' does not exist somewhere apart from the reality of people's lives," President Ikeda says. "Rather, the lives of ordinary people are themselves mystic. The Lotus Sutra proclaims that the human being is sublime. We must never forget this. There isn't some 'mystic place' or wondrous 'mystic being' existing apart from the reality of our lives."

This is the logic that underpins the Daishonin's statement in his letter "The Gift of Rice": "The provisional sutras say that a tranquil mind is like the moon and a pure heart is like a flower, but the Lotus Sutra states that the flower and moon are themselves heart and mind. Therefore, it is obvious that rice is not merely rice but life itself" (MW-1, 269).

In the Daishonin's Buddhism, the Gohonzon — whose power is found only within the realm of faith — is an inscrutable, mystic object of devotion. It's an expression of the essence of our lives, which is difficult to perceive and to understand. Therefore, our lives based on faith in the Gohonzon are the most wonderful treasures and are themselves *myoho*.

Sixteen in a series

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON FAITH

What Do the Prayer Beads Signify?

By RICHARD YOSHIMACHI

STUDY DEPARTMENT VICE LEADER

Q What do the prayer beads mean? And is it OK to rub them?

A First, while it's not necessarily a good idea to rub the prayer beads (also known as *juzu*) excessively while chanting, Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is not restricted by rigid formality. So it would not be correct to say that we *cannot* rub our prayer beads. But we should consider that rubbing the beads too much can become a nervous habit and can ultimately be very distracting to our concentrated prayer. Doing so may also be annoying to the people around us when we chant with others.

The prayer beads we use did not come from Buddhism but from the ancient Indian religious tradition of Brahmanism, which preceded Shakyamuni's time. If prayer beads ever played a vital role in Buddhist history or thought, there would have been some sort of description or precepts regarding them. But there are none.

Additionally, in his writings, Nichiren Daishonin makes no mention of the im-

portance of the prayer beads, even though it is said that he, using his own prayer beads, defended himself from swordsmen's attacks during the Komatsubara Persecution of 1264. He also once asked a believer to kindly send him some magnolia seeds, which were used to make beads. And Nichiren Shoshu 26th high priest Nichikan did state that putting one's palms together during chanting with the 10 fingers touching signifies the principle of the mutual possessions of the ten worlds.

There have been various explanations of the beads' meaning. For example, it has been said that the three tassels on one side and two on the other signify parts of the human body (of the three tassels, one is the head and the other two are arms; the tassels on the other side are legs).

There are 112 total beads in the main circle, 108 of them said to represent the 108 fundamental earthly desires. The four small beads among those 112 have been said to represent the four leaders of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth. However, we need to understand that all these explanations evolved long after the use of the beads began. And, again, the Daishonin never said any of these things.

When the use of beads was adapted

from Brahmanism by Buddhist priests, it was originally for the purpose of counting. First, priests used them to count days. Then they were used to count the number of the Buddha's names during the priests' prayers.

While President Toda was in prison, he created his own beads using milk bottle caps and used these to count how many times he chanted Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. As he was about to reach 2 million times, he had a profound realization that enabled him to become fully aware of his mission for the spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism. (SGI President Ikeda describes the episode in detail in *The Human Revolution*, vol. 4.)

Many people continue to use the beads because they find that they help them concentrate while chanting. They use them as an aid to keep from being distracted. Excessive rubbing of the beads, in this sense, defeats their purpose.

Simply put, the beads are just a tool to help us focus on the Gohonzon. They do not have any special power, and we do not have to use them. Ultimately, what matters is not how we use our prayer beads but our sincere, concentrated prayer to the Gohonzon with a solid vow to work for kosen-rufu. ❏



Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI President Ikeda visits a classroom at Soka University to offer words of encouragement.

Education — Mark of Humanity

On July 23, shortly after 11:00 a.m., SGI President Ikeda, founder of Soka University, paid a surprise visit to a classroom of students who had just finished taking their end-of-semester exam on modern Japanese industrial history, at the university's Hachioji campus in Tokyo. He looked around the classroom and offered words of encouragement to the students present. A summary of his remarks appears below.

• Education is the distinguishing mark of humanity. Among all the animals, only

human beings can receive an education. What is important in life is creating value and realizing peace. The basis for this is education.

• Exams are a form of training that allow you to develop your mind and your forbearance. What matters is that you never give up but continue making efforts. It's important that, even if you get a bad grade, you have the spirit to try harder next time. If you didn't do well today, there's always next time. And if you don't do well next time either, there's always the time after that. It's important to have

the tenacity to keep challenging yourself time after time after time. Your entire life is a process of strengthening your mind and your endurance.

• In life, you have to decide what you will do and then make efforts to achieve it. If you don't, you'll end up unhappy and frustrated. How much you grow as a human being and strive to achieve your wonderful goals and dreams will determine whether you head toward self-improvement or decline. Education exists for us to become happy, to succeed and to lead brilliant lives. WTT

Seminar Looks Beyond Self-Imposed Limitations

By DAVE SHADOVITZ & TONI TOOMEY

PHILADELPHIA CORRESPONDENTS

The only limits to my accomplishments in life are self-imposed.

— Denis Waitley, motivational speaker and author

In an effort to help people better understand what self-esteem is and how to build it, the Philadelphia Region women's division recently sponsored a five-hour self-esteem seminar at the Philadelphia Community Center.

The event attracted nearly 200 participants, who examined some of the latest research and explored specific steps they could take toward building self-esteem.

In "Self-Esteem and Peer Pressure," participants learned that while peer pressure is normal for

school-age children, those with high self-esteem tend to be less influenced by negative pressures. Those with low self-esteem can be easily influenced.

Facilitators advised adults to work closely with children because they often internalize whatever they hear and need continual support to bolster their self-esteem.

In "Winning in Life and On the Job," members shared how they use their practice to change difficult circumstances at work into positive outcomes. Some of the experiences pertained to bosses, others to co-workers. But in almost every case, members said they found that once they took responsibility for the situation, they could confidently take the action necessary to overcome the problem.

Most admitted, however, that their success didn't come without



Photo by RAYMONDE BEST

Members participate in a discussion on self-esteem and peer relations.

a struggle.

Several of the workshops featured exercises, including one that assessed the participants' self-esteem level. They responded to questions such as "Are you easily hurt by criticism?" "Do you try to hide your feelings from others?" "Do you fear close relationships?"

Then they evaluated how they felt about themselves and what they could do to raise their self-esteem.

The day ended with a question-and-answer session with SGI-USA Vice General Director Sheilah Edwards. Participants posed questions ranging from deeply personal subjects about relationships to ful-

filling leadership responsibilities within the organization.

In response to one question about breaking through a persistent problem, Ms. Edwards spoke on the importance of attitude during gongyo. "You can celebrate your life twice a day with the forces of the universe," she said. "Gongyo is when you promise to protect the Law, and in return the Law will protect you through all eternity."

Ms. Edwards encouraged the participants to make goals and forget about limitations. "With Buddhism," she said, "the sky is not the limit. There is no limit. You can be what you want to be when you want to be it." She added that members shouldn't let self-esteem get so low that they can't face the Gohonzon and face themselves.

— With reporting by WANDA PEACOCK FLOWERS

NEWS BRIEFS

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Members' expressions are buried under the L.A. Friendship Center.

Time Capsule Buried Under L.A. Friendship Center

Members' expressions, memorabilia and stones from each of the five Los Angeles-area regions were placed in a time capsule and buried in the foundation of the soon-to-be-opened L.A. Friendship Center on Aug. 9.

In preparation for the opening, which is scheduled

for Sept. 21, the center's steering committee is seeking volunteers to support the planning for the opening ceremony. Interested members may contact Ian McIlraith (imcilraith@sgi-usa.org), the Los Angeles Region leader, for more information on how to get involved.

'Selected Letters of Nichiren' Correction Issued

Columbia University Press has issued an errata for its book, *Selected Letters of Nichiren*. The errata slip will be made available at all SGI-USA bookstores.

The correction reads:

"Page 129, lines 1-3

should read:

"[truth] is good. But there are two meanings involved here. First, that which accords with the truth is to be accounted good and that which goes against the truth is to be accounted bad. This is the meaning..."

FOR WOMEN

Using Her 'Letter for Kosen-rufu'



New region leader Yoko Simpson is determined to help the members attain their goals, using 'blueprints' found in the 'World Tribune.'

By YOKO SIMPSON
ATLANTA REGION WD LEADER

This is Atlanta's new departure!" said Wendy Clark, SGI-USA women's division leader, at the May 3 commemorative gongyo meeting where leadership appointments were announced. I was appointed women's division region leader at that meeting, and I determined to fulfill my responsibility to help my members develop a strong practice.

Talking with our new region leader, Richard Brown, I realized that we shared the same vision for Atlanta. We agreed that our "new departure" must focus on developing and maintaining a humanistic organization where members could realize their hopes and dreams.

We decided to home visit our members, beginning with the area leaders, so that we could have an honest, open, one-on-one dialogue with each of them. This would afford us the opportunity to build personal bonds, discuss individual aspirations and difficulties, and share our vision for Atlanta.

We also decided that the *World Tribune* would be an integral part of our efforts to encourage our members in every aspect of faith. Not only does the *World Tribune* help nurture a deeper understanding of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism through its publication of SGI President Ikeda's guidance, it's also a showcase of actual proof through its publication of the members' experiences.

It is filled with information and inspiration; it represents

kosen-rufu in action.

President Ikeda refers to our SGI publications as "letters for kosen-rufu." We have found that subscribing to the *World Tribune* is like receiving a weekly letter from President Ikeda.

Each "letter" is filled with encouragement that helps us grow in faith, infuses us with confidence and reinforces our determination to persevere. As we read each issue, we seek to capture his spirit and vision and make it our own.


Richard and I were both inspired by President Ikeda's

March 16 speech, published in the April 17 *World Tribune*. We used the following excerpt to encourage our members during our home visits and

dialogue sessions: "Ultimately our future development hinges on every member having the commitment required of a Soka Gakkai president. With this spirit, this sense of responsibility in your activities... may you always work for kosen-rufu and for the victory of the people."

"May you also build a Soka Gakkai where everyone can advance joyfully, a Soka Gakkai of undying progress."

We realized that if we're going to do activities with the commitment required of an SGI president, then we must speak with informed voices. That is why the new departure for Atlanta is being launched with the *World Tribune* clutched tightly in our hands.

We believe it contains the blueprint for helping each of our members to attain their goals, overcome their obstacles and achieve absolute happiness. 



Welcome Home!

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS



On Aug. 1, Saõ Paulo members gather for the opening of the Brazil Ever-Victorious Community Center, formerly Ichijo-ji temple. In May, after an intense seven-year court battle between SGI-Brazil (BSGI) and Nichiren Shoshu, the Saõ Paulo District Court issued an interim order returning Ichijo-ji to the SGI. BSGI members donated the funds to open the temple in 1968, but in 1991 a group of priests and temple members illegally took control of the building, ousting the temple's original Board of Directors. On May 14, the priests were finally evicted, and plans to reopen the temple as a community center were begun. SGI-Brazil General Director Eduardo Taguchi said at the Aug. 1 opening ceremony that 'our gathering here is actual proof of the victory of the Brazilian members' sincere prayers and unity! Let's spread the solidarity of humanity for the happiness of all people! An appeal by Nichiren Shoshu is still pending, but for now the Saõ Paulo members are at home again in the facility that they built for Brazilian kosen-rufu.

Getting Ready for the Fall Elementary Exam

The SGI-USA Elementary Examination is scheduled for Oct. 25. As a study aid, sample questions were published in the July 17 *World Tribune*, followed by page numbers referring readers to where the answers could be found. The exam will be taken directly from these sample questions.

Questions 33-59 referred readers to two books: *Lectures on the "Expedient Means"* and *"Life Span" Chapters of the Lotus Sutra and Learning from the Goshō: The Eternal Teachings of Nichiren Daishonin*. For the convenience

of those preparing for the exam, that material has been reprinted in the August *Living Buddhism*. The following page numbers refer to the location of the answer for the corresponding question:

- Q 33: p. 20
- Q 34: p. 21
- Q 35: p. 22
- Q 36: p. 23
- Q 37: p. 24
- Q 38: p. 27
- Q 39: p. 28
- Q 40: pp. 31-32
- Q 41: pp. 33-34
- Q 42: p. 36

- Q 43: p. 40
- Q 44: p. 44
- Q 45: p. 46
- Q 46: pp. 46-47
- Q 47: p. 47
- Q 48: p. 11
- Q 49: pp. 11-12
- Q 50: pp. 12-13
- Q 51: p. 13
- Q 52: p. 13
- Q 53: pp. 13-14
- Q 54: p. 15
- Q 55: p. 15
- Q 56: pp. 16-17
- Q 57: p. 17
- Q 58: pp. 17-18
- Q 59: p. 16, p. 18

Foreign Language Study Booklets

- SPANISH
- CHINESE
- KOREAN
- JAPANESE

Revised and updated study booklets for the Elementary Examination have just been published in four languages. They contain all the material necessary to prepare for the upcoming exam, except for the booklet 'Questions and Answers on the Temple Issue.'

Now Available in SGI-USA Bookstores \$4 for Chinese; \$5 other languages

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the new

HUMAN REVOLUTION

A NOVELIZED HISTORY OF THE SOKA GAKKAI

'THE FLOWER OF CULTURE'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 1, PARTS 34-35

In the midst of the Cuban missile crisis, the United States and the Soviet Union plant seeds of hope that promise to blossom into peace. But, as Shin'ichi Yamamoto tells members: 'We must spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the world as quickly as we can. Unless we do, the problem will never be solved at its root.'

By **DAISAKU IKEDA**
SGI PRESIDENT

The United States had no intention of changing its position: The first consideration in settling the crisis must be the removal of Soviet missile sites from Cuba. But Khrushchev's new proposal, so different from that outlined in his first letter, created quite a stir among the U.S. leaders. Was it merely a bargaining tactic, or would the Russians refuse to talk at all unless the United States agreed to withdraw its missiles from Turkey? Or could it be a sign of dissension among the Soviet leadership?

President Kennedy sought to uncover Khrushchev's true intent while devising a response to the new demand. In the midst of this, an incident heightened tensions again: a U.S. U-2 reconnaissance plane was shot down over Cuba. Robert Kennedy recalled this as the worst day of the crisis. American leaders met to decide whether to take immediate military action. Once again, any miscalculation, any error in judgment, could result in a cataclysmic war.

In this mood of oppressive tension, President Kennedy decided to override demands for a swift military response and wait one more day before taking action, observing what would develop.

Clinging to a thread of hope, Kennedy replied to Khrushchev's first letter, clarifying that it was not his intention to invade Cuba and calling for the removal of Soviet missiles from the island. Among most of the U.S. leadership, however, there was a strong sense that come Monday, Oct. 29, they would be at war with the Soviet Union.

Sunday, Oct. 28, dawned. Unexpectedly, a new letter from Khrushchev arrived. Moscow Radio broadcast its contents as well. It was a reply to the letter Kennedy had sent the previous day. Khrushchev declared his trust in Kennedy's statement that the United States would not attack Cuba, and he promised to remove all offensive weaponry from Cuba

in return. Kennedy immediately announced that he welcomed Khrushchev's decision. With this sudden development, the standoff was on the way to resolution.

Kennedy was finally released from the nightmarish days and nights of crisis. Khrushchev, too, must have breathed a great sigh of relief. They had come to the brink of an all-out nuclear war. But somehow they had averted a disastrous outcome.

This experience contributed to an easing of tensions between the superpowers in ensuing years.

Though they had not met or talked in person, the Cuban missile crisis provided an opportunity for Kennedy and Khrushchev to exchange views and finally begin moving toward mutual trust. This was fortunate for humanity. Though the two superpowers were still far from considering themselves on friendly terms, the crisis may be seen as the start of a shared quest for peace and coexistence. Nor can the important role of the United Nations in averting an armed confrontation be overlooked.

In June 1963, the Soviet Union and the United States installed a hot line linking the leaders of the two nations so that they could communicate directly and immediately in the event of an emergency to avert an accidental nuclear war. Coming within a hair's breadth of nuclear war also contributed to the signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty by the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain in August of the same year.

As for Cuba, Fidel Castro was said to have been furious that the United States and the Soviet Union decided to dismantle the missile installations in his country without including him in the discussions. Yet perhaps what angered him more than the removal of missiles was the fact that the superpowers, interested only in advancing their own interests, could with impunity decide or affect the fate of the smaller nations in their sphere of influence.

During the Cuban missile crisis, Shin'ichi Yamamoto paid careful attention to every news report on the radio, on television and in the papers. He also earnestly chanted daimoku with the strongest and unwavering conviction that war must be avoided at any cost. The Gosho states: "Our body and our mind pervade the universe" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 412). A strong prayer, an earnest resolve, reaches the farthest corners of the universe. That's why Shin'ichi prayed with all his might for a resolution to the crisis the world was facing. He prayed so as to envelop the entire world with his daimoku.

A Buddhist's struggle for peace begins with a powerful prayer. From that prayer arises determination, which in turn gives rise to wisdom and expresses itself in courageous, committed action.

On Oct. 27, as the tension-packed moments of that day passed, the Soka Gakkai Headquarters leaders meeting for that month was being held in the Tokyo Gymnasium. During that meeting, Shin'ichi spoke about the Cuban missile crisis.

"As you all know," he said, "the deployment of missiles in Cuba by the Soviet Union has created a very dangerous situation. Ultimately, to eliminate this threat of nuclear war, we must spread a valid, life-affirming philosophy; we must spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the world as quickly as we can. Unless we do, the problem will never be solved at its root."

Shin'ichi did not speak long. He simply stated his conclusion clearly and succinctly.

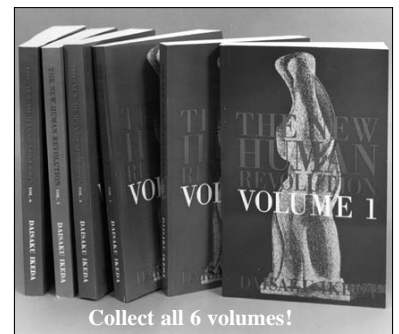
To be continued

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962. Illustration by Ken'ichiro Uchida.

***The cause of the social disorder and many tragic events we've been seeing lies in people being caught in a way of thinking that forgets to accord prime importance to the human being.... 'Let us return to humanism.'* (The New Human Revolution, vol. 4, p. 243-44)**

Volume 6 of *The New Human Revolution*, SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai's world peace movement since 1960, contains Shin'ichi Yamamoto's travels to the Middle East, the contribution campaign to build the Grand Reception Hall, the Mikawashima train crash, early Komei elections, advice to the student division and more.

Available in all SGI-USA bookstores. The price is \$10.00. Mail orders may be placed by calling (800) 626-1313.



Collect all 6 volumes!

Never Forget

In this essay about Rabbi Marvin Hier, SGI President Ikeda stresses the importance of remembering the atrocities of the Nazis. Because, as Rabbi Hier says, 'A world without a past...is a world without a future.'

By **DAISAKU IKEDA**
SGI PRESIDENT

This poem is in Anne Frank's own handwriting," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, pointing to a small notebook in the glass case. It was a poem that Anne had written for a friend when she was only 10 years old:

*Dearest Henny,
It is only a small thing
But I give it to you
The roses that bloom in the
meadow
And a handful of forget-me-
nots.*

Short as the poem is, it is filled with Anne's gentleness and her sensitivity to beauty. The open book shows pictures of flower baskets on each page. From the flower basket on the left, a dove of peace takes flight, with a letter in its bill.

Two months after this poem was written, the Netherlands, to which the Franks had fled from Germany to escape anti-Semitic persecution, was invaded by German forces. As Nazi persecution against the Jews intensified, Anne was forced to live in hiding with other members of her family in an attic in Amsterdam, where they remained for two years until discovered and arrested by the Gestapo. Anne was sent to a concentration camp where she died in 1945. She was 15.

The Nazis murdered 6 million people — simply because they were Jews. They ripped babies from mothers' arms and flung them to the ground to their deaths; they used children as guinea pigs in horrid medical experiments; with sneers on their faces, they unceremoniously herded people into the gas chambers; and shot prisoners just to "let off steam."

And what did the Nazis say about the Jews, who were the victims of their atrocities? They spread false rumors, denouncing the Jews as brutal and inhumane, morally corrupt, the dregs of humanity. Everything that was most true of the Nazis themselves, they ascribed to the Jews.

These repeated lies acted like poison that, drop by drop, penetrated the hearts and minds of the German people and par-

alyzed their senses. Eventually, the people were so transformed that they accepted the most evil of deeds without thinking anything of it.

"Forget-me-not." The name of the flower that Anne wished to send her friend was a plea not to be forgotten. But who could forget her? Who can forget all of those who died in the Holocaust?

Rabbi Marvin Hier founded the Simon Wiesenthal Center out of a determination, a vow that those who died in the Holocaust would never be forgotten. He

is after his natural rights, not revenge. "Without Simon Wiesenthal," writes Rabbi Hier, "the subject of the Holocaust would not really receive serious attention anywhere in the world.... There was still a big period of time between 1945 and the early '60s: a crucial period when there was the greatest pressure to forget." Some had said that the reason for that pressure was that dead Jews don't vote, whereas living ex-Nazis do.

The denial was remarkable and so potent that youthful demonstrators who in-

Rabbi Marvin Hier —
Founder and Dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles

Recollections

By Daisaku Ikeda



Rabbi Marvin Hier escorts SGI President Ikeda through the Museum of Tolerance in 1993.

would not allow them to be forgotten. But that is not an easy task. People tend to want to forget. Not only those who perpetrated the evil but its victims as well.

As Rabbi Hier points out: "Memory is fragile and pliable. And that is why, my friends, if we do not persist on our course, if we are not faithful to memory, then one day no one will believe that those eerie sounds of the trains once delivered millions of unsuspecting men, women and children to the death camps."

Rabbi Hier is committed to perpetuating the struggle of Simon Wiesenthal, after whom the center is named. A survivor of the death camps, Wiesenthal has been dedicated to pursuing and bringing to justice Nazi war criminals who went into hiding after the war. Mr. Wiesenthal has been motivated solely by his duty as a survivor. Justice, not hate, is his motive.

interrupted a stage production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* in Linz, Austria, in 1958, were able to write in the leaflets they distributed: "This play is a fraud. Anne Frank never existed. The Jews have invented the whole story because they want to extort more restitution money. Don't believe a word of it! It's fake!"

When Simon Wiesenthal, who was then residing in that Austrian city, heard of this, he dashed to the theater to investigate. Later, he wrote of this event: "These young rowdies were not guilty; but their parents and teachers were. The older people were trying to poison the minds of the young generation because they wanted to justify their own doubtful past. Many of them were trapped by their heritage of ignorance, hatred and bigotry. They hadn't learned anything from history."

Some members of the older generation in Germany and Austria intentionally spread lies about their past, claiming that Anne Frank's diary was a fake and that the so-called gas chambers were only for the purpose of disinfecting the prisoners' clothing. This is not unlike the lies that are still told in Japan, claiming the Nanking Massacre never took place. When lies are allowed to go unchallenged, they spread like weeds. And from that neglect arises a second and a third Hitler. As Rabbi Hier said, "A world without a past...is a world without a future."

Rabbi Hier has a personal connection to the Holocaust. Though he was born and raised in the United States, almost all of his parents' relatives in Poland were killed in the Holocaust. When he went to Vienna to meet Mr. Wiesenthal, he had a frightening experience. Sitting down in the hotel barber's chair, he noticed a signed photograph of Hitler hanging proudly on the wall. It was a terrible shock. This was the late 1970s, and yet Nazism survived in Vienna. Given this situation, it is not difficult to imagine the obstacles against which Mr. Wiesenthal struggled.

Mr. Wiesenthal's international visibility is very high. His existence has been a constant thorn in the side of ex-Nazis and all who would forget the past. On several occasions his life has been threatened. Attempts have been made to implicate him in scandals, and all sorts of plots were hatched to destroy his credibility. Yet he has kept up his struggle for justice for a half century.

Is it a crime to insist, for the sake of peace, that we must not forget such tragedies of war? When we deny the occurrence of Auschwitz and the Nanking Massacre, aren't we murdering the victims yet again? Surely seeking to keep our young people in the dark by failing to teach

them the truth about history is far more shameful than having to come to terms with a shameful past.

There is no difference between the actions of the Nazis in Europe and those of the Japanese military in the countries of Asia during World War II. Japan may try to play innocent, but the world is not fooled. The more Japan lies, the more the world scorns it and the more isolated it becomes. After the war, the following remark about Japan's invasion of Asian countries appeared in the *Nippon Times*: "The Japanese people must ponder why it is that there has been such a discrepancy between what they thought and what the rest of the world accepted almost as common knowledge. This is at the root of the tragedy that Japan brought

ESSAY, FROM PAGE 1

first corps of the future division. Over the years, the high school division has produced a steady flow of capable people that today courses like a mighty river.

Many vice presidents and top leaders of the Soka Gakkai, including Tokyo Metropolitan Area Chief Shigeru Asami and Soka Gakkai Women's Division Chief Yoko Takayanagi, are graduates of the future division.

Soka Gakkai Youth Division Chief Yoshiaki Tanigawa was a member of the junior high school division when he stood up in faith, thanks to the encouragement of his leader in that division. When the Soka Gakkai was under fierce attack in 1970, the young leader said to Mr. Tanigawa: "I'm really annoyed and angry with myself that I didn't study harder when I was younger. If I had, I'd be able to do much more to defend the Soka Gakkai than I can now. But you still have plenty of time to acquire that ability. Study hard and grow into a capable person for kosen-rufu."

Mr. Tanigawa resolved to reply to these high expectations and threw himself wholeheartedly into his studies and Soka Gakkai activities. As a result, he challenged himself and grew tremendously.

When Soka Gakkai Young

Men's Division Chief Hiroshi Sato was a member of the junior high school division, his leader, though suffering from tuberculosis, used to visit him regularly. This leader was more concerned for his younger members' growth than his own health. Mr. Sato was so moved by the older youth's confident and energetic encouragement that he vowed to live up to his senior's hopes and become a capable person.

"Youth should be treated with respect," a well-known Eastern saying goes. The sincere and earnest desire to foster young people so that they may become even more capable than us, communicating with them heart to heart and striving to inspire them by our example, is the tradition of fostering youth within the Soka Gakkai.



From the time I was a member of the youth division, I made it a point to talk with children, especially the children of those families who opened their homes as meeting places for the members. I always treated them as my young friends and offered them sincere encouragement.

I remember an incident that took place around 1950. I attended a meeting at a member's house in Tsurumi, Yokohama,

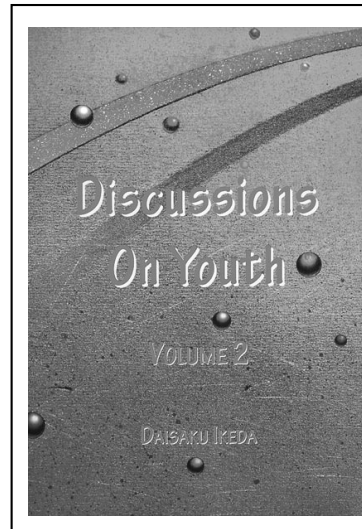
and she showed me a letter she had received. It was from her teenage son, who had gone to work in another prefecture to help out with the family finances.

In the letter he wrote that he was living in a single dormitory with several others and it was difficult for him to do gongyo undisturbed. So he would take his towel and soap and say he was going to the public bath, but actually he would go up the hill behind the house and do gongyo there.

When I finished reading the letter, I immediately took up a pen and wrote the young man a poem. I wanted to encourage and support him, and to tell him not to give up in spite of his tough circumstances, because he had a mission that only he could fulfill.

*Friend, be strong,
And rise up courageously!
I have faith in you,
In your sincere devotion.
Your arduous efforts at work
And your late-night studies —
They, too, are training for
your life,
Letting you turn all
hardships into joy.
Your conviction, your
passion,
Are known to the original
Buddha.*

I was very happy when I later



JUST PUBLISHED

Daisaku Ikeda's dialogue continues with *Discussions on Youth*, vol. 2. Topics include: human rights, the benefits of reading, knowing history, the importance of art, our integral relationship with nature, the fundamentals of faith, the purpose of the SGI and world peace.

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learned that my words had been a great source of encouragement and inspiration for this young man.

Several years on, that same poem became a verse in a Gakkai song "Friend, Be Strong," and has since been sung by countless youth.



The greatest treasure that we can leave for the future is capable people. And no one is more talented and able than a person who can discover and nurture individuals of promise

and ability.

In the process of fostering others, we polish and perfect ourselves. This summer, let us once again make a golden effort for the sake of the future.

Together let us nurture a rich green forest of capable people for the 21st century. ☸

This series is published as "Thoughts on The New Human Revolution" in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

HIER, FROM PAGE 6

upon herself."

The Nazis held up the Aryan race as a chosen people. The Japanese militarists called Japan the Land of the Gods. The belief that there is a divine people always entails the creation of the lie that there are inferior and profane peoples. For the Nazis, it was the Jews and the Gypsies, and for the Japanese military, it was the Koreans and the Chinese. Those lies resulted in the cruel slaughter that both the Nazis and the Japanese military perpetrated.

"He's dynamite," says Mr. Wiesenthal of Rabbi Hier. "The man is never quiet. He is always trying to do things no one else has ever tried." Beneath an intelligent and urbane mien, a fierce anger against evil and injustice burns in Rabbi Hier's heart. Whenever he hears anti-Semitic propaganda, he springs to the offensive. He rebuts it, demands an apology, widely publicizes the truth, and uses every method at his command to cut the poisonous weed of hate off at the root. He lectures, he writes, he appears on television discussion panels, and he meets with the leaders of nations across the globe.

He held public hearings in the U.S. Senate, sounding the alarm about the threat posed by neo-Nazi groups. He refuses to allow the smallest slur or slander to slip by, because he never forgets the history of a civilized society being transformed virtually overnight into an evil one. To teach the importance of human rights, he established the Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance, which uses the latest multimedia technology to teach, in graphically visual form, the truth about the Holocaust and all discrimination. He also founded a film company for this same purpose, working as a producer and writer of documentaries. He is actively involved in teaching the importance of human rights to young people who are drawn to Nazism. He works without rest.

Mr. Wiesenthal asserted,

"Hope lives when people remember." Rabbi Hier's work proclaims, "Hope lives as long as we do not remain silent."

I visited the Museum of Tolerance on Jan. 31, 1993. Rabbi Hier graciously showed me around the facility, even though he was very busy preparing for its official opening in early February. There was a model of Auschwitz as well as a ghetto where countless Jews were massacred. The many photographs and audiovisual footage gave voice and identity to their now silent subjects. Who could

ever forget these tragic events? Who could fail to be enraged by them?

Yet around the same time as I made my visit, books were still being published in Japan that talked of the "international conspiracy of the Jews" — the same ridiculous lies that were once spread by the Nazis. Those who were the greatest victims of the

In my heart, I called out to the millions in Europe, in Asia, who had been trampled beneath lies and violence: I will not forget you. We of the SGI will never forget.

persecution were painted as its perpetrators and attacked. Such is the deplorable insensitivity to and utter abuse of human rights that exist in Japan to this day.

From my meeting with Rabbi Hier emerged the project of bringing the exhibition "The Courage to Remember: Anne Frank and the Holocaust" on a tour of major Japanese cities. It moved and touched the lives of more than a million people. In a speech at the exhibition's Hiroshima venue, Rabbi Hier declared that each individual must have the determination to stand up and speak out loudly, clearly and unmistakably for human rights in every area of the globe where those rights are being violated or threatened.

He also proposed a series of lectures to be held at the Simon Wiesenthal Center to make others aware of the unsung heroes of human rights around the world, to be titled the Makiuchi Memorial Human Rights Lecture Series.

This choice of title is a tribute to the fact that Mr. Makiuchi, our first president, fought to protect people's fundamental human rights from the oppressive forces of Japanese militarism and died in prison for

those convictions.

When I was invited to give the first lecture in the series (June 1996), I closed my speech by saying:

*It is my belief —
that a person, a people,
who embrace a noble
philosophy,
people upholding sublime
faith —
that only a person, a
people,
who, amidst raging storms,
live out the drama
of reality and grand ideals,
subjected to and enduring
limitless persecution —
that only such a person,
only such a people,
will be bathed in the
sunlight
of perpetual joy, glory and
victory.*

Survivors of the Holocaust were in attendance; many had lost relatives in the genocide. In my heart, I called out to the millions in Europe, in Asia, who had been trampled beneath lies and violence: I will not forget you. We of the SGI will never forget. We embrace you and stand strong. We will fight until the day when we can greet the sun together! ☸

REJUVENATION:

THE LEGACY OF A BODHISATTVA

With the sudden death of his wife, Iain Coggins gains a new perspective on life. 'I felt her life pass into mine and into all of us, filling the room like a dissipating mist,' he recalls. 'Within me there was a profound sense of encouragement and of absolute freedom.'

IAIN M. COGGINS,
SANTA ROSA, CALIF.

I wasn't expecting the night of Thursday, May 28, to be anything more than just another night near the end of just another week. I came home from the photocopy shop at a quarter to 11 and found the apartment empty. A note on the altar caught me by surprise: "Come to Memorial Hospital immediately — please don't worry." The note was signed by our close friend and neighbor, Corinne. With a quick glance at the apartment before I bolted out the door, I could see that some type of commotion had taken place in the room. The coffee table was shoved against the far wall, one candle had fallen from its holder on the altar.

This was the night that my old life ended and a new one began.

Katherine Satsuki Coggins was a beautiful young woman with an embracing heart who dedicated her life to helping others. A private person, she never wanted to draw attention to herself, but those she left behind have been powerfully affected by her quiet magnanimity.

Kathy, however, struggled with a low opinion of herself and what she called a "lack of self-identity." In a 1990 journal entry she writes: "I always have that feeling that 'my' life is insignificant.... I don't know where that comes from.... I realized a connection somehow with the way I think about myself and the way I think about the world. Separate." Shortly after writing that entry she met me, her future husband, and we embarked on a whole new journey where she would fully challenge this perception.

From beginning to end, our relationship was one of incredible joy. For seven-and-a-half years we were never apart, and we treasured every moment we had together. Not a moment was spent in vain as we lovingly supported one another in our individual struggles to develop our lives. In fact, things were so good between us that I often pondered how it could be. There was a deep and subtle sense that our time might be limited. I hated this feeling and always shoved it lower in my mind. It stimulated a dark feeling in me that life is inherently sad and that beauty and joy are only a thin veneer over an impenetrable sorrow at the heart of things.

But this feeling could not be suppressed. Kathy brought it back time and again. While we were immeasurably happy, in her own life she continued to fight to determine a direction for herself. "I don't necessarily want materialistic things," she writes, "I want my creativity to be able to surface from my life and I want to be able to draw from it."

On a physical level Kathy suffered from heart palpitations and anxiety attacks. About 10 years ago she was diagnosed with mitral valve prolapse, an abnormality in one of the heart valves that causes an occasional backflow of blood when the heart contracts. The body reacts by increasing the heart rate to

compensate for the anomaly. This problem would usually occur in the middle of the night but was sporadic and unpredictable. It could happen for several nights in a row and then not again for several weeks. The palpitations were particularly pronounced during times of stress. Kathy would shoot bolt upright in bed with heart racing and the feeling that she was going to die at any moment. She would often be unable to sleep for the rest of the night or poorly at best. She lived in terror of these events, and her doctor could suggest little else but avoidance of stress and certain foods.

Over the course of our life together, Kathy would frequently tell me, "I don't think I'm going to live long; my heart is too weak." She became somewhat of a hypochondriac, constantly worrying about the source of her ailment. She would listen to health shows on the radio and read articles wondering if it was her thyroid one week, or a lack of vitamins the next. One thing Kathy deeply realized was that the condition of her body reflected the deadlock in her mind that kept her from releasing her creative potential. She chanted vigorously to reveal this part of herself and carried out SGI activities with the conviction that only by being open and encouraging to others could she discover who she really was.

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IAN COGGINS



lives of innumerable people. Everyone loved her kind and gentle demeanor, and she would go beyond all limits to support others in challenging their personal difficulties. She truly lived the bodhisattva ethos of taking on the problems of others as her own.

With the announcement of the pending destruction of the Grand Main Temple, her faith took a dynamic upsurge. She recognized fully the evil intent of Nikken and furthermore that the fundamental darkness Nikken is manifesting is something that we all must combat within ourselves. Once and for all she wanted to triumph over what plagued her own life: fear and stagnation. Summoning up her courage she determined to visit a cardiologist to finally get some answers about her heart. Her appointment was Thursday, May 28.

After a full battery of tests, including an echocardiogram, the doctor said, to her astonishment, that she had a perfectly healthy heart with no sign of mitral valve prolapse. Apparently the palpitations were the result of a harmless "twitch" in the heart muscle that could be controlled with medication if she so desired.

That night, before I went out to make copies, Kathy joyfully told me that she had won, that she had triumphed over the darkness in her life by having the courage to seek an answer to her greatest dilemma. I felt freer myself, seeing the weight of years lift from her shoulders. We fondly bid farewell to one another as I went out to take care of my business.

An hour or so after I left the house she had begun to feel a strange pain in her head and dizziness. Somehow, before she collapsed from a massive and inexplorable cerebral hemorrhage, she was able to call 911, open the apartment door and then call Corinne. When Corinne arrived only moments later, Kathy lay prostrate before the altar with the phone at her side. She was moaning and muttering disjointed phrases, unable to tell anyone where I was. By the time the paramedics arrived shortly thereafter, she lost all consciousness, her heart stopped and she was quickly placed on life support.

All night long, 12, sometimes more, family and friends stood chanting at Kathy's bedside in the intensive care ward, holding vigil as she died.

She had mentioned on four or five occasions in recent months that she felt she was going to die of "something like a stroke." None of this talk made any sense to me at the time, and I even got angry at what seemed her gloom-and-doom attitude.

"You don't understand," she retorted emphatically. "I just feel it, and you have to deal with that

from me." She deeply understood her destiny and had been preparing me all these years.

At 7:30 a.m., Friday, May 29, Kathy died. She had turned 35 three days earlier. I turned to those who were gathered around her and said, "Let's recite the 'Hoben' and 'Juryo' chapters now." In that solemn and sober ceremony I felt her life pass into mine and into all of us, filling the room like a dissipating mist. Within me there was a profound sense of encouragement and of absolute freedom.

The thought was somehow in my mind that now is the time to move forward like never before. Life from now on is going to be greater than either of us could have ever imagined. I felt she was giving me a charge to elucidate the meaning of her early death and to reassure as many people as possible. She seemed to be saying: "You must encourage everyone! No one can be discouraged by this event!" It was Kathy's profound determination at the moment of her enlightenment that people open their hearts to one another freely, fearing no repercussions for embracing all lives as we do our own and our loved ones.

At her incredible memorial service, this determination pervaded the room. More than 200 people attended her funeral, and letters of condolence from SGI President Ikeda and other leaders in Japan, as well as SGI-USA General Director Zaitzu, among others, were read. Participants were profoundly moved by the powerful, uplifting atmosphere of the memorial. Numerous people in Santa Rosa and the North Bay have begun chanting as a result of Kathy's death, or have rejuvenated their practices. A surge of sharing and deepening of Buddhist practice has emerged here on a scale previously unimaginable.

My wife lived her life as a Bodhisattva of the Earth, purely burning it into white ash, nothing left undone, nothing left unsaid. Nichiren Daishonin writes, "Each and every one of you should be certain deep in your hearts that sacrificing your life for the Lotus Sutra is like trading rocks for gold or filth for rice" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 176).

Moreover, President Ikeda states: "In the event that a person in your family dies a premature death, there is certainly a profound significance to this death. An early death enables a believer to lessen his karmic retribution. As common mortals we may not understand this, but from a long-range perspective, a person's early death, in effect, will result in his being able to avoid some greater calamity in the future, for himself

and for his family, and thus to produce more fortunate circumstances than would otherwise be the case. As our faith deepens, we become able to understand this mystic principle, though we naturally have a strong desire for our deceased relatives to have lived even a little longer than they actually did" (*Buddhism in Action*, vol. 6, p. 21).

The example Kathy left behind, her model of how to live with dignity and compassion, and the transformation we are all experiencing because of her, ultimately outweighs the sadness we feel.

At the moment of her passing my lesser self departed along with hers. I knew then that I would never face deadlock in my practice again. It was as if she enabled me to gain 10 or 20 years of faith all at once; my old life was gone, a new one just beginning. Therefore, in the midst of my sorrow, I feel the greatest, untold joy. This is death in Buddhism: rejuvenation. This is the legacy of a bodhisattva.

CORINNE MEADOWS,
SANTA ROSA, CALIF.

Thank You, Kathy!

Corinne Meadows shares her story of the death of her friend.

The winter's rain fell from the night sky, soaking my clothes as I ran the 500 yards to my friend Kathy Coggin's house. When I arrived, the door was ajar and Kathy was face down on the living room floor in front of her altar. The candles were still burning, and I knew that she had been chanting only moments before. I found myself kneeling on the floor beside Kathy, chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo with all my life force, despite my fear, realizing that this was indeed a crucial moment, that this was a life-or-death situation. As I continued to chant, waiting for the paramedics to arrive, Kathy reached out, grabbed my hand and squeezed it tightly two times, as she drifted into unconsciousness.

Ever since Kathy's death, I have become much more attuned to the profound reality that I am indeed living, and that I often have not been truly living. Instead I have often found myself slandering my life in moments of desperation, almost unconsciously and certainly automatically, un-



Kathy and Iain at Mount Lassen in California, 1993.

able to recognize that my life is something to be treasured. Shortly after Kathy died I found myself again slandering my life, my inner voice screamed out "I want to die." In that moment I became acutely aware of my lack of understanding and appreciation. I knew that I had to change and eradicate this thinking because Kathy no longer had the opportunity to be alive and I did, yet I was wasting precious time and energy. For the first time in my 12 years of practice, I caught my slander and chanted Nam-myohorenge-kyo to cancel it.

It seems that I have always been plagued by a fear of death since my early teens. What bothered me most about death was that people and the world would go on living and functioning without me — for indeed life *does* go on.

Now I feel that living to the fullest honors Kathy's life. She would only want me to be happy and not shrivel and dry up because of my grief. Only days ago I dreamt of SGI President and Mrs. Ikeda. In my dream President Ikeda was 35 years old, the same age as Kathy, and Mrs. Ikeda told me that I have to start to live — to *really* live — and that now is the time when my life truly begins.

I am reminded of the character Emily in Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town*, a young woman who dies and has a moment to review her life and her town. She

sees the beautiful trees and the town where she lived and says: "I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed. Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you. Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? — every, every minute?"

Because I am still alive, unlike the character Emily, unlike my friend Kathy, I can appreciate every minute. Death has taken me by the hand; my eyes have been mercifully opened from their darkness to gaze upon the true wonder of life. What a rare and precious joy it is to be able to walk down McDonald Avenue and inhale the night blossoms, to feel the sun on my face, sit quietly with my cats, to chant Nam-myohorenge-kyo.

Today I continue the struggle to discover the purpose of my life. I am thankful for Kathy because she enabled me to wake up and appreciate my life in all its simplicities and complexities. If I can hold onto this spirit, despite my struggles and especially in my darkest moments, then I can truly enjoy the wondrous nature of life. I can, as Nichiren Daishonin said: "Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life and continue chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo, no matter what happens" (MW-1, 161).

Thank you, Kathy. ☸



Victory!

Photo by IAIN COGGINS

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES



THE
Third Stage
OF
LIFE

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES

It's not enough to live long, SGI President Ikeda says in this dialogue on the third stage of life. 'The important thing is that we live each day without regret, moving forward in our work for kosen-rufu; and that we continue to cherish in our hearts a shining purpose and reason for living, whatever our age,' he says.

Participants in this discussion are SGI President Ikeda, Seikyo Shimbun General Editorial Bureau Senior Director Osamu Matsuoka and Vice Director Katsusuke Sasaki.

SASAKI: Dr. Yoshihiko Ojiri, chief secretary of the Soka Gakkai's science and academic division in Okinawa Prefecture, has offered us some interesting information from the perspective of the health sciences about the longevity of the inhabitants of Okinawa. He is an instructor with the Faculty of Medicine of the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa, and he teaches a course in elementary public health. Toward the end of 1996, the university embarked on an extensive study into the relationship between longevity and Okinawa's climate and regional characteristics. Dr. Ojiri is one of the researchers involved in that project.

MATSUOKA: It is widely accepted that blood vessel blockages in the brain are a major cause of senility, and that bone fractures arising from osteoporosis cause many elderly people to become bedridden. How, then, can we prevent blood vessel damage and the thinning of bone mass?

Dr. Ojiri has been studying what effect exercise patterns have on cholesterol levels and bone density and collating scientific data to demonstrate the importance of exercise. His next step is to make a statistical com-

parison between the Okinawa data collected and that from other prefectures.

IKEDA: That's a meaningful field of research. Wisdom is the secret to good health. Wisdom allows us to ensure our well-being. We need to be aware of how to prevent illness before it occurs and how to preserve our health so that we can go about our activities with zest and energy. We mustn't simply succumb passively to old age; in-

stead, we should engage it head on positively and actively. The field of health science offers us a special type of wisdom that teaches us how to accomplish that. Today, many universities around the world have this field a separate department of specialization. Japan, however, lags behind these moves.

We mustn't simply succumb passively to old age; instead, we should engage it head on in a positive and active way.

SASAKI: Dr. Ojiri offers two important factors in achieving long life: 1) dealing successfully with stress, and 2) physical activity.

Master Your Mind

IKEDA: Recently [Sept. 20, 1997], I met with Dr. Martin Seligman, professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and president-elect of the American Psychological As-

sociation. Dr. Seligman said that people who focus only on themselves tend to fall victim to pessimism easily.

The death of a loved one, divorce, business failure — these are among life's most stressful events. The older you are, the more devastating these events can be. You feel as if you are all alone in pitch darkness, suffering and in pain. There are feelings of isolation and sorrow — which is perfectly natural since we're only human.

Nevertheless, or rather precisely because of this, it's important that we look deep into our hearts and become painters, artists — that we strive actively to repaint our minds in the colors of hope. As long as we remain preoccupied with our own troubles, as long as we allow ourselves to blindly follow the impulsive dictates of our minds, our sufferings will continue. We must each become the master of our mind, not let it be our master, and consciously redirect our thoughts in a positive and pleasant direction and help others around us do the same.

MATSUOKA: That is the secret to dealing with stress, isn't it? Dr. Ojiri has remarked that the Soka Gakkai embodies a system whereby members can discuss their problems with others, a sort of counseling system that has evolved naturally within Soka Gakkai activities. There are many leaders, and a member can talk to them about his or her problems. If one leader's advice doesn't seem helpful, there's always another leader to turn to, and another, until the member is satisfied.

IKEDA: Sometimes seeking advice from many leaders may not be necessary. Josei Toda, the Soka Gakkai's second president encouraged each member to find a trusted senior in faith with whom they could feel free to discuss anything.

Essentially, our own mind or thinking holds the key to dealing successfully with problems that cause anxiety or stress. So in that respect here, too, our heart is what matters most.

SASAKI: With regard to the second factor for a long life, physical activity, I think we can learn a great deal by looking at the case of Ogimi, a village on Okinawa's main island that prides itself in the longevity of its residents. One section of Ogimi, known as Kijoka, produces the famous abaca (banana plant cloth) of Okinawa, and its residents are notably long-lived.

The folk craft of weaving Okinawan abaca, incidentally, has been designated as an Important Intangible Cultural Property of Japan.

MATSUOKA: The University of the Ryukyus team, including Dr. Ojiri, conducted a detailed survey of the daily routines of the elderly residents of this area. Most of them, they found, continued to spin abaca thread well after age 90. This physical activity kept their hands and bodies nimble and supple. At the

same time, the elderly residents had a real sense of contributing to the community, because they were helping produce this famous local product. This seemed to be related to their longevity.

IKEDA: Speaking of abaca, two years ago when I was at the Okinawa Training Center, some elderly members — whom I believe were from Kijoka — showed me how the cloth was woven. It was so interesting that I saw the demonstration twice.

MATSUOKA: Yes, you met Kazu Taira, 86, Miki Nakada, 82, and Yasu Maeda, 80. After shaking your hand on that occasion, one of them remarked with emotion how she would never forget your gentle touch or Mrs. Ikeda's kind smile as she wished them continued good health.

SASAKI: When we asked them the secret of their longevity, they offered all sorts of reasons. One said it was Okinawa's great weather and fresh air; another declared it was eating plenty of vegetables; another chimed in that she ate a lot of pork, and she just loved it. The third suggested that it was working all the time, trying to make ends meet.

Light a Lantern for Others

IKEDA: It is often pointed out that Okinawa retains the positive neighborly values of a horizontal, egalitarian society. For example, in Ogimi Village, passersby will turn on their neighbors' lights for them when it gets dark. No one wants to return home to a dark house, the thinking goes, so they kindly turn the lights on so that the occupants can return to a bright house. Most people in the village never lock their doors. There are no thefts or other crimes. It's a place where people can live in peace and security.

In the Goshu we find the passage, "If you light a lantern for another, it will also brighten your own way" (*Goshu Zenshu*, p. 1598). In an aging society, the spirit of lighting a lantern for others is very important. In the end, it means brightening your own way as well.

MATSUOKA: In an environment such as Ogimi, the solitary death of an elderly person living alone, which happens in so many big cities, is unthinkable, isn't it?

SASAKI: People in Ogimi share

THIRD STAGE, FROM PAGE 10

the extra vegetables they grow — the tomatoes, cucumbers and balsam pears that they pick — with their neighbors. When they have extra, they just leave them on their neighbors' doorsteps.

IKEDA: Local cooperation and mutual assistance are carried out in an extremely natural way, without the formality or bureaucracy we see in other parts of Japan. I think that's wonderful. The Okinawan spirit of mutual aid is famous. Labor-intensive activities such as sugar-cane harvesting are carried out collectively, every family taking turns helping the others. This same spirit of sharing no doubt is what sustains Okinawans' longevity.

MATSUOKA: The production of abaca is another example of sharing. There are some 30 steps in the process of making the cloth. First, the raw material for the cloth, abaca plants, which grow to about six feet in height, are chopped down; then they are boiled, washed and hazed with bamboo pincers to comb out the fibers. Next, they are dried, separated into threads and boiled again in a big pot. Then they are wrung out and dyed, and still the list goes on. There are an unbelievable number of steps to the process, many requiring considerable physical strength. Finely honed skill and craftsmanship are also needed to produce the cloth.

SASAKI: The women of the village divide up the work based on their levels of expertise, making it a joint production. That shared work is fun, they say, and also gives them a sense of purpose and fulfillment. They have a job at which they can stay active throughout their lives.

IKEDA: I have heard that Kazu Taira is a member of the Abaca Cloth Preservation Society and an expert weaver. She made a strong impression on me. Her open and frank personality was revealed in the laugh lines that adorned her face; I'm sure that smile helped her sail through whatever troubles she may have encountered in her long life.

SASAKI: Kazu was raised by her widowed mother, who half-forced her to learn spinning as a craft by which she could support herself. She says she loathed spinning when she was young and went to work instead at a textile plant outside Okinawa just to get away from it. But now she says: "I am grate-

ful to my mother for teaching me to work with my hands. Yes, now that I'm 80, I am finally truly grateful to her."

Kazu and her two friends are known to declare cheerfully: "We're busy. We've got Gakkai activities. We have no time to waste." The local Soka Gakkai chapter women's division leader, Kimiko Nikawadori, remarked that the three women often declare they've had "an idle day" if they take even an hour or two out of their work day to attend to

Zenshu, p. 1527). A place where people are valued, where human relations are treasured, has all the vital ingredients for a society in which people live long and fulfilled lives.

In Okinawa, it's customary for relatives and neighbors to celebrate a person's longevity. One of the most interesting celebrations is that for reaching one's 97th year (which begins with our 96th birthday). It's called *kajimaya*, which means "pinwheel." In this celebration,

There is a difference between simply living a long life and living a rich and rewarding life. What's really important is how much we can improve the quality of our lives during our stay here on earth — however long it may be.

something else. The younger people can't keep up with them, she says with admiration.

IKEDA: There is an expression that symbolizes the Okinawan spirit, "*Nuchi du takara*," or "Life is a treasure." In the Goshō we also find the passage, "Life itself is the most precious of all treasures" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 267). Both reveal a profound philosophy of the innate sanctity of life.

The Okinawan dialect contains no words to express pity toward others in a patronizing or condescending way. Instead, Okinawans say "*chimugurisa*," which means "my heart aches." This, of course, is the same as the Gakkai spirit of sharing or feeling others' sufferings as our own.

Do you know the Okinawan expression "*ichariba chode*"?

SASAKI: It means "All whom we meet are our brothers," doesn't it?

IKEDA: Yes. This is another expression of the wisdom of an egalitarian society. Buddhism teaches us that "All living beings are indebted to one another, so pray for the attainment of Buddhahood for all" (*Goshō*

for people to live long.

SASAKI: Soka Gakkai Vice President Kunihiko Mitsumori of Okinawa has said that in the capital, Naha, and other urbanized areas of the prefecture, these wonderful old traditions are on the wane. As a result, many people have great hopes that the Soka Gakkai's network of friendship and sense of community — created through its regular local gatherings and monthly discussion meetings — will spread further throughout these areas, where they feel it will help preserve the Okinawan spirit.

IKEDA: In the early years of our activities on Okinawa, the strong egalitarian ties that bound people in the community posed a great hurdle to our propagation activities. It was difficult for an individual to be the first in his or her family to join the Soka Gakkai. But as we continued to emphasize the organization's goals and to demonstrate solid actual proof of faith in everyday life, the circle of understanding steadily expanded throughout Okinawan society.

I think you could call it a case of reaching a critical point. Once we reached that point, understanding toward the Daishonin's Buddhism rapidly spread and deepened. That is also due to the Okinawan character, I think.

MATSUOKA: Mr. Mitsumori's mother is 91, but still very hale and hearty. She was born on Taketomijima (one of the islands that comprise Okinawa Prefecture), and she was the first in her extended family to join the Soka Gakkai. Mr. Mitsumori said that his mother's decision upset her family in the

beginning, but when they saw the positive changes she underwent as a result of challenging her human revolution, they quickly joined the Gakkai, too — a reflection of just how strong the family ties were. Today, every member of that extended family practices the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Improve the Quality of Life

IKEDA: There is a difference between simply living a long life and living a rich and rewarding life. What's important is how much we can improve the quality of our lives during our stay here on Earth — however long it may be. For example, a life can be fulfilled and productive even if it is short by time's measure. Quality is the true value, not quantity.

I recently met with Dr. Ved Prakash Nanda, the associate provost of the University of Denver [Sept. 11, 1997]. Dr. Nanda is a world-renowned scholar of international law and a good friend. Though he is struggling with illness himself, he expressed concern for my health. "I am praying with all my heart that you will live to over 100," he told me. He also shared a famous Indian saying: "One must live 1,000 years. Live 1,000 years as if each year has 10,000 days."

The important thing is that we live each day without regret, moving forward in our work for kosen-rufu; and that we continue to cherish in our hearts a shining purpose and reason for living, whatever our age. Leading each day in this way is the key to a life of profound satisfaction and fulfillment. **VI**

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES



為何需要御本尊？

Ted Morino / SGI-USA 教學部長

具體的御本尊，幫助我們顯現內在的佛性，增強信心的湧現，並不單單取決於個人是否擁有或看見御本尊。

在大聖人之前，佛教徒禮拜的對象為釋迦佛或其他菩薩神祇的雕像或畫像。與此對照，大聖人的佛法將佛的內在生命境界，而不是佛像所象徵的佛的外形，以漢字呈現在紙製的尊茶羅上。這尊茶羅就是御本尊，我們的至高無上的禮拜對象。法，亦即成佛之種，不在佛外的特質中，而是在他的心中。

根據佛法的一念三千法門，甚至如同紙張的非情物，也有發揮佛性功能的潛能，端視書寫其上的是甚麼而定。大聖人以此意向，將自己的生命境界賦與御本尊，以期藉此讓佛的生命或兩無妙法蓮華經的妙法照亮生命的每一個領域。換句話說，大聖人所以能夠顯現御本尊，正是因為他充分具體地表現為妙法當體，他以未法本佛的行為說明這一點。

佛法闡明生命具備十種狀態，即佛界、菩薩界、緣覺界、聲聞界、天人界、人界、修羅界、畜生界、餓鬼界、地獄界。每一種境界的顯現，都由我們和周遭環境的關係決定。因此，我們和禮拜對象所建立的關係會影響我們的生命境界，這個關係對我們的幸福具有決定性的作用。

大聖人在「法蓮抄」中說：「此法華經文字，盲目者不能見，肉眼見是黑色，二乘見為虛空，菩薩見得種種色，佛種、純熟之人奉見是佛。是以經文云：『若有所持，即持佛。』」(御書選集五，第二十八頁)

我們可將御本尊看成佛的心，同時也是個人心中的無限潛能，和御本尊的關係有如和己心的關係。因此大聖人說：「此御本尊全不須求之於他處。」(御書選集二，第三二頁)

大聖人又說，面對御本尊祈求時，「一重要者此心耳。」(御書二，第一一八頁)「就這一點，他又說：『信之，信之。』」(御書二，第一〇七頁)

總結來說，信奉御本尊的目的，就是要讓固有的佛性成為固定的基本生命境界。成佛其實就是鞏固本有常性的佛性，使這個生命境界始終成為其他九界的支柱，而御本尊幫助我們達成此目標。

Mohi Ueno 譯自世界聖報七月十日

深究佛法·通曉世法 發揮智慧·超越困境

SGI會長池田大作

(文接上頁) 日目上人在大聖人入滅後的五十年間，幫助師父日目上人，破折五老僧之邪義，守護正法，為弘教奔走全國。

上讓幕府、朝廷四十二次，徹底為弘教奔走。

日目上人在給日目上人的讓與書中(日興跡條事)讚揚他說：「日目於十五歲與日興結識，從信奉法華經以來，至今達七十三歲高齡，這當中一次也不曾違背過。」

日目上人遵奉大聖人、日興上人的教示，一生從不違背地貫徹弟子之道。

不違背不只是消極的不違反，而是指不惜身命徹底實踐師父的教示。

嫉妬導致墮落

大聖人入滅後，五老僧立即背叛。這背叛來自對日興上人醜陋的嫉妒心。

大聖人看穿嫉妬四條金吾的江間家同僚一夥人，說他們「裝作無事，實則內心躍躍欲動。」(崇峻天皇御

書一)

胸中充滿嫉妬之火，燃盡理智，因妒成狂。險惡地攻擊所嫉妬的人，結果招來破壞與沒落。

同樣地，日興也被嫉妬之火燒昏頭，完全失去判斷力，故此想剷除學頭，要斷絕廣宣流布。結果，只會導致宗門滾滾下毀滅之坡。

「魔」也被譯成「破壞」。也就是「破壞善法」的意思。

現今日興將正法及宗門破壞殆盡，正是魔的化身。

日興宗違背日蓮大聖人的遺命，違背了日興上人不惜身命廣宣流布的遺誠。

日興宗早已與大聖人、日興上人完全斷絕了緣分，是妨礙廣布的一天魔宗。

違背師意，則無法流通血脈(小標)

日興上人指導說：「佛法上不違背師意，血脈就如正確清澈之流水。」(出自「一有師化儀抄」註解)，亦

CEC討論弘教新浪潮

Dave McNeill (六月廿六日—廿八日於邁阿密)

我們如何幫助他人獲得幸福？幫助他們清楚了解信行學三要素，將使他們愉快地、自動自發地修行，從而得到修行大聖人佛法的圓滿功德。基於此根本原則，核心決策委員會(CEC)本週末決定未來六個月內將專注於三個明確的目標。

- 一、確保每位會員都知道並了解弘揚大聖人佛法的重要性，並激發他們付諸行動。
- 二、確保每位會員都清楚自己歸屬的地區，了解地區培育會員的任務，並積極參與地區活動。
- 三、確保每位會員都知道、了解，並有機會訂閱世界聖報(World Tribune)。

領導們一致認為擴展這種了解和啟示有助於會員加深信心，並得到無限的功德。幸福的人不僅會引起更多人注意組織的理想，對社會也會產生正面的作用。

落實今年的三個(活動)焦點——造就幸福的會員、培育青年及鞏固家庭基礎——最有效的途徑，就是強調信心的基本要素，這點已在會中達成共識。財津理事長於某次御書講習中提及，我們不應讓此目標軟弱及自發性修行的時代，阻止我們向別人解說信仰的所有細節，尤其是幫助別人以及負責讓此佛法得以廣宣流布的精神。

「我認為為培養自己擁有為廣布祈願的自然的精神或心是非常重要的

即，倘若違背師意，正確的血脈即會斷絕，清新之妙法無法流通。

又說：「一點也不違逆佛法之大師高祖日蓮大聖人、開山日興上人之信心時，後輩的我們也會成為妙法蓮華經之色心。若與佛意相違，則法水之通路阻塞，繼承即身成佛血脈之資格消滅。」(「一有師化儀抄」，大意)

背叛大聖人、日興上人的日興早已斷絕信心血脈，此事自不在話下。

御書中指出「日蓮弟子中，若有異體異心者，則如城者破城也。」(「一生就一大事心脈抄」)

死比如現在，應該要守護廣布法誠的法主御背叛友方，和敵人魔軍串通，想把自己的城堡攻陷。這是對大聖人最大的背叛。

多麼的憤怒啊！

大聖人又說：「為使日本國一切眾生信法華經，而繼成佛之血脈，日蓮反覆種種之難，結果流放來此島。而反置，隨順日蓮，而又違法之事，思之心痛。金，大火不燒，大水不漂不朽；鐵，水火俱不堪。賢人如金，愚人如鐵。貴君豈非真金哉？持有法華經之金故。」(「一生死一大事心脈抄」)

我們要奮起實現大聖人「一闡淨提

的，「財津理事長說。『我們都應培養溫暖的心，關懷別人的幸福。關心別人幸福的人必定關切廣宣流布大業。』他繼續以教導別人信心要素為主題，並引述池田先生說：

「百分之十的信和行，得到百分之十的功德；百分之百的努力，得到百分之百的功德。」

財津理事長反覆強調，各地區應以每年增加二位新會員為目標，並期望每位會員都竭力和別人分享此佛法。正如勤行和研讀御書無法請人代勞，弘教也是每位會員都能自己從中體會極大樂趣的活動。他說：「每當有來賓出席座談會時，我希望每位會員都主動和那位來賓展開有關佛法和生活的對話。」

鑒於以往伏活動的起落不定，財津先生還說此時正是「確立最恰當的弘揚信心方式的時機，不僅以未來五年或十年為目標，更應著眼於久遠的未來，確立一個不但不會讓人厭倦，而且能持續得到快樂的方式。」

其他方面：

考慮於一九九九年以不同方式舉行CEC會議。已經提出的意見包括將現今逾一百五十人之CEC縮減至三十或四十人左右，往後數月間將尋求與此有關的意見。

「宗門事件專線」已經設置，以答覆有關宗門的問題並蒐集相關資料。電話號碼：818-425-5241。另有E-Mail提供相同的服務：templonline@sgu-nara.org。

我們以「御本尊為根本」、「御書為根本」、「一心一意向廣宣流布」前進，能分別出誰人是魔，因此我們的前進沒有一點停滯。

呵責日興的極惡，依照大聖人指示前進的各位，才是「真金之人」。這功德、福德一定會更加輝耀。

佛法就是分清勝負。各位明瞭地滿溢功德，廣布愈得到前進，正邪將會愈益明確。

「愈發堅強」之信心是重要的。

大聖人被流放到佐渡時，有位女弟子日聖聖人遠從鎌倉帶著幼子跋涉險徑前來拜訪大聖人。

大聖人勸勉她：「茲為告者，往昔之心，不可盡言，此後更望一層強盛爾志。其時，須知十羅刹女之守護必更為強盛也。」(「乙御前御消息」)。

不論過去信心多麼強盛，只要現在的一念怠惰、信心低弱，過去累積的福運也會漸漸消失，諸天之守護也會減弱。

大聖人在御書各處常勸勉我們「要愈發加強信心」，其重點不在「以前」，而是「從現在起」。

從現在起發心，朝著具體勝利的目標，明年的五月三日，勇氣十足地前進吧！各位一定會受到諸天的守護。

戰勝一生，贏得永遠的勝利

人生的勝負取決於最後。「取得最後勝利」才是真正的勝利者。以勝利後點此一生，將進入「永遠勝利」之軌道。所以，大聖人教示「要一生貫徹信心」。

最重要的是學會會員。幹部的責任是「服務會員」，絕對沒有相反的情況。

不管遭遇任何事，我為會員們奮鬥，為大家「永遠」的幸福而努力。我會以妙法「不老不死」之生命力不斷奮鬥。

最後，請各位保重身體。

讓我們活得健康、長壽，讓我們過一個美好的人生！

的，「財津理事長說。『我們都應培養溫暖的心，關懷別人的幸福。關心別人幸福的人必定關切廣宣流布大業。』他繼續以教導別人信心要素為主題，並引述池田先生說：

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初級考試

SGI-USA訂於十月二十五日星期日舉行。中文研習材料修訂本每本美金四元，在各會館書店均可買到。需要中文宗門問題手冊者，可向所屬本部索取。

CEC討論弘教新浪潮

Dave McNeill (六月廿六日—廿八日於邁阿密)

我們如何幫助他人獲得幸福？幫助他們清楚了解信行學三要素，將使他們愉快地、自動自發地修行，從而得到修行大聖人佛法的圓滿功德。基於此根本原則，核心決策委員會(CEC)本週末決定未來六個月內將專注於三個明確的目標。

- 一、確保每位會員都知道並了解弘揚大聖人佛法的重要性，並激發他們付諸行動。
- 二、確保每位會員都清楚自己歸屬的地區，了解地區培育會員的任務，並積極參與地區活動。
- 三、確保每位會員都知道、了解，並有機會訂閱世界聖報(World Tribune)。

領導們一致認為擴展這種了解和啟示有助於會員加深信心，並得到無限的功德。幸福的人不僅會引起更多人注意組織的理想，對社會也會產生正面的作用。

落實今年的三個(活動)焦點——造就幸福的會員、培育青年及鞏固家庭基礎——最有效的途徑，就是強調信心的基本要素，這點已在會中達成共識。財津理事長於某次御書講習中提及，我們不應讓此目標軟弱及自發性修行的時代，阻止我們向別人解說信仰的所有細節，尤其是幫助別人以及負責讓此佛法得以廣宣流布的精神。

「我認為為培養自己擁有為廣布祈願的自然的精神或心是非常重要的

的，「財津理事長說。『我們都應培養溫暖的心，關懷別人的幸福。關心別人幸福的人必定關切廣宣流布大業。』他繼續以教導別人信心要素為主題，並引述池田先生說：

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Ingrid Chang 譯自世界聖報七月十日

深究佛法·通曉世法 發揮智慧·超越困境

SGI會長池田大

以下是5·3紀念協議會上，池田SGI會長的演講。由於各位的努力，才能如此明快地「紀使命會」成員，藉此機會向各位表點綴光榮傳統的五月三日。謹向全體、全世界的會員們致上衷心的謝意。

今天（五且五日）是創價學會接班人之日，祈願各位的孫子們能健康成長。對於擔任培育未來部的「二十一世紀」八日中午，從安住八年餘的身延啟

大聖人的足跡

據說日蓮大聖人於二八二年九月八日中午，從安住八年餘的身延啟



▲五月二十六日，池田會長告訴青年部「信心的努力不會白費的。」

程，而在十月十三日入滅於池上（現在的東京大田區）。

今天，一面拜讀御書，一面循著大聖人晚年的足跡，和各位談話。大聖人在以日與上人為首的眾門徒護擁下騎馬啟程，據說此馬毛色青黑美麗，甚受大聖人鐘愛。

啟程之日是陽曆十月十七日，這趟旅程想必是被甲斐群山的丹楓紅葉圍繞，景色美不勝收吧！

根據史料，大聖人一行沿著富士河向北而行。當晚宿於下山地方兵衛四郎宅邸，九日宿於大井庄司入道宅。翌日，沿富士北麓向東而行，十日宿於曾根の次郎家中，十一日向黑駒地方邁進。

從曾根到黑駒的遺傍，就是現在的一宮町，此地曾建有甲斐國的國分寺。

山梨教學研修中心就在「一宮町，在與大聖人有緣之地，意義深刻。」

首重學習最高學問

教學很重要。即使一點點也好，希望能養成持續拜讀御書的習慣。尤其是青年部，為了自己、為了廣布、為了成為二十一世紀的領導人，不可不鑽研御書。

戶田先生經常指導說：「要從最高思想開始深入。」

他還說：「大聖人的哲學是宗教的頂峰，窮究此哲學，就是掌握一切學問的根源。」

登高則能望遠，同樣地，深究大聖人佛法，就能通曉世間一切法則、原理。

大聖人教示：「天晴則地明，瞭解佛法者能通曉世法。」（觀心本尊抄）

拜讀這段御書時，戶田先生說：「受持御本尊的人，在遭逢不景氣時也決不可嘆息。須發揮偉大的生命力，籌劃可行之道，而且還要下苦功。能突破經濟困境，才是「地明」，才是「識世法。」

這指導也適用於現在。

戶田先生嚴正地說：「受持御本尊的人，應該要瞭解如何改善自己的生

活，如何發展自己的事業。不去深思，不去研討，不下功夫，這種人不瞭解生活上的世法，事業衰敗，就認為御本尊沒有功德；甚至讓遭難的人也認為這樣，這種行為就是謬法！」

現在，世界正處於不景氣中，由於長期不景氣，想必很多人會為工作、生活的不如意而煩惱、在搏鬥。

希望不要頹喪，不要挫敗。以「一定要將危機化為轉機」的意念，無論如何也要振奮起來，爭取勝利。

社會、經濟環境仍非常混沌，無法預見未來。只憑現有的知識、經驗，將會落伍。

戶田先生指導說：認為「只要有信心，船到橋頭自然直」的偏安心態，絕對無法超越困境。

正確地評估狀況，尋找可行之道，這種智慧最為重要。

無論遭遇任何困境，皆能發揮生命力與福運的智慧，其根源就是信心。

希望各位以撼動全宇宙般的強盛祈願為根本，通曉世法，成為社會中賢明的勝利者。

希望大家皆能獲得幸福、富裕。

希望各位皆能獲得幸福、富裕。

信仰決不是觀念遊戲

為了得到幸福、富裕，在工作、生活中也要不斷地進行研究和努力。強烈的一念、行動、與妙法冥合時，必能湧出無限的智慧與力量。

戶田先生經常不厭其煩地說：「信心就是生活，決不是觀念遊戲。」

學會的教學一直是實踐的教學，是以御本尊為根本、御書為根本的實踐。

尤其是青年部，希望能率先掌握信心的體驗，體驗就是力量。深具信心體驗的人，無論遭遇何事也不會動搖。依憑確信，遭遇任何困難、勞苦，都能轉換成福德與歡喜。

鼓勵之旅

大聖人一行離開身延，從黑駒，沿著名為鎌倉街道或御版路的古道朝南而行，越過御版山嶺，在十二日停宿於河口。

關於御版山嶺，曾於一九三八年秋，太宰治停留山嶺茶坊提筆寫下：「月見草與富士非常相稱」而聞名於世。

也能由於大聖人要全力鼓舞甲斐地方的門徒，要通過這旅程把信心的精華教誨他們吧！

隔天，越過足柄山嶺，出相模國，朝東海道向東行進。經過關本、平塚、瀨谷，從身延出發後第十二天的九月十八日中午，來到武藏國池上地方池上宗仲宅邸。

日享上人記述說：「約五十里的路程，中途未曾中斷一日，耗費十一天才到達。而且，雖然每日只走五里，可是對抱病在身的大聖人而言，相當吃力。」

青年重起

在大聖人進入池上之地時，發生一件小插曲。鎌倉幕府中有種有勢的「二階堂伊勢入道之子」比睿山的學僧伊勢法印，帶領同伴、家臣數十名前來挑戰，欲與大聖人進行法論。

要選派誰來與對方法論？門徒非常緊張。大聖人說：「這很簡單，就派御公去吧！」

御公就是日見上人，當時他才二十三歲。

大聖人拔擢青年為自己的代言人，與對方法論。

通過十項問答，日見上人將伊勢法印的證據，精明地一一論破，使他屈服。

據說，慘敗的伊勢法印，最初的囂張氣勢，消失得無影無蹤。這就是有名的「池上問答」。

聽到訊息的大聖人，對不良所託的日見上人，深感歡喜而說：「日運早就預見此結果，才會選派御公出馬。」

青年一人立起，與惡奮戰、戰勝惡，正義才能永垂不朽，廣宣流布才能承續不斷。這是古今不變的方針。

日見上人在二六〇年，誕生於伊豆國仁田郡墨鼻（現在的靜岡縣田方郡函南町）是新田五郎重綱的五男。

十三歲時上伊豆的走湯山，在真言宗大寺中修學。

一二七四年，日見上人造訪走湯山，與號稱山內隨一的學者式部僧都論法，獲得勝利。日見上人見到日見上人得勝的英姿，發願成為其弟子。

一二七六年，因仰慕日見上人而登上身延，十七歲時被取名為「宮內卿公」，後被喚作蓮藏房日見。

在身延七年間，不辭辛勞，隨侍大師父日蓮大聖人。

有關其奉侍的情形，記錄中說：「形體壯健，為大聖人取水伐薪，每日數次下山，至身延河谷汲水，由於以頭頂桶運水，日久頭形自然凹

陷。」

勞役之外，更於閒暇時，跟隨日見上人勤勵研習大聖人佛法精髓，為了破除種種邪業，努力鑽研佛理，培養弘教所需的能力。

日見上人鶴立於眾多弟子之中，大聖人比任何人都清楚他勤於求知的精神，和他的才能與人格。

能明瞭弟子之心，弟子本質的師父；而理解師父之心，能以回應的才是弟子。而且，鍛鍊、磨練自己，不斷力求上進的人，必定發出異彩，能在緊要關頭發揮真正的價值。不單是信仰的世界，這是適用於任何社會的原則。

成為名留後世的廣布勇士

戶田先生常對青年部說：「無論何時，當你們被委以重任時，一定要欣然接受，堅實地勤勵信心，將教學深植於心（一九五三年一月六日青年部任命式）」

還說：「希望諸位能勤勵教學、信心、自我鍛鍊，成為廣宣流布的勇士，把自己的名字永遠留在歷史上。」（一九五五年五月二十九日，男子部一萬人總登山）

戶田先生熱愛、期待、徹底地培育青年。

「青年能奮起、成長、培養實力！」為了培養青年部、未來部，我一直竭盡全力。

戶田先生所託付的任務，我已全部達成，未曾一次辜負先生的期許。這是我足以自豪之處，因為這是身為弟子應有的態度。

青年部應培養與惡奮戰的實力、理論。這就是一「破邪顯正」，唯有破折邪義，才能伸張正義。無法與惡對抗的教學，毫無用處。

牧口先生教示：「只有能成為惡人之敵的勇士，才能成為善人之友。」

希望青年部要成為與惡奮戰，具有實力的「獅子」。

大聖人入滅後，將諸宗邪業一舉破折，宣揚大聖人正義，「破邪顯正」的大學者就是日見上人。

在寫完六卷抄後，日見上人說：「有此六卷獅子王之書，縱令國中諸宗徒輩近逼本山，亦將無有稍許恐懼。」

六卷抄是破折邪義的「獅子王之書」。

佛法自始至終，就在於「師徒之道」。

（文轉下頁）

Is This As Good As It Gets?

PERSPECTIVE



What appears to be the worst is only a disguise for the best.

By DIXON HAMBY
BELLEVUE, WASH.

At a conference recently I got in a conversation about what is the best computer. It was clear that my points were overwhelming, and the other person really had no logical argument. Whether it is a computer or a camera, I always want the best. But — is what is best always so clear?

Even as a kid I was very discriminating. I had to have the red Schwinn racer, the Wilson A2000 professional model baseball glove that my dad had to buy on layaway. I think this de-

sire has contributed to my inquisitive nature: Always wanting to know everything about any area of interest. It worked out great when I was looking for a spiritual practice. There was no way I could have settled for anything but this Buddhism. I remember being repelled by the phrase "true Buddhism," but it is. There are no logical, theoretical or actual errors.

The planet I live on is the best in the universe. A magnificent place with a blue sky, billowy clouds, luscious green vegetation, pounding waves and winged creatures that serenade the sunrise. It has beautiful music, prose and images. People of various hues, shapes and natures. Where I live has clean air and majestic mountains.

I am married to the most amazing woman in the universe. She is compassionate, sensual, entertaining, a great cook and has the patience of a saint (after all, she has for 17 years put up with the rather selfish and immature person that I can be). I also have the best job in the

world. It is fun, challenging, has the power of communication and influence, and I love going to work each day.

But is the best always a joyous thing? The best can also be the gut-wrenching, lesser-self-shattering obstacle that calls for every ounce of your energy. The perfect devil from within your life to make you grow even more. SGI President Ikeda said: "The Daishonin also tells us not to be discouraged if our lives aren't of ease and comfort. If they were, we would never be tested or forge inner strength.... We can only achieve a brilliant, indestructible, diamondlike state of life by struggling with obstacles and hardships" (Dec. 16, 1996).

We are so fortunate to be alive at the end of the 20th century on planet Earth with President Ikeda. I am confident that each one of us who faces East in the morning and shows appreciation to the Buddhist gods for another day is in their "best" place. Many times I have won-

dered why-in-the-heck am I here, or why is this (whatever it is) happening to me? Then, facing my obstacle, I chant to turn poison into medicine. And each apparent detour has eventually been the correct path. The Go-honzon has always led me in the direction of real happiness.

On June 23, 1981, during a very dark time in my life, I trudged up the steps to my apartment and saw sitting on the steps a beautiful woman whom I would later marry. She could sense my despair and quoted the Goshō: "However, life itself is the most precious of all treasures. Even the treasures of the entire universe cannot equal the value of a single human life" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 267).

Each day I grow closer to understanding what she was trying to tell me. I am the best. You are the best. We all are the best. As Shakyamuni was trying to get us to understand, we all have the beautiful jewel of Buddhahood in our life. **W**

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The *World Tribune* welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

A Liberally Conservative Point of View



Is Nichiren Daishonin liberal or conservative? And what about the 'World Tribune'?

By LISA JONES
STAFF WRITER

Advisory: This article will offend you. Or not, depending on your point of view.

Nichiren Daishonin once wrote that "Hungry spirits perceive the Ganges River as fire, human beings perceive it as water, and heavenly beings perceive it as *amrita*. The water itself is the same, but it appears differently according to the karmic capacity of individuals" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 163). Buddhism teaches that there are at least 10 different ways to look at any one thing, and our perceptions shift as our life-condition changes.

What's more, Buddhism posits that all phenomena are in constant flux. Therefore, not only do our perceptions change, so do the things we perceive.

Of what, then, can we be certain? Gandhi once said that

"truth resides in every human heart, and one has to search for it there and to be guided by truth as one sees it. But no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth."

In light of Buddhism, I would say that faith is the only certainty; we can be sure only of the faith in our hearts. That's what the Daishonin taught — and he didn't coerce anyone into living his way. Rather, he led people to awaken to the faith inherent in their lives....

So, does that make the Daishonin a liberal or a conservative?

It depends on your point of view, of course. Lately, in spirited discussions regarding the perceived liberalness or conservatism of the *World Tribune*, I've found that participants are hard-pressed to agree on definitions for these terms. What some people call conservative, others would call reactionary or fascist. What some call liberal, others call big-government-loving or *really* fascist. (Yet some say that being liberal has more to do with organic goat farming.) It's meaningless, I feel, to evaluate the *World Tribune* in relation to these ultimately meaningless terms.

Whether we call ourselves lib-

erals or conservatives, I think we generally agree that the goal of the *World Tribune* is to educate rather than indoctrinate, to stimulate thought rather than control it. SGI President Ikeda has said that the *World Tribune* "will be instrumental in cultivating a peaceful future," and most SGI-USA members see it as a "textbook of faith." It seems to me that education is integral to the *World Tribune's* mission, since peace, culture and education are intertwined.

So instead of arguing about labels, maybe it would be more interesting to evaluate the paper in relation to education and free thought. For example, is there a genuine democracy of ideas on its pages? Or mere lip service to or superficial depiction of diversity? Is it a paper full of conviction and hope? Or of self-congratulation and bluster? Does it call attachments and prejudices into question? Or does it reinforce the status quo?

Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish theologian, once wrote, "The consciousness of one's eternal responsibility to be an individual is the one thing needful." Individuality is the essence of the SGI's stand-alone spirit. It's what sets successors apart from mere followers.

Should individuality be expressed or suppressed in the *World Tribune*?

SGI President Ikeda has recently said that "where there is an atmosphere of lively discussion, where people can say or ask anything, it is bright and joyful. In such an environment, there is growth, the rhythm of kosen-rufu — of moving forward — is there." Is this the atmosphere of the *World Tribune*?

Even with regard to this question, we all probably have differing perceptions. The only conclusion I can reach — from the point of view of someone on the *World Tribune* staff — is that the paper is a work in progress. Its future isn't pre-destined; it's in *ku*, the realm of non-substantiality. Like anything else, it's fluid and responsive to prayer and determination. So love it or hate it, keep reading, keep chanting and keep those letters to the editor coming. (Even if they don't get printed, they do get read.)

Sometimes, the paper and the organization seem like a slow, lumbering brontosaurus; it takes a long time for a message to travel from its tail to its brain and back again. That's one perception.

My perception is that — in the realm of faith — anything can change, anytime. **W**

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

More on the New Logo

The new graphic format of the *World Tribune* is exciting and innovative. Many thanks to your graphic artists, Don Sanders and Ellen Brown, for implementing the new design. I was especially thrilled to see the new remake of the banner. Its colorful, upbeat image will definitely attract young people to our publication, if just out of curiosity. I was disappointed to read the negative reaction to the new design in several letters in the July 24 "Mailbox."

I have been a graphic designer since 1972, the year after I joined this great organization. In 1973, I went to work for Nashville's daily newspapers, *The Tennessean* and *Nashville Banner*; spending 13 years of my career there. During my newspaper stint, I witnessed and participated in many changes, not only in the technology of graphics but in the way daily newspapers have had to scrutinize every aspect of publication for their very survival. Last year marked the demise of our city's evening newspaper, the *Nashville Banner*. Today, many newspapers use colorful computer graphics in order to attract more advertisers and increase circulation.

Naturally, the *World Tribune* is not based on advertising revenue. But the *World Tribune* is a very vital part of our practice and encouragement. I can't begin to tell you how many times I have been encouraged and gained the very guidance I needed by picking up the *World Tribune* and reading it! It's also a tremendous resource for those of us who live in rural areas away from community centers.

As we reach the end of this century and look toward the new millennium, the future of kosen-rufu is in our hands as members of the SGI-USA. The future will be led by our present youth division. Let's listen to the youth division and ask them if we need to fall back to our old banner design (Old English lettering) or stick with our new *World Tribune*.

— MEREDITH GREEN,
Kingston Springs, Tenn.

Whoever is doing your layout is doing a fine job. I like the risks you're taking with type and design to make this a publication for the 21st century. Also, the content and quality of articles and features are no-

ticeably improved. The newspaper seems to reflect the diversity of our membership and to be a vehicle for different opinions — how wonderful that this spirit exists within our organization!

As for the recent debate in the "Mailbox" relating to liberals/conservatives and family values, I simply hope that you'll continue to publish SGI President Ikeda's writings about parents and children, as well as family-oriented features such as the "Clearly a Parent" column. It's terrific! Nellida Gallagher's writing always makes me smile.

I often share the *World Tribune* with friends and family — there is something for everyone. Keep up the good work....

— LIZ DWYER,
Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.

When I received the first issue of the *World Tribune* with its new masthead design, I thought that perhaps the issue was harkening back (based on some sort of anniversary or commemoration) to another earlier, more naive day, when it was a fledgling publication. Since the masthead so completely conveyed to me a kind of sophomore high-school annual quality, I searched the paper for evidence that this really was a nostalgic flashback in time. I was astonished to discover that the new masthead was simply that: the new masthead.

Since I value the *World Tribune* so much, I thought I should reserve further judgment until the next mailing. After all, I may have been feeling churlish and curmudgeonly on that particular day. However, when the following issue arrived, I was appalled at the amateur effect that the masthead so utterly achieved.

I was buoyed (as much as "misery loves company" allows) by comments in the July 24 issue from other readers equally disappointed in the "new" look. I would especially like to echo William Cowell's remark that the masthead be "dignified, look professional and be immediately recognizable as what it is" to potential readers who may not be members....

I appreciate the magnificent efforts of those who labor on the staff to provide for us subscribers a paper that visually and editorially expresses both the wide

view and the specific profundity of the

Daishonin's Buddhism.

I have enjoyed, for the most part, the layout and graphic changes that the paper has experimented with over the years. I am sure that the *World Tribune* will continue to be that clarion voice of the practitioners of this philosophy, moving confidently and compassionately forward, happy and united, under the banner — [P-L-E-A-S-E?] — of another masthead!

— HELEN JENSEN, Denver

After reading some of the curmudgeonly comments about the new logo and other changes, I gotta tell ya, the *World Tribune* is better than ever in my humble opinion. I see more reader participation, more variety, a better layout than ever before, and I feel more interested in looking into the contents for my own personal growth. And not just because I'm a Leader. As a one-time writer/editor for the Trib, I know how hard it is to do what you do, to be endlessly new and faithfully true at the same time. You're doin' it! Keeep on doin' it!

— CHIP GOODRICH,
San Francisco

I read the July 24 letters, and I just want to say that I feel sorry for you guys. Obviously, you have put a lot of thought and effort into continually seeking a better and better format for the *World Tribune*, and I think that you deserve more applause than criticism. Change may not always be necessary, but it is more exciting than doing the same thing year after year. If the *World Tribune* had not continued to experiment with its format, we'd still have the same stuffy paper we had 10 years ago.

Especially as a youth division member, I want change! Good or bad, things need to keep moving — whether it's in the organization or in our publications.

However, I do think that there were a few good points made. I can understand why some people may not like the logo (it looks like a baseball program to me, but then again that may be more appealing to younger youth division members), and I think it's probably a good idea for the *World Tribune* to state something about its purpose and function on the cover. Having said that, I don't want a dry, sober,

"dignified" paper! Our publications, in my opinion, need to be more than simply informative. They need to be interesting. I would love it if the *World Tribune* changed its format every week! "Mature organization" my butt!...

Anyway, I don't understand why people get so up-in-arms about this stuff. But not only that, I get offended at the condescending way people tell us how things should be. As a paper of the people, I believe all our opinions are important, but I also think that we need to keep in mind they are our personal opinions, not the gospel truth.

In fact, I may be full of it. So I'll end here.

Thanks for changing. Keep it up. (But that's just my opinion.)

— CHRIS BRACKETT,
Glendale, Calif.

It has been interesting to read the letters of the subscribers of the *World Tribune* that do not approve of the new layout and logo. I hadn't really thought much about it; my main concern with the *World Tribune* is that I get it every week so that I can enrich my life.

But now that it has been brought to my attention, I just wanted to comment that I think the new design is much more accessible to the younger youth division members and friends of the SGI. Of course, there was nothing wrong with the old design, but my feeling is that the new one will make some people feel more comfortable with our publications and organization. It just connotes a sort of friendliness.

I work with the junior high and high school divisions, and I can tell you that I will feel a lot better about showing the new *World Tribune* to my youth division members without making them feel like it's not really for them. I understand that we have a monthly section, but one of my goals is to get the youth to read the whole newspaper.

I am glad the *World Tribune* is moving forward and truly making it a newspaper for all people.

— ALEXIS TRASS, Griffith, Ind.

Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SGI-USA or the World Tribune.



Our Purpose: The SGI-USA (Soka Gakkai International-USA) promotes peace and individual happiness based on Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Peace is inseparably linked with each individual's happiness; SGI-USA members, through their faith, seek to become happier and contribute to society. The SGI exists in 128 countries and was founded in Japan in 1930.

Our Practice: The basic practice is chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the Gohonzon, our object of devotion. According to Nichiren Daishonin, chanting this phrase allows us to be in harmony with the universe and create great value. Faith in this principle is gained through practical experience.

Nichiren Daishonin, a 13th-century Japanese reformer, championed the Lotus Sutra, which teaches that the Buddha nature is inherent in all living things — thus, all people can become Buddhas. He introduced the practice of chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, which is the essence of the Lotus Sutra. The Gohonzon is the mandala expressing this essence.

For more information, contact the SGI-USA community center nearest you or call (310) 451-8811.

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PHOTO ESSAY — MARTIN COHEN, LOS ANGELES

Torch of Life

In one sweeping flow
Out she came
Wet with the bodily fluids
that had surrounded
and protected her
for nine months

She slipped out of you
little Cassidy Oceane Mull
And in that instant
you passed the torch.

No greater miracle
than our human existence
no sight more awe inspiring
than a baby being born

Fluids flowing everywhere
out of your womb
dripping from the baby
tears in our eyes
water and salt
life

How different the female body
seems to me now!

Water and salt
Ocean
Little Oceane Mull
came flowing out
And in that instant
You passed the torch.

Generation upon generation
Centuries
Millennia
Mother
Daughter
Giving birth
Giving birth
Endless cycle of Life

O Woman
What eternal
and awesome task
lies upon your shoulders

That simple moment
of giving life
a little wet baby
flowing out of your womb

Please accept these tears
as a token of humility
at the sight of this miracle
that you have performed
with such precision
and flawless memory
a task that goes far beyond
your own consciousness
deeply embedded in the
essence
of your being

Woman
beautiful
life giving
woman

— Martin Cohen
July 15
for Murielle



If the water of one's faith is clear, the moon of blessings will cast its reflection on it and, without a doubt, protect one. You are assured of an easy delivery. A passage from the Lotus Sutra states, "A wondrous Law such as this...," and another says, "With easy labor they shall bear a fortune child." (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, p. 88)




(Top left) Murielle Mull, a couple of hours before giving birth. (Above) Greg's hands clasp Murielle's, as the contractions increase. (Left) The umbilical cord is cut by the father. (Bottom left) Relief and gratitude after a smooth delivery. (Below) Greg and Cassidy, 15 minutes old.



During the last three months of her pregnancy, Murielle Mull and I chanted together almost every day. Her husband, Greg, asked me if I would take pictures of the birth. Of course, I gladly obliged.

July 15, at 5 a.m., Greg called me from the UCLA Medical Center. The contractions had started earlier that night, and Murielle was going to give birth soon. I did gongyo, chanted for a

while, and got my gear together. It was not until past noon that Cassidy was born. Witnessing her birth was one of the most incredible and deeply joyful experiences of my life. 

COMING NEXT WEEK

Series 2 of 'Discussions on Youth' begins