

LESSONS FROM 'THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION'

The following are excerpts from the The New Human Revolution, volume 1, pages 59–61 and 108–09. Shin'ichi Yamamoto discusses the importance of the district, as well as the district leader. The district is the starting point of our kosen-rufu movement and functions as the direct link to each individual member. The district leader's fundamental responsibility is to struggle for the sake of each member's happiness.

SUNRISE

That evening, the new district leaders came to Shin'ichi's hotel. After the earlier meeting, Shin'ichi Yamamoto had felt extremely fatigued, but now he exerted himself even more strenuously to give guidance and encouragement to the new leaders.

A freshly planted seedling will wither and die unless it is given water and fertilizer. Thus Shin'ichi spared no effort, pouring his heart and soul into providing the nourishment necessary for the "seedling" of the new Hawaii District to flourish. He especially took time to give guidance to the new district chief, Hiroto Hirata, late into the night.

He and Hirata went out onto the hotel patio, which was mostly deserted. Shin'ichi offered him advice from a number of perspectives on everything from personal matters to the management of the organization.

"Riki, to gain trust in society, it is first important to succeed on your job. That is the foundation for everything. To do so, you will naturally have to work twice as hard as those around you. You will also need to activate your wisdom by consistently chanting daimoku.

"Kosen-rufu means to pray and take action for the happiness of others and thereby create a supreme path of good fortune. When you make kosen-rufu your life's objective and pray to excel at your work in order to show proof of that goal's validity, you will be opening the way for your own victory and good fortune."

Hiroto Hirata's eyes sparkled as he listened intently to Shin'ichi's guidance. Shin'ichi clearly sensed that his words were getting through to Hirata. He then began to talk about the proper attitude a leader should have toward faith.

As he spoke, the full moon cast a dim white reflection on the water, and waves could be heard lapping quietly upon the beach.

"I ask you to please spend your life from now on as a district chief who, together with me, lives for the members' happiness. Most people find it is all they can do to worry about their own happiness and that of their immediate family. It is, therefore, no easy feat to live for the happiness of your friends and fellow members, for the sake of the Law and for kosen-rufu, while at the same time grappling with your own personal problems.

"The fact is, however, that when you worry, pray and struggle for the sake of others, you are proving by your very actions that you have transcended the bounds of your own individual concerns and are opening the way for your own splendid human revolution.

"The organization will change and develop in any number of ways depending on the *ichinen*, or deep-seated determination, of the central figure. People will follow a leader who always fights for them. But they will eventually perceive the real nature of someone interested only in personal fame or fortune and will stop supporting that person."

In his pure seeking spirit toward Buddhism, Hiroto Hirata was like dry sand soaking up

water. Shin'ichi Yamamoto grasped Hirata's hand and said: "I am the one who appointed you as district chief. If you fail, then I, too, will have failed. I will take full responsibility. Please fight to your heart's content and to the best of your ability."

"Yes! I'll fight. I'll fight to the end," Hiroto Hirata said, firmly clasping Shin'ichi's hand in return. The eyes of the two men gleamed in the moonlight. Shin'ichi felt that with Hirata in charge, the organization in Hawaii was secure.

The moon was reflected as a silver strand of light across the sea.

One cannot foster capable people without investing full energy and effort. Only with passion and sincerity that wells forth from the depths of life can one inspire people and help them grow.

A NEW WORLD

Shin'ichi went on to introduce the leaders of the new district, which was to comprise three groups encompassing the San Francisco, Suisun and Sacramento areas, respectively.

After introducing the leaders of San Francisco District, Shin'ichi Yamamoto then announced that a district would also be established in Nevada. "I would like to appoint George Oliver as the chief of Nevada District and Yasuko Oliver as the women's division district chief. Although there are only two or three other members in that region — all of whom were introduced to the practice by Mr. and Mrs. Oliver — I have nevertheless decided to form a district there."

The Olivers stood up. Murmurs of surprise arose from the participants. As if to forestall their speculation, Shin'ichi continued: "You may be wondering why I've decided to establish a district in Nevada where there are so few members. It is a step I am taking to prepare for the future.

"The district lies on the forefront of our movement and has a direct connection with each individual. At the same time, it is endowed with all of the functions necessary to support our daily activities. You might say that all our struggles in the realm of faith have centered on the district and that it is within the district that each of us has grown.

"If we liken the Soka Gakkai to an orchard, each district corresponds to a single fruit tree, while the fruit represents each of you. Without the tree, there will be no fruit. Everything depends on the tree. Similarly, the real basis of the Soka Gakkai is each district that composes it. One could even say that the district itself is the Soka Gakkai.

"When a district is formed and becomes fully functional, kosen-rufu in that area will progress by leaps and bounds. Nevada is a large state. It is a land rich with unlimited possibilities for the future. Therefore, though there are scarcely any members besides the two district leaders now, I have established this district with a view toward the future — three, five or ten years from now.

"While I am certain that Mr. and Mrs. Oliver have a formidable task ahead of them, President Toda, too, stood up alone to accomplish kosen-rufu after his release from prison. As a result, the Soka Gakkai's membership grew to more than 1.5 million households in the space of only fifteen years. I ask Mr. and Mrs. Oliver to please stand up resolutely in the vast land of Nevada, holding aloft the banner of the Law.

"Moreover, George Oliver will be the first person of non-Japanese descent to be appointed as a district chief in our organization. His appointment will attest to the fact that the Soka Gakkai is a religious organization for the entire world. I ask you to strive hard so that your efforts may become a model for the kosen-rufu movement in America."

Title: Lessons From The New Human Revolution

Subject: World Tribune 08/20/99 n.3256 p.10 WT990820p10

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Keywords: Daisaku Discussion Encouragement Guidance Human Ikeda Lessons Meetings Revolution Sunrise Tribune World