

**APRIL 24, 1979:  
'RIGHT WILL WIN OUT IN THE END'  
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April 24, 1979 — the unforgettable day. Daisaku Ikeda stepped down as the third president of the Soka Gakkai, a position he had held for 19 years, and became honorary president. The abrupt announcement confused and concerned members in Japan and around the world. Why should he have to resign when it was his leadership that had been responsible for the dynamic development of the Soka Gakkai and Nichiren Shoshu?

Behind his sudden resignation were the numerous slanderous attempts to attack and discredit him and the Soka Gakkai by the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood and others who collaborated with them.

In response, Soka Gakkai members from the Kansai region of Japan rushed to Tokyo. “Their eyes flashed and their whole demeanor radiated their powerful commitment to protecting their mentor,” writes now-SGI President Ikeda. “Today they are all courageously leading Kansai toward unprecedented victory. But then, they wept hot tears of anger. I will never forget that sight” (March 24 *World Tribune*, p. 2).

To protect the members from further persecution and suffering, President Ikeda resolved to take all the blame upon himself and resigned from his Soka Gakkai leadership position. He declared with firm conviction at a meeting he attended a month after his resignation: “Do not worry! I am Mr. Toda’s direct disciple! Right will win out in the end!”

President Ikeda immersed himself in activities to encourage members personally, visiting countless homes of pioneer members who had worked hard to lay the foundation of the Soka Gakkai. He wrote poems and letters of encouragement to those he could not meet face to face and sometimes played the piano to lighten the hearts of others. All this he did with one thought in mind—to bring happiness to the members. He fought on tirelessly, building the Soka Gakkai into the international organization it is today.

In an address recounting the events at that time, SGI President Ikeda states: “Here’s a passage from ‘Questions and Answers about Embracing the Lotus Sutra.’ Nichiren Daishonin writes. ‘When one has had the rare good fortune to be born a human being, and the further good fortune to encounter the teachings of Buddhism, how can one waste this opportunity?’ (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 60). Here he clarifies the ultimate purpose of our existence. Our purpose or mission in this life is kosen-rufu; it is world peace and human revolution. Each of us, possessing our own precious mission in this lifetime has become a member of the Soka Gakkai, the organization dedicated to fulfilling the Buddha’s intent and decree. We are comrades in faith linked together by the deepest of bonds.

“What a terrible waste it would be, therefore, if we were simply to float along in the organization built by our predecessors, without challenging ourselves or making any further effort to advance our movement. We should work with all our might to construct a towering monument of achievement in our lives and to boldly write a great history of struggle for kosen-rufu” (Oct. 1, 2004, *World Tribune*, Special Pullout, p. III).

World peace is not an abstract concept removed from our everyday lives. It starts with trust between one individual and another — each of us opening our hearts and speaking with sincerity, communicating and touching the other on the deepest level.