

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION
'AT THE HELM'
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Facing the painful dissolution of the Soka Gakkai organization in Taiwan, Chapter Leader Zhu Qianxun remembers Shin'ichi Yamamoto's guidance: 'No matter what happens, no matter how hard things become, for the well-being of the people of Taiwan, I hope you will not allow the flame of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism to be extinguished. True victory will be apparent 30 or 40 years down the line.'

Southeast Asia General Chapter Leader Kazumasa Morikawa relayed Shin'ichi Yamamoto's message to Zhu Qianxun by telephone.

The evening of April 9, local district leaders gathered at Zhu's home and, under the supervision of a senior officer of the foreign affairs section of the Taipei police department, a meeting was held to announce the disbanding of the Soka Gakkai organization in Taiwan. Reporters from a number of Taiwan newspapers also turned up to cover the story.

As Zhu surveyed the members in the room, his heart ached. From now on, they would not be allowed to assemble like this under one roof. He was also angry and disappointed with himself for failing to win the authorities over. He felt that he had let his fellow members down.

Powerful emotions surged inside him, but Zhu controlled himself. Making an effort to remain calm, he began speaking in a quiet voice: "Today, April 9, the Soka Gakkai's Taipei Chapter has been ordered to disband by the government, having failed to gain official approval as a registered civic organization. I hereby announce our dissolution.

"We are consequently no longer permitted to hold meetings or conduct any activities as an organization..." Zhu could not continue. His voice choked, his eyes filled with tears, and he trembled with emotion.

The room was silent.

Just then, Zhu vividly recalled what President Yamamoto had said to him some two months earlier, at Taipei's Sungshan Airport on Jan. 27, during a stopover on Shin'ichi's return journey to Japan: "No matter what happens, no matter how hard things become, for the well-being of the people of Taiwan, I hope you will not allow the flame of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism to be extinguished. True victory will be apparent 30 or 40 years down the line. You will definitely triumph in the end."

Shin'ichi's encouragement now struck Zhu like a bolt of lightning. Biting his lip and wiping the tears from his eyes with his fist, he went on with a resolute tone: "Our chapter is disbanding, but Taiwan's constitution guarantees us the freedom of religion. Each of us can still practice our faith without interference from anyone.

"The way to happiness has not been closed to us. As long as we have faith, winter will absolutely turn to spring."

This was all he could say with the police present.

The following day, April 10, in addition to announcing the dissolution of the Soka Gakkai's Taipei Chapter, newspapers throughout Taiwan carried articles and photographs of the final meeting. The articles ran under such headlines as "Disbanding of Illegal 'Nichiren Sect' Announced Yesterday." This was the first that many of the members had

heard of the disbanding, and it came as a terrible shock.

Meetings were held in each district from April 11–14 to notify all the members of the situation and finalize the dissolution. For the members, no meeting was ever sadder or bitterer.

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