Soka Gakkai International

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Dear Madam or Sir:

I trust this finds you in the best of spirits. Allow me to express my gratitude for your interest in the Soka Gakkai International's (SGI) activities for the promotion of peace, culture and education based on the philosophy of Buddhism.

Three years have passed since a wave of hope and euphoria swept the world in 1989—a year which saw a growing tide of democratization in Eastern Europe, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the signing of the historic U.S.-Soviet Malta Declaration which effectively signalled the end of the Cold War. Yet today, faced with the increasing scope of ethnic and regional conflict, humanity languishes in its inability to realize the prospects for a new era of global peace.

It is in this milieu that SGI President Daisaku Ikeda has issued his annual peace proposal titled, "Toward a More Humane World in the Coming Century," to coincide with SGI Day, January 26—the 18th anniversary of the organization's founding.

In the proposal, Mr. Ikeda expresses concern over the intensifying ethnic-based regional wars, symbolized by fighting in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and offers philosophical prescriptions for overcoming them. He expresses support for the United Nations, an organization on which many pin their hopes for peace in the post-Cold War world, and maintains that it should be the embodiment of "soft power" born from cooperative relations between states.

Moreover, the SGI leader underscores the urgency and indispensability for the UN to take on a more democratic character. He urges greater involvement by non-governmental organizations in UN activities as well as the formation of a UN People's Assembly as additional steps for reforming and strengthening the world body. The proposal concludes with a call for the establishment of a High Commissioner for Minority and Indigenous People and an international agency to oversee the dismantling and disposal of nuclear weapons.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing the English text of the proposal. I hope you will find it of interest and helpful for understanding the SGI's thinking on global issues.

Sincerely,

Hisami Yamazaki
Vice General Director
Soka Gakkai International
Chairman
Soka Gakkai Peace Committee

Toward a More Humane World in the Coming Century

Daisaku Ikeda
President
Soka Gakkai International

January 26, 1993

On the occasion of the 18th SGI Day, I would like to share a few thoughts about recent developments in the world. The exhilarating winds of liberation and change experienced only a few years ago, with *perestroika* and the democratization of Eastern Europe, have dissipated. The end of the century approaches and a sense of impending gloom seems to grow more threatening. When the upheaval was at its height, I observed that the most important task confronting us was to find a way to channel the energy released by the new liberating forces in the world into a constructive direction. Unfortunately, this task is proving extremely difficult. The long-standing ideologically-inspired mistrust and enmity that gripped the world in the decades following World War II have largely dissolved and we have arrived in the post-Cold War era, yet the prospects for the creation of a new world order still look very dim. Indeed, everywhere we look there are hot spots, regions torn by deep-rooted ethnic or religious strife which, if appropriate measures for their resolution are not taken, could lead to truly catastrophic consequences.

The problem of ethnic conflict, such as found in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, is a source of particular concern. And there is not even a hint of resolution; in fact, the difficulty of these situations seems only to grow more intense. In trying to analyze international affairs today, we find that conventional world maps are practically useless. Now we must have a second map, one that shows the cultural constituents of countries and regions. In the West also, strained ethnic and racial relations have become more pronounced, as evidenced by the civil unrest in Los Angeles in the United States and the rise of neo-Nazism in European countries. Nor has Japan remained unaffected by these tensions. Modern civilization, which developed pursuing the goals of universality, homogeneity, and uniformity now seems to be on the verge of an abrupt reversal, propelled primarily by ethnic rivalry and tribal chauvinism. This dangerous scourge, which has been called the "AIDS of international politics" *(The Economist),* requires constant vigilance.

At the end of the twentieth century we find ourselves face-to-face with the return of "ethnic cleansing," an abominable ghost that has risen from a 50-year-old grave. When we hear reports from Serbia and other countries describing acts of barbarism that conjure up the nightmare of the Holocaust, and when we stop to consider that the roots of these atrocities lie in ethnic rivalries that date back hundreds of years, we cannot but question the very notion of progress. The human animal sometimes seems a hopeless creature. I am not alone in feeling this way.

In the last chapter of *Crime and Punishment* Dostoyevsky describes the sensitive young Raskolnikov, who has been banished to Siberia for killing an old moneylending woman. In his dreams, he sees the fierce outbreak of a strange, contagious disease.

> A new kind of trichinae had appeared, microscopic substances that lodged in men's bodies.... Those infected were seized immediately and went mad. Yet people never considered themselves so clever and so unhesitatingly right as these infected ones considered themselves.[1]

Thus people absolutely sure of their own convictions seek out enemies, weaving a pattern of broken alliances as they embark on a road of endless mutual slaughter. In the end, the only ones to be saved from the calamity of the disease are the "pure and the chosen, predestined to begin a new race of men and a new life, to renew and purify the earth;..."[2] This is the nightmare that constantly torments the ailing Raskolnikov.

Today we see people, intoxicated by slogans like "ethnic cleansing," shamelessly shedding human blood. Surely they have been infected by Dostoyevsky's "trichinae." They, too, will go on killing each other, and show no signs of stopping until humanity is exterminated (and a "new race" created!). Theirs is literally a sickness unto death, an all-devouring, inescapable malaise of the ego.

We must not turn away from the disturbing fact that humanity does not yet possess sufficient immunity against this disease. As the UN Security Council's resolutions condemning these acts make clear, there is virtually no support for the barbarisms being committed in the name of "ethnic cleansing" and other atavistic concepts. And yet, the international community's cry of outrage grows out of the same soil that is today nurturing the disturbing rise of the radical right, primarily in such countries as Germany, France, and Italy. In other words, it is by no means clear that the people who denounce "ethnic cleansing" accord equal censure to the rise of extremists in their midst. It might be that an important fraction of the general population harbors silent sympathy for their aberrant claims. Calls for the expulsion of immigrants have grown stronger, triggered by the sudden influx of refugees; it is difficult to believe that this could happen without some degree of underlying complicity.

Japan has no real experience dealing with the coexistence (as distinguished from invasion and subjugation) of different ethnic groups, hence one never knows when the tides of anti-foreign sentiment might rise as the country continues to open its market and accept a growing influx of Asian labor. Since the Meiji era in the late 1800s, Japan has vacillated between reverence and rejection of foreign influence. We have not developed any sort of immunity to the disease of xenophobia. Even without considering the tone of recent discourse, there is more than enough evidence to support the fear that a modern version of Japan's historically strong antipathy to foreign influences could make a resurgence, especially, for example, if unemployment or public safety problems were to mount.

With intensifying friction between Japan and her economic partners, Japan has come to be viewed more and more as a cultural and economic anomaly. That the Japanese government has only reacted to these pressures with piecemeal and belated measures is cause for even greater worry.

Inevitably, the coexistence of different cultures is accompanied by the clash of values. Since Japan has not yet developed the necessary immunity to ethnic hatred, concerns about a too-rapid process of "internationalization" may be justified. Nevertheless, it is impossible to turn back the clock, and the only realistic option is to move steadily forward through a process of repeated trial and error. Attention must be paid not only to the various phenomenal aspects of the problem, but most importantly to our own attitudes, to assure that our response always grows out of a basic open-mindedness. To be more specific, when strained ethnic relations erupt into open discord, we must be vigilant to keep a window for dialogue open. If there is no such window, with our attitude self-righteous and close-minded and our responses inflexible, the situation will only worsen, providing an ideal culture for Dostoyevsky's "trichinae." In such a situation discussion becomes impossible, attempts to seek negotiated solutions are frustrated, and appeal to the rule of force appears to be the only option. History is filled with lessons of this kind.

The Divisive Power of the Closed Mind

The main reason relations between different peoples and cultures degenerate into the kind of atrocity symbolized by "ethnic cleansing" is to be found in the closed thinking and narrowness that grips people's minds. People of different ethnic groups who managed until only days before to live side by side without particularly overt problems are suddenly at each other's throats, as if prodded and moved only by hatred. It is difficult to believe that the recurrent strife and bloody conflicts we are witnessing today have broken out solely because the restraining frameworks of ideology and authoritarianism were removed. Economic hardship cannot explain it either, though it may have acted as the trigger; if that were the underlying cause, there would be no necessity to resort to killing. We can only conclude that the true cause lies deeper, in a disease of close-mindedness whose roots are submerged in the history of civilization.

It is my belief that the essence of goodness is the aspiration toward unity, while evil directs itself toward division or sundering. The function of evil is ever to create divisions; to cause fissures in the human heart; sever the bonds among family members, colleagues, friends, and acquaintances; engender enmity between countries as well as ethnic groups; and to destroy the human sense of unity with nature and the universe. Where divisiveness reigns, human beings become isolated and the victims of unhappiness and misery.

A person with a closed heart is one who is shut up within a self-imposed shell of selfishness and complacency. This sad and pointless act of severing "self" and "other" bears the hallmark of "evil" as I have attempted to define it here. This deep-rooted tendency, which has persisted throughout human history, is manifested in a singular way in our time, perhaps a fateful feature of twentieth-century civilization.

Dostoyevsky's apocalyptic episode is a brilliant prediction that identifies this malaise at its very core, but it is somewhat metaphorical. Moving a little closer to our own time, let us look at the warnings of three pioneer thinkers of this century who are nearly our contemporaries. The first is philosopher Gabriel Honor-Marcel, whose penetrating thoughts about the turmoil of his own times have great immediacy for us today.

> Proudhon used to say: "Intellectuals are frivolous," and unfortunately this is terribly true, the deep reason for it being that the intellectual has not to deal, as the peasant and the workman have, with a tangible and stubborn reality, a reality which resists fantasies; the intellectual works with words, and paper permits absolutely anything to be written on it. Of this particular danger the intellectuals of our day ought to be continually aware. Proudhon used to add that, if intellectuals are frivolous, the people is [sic] serious. This, unfortunately, is perhaps no longer true today—because of the press and the radio, which have almost invariably a corrupting effect.[3]

How true that "paper permits absolutely anything to be written on it"! It is this that permits the frivolous use of words; and a too-casual belief in words (because the object of belief lacks substance) easily transmutes into fanaticism. Through the spread of the mass media in the twentieth century, this corruption of the spirit, once the special province of a fatuous class of intellectuals, has infected the general population.

There is no doubt that nationalism, ethnic identity, and other much used and abused slogans today have been perfect objects of this easy credulity and fanaticism. This is because concepts like "race" and "ethnicity" are in large part fictitious, and ethnic identifications have typically been artificially constructed by one means or another. This may sound rather extreme, but I believe the circumstances warrant candid words; in a world where ethnic and national identity have become the source of such brutal violence, a definitive revision of our understanding of the concepts is critical.

Nationalist sentiments have been intentionally cultivated as an integral part of the process of building modern nation-states; it is a means of forging unity among the citizenry and fostering spiritual bonds. In most cases, its authenticity is highly suspect. Countries like England and France, which are considered models of the modern nation-

state, are ethnically and racially more diverse than Japan, for example. It was not so many centuries ago that they were loose federations of smaller tribal groups.

Toward a Global Consciousness

In Japan, national consciousness did not come into full bloom until the Meiji period, some time after Japan was established as a modern state. Before that, the locus of identity was the *han,* the regional domains that made up the country. Going further back in history, to ancient and medieval times, it is an acknowledged fact that there was considerable exchange of people between Japan and the Asian continent, especially the Korean peninsula.

The term "Japanese nation" thus came into use well before it was a substantive reality. This may be true of any people, and is an extremely important factor to keep in mind when we consider discordant racial relations. To believe in words without insisting that their truth first be proved is the most casual, and dangerous, form of belief—for it is all too easily transformed into fanaticism.

Marcel contrasts this readiness to believe in words with the attitude of peasants and common laborers who must confront the stubborn realities of life. In this connection, I would like to recount an anecdote from the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Two Russian soldiers, one a commissioned officer and the other an enlisted man, had been captured and were being held at the Japanese Army regimental headquarters. They were the first prisoners to be taken, and the company commander suggested to his troops that they have a look. But one soldier spoke up against the idea. "In civilian life I'm a craftsman, but once in military uniform, I'm a Japanese warrior *(bushi)*. I don't know who these men are or where they're from. They may be enemies, but they're still soldiers unlucky enough to have been taken prisoner. They have been dragged hither and yon, and made a spectacle of. It must be a pretty embarrassing situation to be in. I think I'd find the sight unbearably pitiful, and so I don't want to go and humiliate them further."

The story continues that the rest of the troops agreed with the enlisted man and decided not to see the prisoners. This story demonstrates the moral uprightness of people accustomed to dealing with "tangible and stubborn reality...which resists fantasies." Obviously that soldier was not steeped in the narrow-minded nationalism of recent years, and that developed so rapidly in Japan in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War. The real seeds of peace do not lie in lofty ideas, but in the human understanding and empathy of ordinary people like that soldier.

Walter Lippmann, considered to be one of the greatest journalists of this century, incisively analyzed the problem of how easy belief can lead, through stereotypes, to a distorted perception of the world around us. Lippmann made his living as a journalist,

an occupation Marcel disparaged for its "almost invariably...corrupting effect." Lippmann's famous work, *Public Opinion,* is a work of conscience, the self-admonishing effort of a journalist to expose the deepest sources of the malaise that afflicts the civilization of the twentieth century.

Observing that, "Whatever we recognize as familiar we tend, if we are not very careful, to visualize with the aid of images already in our mind," Lippmann goes on to say,

> Except where we deliberately keep prejudice in suspense, we do not study a man and judge him to be bad. We see a bad man. We see a dewy morn, a blushing maiden, a sainted priest, a humorless Englishman, a dangerous Red, a carefree bohemian, a lazy Hindu, a wily Oriental, a dreaming Slav, a volatile Irishman, a greedy Jew, a 100% American.[4]

For Lippmann, public opinion is corrupted from the outset by these various kinds of stereotypes. Though public opinion may, like nationalism, be considered a reflection of popular will, there are innumerable instances where the people have been mesmerized by stereotype-based sloganeering and sent into violent rampages unthinkable under normal circumstances. As Plato's allegory of the cave attests, such a tendency is probably not a particularly modern phenomenon. But Lippmann asserts that what characterizes public opinion in the mass society of the twentieth century is that stereotypes make the average man "dogmatic, because his belief is a complete myth."[5] The nature of this process is such that dissent comes to be regarded as betrayal, and a single interpretation takes on the appearance of an all-explaining truth. It is only a short distance from there to intolerance, the "close-mindedness" I have used in my attempts to describe this tendency in the modern psychology.

Ideologies such as communism have produced in prodigious quantity a peculiar kind of character: ideologues who are superficial, intolerant, and self-righteous. It is impossible to engage in true dialogue with someone who is close-minded and intolerant. As long as he remains shut up within his "myth," no matter how much he may talk—indeed, the more long-winded and bombastic he is—he is incapable of carrying on a dialogue, only a monologue.

Boris Pasternak, speaking through his fictional character, Dr. Zhivago, lambasts the attempts of ideologues to enforce belief: "The people you worship go in for proverbs, but they've forgotten one proverb—'You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.'"[6] The ideologue's basic character is violent, and fundamentally incapable of dialogue. For this reason, Lippmann admonishes us in the conclusion of *Public Opinion* to keep the window of reason open and never falter in our efforts to

apply what he calls the "test of evidence." Thus to the very end he continues to appeal to Socratic themes.

When we speak of the theory of mass society in the twentieth century, we cannot forget one other person who has earned an honored place as a pioneer thinker: José Ortega y Gasset. Some people believe his principal work, *The Revolt of the Masses,* has the same significance for the twentieth century that Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract* had for the eighteenth, and Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* had for the nineteenth. From the heights of a noble spirit, Ortega focuses his extraordinary critical powers on an analysis of that uniquely twentieth-century phenomenon—the ascendancy of the masses. This work is filled with valuable insights for us today, well over half a century after its writing. Ortega, too, placed great importance on the idea of dialogue as a pivotal factor in the creation of culture.

> To have ideas, to form opinions, is identical with appealing to such an authority, submitting oneself to it, accepting its code and its decisions, and therefore believing that the highest form of intercommunion is the dialogue in which the reasons for our ideas are discussed.[7]

Without fixed rules to guide us, we cannot engage in dialogue; in fact, it is precisely those shared rules that constitute the underlying principle of culture. According to Ortega:

> When all these things are lacking there is no culture; there is in the strictest sense of the word, barbarism. And let us not deceive ourselves, this is what is beginning to appear in Europe under the progressive rebellion of the masses.[8]

The word "masses," as used here, does not refer to a specific social stratum. Ortega's "mass-man" is a new breed of human being, someone he calls a "new Adam" and a "self-satisfied" child. The structure of his soul is built on two fundamental characteristics: a "hermetism" that derives from his intoxication with self-satisfaction and a shallow sense of victory, and an "indocility" that causes him to go his own way, without regard to rules or norms. "Hermetism" and "indocility" are the two aspects that make up this "self-satisfied" child's peculiar form of infantilism, which, like a two-edged sword, severs the ties of dialogue that otherwise exist between mature people. Ortega's words are a warning that clearly anticipate the isolation and withdrawal from human relations that have come to afflict contemporary mass society.

Transnationalism

The following passage from *The Revolt of the Masses,* analyzing the mentality of the "mass-man," seems to overlap closely with the above quoted Dostoyevsky passage describing the contagion of self-righteousness.

> This contentment with himself leads him to shut himself off from any external court of appeal; not to listen, not to submit his opinions to judgment, not to consider others' existence. His intimate feeling of power urges him always to exercise predominance. He will act then as if he and his like were the only beings existing in the world;...[9]

This is truly a portrait of a person enslaved by a closed mind, a state that is in turn the source of the civilizational afflictions discussed here: an absence of critical thinking leading to fanaticism and intolerance.

Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973), Walter Lippmann (1889-1974), and José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955) were contemporaries, and their writings illustrate the same profound concern: that close-mindedness has robbed people of the ability to engage in dialogue and discourse with others—a capacity that can be considered proof of our humanity—and that this was the cause of the serious ills they observed around them.

How does all this relate to the Soka Gakkai International? The Mystic Law (Jap. *myoho*), which forms the basis of our belief, is written with the Chinese character "myo," which has three meanings: to "open," "be endowed," and "revive." As the first meaning suggests, the SGI is engaged in a Buddhist movement to open up the closed hearts and minds that are at the root of civilization's decline. We must all firmly commit ourselves to the historical endeavor of opening lines of dialogue and generating forces for openness and empathy among people everywhere, East and West, North and South.

Our endeavors do not stop at simply treating the superficial symptoms of the malaise, but involve the challenging task of rooting out its very causes. Symptomatic treatment is of course indispensable for dealing with emergencies such as the frequent eruptions of ethnic strife. But if we do not also turn our attention to the underlying causes, our actions will be no more than frantic attempts to cope with immediate crises, like trying to stamp out one fire as another is started.

Many members will recall the idea of the global family advocated shortly after World War II by my mentor and second president of the Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda. At the time, the tensions of the Cold War were intensifying, and few paid any attention to Toda's ideas. At best, they were dismissed as unrealistic reveries.

But today, this idea has finally entered the public consciousness as "transnationalism" (lit. "beyond nationalism") that has become a key concept in

explaining and predicting the future direction of global affairs. Observing this trend, we can only appreciate even more the remarkable foresight of President Toda.

Determined to realize this great vision, I am now engaged in wholehearted dialogue with numerous individuals. Let us carry on with our respective endeavors in our respective lands and circumstances, each in our own way and without regret, our vision fixed on the far horizon and firm in our conviction that the SGI's development is a source of hope for humankind.

Although we have not yet taken even the first step toward creating a system that can accommodate the new era our world has entered, there is general agreement that the United Nations should play a central role in building a new global order of peace. It seems that, in the words of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "an opportunity has been regained to achieve the objectives of the Charter—a United Nations capable of maintaining international peace and security, of securing justice and human rights and of promoting, in the words of the Charter, 'social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom'."[10]

Attempting to realize this opportunity, the United Nations is currently seeking ways to deal with the realities of a rapidly changing world. Indeed, as last year's dispatch of a multinational force to Somalia attests, the UN now stands at an important crossroads. The Security Council voted unanimously to send troops into Somalia, with the core force from the United States, to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid and supplies.

The goals laid out for the multinational force were expressly humanitarian in nature: to give assistance to the Somali people, who were suffering cruelly from civil war, looting, and starvation. In this respect, the measures taken must be considered appropriate. As fellow human beings, we could not sit idly by knowing that, were nothing done, one-quarter of the Somali population, or two million people, would probably die.

UN Role in Cambodia: A Post-Cold War Model for Peace

Until Somalia, the United Nations adhered to the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of member states. In the case of Somalia, it intervened in the name of securing the safe supply of humanitarian aid, and enforced Charter-sanctioned enforcement measures in a domain that had previously been considered an internal political problem. This means that the UN, which until now refused to compromise any nation's sovereignty, has taken a large step in a new direction.

Recent years have witnessed important changes in the nature of relations between states. On the one hand is the trend toward the sharing of sovereignty emerging in the European Community. Juxtaposed to this is the continuing break-up of nation-

states in response to demands for autonomy and independence by the peoples that had constituted them. Under pressure from both directions, traditional concepts of national sovereignty are undergoing a fundamental rethinking.

Recalling that previous proposals to revamp the UN and form a world government by Albert Einstein and others were virtually ignored in Europe, the recent challenges to national sovereignty clearly indicate the arrival of a new era. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has written, "The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty has passed,"[11] indicating that the UN itself is trying to respond to the changing times, as it attempts to formulate a new world order in which national sovereignty is no longer considered absolute.

Nowhere has the success or failure of UN efforts in this field been more closely followed than in Cambodia, where the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) is working to bring about national reconciliation and reconstruction. UNTAC has been empowered with authority that goes far beyond that normally accorded to UN Peace Keeping Operations (PKO). It has operations in all critical sectors—including human rights, electoral and military monitors, oversight of public administration, civil police, and refugee repatriation—required for the functional administration and reconstruction of the country. In this sense, UNTAC marks the true beginning in the experiment to create a new world structure that transcends national sovereignty.

Precisely because it represents a new and untried challenge, the role the UN in Cambodia is difficult beyond imagination. From the success of this formidable endeavor, however, will emerge the outlines of a more activistic UN role for peace in the post-Cold War world. Clearly, this will have profound implications for the future of the UN. As one who is dedicated to the peace and stability of Asia, I fervently pray that this bold experiment will succeed.

My prayers are intensified, in fact, because of my long-standing friendship with Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the UN Secretary-General's special representative in Cambodia, and my acquaintance with Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who leads the Supreme National Council (SNC) and whom I had the pleasure to meet some years ago in Beijing. General elections are scheduled for this year, and the greatest test of the reconstruction process is rapidly approaching.

Caught in the maelstrom of shifting international power relations, the Cambodian people have suffered long and deeply. What we desire above all else is that peace be established in the land of Cambodia, and that hope be restored to the lives of the Cambodian people. To that end, it is my sincere hope that all countries will lend their full support to the efforts of the UN.

Toward an NGO Summit

Last year, Boutros-Ghali submitted a report entitled "Agenda for Peace" to the UN Security Council. The report contains a concept of peace-enforcement forces that has sparked a great deal of discussion. These forces are conceived as falling somewhere between a full-scale deployment of the collective security provisions of the UN Charter and the peace-keeping forces (PKF) currently in use. That is, they would be supplied with heavy arms, and could be dispatched without the consent of the parties to a conflict, in order to force the cessation of hostilities. The rationale for this proposal is the need for the UN to take an active role in quelling the ethnic strife and other hostilities that have erupted in many areas since the end of the Cold War.

According to a recent issue of a British military journal, there are currently seventy-three regions where fighting has either erupted or is likely to erupt. And an increasingly large percentage of conflicts are taking place within national borders, rather than across them. It is anticipated that the UN will have to respond to more of these conflicts, many of which are extremely difficult to resolve.

Before it becomes too deeply enmired in military functions, however, I believe more careful thought should be given to the original mission of the United Nations. According to its Charter, the purpose of the UN is to maintain peace and safety, and to protect human rights and basic freedom. To achieve those goals, it must "be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" (Article 1, Paragraph 4). It is intended, therefore, to serve as a system through which the actions of various countries can be reconciled. All of the provisions and rules of the UN system are aimed, as the Charter makes explicit, at bringing about the resolution of conflicts between member states through peaceful means. This goal is diametrically opposed to the use of military force. If military and other kinds of force are considered "hard power," then the essence of the UN can be said to lie in the "soft power" of systems and rules. I am reminded of the astute observation of Joseph Nye, who was a commentator at a lecture I gave at Harvard University two years ago. Professor Nye said that "soft power is not competitive power, but rather cooperative power."

If, as I have suggested, the essence of goodness lies in union, and the heart of evil is division, surely "cooperative power" represents the power of union, while "competitive power" operates as a force of division, an expression of the desire to prevail over others. We must never permit ourselves to forget that the founding principle of the UN is "soft power" designed to promote cooperation and union.

The UN will no doubt continue to face a variety of crises and emergencies that must be dealt with promptly and flexibly, and there will be times when sanctions, as provided for in the UN Charter, will have to be imposed. But such sanctions must be considered a necessary evil employed in order to bring about harmony. The construction

of a new world order in the wake of the Cold War requires the creation of systems and rules of peace which are based on the power of cooperation. And I believe the central role in that task must be played by the UN.

Furthermore, to realize cooperation on a global scale, serious consideration must be given to the criticism that the UN is dominated by the select group of developed nations who sit as permanent members on the Security Council. This problem is connected to the issue of whether the current organization, dominated by the Security Council, is in fact appropriate. It also calls into question the legitimacy of the UN's role in international affairs, and raises issues about what body or group should be the locus of international governance, as well as the need for the democratization of the UN structure and its operations.

What, then, can be done to bring about a more democratic United Nations?

It goes without saying that the UN as it stands today is an association of member states. Consequently, it is not a system in which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can operate to the full extent of their potential. Democracy is based on the idea that legitimacy derives from the will of the people. The key, therefore, to UN reform, in which democratization is a central issue, is to find ways in which the will of the people can be more accurately reflected in the operation of the international organization. It has been my contention for many years that the UN should bring to the fore its human, as opposed to its nation-state, aspect in terms of both its organization and operations. To make the faces of human beings more prominent, we must approach UN reform from two perspectives, namely, that of people and humanity as a whole.

The particular strengths of the NGOs, which have been extremely active players in international society in recent years, could be used to reinforce UN activities and give more prominence to the interests of the common person. The UN Charter specifies that NGOs' dealings with the UN be restricted to consultation with the Economic and Social Council. However, in light of the growth and activity of NGOs within the international community, as well as the large scale of the cooperative relationships that already exist between NGOs and the UN, I believe these restrictions are unnatural. A system should be devised that reflects the opinions of NGOs not only in the Economic and Social Council, but also in the Security Council and the General Assembly.

I have heard that one proposal for UN reform being considered is to divide the Security Council into four sections, each responsible for one of the following four areas: 1) peace and disarmament; 2) human rights and humanitarian concerns; 3) population, resources, environment and development; and 4) technology, information, communication, and education. While I do not feel qualified to adequately judge the merits of this proposal, I do know that we have entered an era in which the participation of NGOs is essential in all four of these areas.

Last year, for example, the Soka Gakkai in Japan mobilized its Youth Division to work in cooperation with UNTAC, as part of its efforts to support the work of the UN. The "Voice-Aid" program, in which our members conducted a drive to collect used radios, elicited a strong and positive response. Over 280,000 units donated by individuals throughout Japan are now being delivered to the Cambodian people to help educate them about the political process and keep them informed about the upcoming elections.

Because NGOs can respond quickly in situations such as this, they are ideally suited to this kind of activity. If a system is established that permits NGOs to participate in all fields of UN activity, these organizations could be mobilized to enhance the overall effectiveness of the UN.

Another area where NGOs could prove useful is the field of "early warning," which is now an important aspect of UN activities. In recent years, the UN has developed a system designed to collect information and issue early warnings about dangerous crises such as environmental pollution, natural disasters, famine, population movements, epidemics, and nuclear accidents. The purpose is to make sure the people concerned are informed and help provide solutions for problems before they reach crisis proportion. The system is an important component of the UN's attempts to engage in "preventive diplomacy." The NGOs' information-gathering capabilities have been highly commended in the context of this early warning system, and if cooperative relations between NGOs and the UN are further developed, the system is sure to be even more effective.

One other dimension of strengthening of the UN is in creating a mechanism through which the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General can mobilize all the resources of the various UN agencies toward the solution of a given problem. The lack of such an organic, horizontally-linked mechanism stands in the way of a vigorous UN. As mentioned, an important key to enhancing the overall effectiveness of the UN lies in skillfully utilizing the strength of the NGOs. For this reason I propose that, as a provisional measure, some kind of forum be established for regular consultations between the UN Secretary-General and representatives of the NGOs.

Indigenous Peoples, Minorities, and the UN

Human rights, which are now recognized as a commonly-held value by the entire international community, are a foremost concern. Last year Guatemalan human rights activist Rigoberta Menchú was awarded the Nobel Peace prize for her efforts championing the cause of the indigenous Mayan people. In Guatemala, where indigenous people constitute more than half the population, they remain confined to the

lower strata of the socio-economic order. The prize was a recognition of the leadership Menchú took in urging respect for the linguistic and cultural autonomy of the Mayan people.

The year 1993 is a momentous one for human rights; it has been designated the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, and the World Conference on Human Rights is to be held in Vienna this June. The issues involved here are compelling enough, I believe, to justify the establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Indigenous Peoples and National Minorities. Already last year, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) moved in that direction by establishing its own High Commissioner for National Minorities. The office of this new High Commissioner, working in conjunction with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, could become a powerful force protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities throughout the world. It would be a ground-breaking step forward in efforts to bring the concerns of ordinary citizens to the forefront of the UN's activities.

One other change that would emphasize the interests of humanity as a whole over those of the nation-state would be the democratization of the General Assembly. At present, most discussion concerning the reform and strengthening of the UN is focused on changing the Security Council. While this is an important goal, I feel we should also give serious attention to the reform of the General Assembly, since this is where the will of humankind is expressed through the consensus of the member states.

I am currently engaged in a dialogue with the internationally known scholar of peace studies, Dr. Johan Galtung, the results of which are slated for publication. One of the important issues we have covered in our discussions is UN reform. In the course of our talks, Galtung presented his proposal that a new UN Peoples' Assembly (UNPA) be established alongside the existing General Assembly (UNGA). Although more thought must be given to the actual nature of such a body, Galtung conceives it as a forum where issues can be discussed from a transnational (transcending nation-states) view-point, as opposed to the international (between nation-states) perspective that inevitably characterizes the globalism of national governments. I agree with Dr. Galtung's basic idea that, through the combined efforts of governments and private citizens, we can indeed build a better world.

I am fully aware that it is much easier to propose such a body than it is to actually create one. Fundamental reforms such as this could require revising the UN Charter, which is in itself a daunting task. One of the most pressing challenges facing us today, however, is to create, through a worldwide process of consensus-building, a system of global governance that will better reflect the realities of our modern world and will continue to function effectively into the twenty-first century.

Not long ago, Mr. Peter Hansen, the executive director of the commission on global governance, paid a visit to the Soka Gakkai's headquarters, affording the opportunity for an exchange of opinions on various subjects. The following statement is from the commission's terms of reference:

> The nations of the world have created, over the past half century, an extensive system of international cooperation. In the centre stands the United Nations, with its Charter and its huge potential. In specific regions and areas, there exists further an array of important organizations.
>
> However, the institutions of global governance fall severely short of the demand of a new era.[12]

I am very much in sympathy with this statement. I worked with Mr. Norman Cousins to compile a collection of discussions titled "A Dialogue toward Global Harmonization." Cousins, who since has sadly passed away, served as honorary president of the United World Federalists, and was well known for his dedication to the strengthening of the UN. His insistence on the need for a plenary conference to be held to discuss the new situation that fundamentally affects the future of UN was one of the most unforgettable parts of our discussion.

Not Reduction, Complete Disarmament

It is true that, in the UN Charter, provision is made for such a review conference among member states when it is deemed necessary to open discussion concerning revision of the Charter. Although such a review conference has in fact never been held, I believe that we now have ample reason to do so.

The celebration of the UN's fiftieth anniversary in 1995 would be an ideal opportunity for such a conference. I understand that the Commission on Global Governance will issue its report in 1994, the year before the UN's fiftieth anniversary, with suggestions for the establishment of a new organization for world governance. I propose that the UN bring together the many wise ideas contained in reports such as this, and take the initiative in holding a world summit meeting in 1995 to discuss UN reform. At the same time, we should consider holding a World NGO Summit that would rally the voices of all the world's citizens.

Another problem that stands out against the background of the many conflicts found throughout the world is the issue of arms exports. Many weapons, which have actually served to exacerbate regional conflicts, have been sold by the countries with permanent seats on the Security Council. We have reached the point where it is essential

that restrictions be imposed on the international arms trade, and greater effort made to strengthen the trend toward disarmament.

Now, in the 90s, when the global economic outlook is poor, and the Cold-War structures are being dismantled, it is more imperative than ever that we make an unequivocal start on disarmament to help fundamentally strengthen the world economy.

In the fall of last year, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali presented a report to the First Committee of the UN concerning new dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-Cold War era. In it, disarmament is defined as a part of the UN's overall efforts at "peacemaking, peace-keeping, and peace-building." Boutros-Ghali further states that disarmament should not be restricted to a few specific countries, but rather carried out on a global scale by all the member states of the UN. This is certainly an issue of great urgency, and I strongly hope that the United States and Russia in particular will take the initiative in this regard. At the beginning of this year, the United States and Russia signed the START II agreement, which bans land-based, multiple warhead ICBMs, and reduces by two-thirds the total number of strategic nuclear weapons, to between 3,000 and 3,500 on each side. Although I don't wish to grudge recognition of the historical significance of this agreement, I find it difficult to understand why they felt it necessary to keep so many nuclear weapons deployed.

If the United States and Russia are no longer enemies, the idea of nuclear deterrence, which has been the dominant justification for nuclear weapons until now, loses all meaning. Therefore, there is no reason to stockpile 3,000 nuclear weapons. We call upon these two countries to completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals, because doing so would have great symbolic significance for the cause of worldwide disarmament. If the United States and Russia embark upon such a course, which until now has been thought impossible, it is sure to provide great impetus to the process of worldwide disarmament. The path will be cleared for international conferences that include other nuclear powers aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

One obstacle that currently prevents progress in nuclear arms reduction is the high cost of dismantling and destroying nuclear warheads. It is said that Russia, whose economy is in extremely bad shape, does not have the economic wherewithal to undertake the task. This is not a problem, however, that can be solved simply by having certain countries provide financial assistance to Russia.

Further, the problem of nuclear weapons is not confined to the United States and Russia. We are also confronted with the serious issue of how to prevent global nuclear proliferation. It is my belief that a new, international organization is needed to comprehensively deal with the increasingly complex problem of nuclear weapons.

I believe that Japan is one country that should actively pursue the rejuvenation and strengthening of the UN in the ways I have outlined above. Japan's contribution to

the international community should not be restricted to the question of the role it plays in the UN's security-related activities. Much less is it a question of national ego, as symbolized by the question of whether Japan should become a permanent member of the Security Council. What matters is that Japan cooperate with the UN over a wide range of concerns, including the environment, poverty and hunger, human rights, and population growth.

This year, as in previous years, I confirm and renew my commitment to realizing these ideals of peace, through dialogue with people of shared conviction throughout the world.

NOTES

1. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (New York: Penguin Books USA, 1968), 524
2. Ibid., 525
3. Gabriel Marcel, *Man Against Mass Society* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1962), 110-11
4. Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), 77
5. Ibid., 78
6. Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), 339
7. José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1957), 74
8. Ibid., 72
9. Ibid., 97
10. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace" (New York: United Nations, 1992), 1-2
11. Ibid., 9
12. New World Commission on Global Democracy and Common Responsibility, "Terms of Reference 2nd Draft" (Geneva: 1992)

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Señor
Hisami Yamazaki
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Soka Gakkai International
Chairman
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Japón

Estimado señor:

Por encargo de S.E. el Presidente de la República, don Patricio Aylwin Azócar, tengo el agrado de acusar recibo de su carta del 26 de febrero, recibida en este Gabinete con fecha 2 de abril de 1993.

Saluda atentamente a Ud.

CARLOS BASCUÑAN EDWARDS
Jefe de Gabinete Presidencial

pp MARCELO TRIVELLI OYARZUN
Asesor Presidencial

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