

## **SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MESSAGE EDUCATION TO REVITALIZE YOUNG PEOPLE**

**In his message to the Caltech opening of the 'Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century' exhibition, President Ikeda talks about the Columbine High School murders. 'The recent tragedy in Colorado has shocked and horrified educators, students and their parents throughout the world,' he says. 'We cannot turn our eyes from the underlying issues that gave rise to that heart-rending event.... Education that revitalizes the hearts and spirits of young people is essential.'**

It is truly a great pleasure and honor to offer this message celebrating the opening of the exhibition "Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century." In my mind's eye, I can picture the scene of this opening, held in the beautiful city of Pasadena, a city of culture and learning, under the brilliant Southern California sun.

Dr. Linus Pauling. The immortal name of this great man conjures the image of a towering peak, soaring above the vicissitudes of the 20th century. Like an Everest he stands, the heights of sublime wisdom supported by a broad-based humanity and warmth.

It is a particular joy to me that it has been possible to hold this exhibition, which portrays the full scope of Dr. Pauling's life and achievements, here at this world-renowned center of learning, the California Institute of Technology, where Dr. Pauling taught and conducted research for 42 years.

It was my great privilege to know Dr. Pauling in his later years. Each time that we met, I was struck by his ever more youthful spirit, his determination to move forward without cease toward his goal of contributing to the peace and health of humankind.

At no point did he permit himself to be satisfied with his enormous accomplishments — like his being the only person to receive two unshared Nobel Prizes. On one occasion, he shared with me his desire to continue, through his research, to alleviate human suffering and contribute to world peace. He said that he felt compelled to do this, so long as our world continues to be filled with war and conflict.

I also vividly recall our meeting one year before his death, when he was already 92. At that time, he told me, with great enthusiasm, of his ongoing research into the use of vitamins in the treatment of heart disease. He said that he had just met with and recommended such treatment to three patients. His bright complexion and the sparkle in his eyes — the gleam of an uninterrupted pursuit of truth — were that of a young student far more than of a great scholar of advanced age.

The work of sharing this most full, extraordinary life with the people of the world is an act of education — education for humanity, education for peace. And it was this belief that inspired me to first propose the organization of this exhibition. With the support of the distinguished members of the Advisory Committee and all those who participated in the planning and creation of this exhibition, we have succeeded in bringing into being an exhibition that would have satisfied Dr. Pauling. My heartfelt gratitude to all those who have made this exhibition possible.

As this century draws to a close, humanity is afflicted by a lack of clear vision regarding its most basic values. For this reason, I am certain that the message of this exhibition — which speaks so powerfully to those values — will continue to resonate in people's hearts.

In our discussions, Dr. Pauling and I were in complete agreement that we must make the coming 21st century an era of life, an era in which respect for the dignity and sanctity of human life takes precedence over all else. This is the core value that we must uphold. And it requires that we resolutely confront and oppose everything that undermines or destroys the value of life.

The work and struggles of Dr. Pauling, waged alongside his beloved partner and comrade, Mrs. Ava Helen Pauling, were committed to this ideal. Together they surmounted enormous challenges and difficulties. I believe that this message, the message of Dr. Pauling's humanity, is what this exhibition conveys, even more than his great talents and learning.

When we look at the world around us, we see continuing war, conflict and violence. In societies shadowed by the dark clouds of hatred and mistrust, there is increasing disregard for human life and an increasing readiness to view life as a means to an end.

The recent tragedy in Colorado has shocked and horrified educators, students and their parents throughout the world. We cannot turn our eyes from the underlying issues that gave rise to that heart-rending event. The war and violence that have been so pervasive in this century have implanted in the hearts, even of children, a callous disregard for the value of life. It is this devaluation of life that we must first confront and transform, as we enter the new century.

To this end, education that revitalizes the hearts and spirits of young people is essential. I sincerely hope that the message of this exhibition will reach many young people. For it is a message of the precious sanctity and dignity of life.

I express my sincere respect for the support extended by Caltech, which has enabled this exhibition to be held on this historic campus. Caltech President David Baltimore is renowned for his work in AIDS research, through which he seeks to resolve one of the major causes of human suffering in the world today. At the same time, he is dedicated to fostering an unbroken stream of young scientists. Under the leadership of President Baltimore, Caltech continues to forge ahead, seeking to understand those issues that will more directly impact humanity's future. I certainly hope that this exhibition will generate new waves of heightened public awareness, which will issue from this campus, supporting and strengthening efforts to create a new century of life.

I also want to express my gratitude to the many Los Angeles-area volunteers, who have so deeply understood and appreciated the significance of this exhibition and offered their unstinting support. In particular, I want to thank the young people who have created a play portraying the life of Dr. Pauling. Together with the brilliant actor John Astin, these young people have learned from the life of Dr. Pauling, who dedicated his enormous talent and knowledge to finding a fundamental solution for the human suffering. And they have sought to share that vision with their generation and the public. I cannot find words to express fully my respect and praise for their efforts. I can only imagine how delighted Dr. Pauling would be to witness this kind of spontaneous citizens' movement, generating an ever greater popular commitment to peace.

As one determined to carry on Dr. Pauling's legacy, I offer my pledge to work with all of you, without cease, for the realization of the ideals to which Dr. Pauling dedicated his life. I close by expressing my sincere prayers for the excellent health and well-being of all in attendance today.

*May 14, 1999  
Daisaku Ikeda  
SGI President*