

April 24th, The Day of Justice



Daisaku Ikeda is the president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist association of more than 12 million members in 190 countries and territories, and founder of several educational, cultural and research institutions.

He is a prolific writer, poet and peace activist, recognized as one of the leading interpreters of Buddhism, bringing its timeless wisdom to bear on the many contemporary issues confronting humanity. (from www.sgi.org)

Daisaku Ikeda became the third president of Soka Gakkai on May 3, 1960 in Japan . He had to resign from its presidency on April 24, 1979 to settle down the tension between priesthood, Nichiren shoushu, and Soka Gakkai lay organization. This incident and related issues that Soka Gakkai had to face around that period of time was later called first temple issue.

After 18 years had passed [1997], SGI President Ikeda started speaking about his struggles he faced during the first temple issue. Commemorating March 16 and April 24, Soka Spirit team of Southeast Zone took initiatives to compile information concerning the first temple issue. Our hope is that as many people study the content of the packet, especially by youth division, and present at a discussion meeting at district level.

March 16, 1958

Just few days after the ceremony (March 16, 1958), Mr. Toda, who had a strong premonition of the corruption of the priesthood, said to me gravely:

“You must never let up in your struggle against evil.”

(An essay by Daisaku Ikeda. WT 03/27/1998)

Note: Mr. Toda, the second Soka Gakkai president, passed away on April 2, 1958.

The vision of Seven Bells (May 3, 1958)

The Eighteenth Spring General Meeting was held on May 3, 1958, at the old Ryogoku National Sports Arena, which later became the Nihon University Auditorium.

.....

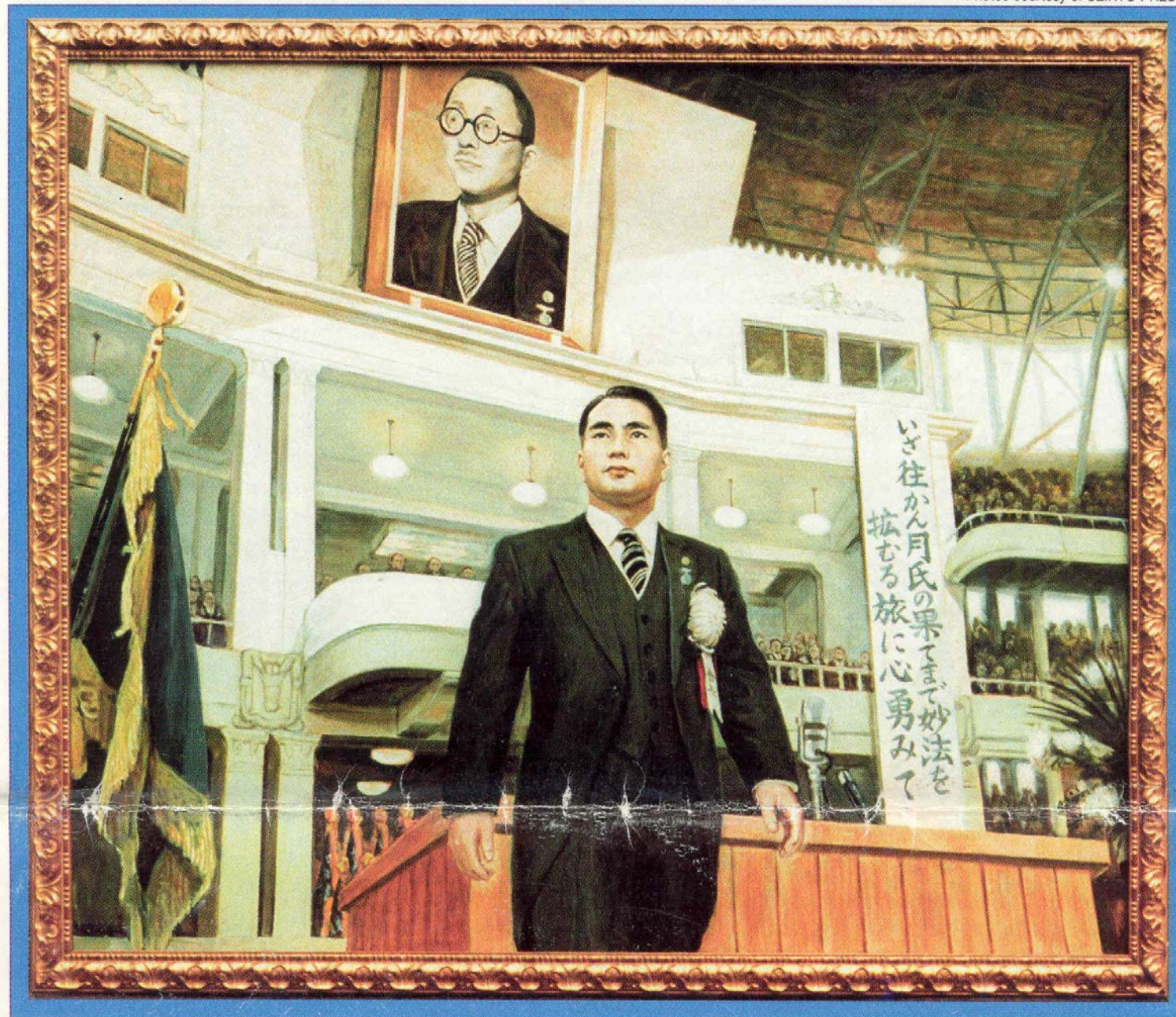
Next he touched on Toda's vision of Seven Bells and traced the Gakkai's history of having made a substantial leap forward every seven years since its founding in 1930.

.....

“Starting today, the curtain finally opens the fifth bell-our fifth seven-year period of development. After that, two more seven-year periods will remain before completing the seventh bell in 1979, twenty-one years from today. Let's make it our goal to firmly solidify the foundation and overall structure of our kosen-rufu movement by the time [May 3, 1979] these seven bells finish tolling.

From *The Human Revolution, New Dawn* p1947-1949.

Note: The meeting held on May 3, 1979 became the place where Daisaku Ikeda's resignation from the presidency of Soka Gakkai was announced.



May 3, 1960, Daisaku Ikeda was inaugurated as the third Soka Gakkai president, inheriting the spirit of second president Josei Toda. The above painting was a gift from Kenichiro Uchida, the illustrator for the novel 'The New Human Revolution.'



January, 1979

It was my first visit to Aomori in 15 years. Summer, 1994. I had flown from Sapporo on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido to the airport in Misawa. From there, I went to the Soka Gakkai's Tohoku Training Center.

My last visit had been in January 1979. At that time the Gakkai, and I personally, had been forging ahead through an intense blizzard of opposition and difficulty. It was a time in which those characterized in the Lotus Sutra as "the devil and the devil's people" were running amok.

But the members endured that long, long winter. They gritted their teeth and persevered for 15 years. Before the indomitable light of the sun of justice, the filthy ice of evil melts to nothing. The "grove" of capable and victorious friends now sparkles with richness.

.....

***To this tree, I ask in my heart,
"Wouldn't you like to go somewhere else some day?"***

***But the tree seems to smile warmly and reply:
"Of course not! This is my place!
It is here that I have struggled and won!
Could there be any greater place than this?"***