



THE NSGI TIMES



09/19
SEPTEMBER

A Buddha is not the one who sits quietly in a remote world of enlightenment. A Buddha is one who never ceases to take on challenges, who goes among those who are suffering and sweats and toils for their happiness.

YOU BE THE POWER OF ONE GOLDEN PILLARS
It's up to you.
dream, candle, laugh, smile, simple, NE, sunbeam, voice, change, nation, hope, care, spirits, wisdom, difference, Dream.

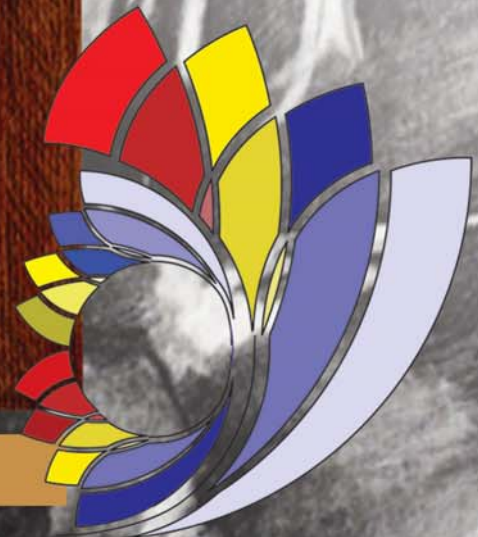


20th Anniversary
NSGI Men's Division

NSGI
MEN'S
DIVISION

CELEBRATING
20
YEARS

Year of Soka Victory - Toward our 90th Anniversary



Contents >>>

1

Editorial
(Zadankai Meeting)

A Grand
Bastion of the
Written Word

2

**Encouragement for the
Future
Division**

[10] Victoria
Harbor in Hong
Kong

4

The
Wisdom
for
Creating
Happiness
& Peace

Chapter 24:
Leaders
Who Guide
Others to
Happi-
ness—Part
2 [of 2]

9

NSGI
Activities

The Power
of One

11

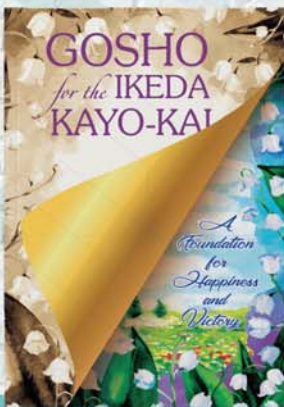
The New
Human
Revolution

(NHR Meeting)

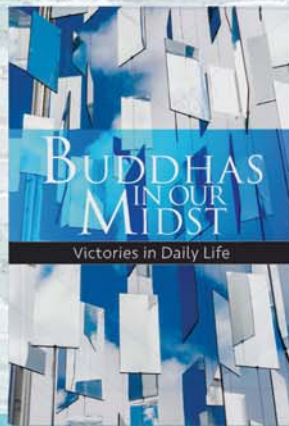
Awaiting the
Time

Volume 30,
Chapter 2,
Installments:
29-42

NEW RELEASES!



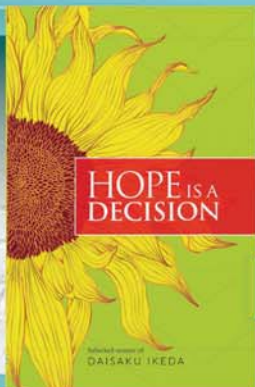
₹320



₹295



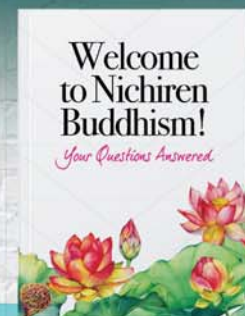
₹360



₹250



₹330



₹110



Visit www.eternalganges.com for Online Purchase, EG Showrooms, Partner Outlets
For queries, email sales@eternalganges.com or call 8527712881



A Grand Bastion of the Written Word

In one of his letters, Nichiren Daishonin praises a female disciple named Onichinyo, who was making sincere efforts to support kosen-rufu in spite of her modest circumstances. He explains to her: “A single character of the Lotus Sutra is like the great earth, which gives rise to all things. A single character is like the great ocean, which contains the water from all rivers. A single character is like the sun and moon, which illuminate all four continents. This single character changes and . . . becomes a Buddha” (WND-1, 1089).

The Lotus Sutra and the Goshō carry the living voices of Shakyamuni and the Daishonin, both of whom spoke out tirelessly in their determined effort to help all people attain enlightenment. In this age of the Latter Day of the Law—an age of quarrels and disputes—the Soka Gakkai newspaper Seikyo Shimbun, fully imbued with the wondrous power of each word of these sacred texts, is carrying on the great struggle to communicate the truth through the written word.

I will never forget the early days of the Seikyo Shimbun when, under the leadership of my great mentor in kosen-rufu, Josei Toda, I exerted myself energetically in editing, delivering, and

promoting the paper. I still fondly recall our small, cramped editorial office in the Ichigaya Building (near Tokyo’s Ichigaya Station).

Our members have embraced the Seikyo Shimbun and worked wholeheartedly to realize the shared wish of mentor and disciple to enable people all around Japan and the world to read our newspaper. Today, the Seikyo Shimbun has gained a large and dedicated readership, and some 80 sister publications, such as the Hwakwang Shinmun of SGI–South Korea (KSGI), have appeared across the globe.

The impressive new Soka Gakkai World Seikyo Center, a grand bastion of the written word, is now nearing completion in Tokyo. My wife, Kaneko, and I wish to express our deepest respect and appreciation to our uncrowned heroes, the Seikyo Shimbun deliverers; our volunteer regional correspondents; our newspaper promotion chiefs; and all those who have contributed to the newspaper’s present remarkable growth.

The Seikyo Shimbun is the “great earth” of happiness. Through its articles, it provides not only documentary and theoretical proof, but actual proof in the form of personal

experiences attesting to the wonderful benefit of practicing Nichiren Buddhism. In this way, it offers hope and inspiration for human revolution, for overcoming the most challenging destiny and achieving happiness for both oneself and others.

The Seikyo Shimbun is the “great ocean” of peace. Transcending all differences, it embraces people the world over, actively encourages cultural and educational exchange, and creates beautiful, shimmering waves that carry the Daishonin’s ideal of “establishing the correct teaching for the peace of the land” far and wide.

The Seikyo Shimbun is the “sun and moon” of truth and justice. It illuminates the darkness of our confused and troubled times with the light of the life-affirming philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism, and points the way forward for humanity, speaking out for what is right with a courageous lion’s roar.

A new bastion of the written word dedicated to fostering, uniting, and illuminating world citizens now stands majestically before us. Proudly sharing the Seikyo Shimbun, let us reach out to others in dialogue, showing utmost respect for each person in the spirit of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging, and help as many people as possible form a connection with Nichiren Buddhism as a cause for their happiness.

Together with the Seikyo Shimbun, continue writing a golden “day-to-day record” (WND-2, 843) in your lives, living each day without regret.

(Translated from the September 2019 issue of the Daibyakurenge, the Soka Gakkai monthly study journal)

The Seikyo Shimbun is the “great earth” of happiness. Through its articles, it provides not only documentary and theoretical proof, but actual proof in the form of personal experiences attesting to the wonderful benefit of practicing Nichiren Buddhism. In this way, it offers hope and inspiration for human revolution, for overcoming the most challenging destiny and achieving happiness for both oneself and others.

SGI President Ikeda's Encouragement for the Future Division

Messages from Our Brilliant Planet

A series of photo essays by SGI President Ikeda addressing members of the boys and girls division.

[10] Victoria Harbor in Hong Kong

One month has passed since the start of the new year (2018). Just as our brilliant planet continues to move around the sun, I hope all of you in the boys and girls division are also energetically forging ahead in your lives. Even if your New Year's resolutions only lasted for a few days, the important thing is to keep trying. If you challenge something even for three days, you'll achieve three days' worth of growth. If you repeat that pattern 10 times, that will add up to a whole month of progress!

If at first you don't succeed, just try and try again, telling yourself: "Tomorrow is another day!" Keep pressing on with renewed determination and a bright, invincible spirit. Please be bold and positive, and know that I'm praying for you, too.

*

A number of places around the world, including China, Singapore, and Vietnam, celebrate the new year in February. This important holiday is known as Chinese New Year and occurs between late January and early February, with the exact date differing each year. This year (2018), Chinese New Year falls on February 16, the birthday of Nichiren Daishonin.

In the past, I've also celebrated Chinese New Year with fellow Soka Gakkai members in Hong Kong. Drawings of children holding large goldfish and carp (symbols of good luck) adorned the streets, and red and gold banners with messages of happiness and good luck could be found everywhere. There were fireworks and

lion dances, too, as everyone joyfully welcomed the new year.

Hong Kong is an attractive tourist destination and international center. The origins of its development as such can be traced back to the bustling trade around Victoria Harbor, one of the world's busiest harbors, with ships of all shapes and sizes passing through every day.

During my visits, I would often gaze out over the harbor together with my delightful friends in Hong Kong and take photos of the view. The ships moving through the water always seemed to be engaged in lively conversation with the buildings lining the harbor.

*

Zoom zoom! Sparky the boat is racing ahead, cutting through the water.

"Wait for me—!" his sister, a boat named Hope, calls out.

Looking behind him, Sparky realizes that Hope is still at the pier. "What's the matter?" he asks. "Come on, let's go!"

"It's my first time and I'm scared! Will I be able to safely reach my destination?" she says, about to burst into tears.

"Don't worry!" comes the reassuring voice of one of the buildings along the harbor. "Since it's your first time, just take it slow and you'll arrive safely. By the time you return, you'll be filled with confidence!"

Sparky adds: "I was afraid the first time I went out to sea, too. But these

buildings cheered me on, and I gave it my best shot."

"But what if I run into strong winds along the way?" Hope asks, worried.

A usually silent tower standing near the building calls out with a smile: "You'll be fine! At first, I was terrified of rising so high into the sky myself, but thanks to the encouragement of those around me, I found the courage to keep going!"

"Really?" Hope asks, surprised.

"Yes, you have nothing to worry about!" the tower says. "Since I can see far into the distance, I'll be watching over you. So go ahead and boldly set sail!"

Hope is still looking quite anxious.

"Oh, I know!" the building speaks up again, as if an idea just popped into her head. "How about moving just a tiny bit at first? If you're afraid, you can always turn right back."

A look of relief sweeps across Hope's face. "Well, in that case, maybe I can give it a try . . ."

"That's the spirit!" says the tower, resoundingly. "The important thing is taking that first step forward. Nothing changes if you stay still, but as soon as you take that first step, things will be set in motion and you'll be able to take the second and third steps, too. The first step is key!"

"Thank you, everyone!" Hope calls out. "I'm going to be brave!" She cautiously starts her motor. Vroom-vroom-vroom!

“Thank you, Mrs. Building! Thank you, Mr. Tower!” says Sparky. “We’re off! Follow me, Hope!”

Sparky revs up his engine and charges ahead, trailing a wake that sparkles brightly in the sunlight.

Seeing this, Hope sets out as well. Zoom, zoom!

Watching them sail off, the tower remarks: “Wow! Look how far they’ve gone already!”

“Of course,” says the building. “They might not be aware of it, but they both have top-class engines. If they choose to, they can cross the entire ocean, in all its vastness, and go anywhere their hearts desire, carrying people and goods, hopes and dreams.

Toot, toot! Toot, toot! The cheerful sounds of Sparky and Hope’s

whistles echo into the distance as they make their way.

*

For ships, the harbor is their safe place, the point from which they can start their voyage and to where they can return and rest before setting out to sea once again.

You have a harbor, too—your parents and fellow members in your local community. At any time or place, the Soka family is here for you, warmly watching over you, ready to extend its support. You have many friends and allies everywhere.

Knowing this, I hope you will boldly take on challenges without being afraid of making mistakes. After all, there is no such thing as failure. The only real failure is being afraid to try in the

first place. Even if things don’t work out as you hoped, you are already a winner because you tried. And as long as you keep on trying without giving up, you’ll absolutely be able to succeed.

When you’re feeling anxious or worried about something, or when you’re feeling down, I hope you’ll try talking to your parents or fellow members.

Every day is a brand-new day, a voyage filled with fresh discovery, and you, my young friends, are all ship captains sailing across the vast ocean toward world peace. Your futures are bright with promise. When you run into fierce opposing winds, please summon forth even greater courage, telling yourself “I won’t be defeated!” and continue pressing onward cheerfully. Remember, you have the best possible engine to drive you forward—chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

Today, again, fueled with daimoku, let’s embark on a new voyage from the harbor of hope!

*

(Translated from the November 1, 2017, issue of Boys and Girls Hope News, the Soka Gakkai monthly newspaper for the boys and girls division)



Background:

Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China located in the southeastern part of the country. Formerly a British colony, it reverted to China on July 1, 1997, and continues to thrive as a “harbor of hope.”

President Ikeda first visited Hong Kong on January 28, 1961, and formed a Soka Gakkai district there, the first to be established among Japan’s Asian neighbors. “If you pool your energies and work together, you will be able to bring forth tremendous strength,” he told the members at the time. “A solidly united group of people can summon forth a power that is many times greater than the sum of its members.” To date, President Ikeda has visited Hong Kong on 20 occasions to meet and encourage members there and hold dialogues about the future with leaders from various fields of society.

In 1992, Hong Kong Soka Kindergarten, the first kindergarten under the Soka school system outside Japan, was established. In addition to Cantonese, the students learn Mandarin and English, and in 2006, the school was designated as an “outstanding kindergarten” by the local government.



The Wisdom for Creating Happiness and Peace

Selected Excerpts of SGI President Daisaku Ikeda's Guidance

Part 3: Kosen-rufu and World Peace

Chapter 24: Leaders Who Guide Others to Happiness—Part 2 [of 2]

24.6 The Significance of Soka Gakkai Leadership Positions

Introduction:

President Ikeda explains the great significance and responsibility of leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai.

President Ikeda's Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a Tokyo No. 2 Area executive conference, Tokyo, February 3, 2005.

The Soka Gakkai is the organization for kosen-rufu that is acting in exact accord with the Buddha's intent.

All leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai are for the sake of kosen-rufu. For that reason, they have great significance.

Those who recognize the importance of their leadership positions and strive to carry out their duties with a sense of responsibility will lead lives of supreme value and fulfillment. They will accumulate good fortune and benefit that will endure throughout eternity, and walk a sure path leading in the direction of victory and happiness.

All kinds of organizations, including businesses and governments, have leadership positions. But leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai are of a completely different nature because they are based on the Mystic Law, which permeates life throughout the three existences of past, present, and future.

Never put your position in society ahead of, or look down on, your position in the Soka Gakkai.

To make light of Soka Gakkai positions and treat them casually is foolish. Those who do so ultimately destroy their own good fortune and slide down the slope to unhappiness and defeat.

Of course, organizational positions in the Soka Gakkai are not a measure of faith. It is completely inappropriate and inexcusable for leaders to behave high-handedly because of their positions. Leaders have a duty to serve and work for the happiness of the members.

Also, you shouldn't allow your organizational position to define or limit you as a person. Remain free and true to yourself. Your faith is what matters above all. What's crucial is your awareness as leaders.

The Soka Gakkai is an organization that exists to help people—to share the practice of Nichiren Buddhism with those who are suffering and enable them to become happy. Nothing is nobler, therefore, than

serving in leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai.

I hope you will have an even deeper awareness of your responsibilities as leaders and do your best to fulfill them. Through doing so, you will gain immense benefit and realize a state of life that guarantees you eternally indestructible happiness in lifetime after lifetime.

24.7 Live with Energy and Vigor!

Introduction:

President Ikeda discusses the requirements and qualities needed by leaders in the Soka Gakkai.

President Ikeda's Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a representative leaders gongyo meeting, Tokyo, September 11, 2004.

Mr. Toda was always in complete earnest in the struggle for kosen-rufu. When the leaders are truly serious, the members will be, too. In such an organization, no matter how intense the struggle, everyone will share a warm spirit of mutual trust.

The commitment and actions of the central leaders are paramount. In accord with the principle of “consistency from beginning to end,” they determine the success or failure of that particular organizational unit as a whole.

Buddhism is strict. Our commitment in faith must be firm and true.

Self-centeredness and arrogance not only destroy one’s own faith, but also that of others. Arrogance is a devilish function that destroys faith. Only by banishing arrogance can we achieve new growth and development in kosen-rufu. Please deeply engrave this in your hearts.

In particular, men need to value and respect women. Also, seniors must support their juniors and help them grow.

The higher your organizational position, the more humble and courteous you should be to others. That is what makes a person truly admirable.

The important thing is to live with energy and vigor, because that proves the benefit of our Buddhist practice. As the Daishonin indicates: “You will grow younger, and your good fortune will accumulate” (WND-1, 464).

Buddhism teaches the principle that “earthly desires lead to enlightenment.” Chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with fierce determination, we blast away all problems and worries!

We are living in a time of turbulent change. Everything is moving at a rapid pace. The more this intensifies,

the more youthful in spirit our leaders need to be. Those who are passive, timid, and don’t fight for kosen-rufu will quickly grow old. Strive, take action, and put your mind to work for the happiness of the members. Bravely take on challenges. That will keep you young and living longer, and fill your life with joy.

Winning leaders move forward confidently, with a refreshing, exuberant spirit. They speak convincingly. Their faces shine and their lives brim with vitality.

Leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai are supremely noble assignments in the struggle for kosen-rufu. The greater your responsibility, the greater the challenges you will face, but also the greater the benefit you will gain. You will achieve victory as a human being, and shine and succeed in society. The experience will add something positive to your life.

Some of you have vice leadership positions. If you fail to clearly establish what your responsibilities are and don’t put any real effort into fulfilling them, you will receive no benefit. What matters is whether or not you burn with a genuine fighting spirit for kosen-rufu. “It is the heart that is important” (WND-1, 1000).

If you devote yourself to faith with a pure heart, you can polish the mirror of your life so that it shines eternally.

Please continue to forge ahead on the path of kosen-rufu and leave a record of victory and success on the stage of your mission.

24.8 Finding and Fostering Capable Individuals

Introduction:

President Ikeda explains that an important mission of Soka Gakkai leaders is finding capable people and then fostering those individuals to surpass them.

President Ikeda’s Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a Soka Gakkai Headquarters leaders meeting, Tokyo, January 20, 1994.

Both Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda put their greatest energy into fostering capable individuals.

Everything depends upon people, upon capable individuals. The Law is important, but people are key. It is people who spread the Law, and the Law enables people to flourish.

I hope, therefore, that as leaders, you will devote yourselves wholeheartedly to fostering capable individuals. Never look at your juniors as subordinates or underlings. We successfully foster the growth of others—and ourselves—when we strive with the conviction that they have even greater potential than we do, and resolve to do everything we can to help them surpass us.

Leaders need to think about how they can help everyone become happy, become successful, and give full play to their potential.

If we just carry out activities routinely, without that special focus, we won’t be able to raise capable people. We need to consciously chant and make active efforts toward that goal. We cannot build a full-fledged golden tower of capable individuals by simply going through the motions.

We are living in a time of turbulent change. Everything is moving at a rapid pace. The more this intensifies, the more youthful in spirit our leaders need to be. Those who are passive, timid, and don’t fight for kosen-rufu will quickly grow old. Strive, take action, and put your mind to work for the happiness of the members. Bravely take on challenges. That will keep you young and living longer, and fill your life with joy.

Mr. Makiguchi said that fostering capable individuals “is like trying to find gold in sand.” That is very true. He praised his fellow members, saying: “You are truly gold found among sand. Yet, though you are gold, you didn’t shine as gold to begin with; you were like muddy rocks. . . . Being ‘found,’ you now shine as splendid gold.”

All people possess a golden brilliance within them. As leaders, we must constantly bear this in mind and do everything possible to help them reveal their golden light.

It is important for leaders to meet with many people and take wide-ranging action, but what is the ultimate purpose of such efforts? To find gold in the form of capable individuals and foster them until they shine with their true golden brilliance. We must never forget that crucial point.

That’s why Mr. Toda, inheriting Mr. Makiguchi’s spirit, declared: “The Soka Gakkai must build a bastion of capable individuals!”

“Building a bastion of capable individuals”—this is our eternal guideline. To fight, win, and ceaselessly open the way forward with capable individuals—this is the Soka Gakkai’s creed.

From this year, I am determined to put even greater energy into fostering capable individuals.

I want to foster people who will genuinely work for kosen-rufu, leaders willing to work hard for the members, world-class leaders, not self-serving individuals who sit back and let others do the hard work. Wherever I go and whatever I do, I want to train and foster such leaders.

24.9 One Person of Passionate Commitment Is Stronger Than a Force of Untold Numbers

Introduction:

President Ikeda expresses his firm belief that his prayers and efforts based on a vow to protect his mentor and fellow members by taking on the brunt of all persecutions opened the way to worldwide kosen-rufu.

President Ikeda’s Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a Japan-Italy representatives conference, Gunma Prefecture, August 11, 2000.

In August 53 years ago (in 1947), I became a disciple of Josei Toda. Soon after joining the Soka Gakkai, I read the Daishonin’s writing “On Practicing the Buddha’s Teachings.” There is one passage that says:

Once you become a disciple or lay supporter of the votary who practices the true Lotus Sutra in accord with the Buddha’s teachings, you are bound to face the three types of enemies [arrogant lay people, arrogant priests, and arrogant false sages]. Therefore, from the very day you listen to [and take faith in] this sutra, you should be fully prepared to face the great persecutions of the three types of enemies that are certain to be more horrible now after the Buddha’s passing. (WND-1, 391)

As a disciple who took Mr. Toda’s spirit as my own, I made the following vow: “Let me alone bear the brunt of any persecutions. Allow me to protect my mentor Mr. Toda and all the members of the Soka Gakkai.”

Over the last 53 years, I have constantly prayed and striven to fulfill that vow. It is my greatest personal pride that, while fighting fiercely against the three types of enemies predicted by the Lotus Sutra and the Daishonin’s writings, I have been able to open the way for worldwide kosen-rufu, extending our movement to 163 countries and territories, without a single person losing their life to persecution.

When the Daishonin was about to be executed at Tatsunokuchi, he exclaimed: “What greater joy could there be?” (WND-1, 767). And when he was exiled to Sado, he declared: “Because I view things this way, I feel immeasurable delight even though I am now an exile” (WND-1, 386).

In life and in the struggle for kosen-rufu, all our sufferings and earthly desires are fuel for our enlightenment. The tougher the challenges we face, the greater the joy and benefit and the higher the life condition we will ultimately savor.

It is important for leaders to meet with many people and take wide-ranging action, but what is the ultimate purpose of such efforts? To find gold in the form of capable individuals and foster them until they shine with their true golden brilliance. We must never forget that crucial point.

It's important for leaders to resolve to work harder than anyone. They should also keep striving and live their lives cheerfully and confidently, determined to enjoy themselves more than anyone. People with such resolve are invincible; no one is a match for them. One person of passionate commitment is stronger than a force of untold numbers.

The outcome of a struggle is decided by the leaders' determination, by their sense of responsibility.

The members in the early days of the Soka Gakkai rose up with a spirit of absolute determination to triumph and achieve kosen-rufu in their communities. If you have that determination, capable people will appear and join you in realizing that goal. Your resolve will also be communicated to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas throughout the universe, who will respond to your dedication. In other words, resolute prayer is the key. And just as the fields burst into flower when spring comes, all of your efforts, too, will blossom without fail when the right time comes.

24.10 Having Sincere Concern for the Members

Introduction:

President Ikeda expresses his appreciation to members who made the journey to attend a Soka Gakkai Headquarters leaders meeting in spite of difficult travel conditions caused by record snowfalls.

President Ikeda's Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a Soka Gakkai Headquarters leaders meeting, Tokyo, January 6, 2006.

From the end of last year (2005), many areas around Japan, particularly Hokkaido, Tohoku, Shin'etsu, Hokuriku, and Chugoku, have been experiencing record snowfalls. To all our members who are battling heavy snows in places such as Akita, Niigata, and Fukui prefectures, please know that my prayers and thoughts are with you. My deepest appreciation also to

everyone who has traveled here despite many snow-related delays and inconveniences. I know that it has taken our Akita Prefecture women's division leader, who runs a bakery, two whole days to get here. I have heard of many other similar cases.

Twenty-four hours a day, I receive an unending stream of reports on matters, big and small, concerning our members. If there has been a traffic accident, I know where it's happened. I know who's in hospital at the present moment and what condition they are in. Reports pour in from morning until night. Many times, a report has prompted me to jump out of bed in the middle of the night to chant daimoku.

Leadership positions in the Soka Gakkai have nothing to do with status or rank like those found in society. Genuine Soka Gakkai leaders are those who fulfill every task before them with a solemn sense of responsibility, working single-mindedly for the welfare of the members and for kosen-rufu. This is something that must never, ever be forgotten.

Nichiren Daishonin writes: "Concerned about my life in the mountains, you had your messenger make his way through the snow to call on me. Your sincerity has no doubt been recognized by the Lotus Sutra and the ten demon daughters [guardian deities of Buddhism]" (WND-1, 891). When I heard about the damage caused by the heavy snowfalls, I immediately thought of this passage.

Making one's way through the snow for the sake of the Mystic Law—taken in the broadest sense in terms of our activities for kosen-rufu today, this corresponds to our earnest efforts to offer guidance and encouragement, to share the teachings of Buddhism with others, and to be diligent in organizational communications and reporting.

The Daishonin highly praises such dedication, telling the letter's recipient [the lay priest Matsuno Rokuro Saemon] that he appreciates his sincerity and pure intent. In the same way, the Daishonin is surely applauding

Twenty-four hours a day, I receive an unending stream of reports on matters, big and small, concerning our members. If there has been a traffic accident, I know where it's happened. I know who's in hospital at the present moment and what condition they are in. Reports pour in from morning until night. Many times, a report has prompted me to jump out of bed in the middle of the night to chant daimoku.

all of you most heartily for your devoted efforts. Your benefit is beyond measure.

Naturally, I don't want any of you to overexert yourselves or put yourselves at risk. I ask our leaders not to place unreasonable demands on members, but to always give foremost priority to everyone's health and safety.

I am praying with all my heart for the safety and well-being of our members living in heavy snowfall areas.

*

24.11 The Foremost Message of the Buddha

Introduction:

President Ikeda declares that the foremost message that Shakyamuni and Nichiren Daishonin wished to convey to us is to respect our fellow Buddhist practitioners and our fellow human beings.

President Ikeda's Guidance:

From a speech delivered at a joint conference of prefecture leaders and Tokyo ward leaders, Tokyo, December 21, 1991.

Your selfless, unsparing, and tireless efforts for the sake of your fellow members, sincere practitioners of Buddhism, and for kosen-rufu are incredibly noble. The essence of the Lotus Sutra and the fundamental spirit of Nichiren Buddhism pulse vibrantly in such actions to protect and care for others.

Your selfless, unsparing, and tireless efforts for the sake of your fellow members, sincere practitioners of Buddhism, and for kosen-rufu are incredibly noble. The essence of the Lotus Sutra and the fundamental spirit of Nichiren Buddhism pulse vibrantly in such actions to protect and care for others.

This is the final message that Shakyamuni taught in the 28 chapters of the Lotus Sutra: treat those who uphold the sutra as if they are Buddhas.

I am referring to the passage from the "Encouragements of the Bodhisattva Universal Worthy" (28th chapter of the Lotus Sutra in which Shakyamuni tells Bodhisattva Universal Worthy: "If you see a person who accepts and upholds this sutra, you should rise and greet him from afar, showing him the same respect you would a Buddha" (LSOC28, 365).

This is the very last teaching presented by Shakyamuni in the Lotus Sutra. It is also a passage that we of the Soka Gakkai have been putting into practice in our own lives.

The fundamental attitude of Soka Gakkai leaders must always be to value their fellow members to the highest degree and serve them sincerely. This spirit is what has enabled the Soka Gakkai to grow to the extent it has. Putting the members first is the eternal and unchanging spirit of the Soka Gakkai.

In The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings, the Daishonin comments on that passage from the "Encouragements of the Bodhisattva Universal Worthy" chapter as follows:

In this chapter Shakyamuni Buddha revealed the foremost point he wished to convey to us. The Buddha preached the Lotus Sutra

over a period of eight years, and eight characters sum up the message that he has left behind for living beings in this later age, the Latter Day of the Law. It is in the passage that reads, "Therefore, Universal Worthy, if you see a person who accepts and upholds this sutra, you should rise and greet him from afar, showing him the same respect you would a Buddha" (chapter twenty-eight), particularly the eight characters that make up the end of the passage, "you should rise and greet him," etc. With this passage the words of Shakyamuni Buddha in the sutra come to an end, thus in effect ending the sutra.

The word "should" shows that these words refer to the future. The words "should rise and greet him from afar" indicate that the sutra passage is saying that one should without fail show the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra the kind of respect one would show to a Buddha. (OTT, 192–93)

We need to respect and value most highly those who embrace the Mystic Law. That is the "foremost point [the Buddha] wished to convey to us." The word "should" [in the phrase "you should rise and greet him from afar"] refers to the future, the Latter Day of the Law in which we are living at present. In a specific sense, the "practitioners of the Lotus Sutra" refers to Nichiren Daishonin, but in a general sense, it refers to all his disciples dedicated to kosen-rufu in the Latter Day of the Law.

Respect the practitioners of Buddhism, respect all human beings—this is the foremost message the Buddha seeks to convey. We of the Soka Gakkai are inspired by, grateful for, and in complete understanding with this humanism, this love of humanity, that pulses vibrantly in the teachings of Shakyamuni and Nichiren Daishonin. Let us vow together to advance forever in perfect accord with this message.

(Translated from the January 2017 issue of the Daibyakurenge, the Soka Gakkai monthly study journal)

The Power of One

Navin Manandhar

NSGIT

This month is a very special month for Nepal SGI. August 24, 2019 is the 72nd anniversary of SGI President Daisaku Ikeda joined the Soka Gakkai as the disciple of the Second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda. To commemorate this historic month, NSGI Men's Division 20th General Meeting was held on August 17, 2019 at Nepal SGI Peace Centre, Kalanki.

78 powerful MD members including 3 members from Pokhara attended the meeting to celebrate the August 24, Men's day. They were cheerfully supported by 70 WD and Youth members.

To ensure a successful meeting, over the previous month the Men's division carried out a campaign of weekly meetings conducted in each chapter, along with extensive home visitation and study specially selected for the Men's division. Svetkamal Chapter Block Leader Mr. Laxman Dangol and Sayapatri chapter leader Mr. Gunja lama reported wonderful victories during the one month campaign. Chanting and making efforts to connect with the entire MD and talking with many others in accord with our mentor's teachings, they shared their joy of bringing back 5 old members who joined in meetings after many years. Happily, 9 new members joined the SGI during this one month campaign.

This one month campaign helped to form a strong spirit of unity among the Men's division towards the goal of Kosen Rufu, and to achieve the goal of inviting 500 Bodhisattvas of the Earth to join in Nepal SGI's 5th General Meeting to be held on December 2019.

8 members powerfully shared their experiences and 4 members recited their short poems based on the theme "The Power of One". Each member's experience was filled with gratitude which portrays the actual proof of prayer and how to fight, never losing hope. In

his experience, confronting sufferings and winning time and again Mr. Navin Pradhan concluded his sharing by a quote of the Irish novelist Oliver Goldsmith "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

When "I'll never be able to do that" is transformed into "I can do it"; they were able to break through the walls of self-imposed limitations. Experiences rolled on one after the next and showed the power of transformation which lies within the heart of everyone. Their individual victories showed there is hope for the prevailing mood of powerlessness in our country today. The hall thrilled with an appreciation for their wonderful victories.

Filled with gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of this historic meeting, district coordinator Khub Bahadur Baral presented his full report for Machhapuchhre district in Pokhara. The meetings there are now conducted regularly in an increasingly joyful spirit, he said. Addressing the meeting in high spirits, District Leader Mr. Dhurba Lal Pradhan was very excited while sharing SGI President Daisaku Ikeda's journey of faith. His lifelong dedication for world peace and happiness was lauded by the people, and benefitted the whole world, he said.

Next, Men's Division Chief, Mr. Navin Manandhar spoke about the power of one, which is the power of hope and how a single individual can show the power of change. He urged every individual to bring a positive change from within so that we can improve not only our

present situations, but also leave a better world for future generations. He suggested a simple yet profound determination for all to carry out this year. He said our daily morning and evening gongyo, reading the Gosho and studying sensei's guidance should be carried out without fail. Our weekly determinations will be; 1-hour daimoku for peace and 1 home visit. Our monthly determinations are one victory experience, 1% contribution of total income and 1 new dialogue. He requested each one to subscribe to one Himali Shanti, shakubuku one friend and prepare one paper presentation in a year. In addition to this, he encouraged all 4 divisions to become a member of the one-hour daimoku club doing minimum one-hour daimoku every day to deepen their faith.

Finally, the General Director stepped on to the stage accompanied by great cheers from the Men's division after their magnificent victory. The power of one comes from the belief that you are right. He said.

All members left the hall for a commemorative photograph in a vibrant spirit. The cheerful faces were captured in photos but the gathering of many in body one in mind determined to stand affirm as golden pillars were deeply consolidated in the heart of members to shoulder the responsibility of widening Kosenrufu movement in Nepal.



एकले तर जोडिदै



कृष्ण द्वाडी

अन्धविश्वासले ढाकेको समाजमा,
अज्ञानताले आक्रान्त मानिसहरु वीच,
सत्यको ज्योती बोवदै विषपान गरेका
एकले तर दृढ र विश्वस्त शुकरात जस्तै ।

लामो कालरात्री रुपी भ्रमण बाँचेका,
लोकको भ्रम चिर्दै, पृथ्वीले सूर्य परिक्रमा गर्ने,
ज्ञान ज्योती बाल्ने, सधैं तिरस्कृत हुँदा पनि,
एकले आवाजलाई निरन्तरता दिने कोपरनिकस
जस्तै ।

अन्धकारको लामो चत्रमा,
सांसारिक दुःख निवारणार्थ, मानव मुक्तिको,
अखण्ड ओती रुपी ज्ञान र सत्यको,
अनि,

जन्म जन्मान्तरको भवचक्रवाट मुक्तिको,
सहज र सरल मार्गको खोजीमा,
महाभिनिक्रमणमा निरुक्केको एकले,
विश्वस्त, प्रतिबद्ध र समर्पित मानव आत्मा जस्तै,

एक, पाँच अनि थपदै बह्दै,
एक जनपद अनि अर्को गर्दै,
पिँढी दर पिँढी सार्दै,

क्रमसः पूर्व, दक्षिण अनि उत्तर फैलिदै,
मानव मात्रको कल्याणमा समर्पित बोधिज्ञान ।

समयान्तरमा नयाँ काँचुली र कलेवरमा,
पूर्वबाट फेरी पश्चिम फैलिदै आएको बोधिज्ञानका,
प्रतिबद्ध, एकले तर एकतारमा जोडिएका,
कपासका हामी,

सांसारिक इच्छाबाट बोधिज्ञान बटुल्दै,
कोसेनरुफुमा एकले तर अनवरत,
आँधीवीचको विशाल वृक्ष जस्तै अटल,
अगाडी बढ्नु छ ।

एकले र भावका तारहरु जोडिदै,
एकले तर भावका तारहरुसंग जोडिदै ।
एकले तर भावका तारहरुसंग जोडिदै ।

सेन्सेइ



राजन विक्रम थापा

सेन्सेइ सेन्सेइ हो सेन्सेइ तिमी नै हो गुरु
अन्त जसै तिमी हो तिमी बन्यौ शुरु
म भुल्ने छैन गुरु म भुल्ने छैन गुरु
शान्तिको पथ छोडी कतै झुल्ने छैन गुरु

ज्ञान कै ज्योति बाली सधैं हिन्दु गुरु
तिमै आँखाले सारा संसार चिन्छु गुरु
तिमो काँधको भार म आफै लिन्छु गुरु
कोसेनरुफु यात्रा सम्हाली दिन्छु गुरु



इश्वरी स्वतिवडा

सिकाई आ-आफ्नै
घर्तिबाट सिकें मैले,
सबैको भार उठाउन
आकाशबाट सिकें मैले,
मा.....थी उदै जान

सूर्यबाट सिकें मैले,
संसारै उज्यालो बनाउन
चन्द्रमाबाट सिकें मैले,
सबैको पीडा गर्न

सिंहबाट सिकें मैले,
आफ्नो रक्षा गर्न
शहीदबाट सिकें मैले,
हाँसी हाँसी गर्न

The power of Buddhism



Lekh R. Shakya

Let's know Buddhist teachings,
How to be it a powerful,
And compassionate at a time.

If we ignore power,
We ignore powerful Buddhist teachings
Come and talk on the power of Buddha's
teachings.

Today, many of us
Blind to our own power,
May there be a part to privilege.

Buddhist from entire world,
Were obsessed with social justice
and learnt the power of Buddhist practice.

People search for universal brotherhood,
As the ultimate goal for human beings,
So their soul looking for peace and harmony.

People raising voices for peaceful
coexistence,
From all over the countries of the entire
world,
the mighty and the great countries no
listening.

Panch sheela may be a powerful one
This may be the only a foundation for
harmony
That may be our one powerful and final
path.

Therefore, let's learn to respect each other,
Let's learn to no interfere with other affairs,
And let's learn equality and mutual benefit
in all sectors.

Let us enter inthe root of Nichiren's
teaching,
Let us follow the Lotus Sutra as he taught,
Let be follow the 10 principles created by
Nichiren to build value creating society.

A friend asked me about the faith in Nichiren
Buddhism,
I said there are great power in chanting and
it is more powerful than doing the
meditation.

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION

- Daisaku Ikeda

Awaiting the Time

Volume 30, Chapter 2, Installments: 29-42

At the Kanagawa Training Center in Hakone, the Shinjuku Culture Center in Tokyo, and other Soka Gakkai facilities, Shin'ichi continued day after day to meet with divisional and regional representatives, offering them guidance and encouragement.

Certain tabloids and other news media kept up their attacks on the Soka Gakkai with false or distorted reporting. But, as serenely and steadily as the sun moving along its set course, Shin'ichi pressed on in his efforts to personally encourage and guide members.

Nothing is more inspiring than seeing people you have encouraged summon fresh determination in faith, challenge and overcome karmic obstacles blocking their way forward, and achieve resounding victory in their lives.

Shin'ichi enjoyed speaking with young people. While conversing with several young men's division and student division leaders at the Kanagawa Culture Center in Yokohama, he said: "It's more than six months since the Soka Gakkai made a new start. How are all the youth doing? Are they in high spirits?"

A young men's division leader answered: "Everyone is working hard. But they're sad that you're no longer giving guidance at meetings."

Shin'ichi responded directly: "If that's how the youth feel, then you must all take action. Otherwise, you are mere bystanders, not protagonists. Youth must resolve to take full responsibility and be the driving force for development."

The young men's division leader replied with a troubled expression: "We do suggest ideas for new activities, but our seniors in the men's division usually don't approve."

Shin'ichi said with a smile: "To a greater or lesser extent, that's the case in every organization and society. Young people offer new ideas and plans, and their seniors oppose them.

"Older people have rich life experience. They have formed a set of principles and approaches from that experience, and they tend to judge everything based on that.

"And being backed by the wisdom of experience, their evaluations are usually correct. But older people also tend to react negatively to things they are unfamiliar with. And when times change dramatically, their experience-based approaches become useless. If they fail to see that, they can make errors in judgment.

"Men's division leaders need to be aware of that and make a positive effort to listen to the ideas of young people."

“As youth division leaders,” Shin'ichi continued, “you’ll have to hone your powers of persuasion to gain the men’s and women’s division leaders’ support for your ideas.

“You need to be able to explain clearly and in an organized, logical manner why your proposals should be adopted. And it’s also important to show the basis for your ideas—for instance, by citing concrete data and actual examples. If what you say is reasonable, no one can fail to accept it. Nichiren Daishonin writes: “Buddhism is reason. Reason will win over your lord” (WND-1, 839). Sharing Buddhism with others is the best means for developing your powers of persuasion.

“It’s also important to have the ardent passion of youth. When young successors make earnest, wholehearted appeals to start something new, their enthusiasm naturally inspires people to support them in their aims. When you really move people’s hearts, the situation will change dramatically.

“In addition, you need to establish a record of success. If your plans and proposals are innovative and always create fresh momentum for our movement, people will be eager to listen to your ideas. In other words, positive results build trust.

“Don’t immediately give up or become discouraged because one of your ideas isn’t accepted, either. If you think what you are proposing is truly necessary and important, examine any flaws or problems that have been pointed out, correct them, and keep presenting your idea. You need to be persistent.”

Shin'ichi's words were backed by his own experience. In March 1954, he was appointed to the new position of youth division chief of staff, responsible for planning and overseeing the Soka Gakkai's activities. At first, the Soka Gakkai's board of directors expressed doubts about almost every proposal he made. Even the youth division athletic meet he proposed—the forerunner of later peace culture festivals—did not have their support initially.

But after several such events were held and widely applauded, they went on to become a hallmark of the Soka Gakkai. It was a victory of the power of youth.

Shin'ichi added: "It is no exaggeration to say that there are as many opinions as there are people. And it's all the more natural that people of different generations will have differing views about things.

"When organizing a discussion meeting, for example, some people may want the meeting to be held on a weeknight, while others prefer an evening on the weekend. Some may ask that it be held on a Sunday morning or afternoon, while others suggest a weekday morning or afternoon. But a decision has to be made, and that means choosing the day and time that suits the majority.

"Once a decision has been reached after discussing it among yourselves, it's important to unite and make the greatest possible efforts to ensure the meeting's success, even if you didn't get your preference.

"Those organizing the discussion meeting also need to think of the members who can't attend that day, and to come up with ways to support them—perhaps planning to hold small group meetings on some other days, or occasionally changing the day for the discussion meeting—so that everyone can equally and joyfully engage in faith and practice.

"In addition to discussion meetings, people no doubt have varying opinions on how to carry out activities or other aspects of our movement. There are no absolute rules or perfect ways of doing things as far as activities go. There will always be pros and cons of some sort. If a problem arises, everyone should put their heads together and think of ways to solve or minimize it. The key is to remain flexible, open-minded, and to work together."

The young men listened intently. Shin'ichi looked at each of them, and emphasized: "The most important thing to remember in conducting activities is not to become disheartened, or upset and resentful when your opinions are not accepted. That will not only damage your own faith but will act to undermine our movement for kosen-rufu as well.

"Many organizations and religious groups have splintered because of conflict and resentment arising from different opinions and ideas on how they

should be run. But the Soka Gakkai must never go down that path!"

Shin'ichi continued: "Today, for the sake of the future, I'd like to share with you the most crucial principle for advancing kosen-rufu. And that is having the unshakable unity of 'many in body, one in mind.'

"Nichiren Daishonin writes:

All disciples and lay supporters of Nichiren should chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with the spirit of many in body but one in mind, transcending all differences among themselves to become as inseparable as fish and the water in which they swim. This spiritual bond is the basis for the universal transmission of the ultimate Law of life and death. Herein lies the true goal of Nichiren's propagation. When you are so united, even the great desire for widespread propagation [the great vow for kosen-rufu] can be fulfilled. (WND-1, 217)

"Here, the Daishonin articulates the guiding principle that all of his disciples—in other words, we who dedicate ourselves to kosen-rufu—should take to heart.

"First, he says 'transcending all differences among themselves.' He is telling us to banish any tendency we may have to let our differences divide us or to discriminate against others.

"People differ in many ways—in nationality, ethnicity, culture, and customs; in social status, position, age, and background; and also in their viewpoints and sensitivities. We must transcend those differences and constantly return to the basic point that we are all comrades in faith and Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

"Then, the Daishonin says that we must 'become as inseparable as fish and the water in which they swim.' This means realizing that we share a close and inseparable relationship as fellow practitioners of Nichiren Buddhism, and respecting and supporting one another based on that awareness.

"Letting a personal dislike for a certain leader keep you from practicing with your local organization or taking part in activities is contrary to

these golden words of the Daishonin. It's also a sign that you're being defeated by your own selfish negativity.

"It is by no means a coincidence that we are practicing Nichiren Buddhism together at this time. Bound by deep ties from the inconceivably remote past, we have appeared in this troubled age of the Latter Day of the Law to fulfill the vow we made long ago.

"When we each awaken to the fact that we are here today because of that past karmic connection, we will forge strong bonds and create a powerful driving force for kosen-rufu."

Shin'ichi continued: "Next, the Daishonin says 'with the spirit of many in body but one in mind' (WND-1, 217). 'Many in body' [which could also be expressed as diversity] means respecting one another's unique personalities and qualities, while 'one in mind' means uniting in heart and mind for the shared purpose of kosen-rufu.

"The walls of old Japanese castles, for example, are built of stones of various shapes and sizes; these differences allow the stones to interlock and support one another, making the walls strong.

"The spirit of 'many in body, one in mind' not only creates the strongest unity, it also enables each of us to make the most of our potential and give full play to our talents and abilities.

"The Daishonin says that chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with faith grounded in the spirit of 'many in body but one in mind' is the 'basis for the universal transmission of the ultimate Law of life and death' (WND-1, 217). This is how the most important Law of life is passed on from the Buddha to all living beings. The Daishonin declares here that this is the heart of his own efforts to spread the Mystic Law. And exerting ourselves in Buddhist practice with this spirit is key to fulfilling the great vow for kosen-rufu.

"Becoming upset or resenting others over differences of opinion is confusing the means with the end. Advancing with the resolve to unite and work together for the sake of kosen-rufu, no matter what—forging ahead with

faith based on the spirit of ‘many in body, one in mind’—that is our unchanging guideline. Indeed, it is the golden rule of the Soka Gakkai.

“The Daishonin goes on to say: ‘If any of Nichiren’s disciples disrupt the unity of many in body but one in mind, they would be like warriors who destroy their own castle from within’ (WND-1, 217).

“The greatest offense in Buddhism is to disrupt or destroy from within the unity of ‘many in body, one in mind’ directed toward realizing kosen-rufu. It would be as if, while waging an intense battle for kosen-rufu, our comrades-in-arms set fire to the castle we share and turned their swords against us. Those who undermine this unity, no matter how they may try to justify it, are doing the work of the devil king of the sixth heaven.”

A student division leader spoke: “While there are many seniors in faith who have worked hard as leaders and maintained a solid practice to the end, there are also those who have stopped practicing and turned against the organization. What is the fundamental reason for this difference?”

Shin’ichi replied: “Ultimately, it comes down to whether your deepest motivation is kosen-rufu or your own self-interest.”

The young people nodded in response.

The student division leader who asked the question said: “Certainly, when I recall people I thought were bright and amazingly talented but who later stopped practicing, it seems clear they were all self-centered. They craved the limelight and were unwilling to cooperate with everyone else or to unite in spirit with their seniors in faith. Ultimately, I think they were arrogant. Some of them also caused problems arising from sexual or financial misconduct.”

Shin’ichi felt these words showed keen insight.

“What you say is true. I have also seen many such examples. It’s very regrettable.

“When people become self-centered, they no longer refer to the

writings of Nichiren Daishonin or the guidance of the Soka Gakkai, nor do they make the unity of many in body, one in mind a priority. They forget the key Buddhist attitude of self-examination and self-reflection.

“Also, because they let their mind be their master, they lack self-control. Driven by greed and self-interest, they blindly pursue fame and wealth and do whatever suits their selfish ends. They cause trouble for others and create all sorts of serious problems. They lose everyone’s trust, and ultimately find it impossible to remain in the pure realm of the Soka Gakkai. That’s the common pattern of those who stop practicing and turn against the organization.

“During his exile on Sado, Nichiren Daishonin declared that it is not external enemies that can undermine Buddhism, but rather ‘worms born of the lion’s body’—that is, enemies found among the ranks of the Buddha’s disciples themselves. We must never forget this as we advance kosen-rufu. This sort of thing is certain to happen in the future as well. When it does, genuine disciples will stand up decisively and fight against it.”

As if to verify Shin’ichi’s words, a corrupt attorney and his cohorts, who were secretly maneuvering with members of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood to try to gain control over the Soka Gakkai, would soon take off their masks and reveal their true nature.

In his “Guidelines for Youth,” second president Josei Toda urges his disciples not to allow those who have turned against the Soka Gakkai to slow their progress.

The network of Soka Gakkai members is a gathering of lions who have each vowed to realize kosen-rufu and brave the fierce winds of adversity.

Shin’ichi was very happy to be able to speak freely with the young people.

Conveying his high hopes for their future, he said: “Youth have the important mission of shouldering our movement as the Soka Gakkai’s successors.

“That’s why President Toda

put such serious effort into training and fostering the youth. He was especially strict with me. Sometimes, he would scold me sternly in front of a large group of people. He would often take me to task, even if it was someone else who had made a misstep. In particular, when he wanted to teach everyone the rigorous nature of the mentor-disciple path in our struggle for kosen-rufu, he would address his words to me.

“His training resembled the tough love of the lion that cast its cubs into the ravine to test them. Mr. Toda was trying to foster me like that, into a lion who would be his true successor.

“I have also given strict guidance to our top leaders because they have the important role of bearing full responsibility for the Soka Gakkai from now into the future.

“The top leaders of our movement must always stay razor focused. They need the strength to win in the end, no matter what. I want them to grow further and become outstanding leaders. That’s why, as their mentor in a life dedicated to kosen-rufu, I will continue to speak firmly to them. Doing so is an expression of compassion.

“A mentor is strict with those who are genuine disciples. I have reached the age where I now understand well how Mr. Toda felt.

“Many people knew Mr. Toda and many received guidance from him, but I am the only one who served him with complete dedication, inherited his vision, and opened the way of kosen-rufu just as he instructed. That’s why I dare to say that I know the Soka Gakkai and the truth about Mr. Toda better than anyone else. That is also the reason why I am writing my serialized novel *The Human Revolution*—so that our members around the world and those of future generations who will take up the baton of kosen-rufu can advance unerringly along the Soka path of mentor and disciple.

“I want you to always boldly take on challenges and improve and train yourselves. Please keep pressing forward together, valuing unity above all, and create the Soka Gakkai of the 21st century!”

Day after day, Shin'ichi continued his tireless efforts to encourage others, reaching out to the members and into their hearts. It was an arduous spiritual struggle, waged through dialogue, aimed at opening new horizons in the Soka Gakkai's movement for kosen-rufu.

The turbulent year of 1979 now entered its busy final month.

On the afternoon of December 26, Shin'ichi visited the Arakawa Culture Center in Tokyo. He was scheduled to attend the Third Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting at the Arakawa Civic Hall that evening. Before the event began, he wanted to meet and encourage the young women of the Fife and Drum Corps and local Arakawa members who had gathered at the culture center.

Shin'ichi had great affection and hopes for Arakawa Ward.

In August 1957, a month after the authorities in Osaka had arrested and detained him on false charges of violating the election law, he was making energetic efforts for the development of kosen-rufu in Arakawa Ward.

Having battled against the oppressive forces of authority while in jail, Shin'ichi felt deeply that the only way to stand up to such injustice was to unite and expand the power of ordinary people. As a result, he resolved to achieve a record of great progress for kosen-rufu in Arakawa Ward, a place where the old, richly human "downtown spirit" of Tokyo remained vibrantly alive.

Focusing on the individual, Shin'ichi gave his all to encouraging each person he met. Through his passionate, wholehearted efforts, one courageous person after another emerged—each a champion with the strength of a thousand.

Arakawa is a small ward, but a united victory there would serve as a breakthrough, leading the way to a great victory for all of Tokyo, and setting an inspiring example for members throughout the country and around the world.

Before embarking on this roughly weeklong campaign in Arakawa, Shin'ichi had set his mind on achieving a specific goal: to increase the

number of member households in the ward by more than 10 percent.

Although it would be an unimaginably difficult challenge, if the members could succeed here, that victory would become a source of pride and confidence for them, and a badge of honor and good fortune that would adorn each person's life forever.

Nichiren Daishonin writes: "Only by defeating a powerful enemy can one prove one's real strength" (WND-1, 302). Shin'ichi wanted the Arakawa members to overcome every difficulty and build a tradition of being dauntless "champions of Tokyo."

After arriving at the Arakawa Culture Center, Shin'ichi did gongyo with the Fife and Drum Corps members and local members present, praying deeply for their growth and happiness and for the success of that evening's general meeting.

He also talked with the Arakawa members and listened intently as they told him about their activities. When the subject turned to his leadership in the Arakawa campaign in August 1957, Shin'ichi said: "During that campaign, I set out with fellow pioneer members to accomplish a deliberately challenging goal, and together we created a record that established Arakawa as a champion. Through that struggle, everyone deeply engraved in their lives the powerful conviction that when we take on and overcome difficult challenges for kosen-rufu, we will savor the joy and exhilaration of winning and forge a state of indestructible happiness.

"More than two decades have gone by since then. I'd now like each of you to create a new record of victory based on that tradition, and pass that legacy on to the next generation.

"However, we can't create or maintain a tradition of victory in our movement for kosen-rufu just by doing the same old thing. Both the times and society change. It's by staying creative and innovative, continually taking on fresh challenges, and succeeding in every endeavor that a lasting tradition of victory is formed. What we need to convey to the next generation is that fighting spirit."

The spirit to fight for kosen-rufu is a legacy that cannot be transmitted through words alone. It is passed along from senior to junior, from one person to another, through shared experience and a process of inspiration while striving together in Soka Gakkai activities.

With high hopes, Shin'ichi said: "Now is the time for each of you here in Arakawa to fight valiantly in the same spirit as me. If a tradition of undefeated victory is established in a single area, the Soka Gakkai will flourish forever, because everyone will learn from that example. I hope you'll always remember that this is the great mission of Arakawa.

"I'm not free to give guidance at large meetings right now, but that's all the more reason why I'd like each of you to stand up and take action. I want you to triumph in everything and show that the Soka Gakkai is rock solid."

The members' eyes sparkled with determination.

At 6:30 p.m., Shin'ichi left the Arakawa Culture Center to make his way to the Arakawa Civic Hall, where the Fife and Drum Corps was holding its general meeting.

As he got in the car, a leader accompanying him said: "The Sumida River is about 200 meters (some 200 yards) from here, and on the other side is Adachi Ward."

"Is that so?" said Shin'ichi. "Adachi . . . If I could, I'd love to go there, too, to encourage the members.

"The other day, I received a letter from a women's division member in Adachi, and I'm sure the sentiments she expressed are shared by many in the area.

"She said that since I stepped down as president, she has felt so sad and pained. On top of this, the weekly tabloids kept up their barrage of irresponsible negative reporting on the Soka Gakkai, causing some of her non-member friends to believe those stories and make critical remarks to her about the organization. The injustice of it filled her with anger and frustration, she said, but she refused to be defeated and would

keep doing her best to help people gain a correct understanding of the Soka Gakkai and my efforts.

“That is what she wrote. Hers is the true fighting spirit of the invincible champions of Adachi. I was deeply moved.

“Everyone is doing their utmost with great tenacity and forbearance. I really admire them. I want everyone to become happy without fail. That, after all, is the purpose of our Buddhist practice and Soka Gakkai activities.

“And that is why I’d like our members to rally themselves in such challenging times and strive to fill the garden of kosen-rufu with flowers of victory and the magnificent fruit of happiness.

“Please convey this message from me to the Adachi Ward members: ‘I am chanting for you each day. Conquer your limitations! Win out over your destiny! Triumph in the struggle for kosen-rufu! And lead lives of victory fragrant with the flowers of happiness!’”

In the car, Shin’ichi thought of the Adachi members and earnestly chanted daimoku for them in his heart.

On December 26, 1979, starting at 7:00 p.m., the final performance of the Third Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting, with the theme “Great Hope-Filled Advance toward the Year 2001,” got under way at the Arakawa Civic Hall.

The activities of these “emissaries of peace,” aiming toward the 21st century, were part of the Soka Gakkai’s wider efforts to promote culture and education.

Shin’ichi had received numerous invitations from the Fife and Drum Corps to attend the general meeting, and he had accepted out of a wish to encourage everyone.

A bright and sunny atmosphere pervaded the Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting. The performances brimmed with happy, hope-filled smiles, pure-hearted radiance, and the confident vitality of youth.

It was a spectacular celebration, in which the corps members

joyfully displayed the splendid results of all their practice and hard work.

The prologue opened with the color guard twirling pink and blue flags in rhythm with the cheerful melody of the Fife and Drum Corps song “Angels of Peace,” the lyrics of which were written by Shin’ichi Yamamoto. Their skillful performance drew rousing applause.

This was followed by Part One, titled “Plaza of the World.” It featured a dazzling and powerful marching drum and drill performance unfolding against a backdrop of changing scenes from around the world—the châteaux of the Loire; the Champs-Élysées; Tiananmen Square in China; the skyscrapers of New York; and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The cute little pom-pom performers also brought smiles of delight to the audience.

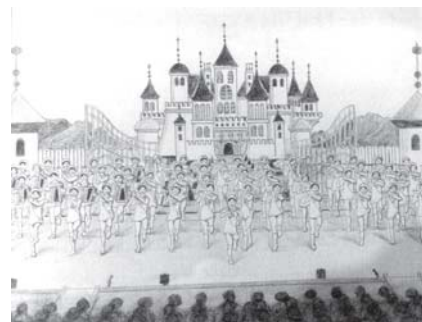
Part Two was titled “March of Hope” and included performances of the “Light Cavalry Overture” and “The Noisy Bird” (L’Oiseau tapageur), followed by a chorus of the symphonic poem “The People.”

Like the surging of a vast sea stretching to the far horizon—the people

This was sung beautifully to the solemn melody by members of the men’s division Bodhisattvas of the Earth Chorus, the women’s division White Lily Chorus, the young men’s division Shinano Choir, and the young women’s division Fuji Chorus, all joining together in a guest appearance.

Shin’ichi had composed the poem, titled “The People,” to celebrate the young women’s division leaders meeting held at the Nihon University Auditorium in Tokyo’s Sumida Ward in September 1971.

In the poem, he spoke of how the history of the people, who deserve the greatest honor and respect, was



characterized by unending oppression by the powerful and written with tears of suffering and anguish. He called for the people to stop being silent, to break free of their resignation and weariness, and create a new age in which they are the protagonists.

I will spend my life exerting myself for your sake

Though at first sight I may seem to stand in isolation,

I want to make it my proud and only mission

to fight on and on for you alone, always in your behalf.

Shin’ichi hoped the young women’s division members would not lead lives that were empty or shallow, but rather, would put down solid roots among the people, as proud daughters of the people, always living for and together with them. For that is where real life takes place, and the happiness forged there is true and genuine.

It was with that wish that he presented them with the poem “The People.”

A musical composition—a symphonic poem—based on it had first been performed at the Second Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting, held a year earlier, in October 1978, on the athletic grounds of Soka University in Hachioji, Tokyo.

That event took place in the rain. The passionate voices of the 3,000-member young women’s division chorus combined with the dynamic energy of the 3,000-member dance team and the spirited playing of the 150-member fife and drum corps ensemble.

The rain fell relentlessly throughout the performance, soaking the singers and dancers, along with the fife and drum corps members and their musical instruments. The hems of the dancers’ brand-new blue, yellow, and pink dresses were splattered with mud. But their expressions radiated joy and pride. They brimmed with the energy and resolve to build an age of the people.

Shin’ichi sat in the rain watching the performance, his suit becoming drenched. Seeing the young women performing their hearts out,

unfazed by the wet conditions, he couldn't bring himself to use an umbrella. Silently chanting daimoku that the participants wouldn't catch cold, he watched their beautiful, powerful performance.

When the symphonic poem "The People" was finished, thunderous applause engulfed the field, rising into the sky and seeming to burst through the clouds. At that moment, the rain stopped. The sun showed its face.

Shin'ichi hoped that, through this general meeting, everyone would learn the spirit to persevere in their shared struggle for kosen-rufu, undefeated by any obstacle. He also wanted them to engrave in their lives the awareness that as long as they maintained an unwavering commitment to kosen-rufu, the sun of hope would be certain to shine upon them. This was because the solidarity of women with such strong faith would play a powerful role in raising the curtain on the victory of the people.



Now, more than a year later, Shin'ichi was listening once again to the symphonic poem "The People" at this Third Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting.

This time, members of the men's, women's, young men's and young women's division chorus groups joined together to sing the choral section. Their resounding ode to victory was a true collaboration of people of diverse ages and backgrounds.

In his poem "The people", Shinichi had written:

*Science, philosophy,
art, religion, all undertakings
must be directed towards the people*

*Science without you is cold-hearted
philosophy without you is barren
art without you is empty
religion without you is merciless*

*You should look down on those
who sneer at you.....*

Listening to the musical performance, Shin'ichi deeply pondered the significance of the Soka Gakkai's purpose.

He mused to himself, "It is the Soka Gakkai's mission to liberate the people from the yoke of every form of oppression and from the chains of karma! That is the heart of our humanism! I will fight! I will strive resolutely, for the people and for kosenrufu! Whatever happens, I will stand on the side of the people and bring about an age of the people!"

The Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting reached its finale. The performers paraded down the aisles and took the stage for a grand chorus of "Angels of Peace, members of the Fife and Drum Corps."

Tears of joy sparked on the cheeks of the young women as they sang with all their might. They were the culmination of their pure-hearted youthful spirit.

Shin'ichi had been asked to say a few words. He wanted to encourage them by conveying his appreciation and gratitude for all their hard work and dedicated efforts.

When he rose from his seat in the audience with a mic in his hand, cheers and thunderous applause broke out.

"Your performance was very beautiful and impressive, and this has been a magnificent general meeting. I am deeply moved!" Shin'ichi said.

It was the first time in quite a while that members had heard Shin'ichi's energetic voice. They all listened intently.

"I can only imagine the incredible hard work and unflagging dedication that lies behind your beautiful performance, the determination and perseverance with

which you practiced and honed your skills. In life, too, any beautiful accomplishment is backed by arduous effort.

"True to its theme, today's general meeting is indeed the beginning of your hope-filled advance toward 2001. I will also begin a hope-filled advance toward that same goal. Let's forge ahead together!

"Most of you are second- or third-generation Soka Gakkai members. You, my young friends, will have to make your way through raging storms amid the harsh realities of life in this world. Various problems and trials no doubt await you, whether in your studies, your work, your relationships, or with your health. But please be aware that only through experiencing such hardships and triumphing over them will you complete your hope-filled advance toward 2001.

"Always remember this day, and never forget the determination and perseverance you have shown. It is my wish that all of you, with strong faith, will climb to the summit of the 21st century, a shining new era of happiness.

"Thank you for your wonderful performance today. I am praying with all my heart for your happiness and victory in life."

Once again, rousing applause swept the hall.

Shin'ichi was filled with joy, sensing that this generation of youthful successors was growing vibrantly and reaching for the skies of the 21st century. He felt a surge of unsurpassed hope.

The Fife and Drum Corps General Meeting was the last major event for the momentous year of 1979, a fanfare announcing a fresh departure into the 21st century.

A dramatic year—marked by turbulence, upheaval, and finally renewal—was coming to a close. On New Year's Eve, Shin'ichi was at the Shizuoka Training Center. Thinking of first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, who was arrested in Shizuoka, he felt his own new struggle was beginning. The darkness was still deep.

He recalled the words of the Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881–1936): "The light always comes. Like the dawn, it cannot be obscured."