



STATEMENT DN-095

NICHIREN SHOSHU BUDDHISM, MYSTICAL MATERIALISM FOR THE MASSES

by John Weldon

Summary

Nichiren Shoshu (NS) claims to represent true Buddhism and to offer the world a scientifically enlightened form of religious practice. It teaches that by worshiping the Gohonzon, a sacred mandala, believers can bring their lives into harmony with ultimate reality, producing wealth, success, and health. However, NS constitutes a late form of Buddhism whose emphasis upon materialism would have been repudiated by the Buddha. Furthermore, its claim to be compatible with Christianity is contradicted by its Buddhist philosophy and basic approach to life.

Recording stars Tina Turner, Herbie Hancock, Larry Coryell, and Wayne Shorter all have something in common besides gold records: like hundreds of thousands of other Americans, they are followers of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism (NS).

NS is among the most influential of the new religions that have come on the scene in recent decades. Overall, the movement claims 17 million members in over 117 countries.¹ As a mystical faith with a materialistic emphasis (one that constantly stresses its "scientific" nature), it is uniquely suited for success in America.

IN SEARCH OF "TRUE" BUDDHISM: NICHIREN SHOSHU HISTORY

The founder of Nichiren Shoshu was Nichiren Daishonin (A.D. 1222-1282), one of the most controversial and important figures in Japanese Buddhism. Daishonin lived during a period of Japan's history embroiled in political and religious turmoil. With many of the Buddhist sects in conflicting disarray, he grew to long for the reality of one true and united Buddhism — and he devoted tireless efforts to this end.

From the age of 12, Daishonin researched various schools of Buddhism, including the *Tendai*, *Zen*, and *Shingon* sects. Although he consumed years studying at the esoteric monastery of the *Tendai* school on Mt. Hiei (and at 16 became a monk there), it was only through intensive, prolonged meditation at the Shingon Monastery at Mt. Koya that he became convinced of the "truth" that has become the heart of Nichiren Buddhism. This revelation was that the essence of the true Buddha's teachings were crystallized in the *sutra* or scriptural narrative known today as the *Lotus Sutra* or *Saddharma-Pundarika* (the Sutra of the Lotus of the True Law).

Nichiren came to believe that the mystical essence of this sutra was embodied in the invocation *Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo*, the ceremonial chant used by Nichiren Shoshu Buddhists. The chant is thus believed to be a repository of magical power so that the disciple can instill the alleged material and spiritual benefits of the sutra into his or her life, even without reading it.

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Daishonin was persuaded that not only was his life's mission to clarify true Buddhism, but that he was the sole repository of Buddhist truth, and that only his interpretation of the Lotus Sutra was correct. He argued that "the Pure Land Sect (*Nembutsu*) is the Everlasting Hell; *Zen* devotees are demons; *Shingon* devotees are ruining the nation; and the *Vanaya* sect are traitors to the country."² To anyone who opposed him, he warned, "Those who despise and slander me will have their head broken into seven pieces."³ He even threatened destruction of the Japanese state unless it united under true Buddhism (i.e., his teachings).

Nichiren Daishonin thus aroused no small amount of opposition by his robust intolerance of all other Buddhism. During his life he was expelled from his own monastery, exiled twice, sentenced to death once, and repeatedly suffered from persecution (though his death sentence was commuted).

Despite his heartfelt desire to unify Japan and all Buddhism, his intolerance and inability to accept compromise merely saddled Japan with one more competing sect. As Brandon's *Dictionary of Comparative Religion* observes, "Nichiren's teaching, which was meant to unify Buddhism, gave rise to [the] most intolerant of Japanese Buddhist sects."⁴ Noted Buddhist scholar Dr. Edward Conze declares, "[he] suffered from self-assertiveness and bad temper, and he manifested a degree of personal and tribal egotism which disqualifies him as a Buddhist teacher."⁵

Not unexpectedly, Nichiren and his most prominent disciples discovered they could not agree on what constituted true Buddhism and this led to initial charges of heresy amongst themselves and eventual historic fragmentation. Although Nichiren Shoshu is the largest of the more than 40 Nichiren sects today, each sect maintains that it is the "true" guardian of Nichiren Daishonin's teachings.

Nichiren Shoshu Today

In 1930 a lay movement was founded to promote Nichiren Shoshu: *Soka Gakkai International* (SGI). Since 1960, the leader of SGI has been the prolific and energetic Daisaku Ikeda. Perhaps one evidence of his dynamism is that under his leadership NS has expanded into over 100 nations. Ironically, such success has apparently caused a major rift in the movement. A recent devastating split between the lay organization and the priesthood has emerged with serious charges being leveled back and forth.⁶ In characteristically unbuddhist-like fashion, it appears that the Japanese priesthood has become jealous and even resentful of the phenomenal prosperity of the lay movement.

How all this will finally play out is anyone's guess, but the image of Nichiren Shoshu has suffered much from the quarreling, threats, negative publicity, power plays, and so forth. As a recent editorial in SGI's *World Tribune* was forced to confess: "When priests denounce President Ikeda and confuse members in order to gain followers, this...is wrong...the priesthood's recent actions are disrupting unity and hindering the propagation of [Nichiren's] teachings."⁷

By stripping Ikeda of his authority and consolidating power to themselves under the local "Danto" movement (i.e., followers of NS who identify with the priesthood rather than the lay organization), the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood has effectively asserted its supreme jurisdiction — but it has also caused a rift that could potentially fragment the movement even further.

Today in Japan, the Soka Gakkai has the third largest political party, the Komeito. It advocates a one-world government based upon Buddhist politics and universal pacifism.⁸

But one has to wonder about tomorrow. Although Soka Gakkai International continues to devote strenuous efforts to its ultimate aim of *Kosen-rufu* — the conversion of the entire world to its teachings — the current crises, if not resolved, could decimate both the movement's credibility and its numbers.

IN SEARCH OF "BENEFITS": NICHIREN SHOSHU PRACTICE AND TEACHING

Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism teaches that an omnipresent and ultimately impersonal "essential life" flows throughout the totality of the universe, both animate and inanimate. This life, however, assumes different forms. For example, in man the life essence has manifested itself as consciousness, emotions, and other mental capacities. In trees, rocks, air, water, and so forth, the life essence is present, but latent, or dormant.

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One conclusion we may draw from this teaching is that in terms of their true nature, man and the universe are ultimately one: their inner nature is identical, despite any differences in outward form. However, NS claims, until we practice the teachings of Nichiren Shoshu, this unity is neither realized nor appropriated, and "spiritual" benefits cannot be acquired until this occurs.

By chanting "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo" (again, the magical invocation that is believed to summarize and internalize the essence of the Lotus Sutra), one's individual nature is brought into harmony with the "essential life" of the universe. Eventually, the highest expression of essential life, the Buddha nature (which is dormant in the inner self), is brought to the surface. The individual nature becomes united to the Buddha nature, the result allegedly being new spiritual power, self-renewal, greater wisdom and vitality — and not the least, material wealth.

In order to achieve this state of Buddhahood, each morning and night the NS member kneels, chants Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and recites sections from the Lotus Sutra. This ritual is performed before the *Gohonzon*, a small altar comprised of a Buddhist mandala. This mandala is a sacred piece of paper. It contains the sacred chant written vertically in the center and the name of Nichiren, around which are written the names of various Buddhist "gods" which are mentioned in the Lotus Sutra, including a "demon god." (In NS, Buddhist "gods" and "demons" are not, officially, personal spirits, but positive and negative life functions.)

This daily ritual worship is termed *gongyo*, and consists of three aspects: the first (as noted) involves kneeling before the Gohonzon and reciting passages from the Lotus Sutra. This constitutes a mystical, not intellectual, endeavor. The second aspect of *gongyo* is chanting the *daimoku*: *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*, while rubbing a string of *Juzu* (prayer beads). *Daimoku* is also done throughout the day, and is the most important form of *gongyo*. The third aspect involves five prayers: prayers of gratitude to (1) various deities, (2) the Gohonzon, and (3) Nichiren; (4) a prayer to fulfill one's wishes; and (5) a prayer to the dead.

The Sutra passages are recited five times in the morning and three times in the evening. Chanting is performed until one "feels satisfied," which may last many hours, producing something of a hypnotic or trance-like effect. One individual claimed to have chanted *12 million* *daimoku* which, purportedly, led her into spirit contact. She claimed that "she directly met Nichiren Daishonin and received his guidance."⁹

The emphasis on materialism and the element of personal power are the most obvious attractions of Nichiren Shoshu. Chanting is believed to bring "benefits" (answered "prayer") in the form of acquiring possessions, money, health, and control over one's own personal circumstances and perhaps even those of others. By chanting, one can allegedly acquire anything one desires: "Through faith in the Gohonzon he can fulfill any wish and control his environment...."¹⁰

The philosophy underlying this idea is probably of little concern to most followers, who are satisfied to simply be "receiving benefits." Nevertheless, it is integral to NS theology. According to President Daisaku Ikeda, "There is a single, underlying rhythm which controls the constant shifting of nature and the play of her interlocking harmonies — a fundamental law which also moves and supports human life. Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism defines it as *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*...."¹¹

Nam means the consecration of one's entire being into believing in the Gohonzon and all it represents.

Myoho is the supreme law of the universe, its natural working principle: "Buddhism interprets nature itself as the great life. There is no such god outside the great universe. The great universe itself is mysterious (*Myo*), and yet has a strict law (*ho*) in itself. Therefore, it should be termed *Myoho*, i.e., the Mystic Law."¹²

Renge refers to the lotus flower and represents karma, interpreted as the "simultaneous nature of cause and effect." Chanting is the highest possible cause, resulting in the natural effect of answered "prayer" or benefits. *Kyo* is the "sound or vibration within the universe." The sound and rhythm of the chant places one into harmony with the stream of life.¹³

By chanting, therefore, one allegedly brings one's self into harmony with the laws of the universe and the fundamental flow of life. As one becomes united with the universe, "behavior will become synonymous with Mystic Law which leads to eternal happiness."¹⁴ The objects of one's desires are now capable of "flowing" naturally to him or her; hence, regular practice of *gongyo* allows one to achieve his or her desires and thereby produces happiness.

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According to President Ikeda, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo "is the origin of everything."¹⁵ Therefore, "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the essence of all life and the rhythm of the universe itself. Life can never be apart from Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and yet, because we have forgotten this, we have come out of rhythm with life itself. When we chant, we enter *back into* that basic rhythm and once again have the potential for indestructible happiness....[because] our life force will permeate the universe and the Buddha nature will emerge within ourselves, *enabling us to fulfill our wishes*" (second emphasis added).¹⁶

IN SEARCH OF SALVATION: NICHIREN SHOSHU VS. CHRISTIANITY

According to Daishonin, the cause of all unhappiness is evil religion, which, more or less, constituted all other religious interpretations apart from his own. *Shakubuku* (to break and subdue) is one NS term descriptive of his attitude toward other religions. *Shakubuku* is the forceful method of conversion, whereas *shoju* is the more moderate approach. According to Harry Thomsen, author of *The New Religions of Japan*, "Nichiren maintained that to kill heretics is not murder, and that it is the duty of the government to extirpate heresy with the sword."¹⁷

Shakubuku is considered an act of great love and mercy, because it breaks the evil religion of the person being converted.¹⁸ The second president, Josei Toda, stated on May 3, 1951: "*Kosenruffu* [mass conversion] of today can be attained only when all of you take on evil religions and convert everyone in the country and let him accept a *Gohonzon*."¹⁹

Professor Noah S. Brannen, author of *Soka Gakkai: Japan's Militant Buddhists*, states that *Shakubuku* "designates intolerant propaganda and pressure to produce a forced conversion....[it] often employs a technique of intimidation carried out in a very systematic manner."²⁰ Although the practice has been modified, Brannen and others list earlier incidents of threats of injury against a prospective convert and his or her family members, actual beatings, cases of arson, and so on.²¹

Perhaps it is not surprising that, despite attempts at accommodation, hostility toward Christianity has remained a feature of the writings of Nichiren Shoshu and President Ikeda. Regrettably, Christianity is often misrepresented and then attacked as an inferior and irrational belief. Thus, in the authoritative NS literature the major doctrines of Christianity are described as follows: "unscientific nonsense," "stupid superstition," "ridiculous," "fantasy," "irrational," "morbid," "shallow,"²² and so forth.

NS believes "[the Christian] God is dead..." and "it is apparent that Christian life has, in fact, repeated every kind of atrocity."²³ The Genesis doctrine of creation is "foolish and childish."²⁴ Heaven is seen as "an enticement toward some illusionary paradise."²⁵ Under a belief in absolute monotheism, "the people are powerless beings."²⁶

In essence, being a Christian brings "bad karma."²⁷ Relying upon Jesus Christ for salvation will "ultimately lead to confusion."²⁸ Christian teachings are "destructive of people's happiness."²⁹ And, referring to the Christian concepts of God and salvation, we are told there is no need to seek salvation outside ourselves in the Christian God, nor is there any reason to believe in Him, nor is there any need for the concept of God's grace.³⁰ As professor N. S. Brannen observed, "Christianity is the universal non-Buddhist religion singled out for attack."³¹

God

Nichiren Shoshu replaces God with an impersonal omnipresent essence that eternally fluctuates in cycles of manifestation and dormancy. Practically speaking, Nichiren Shoshu is an atheistic system, for any concept of a personal God is irrelevant and, to their way of thinking, spiritually harmful.

Nichiren Shoshu teaches that "life has no beginning; therefore it was not created by God,"³² and, "God is not the Creator....Our life is not given to us by our parents, and is neither given by God."³³

Perhaps the clearest expression of their humanistic theology is given in *The Complete Works of Daisaku Ikeda*, volume 1. There it simply, if succinctly, states: "God is nothing but man"³⁴ (cf. Jer. 17:5; Ps. 9:15, 20; 10:3-4).

While it is true that NS rejects the Christian concept of God, it is also clear that the mystical life essence ("the very

source of the universe") is divinized, and that the Gohonzon is the visible expression of it. Thus, while the biblical God is ridiculed as a myth, the Gohonzon is deified and worshiped.

Even though common sense tells us that the Gohonzon is merely a piece of paper (Nichiren Shoshu stresses that it is a religion of common sense), throughout Nichiren Shoshu writings we find that the Gohonzon is constantly worshiped, personalized, and held to be eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and the ultimate source of everything. We find that it alone saves, supports, protects, purifies, and physically heals the believer; that it answers prayer, forgives sin, punishes evil, and gives great wisdom.³⁵ It alone can bring happiness and good fortune.³⁶ To slander or disbelieve in the Gohonzon is to fall into the lowest hell: "Nothing can surpass the *Gohonzon*"; "All of us are children of the *Gohonzon*"; "The *Gohonzon* witnesses everything"; "The *Gohonzon's* blessings are as vast as the universe"; "The *Gohonzon's* mercy is equal to all."³⁷

Jesus Christ and Salvation

Statements about Jesus Christ are usually general and given within a Buddhist context. For example: "Because of his love, Jesus of Nazareth is comparable to a Bodhisattva," that is, one full of compassion who sacrifices himself to help others attain "enlightenment" (i.e., Buddhahood).³⁸ Thus, Nichiren Shoshu rejects the *biblical* portrait of Christ's person and mission, that is, His unique deity (John 1:1; 3:16, 18; 10:30, 33) and His atoning death (Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7). For example: "Jesus died on the Cross. This fact shows that he was defeated by opposition, whatever interpretation posterity may have given to this fact...."³⁹

While the Bible teaches that "there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:15), who is "the Savior of all men" (1 Tim. 4:10), Nichiren Shoshu teaches that it is Nichiren who is "the true Savior of mankind."⁴⁰ Only *he* is to be worshiped through the Gohonzon, as he is "the original and eternal Buddha."⁴¹

According to Nichiren Shoshu, "Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism alone can save all of the people."⁴² But what is salvation? In its true essence, salvation is humanistic for NS, not theological. Salvation is equivalent to lasting personal happiness or satisfaction ("Buddhahood"); it does not involve deliverance from sin and spiritual death as Christianity maintains (Eph. 2:1-4). In a nutshell, "salvation" is from suffering, ignorance, and unhappiness. It results from appropriating the supposed Buddha nature within, achieved by the spiritual mechanics of Nichiren Shoshu: "The true intention of the Daishonin is to save the whole world through the attainment of each individual's happiness in life."⁴³

The biblical concept of atonement (John 3:16; 1 John 2:22) is rejected on multiple grounds. First, Christianity's God is held to be a myth and so its teaching on the atoning death of Christ — God's Son — is also held to be a myth. There is no Christian God who exists; so he could not, in fact, have a Son to give. Thus, as NS acknowledges, "faith in the saving power of Christ is fundamental to every Christian teaching....Buddhism paints a vastly different picture."⁴⁴

Second, the concept of the miraculous is rejected. The idea of a divine incarnation or of a God who intervenes in history is seen as "irrational, unscientific nonsense."⁴⁵ Yet salvation in Christianity is miraculous from start to finish as can be seen in the doctrines of Christ's miraculous birth, ministry, death and resurrection, ascension, intercession, and Second Coming.

Third, the concept of substitutionary death for man's sins violates the heart of major Buddhist doctrine, such as the law of karma — the relationship between cause and effect, and the necessity to atone for one's *own* misdeeds by repayment.

Fourth, the idea of the Christian atonement is innately repugnant to Buddhists since it implies that ultimate reality is somehow linked to suffering, the very thing Buddhists work so diligently to eradicate. In the Buddhist universe, suffering is an illusion to be dispensed with — forever vanquished by absorption into the ultimate reality of a blissful, if impersonal, Nirvana. It is not something that can be related to ultimate reality ("God") in any way.

In conclusion, Nichiren Shoshu clearly offers a system of salvation by merit and personal effort. God is an entirely irrelevant consideration. By chanting, one removes karma, becomes happy, and, finally, attains Buddhahood

("eternal happiness" — although not in a personal, individual sense). All this is why President Ikeda emphasizes, "We must seek the source of the meaning in life within man himself, instead of finding it in another transcendental being, God."⁴⁶

Nevertheless, Jesus Himself taught: "This is eternal life, that they may know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent" (John 17:3). And, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Three Problems for NS

In the areas of spirituality, religious claims, and morality, NS Buddhism falls short of what a seeker might legitimately expect of the true religion. First, despite its claims to offer an intelligent spirituality, NS really offers just another occult-based system of religion. Nichiren Shoshu priests and some laypersons have claimed occult and/or shamanistic powers, and part of daily worship involves an offering of ritual prayers to the dead. The Gohonzon itself is seen as a repository of magical powers available to anyone who recites the incantation and therefore "has the power to bless or curse" its worshiper, depending upon the treatment given it.⁴⁷

Second, NS's claim to constitute true Buddhism is false. As Yale historian Kenneth Scott Latourette concludes, "[Nichiren] was mistaken in his conviction that the Lotus Sutra contained the primitive Buddhism. As a matter of fact, it was a late production, an expression of a form of Buddhism that would scarcely have been recognized by Gautama, or if recognized, would have been repudiated."⁴⁸ Nor can NS offer the world the true interpretation of the Lotus Sutra, for the important NS doctrines are absent from the Lotus Sutra and its mythological content is incapable of objective uniform interpretation.

Third, I have talked with NS members who have attempted to utilize chanting to bring about evil: to obtain drugs, commit crimes, or to magically control other people's decisions. They have told me that "chanting works as well for these things as for any others." But even when NS members chant for "good" things, the emphasis is far too materialistic. NS maintains that those who chant properly "will surely become rich"⁴⁹ and, "Let's make money and build health and enjoy life to our heart's content before we die!"⁵⁰ Many more examples of such a materialistic attitude could be cited if space permitted. In NS it becomes all too easy to replace spiritual integrity with a goal of personal indulgence.

In contrast to this entire approach to spirituality, Jesus warned us, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed, for not even when one has abundance does his life consist of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). After Christianity's clear condemnations of the occult and materialism and its solid historical support are contrasted with NS's failings in these areas, the seeker of truth and salvation would be a fool to disregard the claims of Christ for NS's promised "benefits." For Jesus also said: "What will a man be profited if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26).

John Weldon, Ph.D., is a Senior Researcher for the *John Ankerberg Show*. His M.A. thesis for Simon Greenleaf University comprised a critique of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism.

NOTES

¹ William M. Alnor, "Name It and Claim It Style of Buddhism Called America's Fastest Growing Religion," *Christian Research Journal*, Winter/Spring 1989, 26.

² R. H. Robinson, "Buddhism in China and Japan," in *The Concise Encyclopedia of Living Faiths*, ed. R. C. Zaehner (Boston: Beacon, 1959), 346; cf. Harry Thomsen, *The New Religions of Japan* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1963), 101.

³ "The Buddha's Perception into the Three Existences of Life," *Seikyo Times*, Dec. 1978, 7.

⁴ Charles Brandon, ed., *Dictionary of Comparative Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 470.

⁵ Edward Conze, *Buddhism, Its Essence and Development* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 206.

⁶ See William M. Alnor, "Infighting, Division, and Scandal Afflicting Nichiren Shoshu Buddhists," *Christian Research Journal*, Winter 1992, 5-6.

- ⁷ Editorial, *The World Tribune*, 1 April 1991, 2.
- ⁸ Kiyooki Murata, *Japan's New Buddhism* (New York: Walker, 1969), 169-70; Daisaku Ikeda, *Lectures on Buddhism*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Seikyo Press, 1970), 44.
- ⁹ "Twelve Million Daemoku," *World Tribune*, 31 August 1970, 7.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1 July 1970, 7.
- ¹¹ Daisaku Ikeda, "Be Envoys of Peace for a Troubled Age," *NSA Quarterly*, Winter 1976, 42.
- ¹² Daisaku Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: The Seikyo Press, 1968), 478-79.
- ¹³ *NSA Quarterly*, Spring 1973, 59-60.
- ¹⁴ Daisaku Ikeda, *Lectures on Buddhism*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: The Seikyo Press, 1969), 119.
- ¹⁵ Daisaku Ikeda, "Life's Ultimate Fulfillment," *NSA Quarterly*, Fall 1975, 68.
- ¹⁶ *NSA Quarterly*, Spring 1973, 59-60.
- ¹⁷ Thomsen, 101.
- ¹⁸ Murata, 103, citing Soka Gakkai Kyogakubu (Study Dept., Soka Gakkai) *Shakubuku Kyoten*, Tokyo, 1967, 244.
- ¹⁹ Murata, 104.
- ²⁰ Noah Brannen, *Soka Gakkai: Japan's Militant Buddhists* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1968), 100-101; cf. 103-6; and Thomsen, 104-15.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*; cf. Murata, 102.
- ²² *The Sokagakkai*, rev. ed. (Tokyo: The Seikyo Press, 1962), 78, 82, 143, 148; Daisaku Ikeda, *Science and Religion* (Tokyo: The Sokagakkai, 1965), 47; Daisaku Ikeda, "Salvation of Mankind in Our Times," *The East*, Jan. 1973, 25; *Seikyo Times*, Nov. 1972, 45; Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, 442; *NSA Quarterly*, Fall 1973, passim.
- ²³ *Seikyo Times*, Nov. 1972, 45; Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, 442; cf. *NSA Quarterly*, Fall 1973, 18-127.
- ²⁴ Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, 462.
- ²⁵ Editorial, "Three Guiding Principles," *Seikyo Times*, Jan. 1979, 4.
- ²⁶ Daisaku Ikeda, *Heritage of the Ultimate Law of Life*, part 2 (Santa Monica, CA: World Tribune Press, 1977), 12.
- ²⁷ "To Secure Human Happiness," *Seikyo Times*, Oct. 1982, 52.
- ²⁸ "The Reality of Evil," *Seikyo Times*, Nov. 1982, 58.
- ²⁹ "Heaven and Hell versus Life in the Ten Worlds," *Seikyo Times*, June 1982, 56.
- ³⁰ "The Innate Power of Life," *Seikyo Times*, Dec. 1982, 43-44.
- ³¹ Brannen, 98-99.
- ³² Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, 395.
- ³³ Y. Kohira, *Shakubuku Kyoten*, 344 (1954 ed.), from Thomsen, 103.
- ³⁴ Ikeda, *Complete Works*, vol. 1, 8.
- ³⁵ E.g., *The Soka Gakkai*, 48, 50, 60, 126, 144; Ikeda, *Lectures on Buddhism*, vol. 5, 6, 10, 15, 19, 59, 70-71, 73, 112, 115, 144, 161; *Seikyo Times*, March 1973, 23-24, 49-54; *NSA Quarterly*, Spring 1973, 87; Winter 1976, 8; Ikeda, *Heritage of the Ultimate Law of Life*, part 2, 78.
- ³⁶ Takashi Harashima, "Faith and Study," *Seikyo Times*, Nov. 1978, 6; Ikeda, *Complete Works I*, 550-51.
- ³⁷ Ikeda, *Lectures on Buddhism*, vol. 5, 19, 144; *Seikyo Times*, March 1973, 23-24, 49-54.
- ³⁸ Ysuiji Kirimura, *Fundamentals of Buddhism* (Tokyo: Nichiren Shoshu International Center, 1978), 161; cf. 45.
- ³⁹ Thomsen, 103.
- ⁴⁰ *The Soka Gakkai*, 47-48; Ikeda, *Lectures on Buddhism*, vol. 4, 307.
- ⁴¹ "Ho'on Sho," *NSA Quarterly*, Fall 1975, 130; Kirimura, 151-52.
- ⁴² "Practice of the Buddha's Teaching," *Seikyo Times*, Sept. 1975, 46.
- ⁴³ *The Soka Gakkai*, 15.
- ⁴⁴ "The Roots of Suffering," *Seikyo Times*, July 1982, 51.
- ⁴⁵ This quote is derived from personal conversations with many members.
- ⁴⁶ See "Buddhism and Traditional Western Concepts Series," *Seikyo Times*, June 1982, 55, and October 1982, 52-53.
- ⁴⁷ Brannen, 34.
- ⁴⁸ K. S. Latourette, *Introduction to Buddhism* (New York: Friendship Press, 1956), 38; cf. Mark A. Ehman, "The Saddharmapundarika-Sutra" in *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective*, ed. Charles S. Prebish (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), 102; and Murata, 24.
- ⁴⁹ *The Soka Gakkai*, 141.
- ⁵⁰ In Murata, 107-8.