

**THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION**  
**A NOVELIZED HISTORY OF THE SOKA GAKKAI**  
**'EARLY SPRING', VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 3, PARTS 11-12**

**To express his appreciation for the members' efforts, Shin'ichi Yamamoto picks Paris' historic, beautiful Place de la Concorde as the site for the inaugural Europe General Chapter and Paris Chapter meeting.**

The morning of Jan. 16, 1963, snow fell lightly on Paris. By the time the German youth division members finally arrived shortly before noon, however, it had stopped.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto had been anxiously awaiting their arrival, and he came down to the hotel lobby as soon as they got there. He was relieved to see the bright, smiling faces of the four red-cheeked youths.

"Thank you for coming, and from so far away!" he said, giving them warm, welcoming handshakes.

"By the way, how did you get here?" he asked.

"We came by car, through Belgium. The roads were covered with ice, and we also ran into a blizzard, so I'm afraid we're late," one of them replied.

"When the weather is so bad, you mustn't take unnecessary risks. Your safety is more important than anything. Did your car make the long trip OK?"

"Yes."

"What kind of car is it, anyway?"

Koichiro Sada replied proudly, "It's a Volkswagen, a used one."

"Will you show it to me?" asked Shin'ichi.

Sada was delighted that Shin'ichi had taken an interest in his car. It was his greatest treasure. He had scrimped and saved to buy it, so that he could use it for his Gakkai activities. Shin'ichi went with the four young men to see the car.

"This is it, Sensei!"

"What a fine car!" Shin'ichi responded.

"I've named it The Young Lion," said Sada, smiling proudly.

"That's an excellent name. You are very brave to drive all the way here through a blizzard. Tomorrow, I want you to enjoy Paris. Let's go sightseeing."

The inaugural meeting of the Europe General Chapter and Paris Chapter was to be held at 1:00 p.m. in a room at the Hôtel de Crillon, where Shin'ichi was staying.

In addition to Koichiro Sada and his three companions, young women's division member Matsuko Takaishi had also traveled to Paris from West Germany. Members from Austria were present as well, as were Kiyoko Ohara from Sweden and Koji Hashimoto and his wife Keiko from Norway.

Hashimoto was the young man whom Shin'ichi had met and encouraged in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) two years earlier. At the time, Hashimoto had been a chef at the Japanese embassy in Ceylon, but in September a year later the ambassador had been transferred to Oslo, Norway, and Hashimoto had accompanied him.

The Hôtel de Crillon, one of Paris' most distinguished hotels, was designed by the great 18th-century architect Jacques-Ange Gabriel. The hotel looked out on the Place de la Concorde, also designed by Gabriel and considered by many to be one of the most beautiful plazas in the world. The waters of the fountain in the plaza sparkled golden in the sun-

light that began to stream out from amid the clouds.

Though called the Place de la Concorde — to commemorate the harmonious union of all France — it was called the Place Louis XV, when the plaza was built. During the period of the French Revolution, it was renamed the Place de la Revolution, and it was here that Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette and many others had lost their lives to the guillotine.

Centuries later, during World War II, when the Allies made their successful D-Day invasion of Normandy, drove out the Nazis and liberated Paris, Charles de Gaulle led a victory march from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde.

Shin'ichi thought that the Hôtel de Crillon, standing at the Place de la Concorde with its long history of glory and tragedy, was a perfect place to launch a new phase in the kosen-rufu movement toward bringing lasting peace to Europe. He also felt that the members who would gather there that day, though by no means well off financially, all cared deeply for the countries in which they lived and were devoting themselves to kosen-rufu day after day while praying for world peace and the happiness of all humanity. They were, Shin'ichi believed, as important as their nations' leaders.

He selected this beautiful setting to express his respect and appreciation for their efforts. He also wanted them to grow socially confident, so that they could mix with all levels of society and feel comfortable in every situation, including visiting first-class hotels.

Thirty-five members gathered. As they waited for the meeting to begin, they seemed a little overawed by the luxury of the Hôtel de Crillon and even a little uncomfortable. Then Shin'ichi entered the room. He sensed their stiffness at once and said with light humor: "Bonjour! Since I am in France, it is only polite to greet you in French. Ah, yes! We have some German members here today, too. Guten Tag!

"And oh yes: Mekarimakka! (In Japanese, 'Are you making money?') That's hello in Kansai dialect! I know we have some Kansai members here, too."