

## **SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S SEPT. 10 SPEECH THE WHOLE WORLD IS LOOKING TO YOU**

*Celebrating the SGI's 25th anniversary, SGI President Ikeda tells youth from 55 countries and territories: 'Soon the 21st century will be here. The whole world is looking to the youth.'*

*The following is a speech given by SGI President Ikeda at the 25th SGI General Meeting and the 37th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Sept. 10.*

I want to warmly welcome my dear fellow SGI members who have traveled from 55 countries and territories to be here. Many of you, despite all kinds of trials and obstacles, have managed to raise the money and find the time in your busy schedules to come all the way to Japan. What incredible sincerity! I want the Japanese members to learn from the faith of our friends from overseas.

### **It is up to you to change the way things are.**

Sixty years ago today — on Sept. 10, 1939 — Japanese forces launched their reprehensible invasion of the Chinese city Changsha, where the esteemed Hunan Normal University is located. This took place the year after the university was founded.

More than 100,000 Japanese troops assaulted Changsha from three sides. A large fleet of Japanese warships also approached, sailing up the Yangtze River, while overhead Japanese combat planes swarmed, shelling the city relentlessly. Fierce fighting continued for about 20 days.

The Japanese army committed every atrocity conceivable — they murdered, raped, looted, destroyed. They burned down villages and hamlets as they invaded the city, and they went on to eventually occupy all of Changsha.

As a Japanese, I apologize from the bottom of my heart to the Chinese people for these abominations.

And as a Buddhist, I solemnly offered prayers this morning, as I do every day, for all victims of the war. I pledge today to keep fighting vigorously throughout my life for lasting peace and friendship with China. For as long as I live, I am committed to atoning for the wrongs that have been perpetrated against China by the Japanese. I believe this should be the stance of all Japanese people.

I fear nothing. All that a human being should fear is how justice will judge you. I want the youth of Japan to firmly inherit my spirit in this regard, too. It is deplorable if youth stand by and condone the behavior of those who arrogantly hold their fellow citizens in contempt, who have no scruples in twisting and misrepresenting historical facts — who are authoritarian to the very core. It is up to you, the youth division members, the SGI youth, to change the way things are.

### **Truly great leaders always think of the welfare of future generations.**

I will never forget the day I met Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. It was 25 years ago, on

Dec. 5, 1974. It was at night, in the freezing Beijing winter. Premier Zhou was 76 at the time, and I was 46. “The prime minister is seriously ill,” goes a line in the Chinese classic Romance of the Three Kingdoms, referring to the illness of the brilliant prime minister Chuko K’ung-ming. Now the Chuko K’ung-ming of the 20th century, Zhou Enlai, was gravely ill.

When I was told I could meet with the premier, I at first declined. I was worried about his health. But then I learned that the premier strongly wished to meet. His wife, Madame Deng Yingchao, later confirmed this, saying that her husband had been adamant, insisting, “I have to meet President Ikeda at all costs.” So it was that Premier Zhou received me in a room at the hospital where he was being treated.

Eighteen days later, on Dec. 23, 1974, Premier Zhou, pushing himself mercilessly despite his illness, boarded a plane and flew out of Beijing. What was the destination of this, the premier’s last trip? It was the city of Changsha, home to Hunan Normal University. He went there to talk directly with Chairman Mao Zedong, who was then staying in Changsha. Premier Zhou was determined to block the intrigues of the treacherous Gang of Four.

Naturally, his doctors were violently opposed to his making the long journey to Changsha [a 780-miles trip from Beijing]. But Premier Zhou calmly told them he was going, saying, “Since I have been thrust on the stage of history, I must fulfill the mission history has given me.”

Before returning to Beijing, Premier Zhou succeeded in securing concrete measures to contain the activities of the Gang of Four. And in January 1975, the following month, he delivered his last address at the National People’s Congress, setting forth the basic policy line for the Four Modernizations. This paved the way for the phenomenal development China has achieved today.

The Four Modernizations was a program undertaken by the Chinese government to bring China’s economy in line with other leading nations in the world through improving agriculture, industry, defense and science and technology within this century.

Truly great leaders always think of the welfare of future generations. In contrast, foolish leaders, however eloquent they may be, think only of themselves, of short-term gain. The world is filled with far too many leaders of this kind. Don’t you agree?

### **A change in our attitude at any given moment spreads out in a huge ripple.**

Today, at this most solemn presentation ceremony [of an honorary professorship to the SGI president], we are honored by the presence of distinguished scholars from Hunan Normal University, the fine educational institute of Changsha, the city where Zhou Enlai, summoning forth all his life’s energy, left behind an immortal record of his indestructible spirit. My deepest appreciation and gratitude to our honored guests. Most esteemed Vice Rector Luo Weizhi, distinguished scholars: Thank you very, very much.

Zhou Enlai said to me, as if entrusting me with the future: “The last 25 years of the 20th century will be the most crucial period for the world. All nations will have to cooperate and help each other as equal partners.” I deeply and strongly shared his conviction, and the month after our meeting, on Jan. 26, 1975, the SGI was established.

A quarter-century has passed since that time. Today, young leaders of the 21st century who are working for peace—my heirs and successors—have gathered here from 55

countries and territories around the world. My most heartfelt welcome to all of you.

Hunan Normal University is one of the leading institutions for training educators in China. The campus commands views of the flowing waters of the Xiang River in the east and the majestic peaks of the Yuelu Mountains in the west. As an ideal center of education and learning, the school has produced more than 100,000 graduates, who are making great contributions to society. I profoundly respect the venerable 60-year history of Hunan Normal University, which has pioneered the noble path of humanistic education based on respect for and confidence in youth.

Filled with the determination to work together with the dynamic young people of China, I accept this sublime educational honor of being named an honorary professor of your fine institute, together with these young SGI leaders, who have gathered from around the world.

Founding Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, who died in prison upholding his beliefs, once said with keen insight, “Lakes foster in the youth that live near them the expansive spirit to courageously set sail out into the world.”

Since ancient times, Hunan Province, home to the magnificent Lake Dongting, which inspired such great poets as Li Po and Tu Fu, has produced many outstanding people. In a biographical dictionary of famous Chinese people in modern times, I have been told, more than 10 percent of those listed hail from Hunan. A glittering galaxy of capable people has emerged from the province.

As Vice Rector Luo mentioned in his speech a little earlier, one such person is Huang Hsing, who, together with Dr. Sun Yatsen, formed the revolutionary Alliance Society in 1905. As a matter of fact, during his student days in Japan, Huang Hsing studied at Kobun Gakuin, a school where Mr. Makiguchi taught as a young man. Kobun Gakuin, which was located in what is now the Shinjuku area of Tokyo, had many students from Hunan Province attending its classes. I am sure that meaningful ties must have been cultivated between the sincere Hunan youth and Mr. Makiguchi, who deeply respected and admired China.

Mr. Makiguchi worked hard in his youth to gain an education. He graduated from the Hokkaido Normal School. [Normal school is a term virtually interchangeable with today's teachers college, and in the past, in Japan, it usually referred to a two-year school for training mainly elementary school teachers.] I therefore humbly dedicate the honor I have received from Hunan Normal University [an institute similarly dedicated to training educators] to that great, eternal teacher of value-creation, Mr. Makiguchi.

Dr. He Jingsong of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is also here today. I delivered a lecture at this academy seven years ago. [In October 1992, President Ikeda gave an address there titled “The 21st Century and East Asian Civilization” and was conferred an honorary research professorship.]

Since hearing one of my lectures at Beijing University, Dr. He has applied himself earnestly to researching the Soka Gakkai, publishing such scholarly works as *A Perspective on Nichiren and The Philosophy and Practice of the Soka Gakkai*. He was also one of the contributing writers to a recent book chronicling the lives and achievements of 50 of this century's outstanding world cultural figures. I was most humbled to find myself included in the book.

*The book is one in a series titled The Famous Foreign Cultural Figures of the 20th Century Library. President Ikeda is featured alongside such giants of this century as*

*Mahatma Gandhi, Jean Paul Sartre, Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein and Max Weber. Only two Japanese are included: President Ikeda and novelist Yasunari Kawabata, who won the 1968 Nobel Prize for Literature.*

Incidentally, another Chinese city—the port-city of Dalian, which is known as the “Pearl of the Northern Seas”—will from Sept. 16 host the “Beyond the Horizon” exhibition, which features photography taken at sea by Soka Gakkai members of the High Seas Group [a training group for men’s and young men’s division members who work at sea for extended periods of time]. The event will be part of the city’s centennial celebrations. Representatives of the High Seas Group are also attending today. I’m praying for the exhibition’s great success.

The Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai of China, a towering intellect in the pages of world history, a teacher of all humankind, was also a Hunan native. He studied deeply and extensively while soaking in the region’s beautiful natural scenery and rich historical heritage.

It was T’ien-t’ai who expounded the doctrine of a life-moment encompassing 3,000 realms—the essence of the Lotus Sutra. With this doctrine, he fully elucidated the true entity of life, explaining that a change in a life-moment—that is, a change in our mind or attitude at any given moment—spreads out in a huge ripple throughout the 3,000 realms, which include our individual lives, society and the land or environment as a whole.

### **Psychology approaches the human being from distrust, while Buddhism begins with trust.**

Bringing fresh light to shine on this profound Buddhist wisdom that flowered in China, a new spiritual quest is energetically under way around the world, as we prepare to enter the 21st century.

Aug. 20–24, the American Psychological Association Convention was held in Boston and a representative from the SGI [Dr. Yoichi Kawata, director of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy] attended.

One of the symposia was titled “Where Buddhism and Psychology Meet—Perspectives on Empowerment.” Western psychology has traditionally concentrated on empowering the weak from without. In contrast, Buddhism seeks primarily to develop the inherent power and potential of human beings. I understand that such differences attracted a great deal of interest among the participants.

Dr. Martin Seligman, a leading American psychologist and former president of the American Psychological Association, has observed that whereas psychology approaches the human being from a position of distrust, tending to direct attention to a person’s weak or negative aspects, Buddhism begins from a position of trust, of believing in others. By learning from Buddhism, psychology can develop further, he has said. Many leading intellectuals around the world share his view.

In any event, the question is: How can we tap and manifest for society’s benefit the power of wisdom, courage and compassion that lies dormant within us and is as vast as the universe itself? It is for this cause that we are carrying out our momentous movement of education, philosophy and culture. Please be confident that you are making pioneering efforts toward the 21st and 22nd centuries.

### **It is cowardly not to fight when you see right being persecuted.**

Title: The Whole World Is Looking To You  
Subject: World Tribune 10/08/99 n.3263 p.1 WT991008p01 Hachioji, Tokyo, Japan 09/10/99  
Author: Daisaku Ikeda  
Keywords: 09/10/99 Daisaku Encouragement Gakkai Gen. Guidance Hachioji Headquarters Ikeda Japan  
Ldrs. Leaders Looking Major Meeting Mtg. President Soka Speech Speeches Tokyo Tribune Whole World Yout

When T'ien-t'ai expounded the profound teaching of the Lotus Sutra in the sixth century, all manner of Buddhist monks, descending on him like a flock of crows, attacked him with harsh criticism and abuse. But he dauntlessly faced this raging storm of denunciation that beset him.

In "On Repaying Debts of Gratitude," Nichiren Daishonin notes that T'ien-t'ai calmly refuted and overturned each of the charges and assertions made against him by the other monks (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, pp. 189–90). Fighting back against error and false accusations is crucial in waging a spiritual struggle. When something is said against you, you must respond. You must fight back even more powerfully and vociferously. This is what refutation is all about. This is the spirit of Buddhism.

Some people in our organization comment adversely on what they see as a decline in the spirit of refutation—a lack in the fighting spirit to strike back against mistaken criticism—in the Soka Gakkai today. If our leaders stop fighting passionately against evil and injustice, merely putting on a great act of giving guidance, occupying themselves solely with protecting their own interests, it is a sign that their faith is bankrupt.

No matter how many people we have, if they don't fight, it's meaningless. We won't be able to accomplish kosen-rufu. "The practice of the Lotus Sutra is *shakubuku*, the refutation of provisional teachings"—this is the heart of the Daishonin's Buddhism, this is the Soka Gakkai's starting point.

In President Toda's day, I fought on my own against all kinds of criticisms and attacks, and protected my mentor. It is cowardly not to fight when right is being persecuted. Leaders must be the first to take action.

T'ien-t'ai clearly refuted all erroneous Buddhist doctrines, based on the sutras that are the foundation of faith and based on reason. The Daishonin writes that T'ien-t'ai's vehemence in this task was "like the lion king roaring" and "like a hawk or an eagle swooping down [on its prey]" (MW-4, 192).

Actually, the declaration that "the practice of the Lotus Sutra is *shakubuku*, the refutation of provisional teachings" was made by T'ien-t'ai in his *Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*. This is the very heart of the practice of the Lotus Sutra.

## **We must never forget the selfless struggle of presidents Makiguchi and Toda.**

Oct. 27, 1938, the day on which Hunan Normal University was founded, was also the day Japanese forces ravaged and occupied Wuhan in Hubei Province. This was an act of betrayal against China, a great benefactor that had played a key role in introducing Buddhism to Japan.

Bowing to the military authorities and obsequiously trying to curry favor with them, the cowardly Nichiren Shoshu priesthood conducted a special *gokaihi* ceremony [to worship the Dai-Gohonzon] in celebration of the Japanese army's occupation of Wuhan. What is worse, to this day the priesthood has expressed no remorse or apology for its actions at the time. This is an indelible stain on the priesthood's history.

In sharp contrast to this behavior, during that insane period of Japanese militarism, the Soka Gakkai's first and second presidents, Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda, faithfully upheld the spirit of "the practice of the Lotus Sutra is *shakubuku*, the refutation of provisional teachings." They persevered unswervingly in their struggle for justice and peace, and as a

result encountered intense persecution. They were thrown in prison, and Mr. Makiguchi died there, a martyr to his beliefs.

We must never forget their selfless struggle. Which is correct, the Soka Gakkai or the priesthood? The facts I have mentioned alone should clearly answer this question.

Incidentally, Mr. Luo Weilong, a leading Chinese authority on Japan, made a sharp observation to the effect that “the forces attacking the Soka Gakkai and the forces distorting the history of Japan’s war of aggression are one and the same.”

In an interview in the *Seikyo Shimbun* this June, Mr. Luo said: “Japan’s growing nationalism and its veering to the political right is extremely worrisome. One thing I found interesting was that those who unabashedly attack President Ikeda also proclaim that the Rape of Nanking didn’t happen, or that the war launched by Japan was not a war of aggression. Paradoxically, their attacks only serve to prove that President Ikeda is a leading defender of peace in Japan.”

### **Rather than the older generation trying to draw the youth together, the youth naturally draw themselves together.**

In the Chinese, classics there is a parable known as “A Dispute on a Snail’s Horn.” It humorously dismisses trivial conflicts that are like struggles fought on the tiny horns of a snail. Mr. Makiguchi used this parable in *The Geography of Human Life* in a harsh condemnation of the insularity and narrow-mindedness of the dwellers of island nations.

Following Mr. Makiguchi’s lead, we of the Soka Gakkai in Japan must also reject and work to rectify the base island-nation mentality prevalent here. It is only natural that Japan will find itself alienated from the rest of the world if it violates human rights, decency and truth in the single-minded pursuit of profit. By contrast, the entire world is the stage for the SGI’s contributions, which are directed toward the welfare of all humanity.

Soon the 21st century will be here. The whole world is looking to the youth. The German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe asks, “What could be more wonderful than the youth of all regions of the world gathering together in order to form a tighter alliance for goodness?” This describes all of you gathered here today.

Goethe also says: “Youth [is] what most strongly affects youth; and effects produced thus are the purest ones. It is these that invigorate the world and prevent it from dying out either morally or physically.” Rather than the older generation trying to draw the youth together, the youth naturally draw themselves together. That is what makes the solidarity of the SGI youth so strong.

Tomorrow, Sept. 11, it will be exactly 600 days to the momentous anniversary for which we have been striving for many years—May 3, 2001.

I close my speech with my determination to expand the flow of immensely capable, talented individuals into the 21st century, together with the youth from around the globe gathered here today and the distinguished scholars and officials of Hunan Normal University.

*Xie xie* (Thank you).

**WT**

### **TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS**

Title: The Whole World Is Looking To You  
Subject: World Tribune 10/08/99 n.3263 p.1 WT991008p01 Hachioji, Tokyo, Japan 09/10/99  
Author: Daisaku Ikeda  
Keywords: 09/10/99 Daisaku Encouragement Gakkai Gen. Guidance Hachioji Headquarters Ikeda Japan  
Ldrs. Leaders Looking Major Meeting Mtg. President Soka Speech Speeches Tokyo Tribune Whole World Yout

## Refuting What's Wrong

From This Speech:

In "On Repaying Debts of Gratitude," Nichiren Daishonin notes that the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai calmly refuted and overturned each of the charges and assertions made against him by the other monks (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, pp. 189–90). Fighting back against error and false accusations is crucial in waging a spiritual struggle. When something is said against you, you must respond. You must fight back even more powerfully and vociferously. This is what refutation is all about. This is the spirit of Buddhism.

1. What is a spiritual struggle to you?
2. Have you had an experience where you've had to speak up for yourself against false accusations; Where you've had to speak up for this Buddhism or this organization?
3. Why do you think SGI President Ikeda says that this kind of refutation is the spirit of Buddhism?
4. What do you think is important for us to refute today?
5. What do you think is the best way to refute something that's wrong?

Title: The Whole World Is Looking To You

Subject: World Tribune 10/08/99 n.3263 p.1 WT991008p01 Hachioji, Tokyo, Japan 09/10/99

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: 09/10/99 Daisaku Encouragement Gakkai Gen. Guidance Hachioji Headquarters Ikeda Japan

Ldrs. Leaders Looking Major Meeting Mtg. President Soka Speech Speeches Tokyo Tribune Whole World Yout