

**VOICES FROM THE ZONE
MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE
BY OSAMU KANEKO, CENTRAL ZONE YOUTHLEADER**

In Nichiren Daishonin's letter "Many in Body, One in Mind" he states:

If the spirit of many in body but one in mind prevails among the people, they will achieve their goals, whereas if one in body but different in mind, they can achieve nothing remarkable. (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 618)

After this passage, Nichiren Daishonin quotes an episode of King Wu of Chou leading 800 men who defeated King Chou of Yin with 700,000 soldiers. He refers to the prime reason for victory as nothing but "perfect unity."

Have you ever imagined what kind of battle and strategy King Wu employed to win over enemies with almost 100 times more soldiers than his army? Whenever I read this passage, I am so encouraged and hopeful just thinking about the amazing power and result we can create if and when we truly unite. At the same time, I cannot help but wonder what kind of organization, as well as what type of leaders and people, we would need to have in order to make the impossible possible (just like King Wu and his soldiers).

I often recall a men's leader with whom I practiced in Canada. Although he was just an ordinary man, he gained the respect and trust of all the members and created an organization that was bound together by friendship. He visited every single member and continued to encourage them by sharing SGI President Ikeda's guidance. He would often share his love toward President Ikeda and his dream to someday welcome President Ikeda to his area for the sake of the members and the community.

Finally, after 20 years of sincere chanting, President Ikeda visited his area. No one ever thought that he would visit a city with such a small membership. But I feel that it was that men's leader who made the impossible possible. I clearly remember the feeling and atmosphere of total unity with the members and the joy that was derived from it — all of us working together toward welcoming President Ikeda.

In his speech at this past July's Headquarters Leaders meeting, President Ikeda said: "It is beautiful when people can get along and work well together. Buddhism is a doctrine of cooperation and harmony. This spirit of friendship is articulated as many in body but one in mind and is the SGI's foremost treasure." Also in the same speech, he mentioned: "What is it that distinguishes a successful organization? Leaders who take committed action, who make unstinting, all-out efforts, who lead the way in visiting individual members at home to offer words of encouragement and guidance. This is what makes for a successful organization" (Sept. 1 *World Tribune*, p. 9).

This coming November, the Central Zone will host a 40th Anniversary event in Chicago. This will be our steppingstone toward May 3, 2001, and the SGI Family Youth Festival in our zone. Based on this guidance, youth in the Central Zone are totally determined to create incredible harmony and joy in our organization, together with the men's and women's division, to welcome President Ikeda back to the Midwest!