

**THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION**  
**'AT THE HELM'**  
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*Niigata members trapped in a train in the snow encourage themselves by singing Soka Gakkai songs as the situation becomes life threatening.*

It took three hours before all the 900 train passengers from Niigata and Uetsu had eaten. The Nagaoka members didn't head for home until 2:00 in the morning.

The rice balls and miso soup had heartened the stranded members tremendously. A single bowl of soup, made with such loving care by their comrades in faith, reawakened in the passengers their pride as Soka Gakkai members and gave them the courage that they needed to endure the continuing hardship. They all renewed their determination not to be beaten. The atmosphere in the train became bright and lighthearted again. Some even joked, saying things like "That hot miso soup was great—better than guidance from 10 leaders!"

When the Nagaoka members arrived home, they immediately began to prepare breakfast for those in the train. They worked almost all night.

The next morning, Jan. 25, rice balls were delivered to the train again. There were more rice balls and miso soup for lunch and rice balls and pork soup in the evening.

The Nagaoka members also sent fresh diapers and milk for the infants, sweets for the children, as well as tangerines, tea, toilet paper, medical supplies and gauze masks for those with colds. The people in the train hadn't asked for these; they were an expression of the Nagaoka members' thoughtfulness, born of their deep concern.

Through all of this, the snow continued to fall. The train's roof was piled with about 3 feet of snow, and icicles fringed the edges. Some of the train's toilets had stopped up, and an unpleasant odor began to waft through the cars. Members of the Traffic Control Group worked valiantly with sticks and other makeshift tools to clear the obstructed toilets.

These young men outdid themselves, carrying out their duties around the clock with almost no rest or sleep. One of the TCG members, as he was running up and down the platform delivering messages between cars, slipped and fell into an open drain alongside the platform. Water for melting the snow was running into the drain, and he got completely soaked.

But he didn't let that deter him in the least from his duties. Determined to support and assist his fellow passengers, he kept working energetically, with a smile on his face. Everyone was moved by his sense of responsibility. His was a shining example of the truth that a person's real worth becomes apparent in times of adversity.

The train's heating had cut off in the early morning hours of Jan. 25, apparently because the fuel for the heating system had run out. In a flash, the temperature in the cars plummeted. Without heat in heavy snowfall, the situation was fast becoming life threatening.

Niigata Chapter Leader Kinji Eda and the TCG leader consulted with the stationmaster to find a solution to this crisis. The stationmaster, contacting everyone available, finally secured more fuel and got the heating up and going again.

Jan. 25 darkened into evening. It would be the third night since the group left the head temple. Though the warm support and encouragement of the Nagaoka Chapter members

had inspired them, they were worn-out. Forced to sleep night after night sitting up, unable to lie down and stretch out, their legs were swollen and stiff.

But they were more exhausted mentally than physically. In the 40-odd hours that they had been stranded at Miyauchi Station, they had not had a moment's ease. As the hours crept past, people began to grow anxious, impatient and irritated, and found themselves becoming short-tempered with one another.

Eda chanted daimoku silently as he tried in earnest to think of some way to handle the situation. Then he had an idea. He called out to the members in his car: "Everyone, let's have a discussion meeting! Let's start with some Soka Gakkai songs!"

Immediately, a young TCG member said: "All right. I'll sing 'The Traffic Control Group Song.'" He, too, wanted to cheer everyone up. Closing his right hand into a fist, he began to lead the song, moving his arm to the beat as others clapped in time.

*In our boldly advancing  
Soka Gakkai  
Young lions now stand resolute.*

His voice was powerful and clear, and it was filled with the determination never to be defeated. Those who knew the song joined in, and the clapping grew louder as animation returned to the members' faces. The young man's energetic performance had roused everyone's spirits.

When the song came to an end, Eda said, "Let's sing some more!"

"I'll lead you in 'Song of Indomitable Dignity,'" responded the youth again, and he started them off by vigorously singing the opening line:

*Into this defiled and evil world  
Go we of the Gakkai....*

This time, everyone in the car sang in unison.

*We advance unperturbed  
By obstacles blocking our way  
Upholding our faith and practice  
With indomitable dignity—  
Here lies our confidence....*

As they sang passionately, the joy and hope of dedicating themselves to their mission to realize kosen-rufu surged in their heart. They were filled with fresh resolve to make it through this ordeal. They sang one Soka Gakkai song after another, until finally everyone's eyes were wet with emotion.

When the people in the next car heard the singing, they began to sing Soka Gakkai songs, too. It spread from car to car, until everyone on the train was singing, their joyful voices echoing out into the blizzardy night.

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the  
novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto.  
The events take place in 1963.