

The Centennial of Satyagraha --

The Satyagraha of Gandhi and Human Revolution of Ikeda Some reflections*

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Respected Dr Kawada, Dr. Morita, my good friend Dr Akash Ouchi, learned faculty and friends.

For me, to come to the Soka University campus is like a pilgrimage as well as a part of my continuing education. I have used the expressions 'pilgrimage' and 'education' for two different purposes. I don't come here as a visitor or a speaker. To me and those who accompanied me yesterday to the Entrance Ceremony at Soka University, it was a most moving learning occasion as well as a spiritual experience we could ever imagine. This spiritual experience was the hall mark of every visit I have had the privilege during the last 23 years of my association with this great centre of Value Creation.

Basically, I am an educator. And as an educator, I know what it means when a new year begins in an educational campus. Very often, it's the beginning of one more year which need not be eventful or significant in any way. Young students and scholars, coming from various institutions commence their educational or research programs in a new environment, very often, with new friends and new faculty. This is all what a new-year means in most of the colleges and universities world over.

In sharp contrast to this, yesterday, to tell you the truth, I was witness to some thing very remarkable. I was over-taken with an emotion which was difficult to explain as I sat through the entrance ceremony at the Soka University. It was a unique experience for my entire family. I almost wept, right from the beginning to the end. Looking at the whole procedure, process and the remarkable manner in which Dr Ikeda, the founder of this great seat of learning, which in deed is a tribute to his mentor, dialogued and communicated with those who were around, before and behind him and on both sides of the jam-packed hall, I said to myself, 'this is most poignant and unimaginable'.

Text of speech at the Indo-Japan joint symposium arranged by the Oriental Institute of Philosophy, Tokyo on 3rd April 2007 to mark the Centenary of the Satyagraha movement under Gandhi

I sat through the entire function, almost spell-bound. Dr. Ikeda was not speaking in the conventional manner of a founder. It appeared as if he was addressing each one of us in the capacity-filled hall. He radiated a rare brilliance as he proceeded addressing the students particularly. He was looking at us straight in our faces, and communicating with us directly and slowly getting into our being.

At no stage did he appear to be pontificating nor advising. But then, the manner in which he took the younger generation, particularly into confidence, built a kind of rapport with them on the basis of their aspirations, their hopes, their perceptions, their dreams on their lives and the need to develop harmony with in themselves, revealed what a great communicator and leader that he is. I sat spell bound, so too almost every body around me. In a conversation style he was building on the relationships which are the priority of life and emphasizing that conversations are the crucial element in caring of relationships.

April 2, is an auspicious day for every one in the Soka University campus. The joy which every one of you experiences gets augmented in the rare feat of color display provided by nature outside. When one looks around over the windows for a moment, to have a panoramic view of the nature outside, one will be struck with amazement. The nature reveals in its plenty. All around this building and all over the campus, beautiful cherry blossoms have provided a canopy of rare beauty – a canopy of harmony -- a canopy of oneness, affirming the greatness of the Ultimate Reality which reveals in myriad forms. The beauty and color that radiates through the cherry blossoms send around a kind of joy and harmony which is almost primordial. This joy, revealed through the multitudes of cherry blossoms has a multiplying effect, both in animate and inanimate objects.

It is not necessary that such a radiating wave of beauty and happiness come from the beauty outside. In fact, the springboard of happiness is always, the interior landscape of each of us.

Building bridges with youth

Though we boast of the great strides humanity has achieved in the field of communication, the real problem confronting each of us is one of effective communication or lack of it. Communicating with the younger generation has become a major problem of the 21th century. Scientists also admit this. Either we blame the younger generation for not falling in line with our thinking or take them for granted. The so-called generation gap is alarmingly widening in all societies and precious little is being done to understand the youth and carry them with us as equal and trusted partners in development.

The feudal and almost condescending attitude of the elders to treat the youth as a segment of immature humanity still guides a large part of the world. As Roger Rosinblastt, author of *Children of War*, wrote, “children and youth are, of course, the

least consulted about their futures... nobody asks them, nobody gives them a choice, and the first thing that they are ordinarily asked to do by their governments is to “fight”. In sharp contrast to this general attitude, three great modern leaders took courageous initiatives in not only trusting but bringing the youth into the main stage of social activism. Two of them are not with us physically though they continue to inspire generations of social reformers and educational experts. They are Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

The third, Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, who is affectionately and reverentially addressed as “Sensei” is guiding us -- both young and old -- as a father figure. The remarkable manner in which he communicated with the 5,000 or more youth who were present yesterday was a proof of his total commitment to the welfare of youth as well as their own faith in him as a *mentor par excellence*.

Education as Human Revolution and education for Human Revolution

I could see how many of them who were sitting in the front portion of the audience were controlling their tears and many of them were emotionally and intellectually surcharged. This is education, this is *Human Revolution*. *Human Revolution* is not a mechanical process of someone leading somebody, like Moses of history. *Human Revolution* is a creative process of effecting a qualitative change in our perceptions, in our attitude, in the manner in which one should shape one’s life, so that one will be able to meet the day to day challenges of life, leading to a transformation.

Shakyamuni did it with convincing success a long time back. Prophet Mohammad too did it at a time when Arabia was enveloped in darkness, both spiritual and material. Jesus was another prophet who opened a new window of hope for humanity. The Jain seer, Vardhamana Mahaveer was another nonviolent prophet. In the 13th century we have Nichiren Daishonin who through his courageous interpretation of the Buddhist texts in the context of the emerging reality broke new grounds leading a large chunk of humanity to a new spiritual awakening.

Gandhi in the 20th century interpreted in the secular context the available wisdom, on the basis of human capability and the essential goodness of every human being. He offered a new set of nonviolent tools and methods to identify evil and encourage people to fight for their rights and preserve human dignity. There were many others like Martin Luther King who were inspired by Gandhi to follow nonviolent methods for political emancipation, religious awakening, and societal transformation.

The Soka education, right from the kindergarten up to the university reflects this awareness and an eloquent expression of the leadership of the Soka movement to remain committed to the dream of its founder Mr Makiguchi who believed the purpose of education is enable to children to live lives of happiness. His revolutionary cry for humanistic education is the hall mark of the Soka education.

The present leadership under the visionary President Dr. Daisaku Ikeda holds aloft this flag with remarkable determination and courage of conviction.

What is important is how we look at the fabric of life. Life is, as people say, a beautiful poem. As Dr. Ikeda described, it's a precious jewel. It is to be lived and not talked about. There are people who cherish it as a glory while there are also people who view it as a curse and burden. Well, it all depends on how one looks at it. We have lots of philosophies and galaxies of philosophers. Great men and women lived their lives in inspiring styles and left behind them rich legacy and heritage. We, who have inherited this rich legacy, go on and on, trying to improve the texture and quality of life with the aid of these fore runners. And as we embark on the long, long journey of life, in our Herculean efforts to relate ourselves to the emerging realities, what guides us certainly is the legacy and heritage of the past which constitutes the foundation of our life. This foundation rests on values such as love, compassion, and respect.

While we are conscious of our own efforts to live, we don't recognize the rights of others to live their lives. Many of us are so selfish that while we want to live, we trample upon other's right to live. Here comes the relevance of the Buddhist assertion of co-existence and dependent origination.

Mentoring the youth – Ikeda's lead

Dr Ikeda, in his own inimitable manner, dialogues with the younger generation. They find in him a very reliable mentor. In fact, mentoring is a very difficult thing. Back in our homes each one of us has a specific role to play as parents, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, or teachers. Performing each one's role satisfactorily or so well, need not mean that we are mentoring anybody. Mentoring is one of the most difficult things in the process of growing. To get a genuine mentor in one's life is one of the greatest privileges any generation can have.

We look at Mt. Fuji as a source of inspiration. The living Mt Fuji to the younger generation as well as to the older people, so far as I am concerned, is Dr Daisaku Ikeda, who is a *Sensei par excellence*. The profundity of his mission, the extent of his commitment and the manner in which he is able to radiate them originate from his perception of life and commitment to his mentors. This is something extraordinary.

Without exaggeration, let me humbly state that I feel a rare spiritual vibration here and I go back surcharged, both emotionally and spiritually. Like a thief, I take back a lot of nourishment from here every time I come. This spiritual nourishment and the intellectual satisfaction I derive from here are tremendous.

As a human dynamo I get myself recharged. This time I came with my family. My second son, who is with me, is an officer in the Indian Air-force. I am happy to note that he is trying to be a nonviolent officer. He is trying to demonstrate among his

colleagues and trainees how one person can make a change in life. This is Human Revolution at micro level and Satyagraha at individual level.

Satyagraha, a gift of Gandhi to humanity, is based on the assertion that you don't need a group or many people to effect changes in society or in life. This is also the basis of '*Human Revolution*', propagated by Dr. Ikeda as I have understood it from the manner in which he has been practicing it over the years.

Individual as agent of change

Let us recognize the worth and importance of every individual. Each one of us can make a difference. What we require is courage, conviction, determination and faith. In fact, these are the four pillars of changes.

Faith could be visualized and experienced in many ways. At the individual level it begins with the cultivation of faith in oneself, in one's capabilities and in one's supreme confidence in surmounting the obstacles that may crop up in daily life. This will be followed by a faith in a philosophy, religious tenets which one may have taken voluntarily, and what constitutes the broader frame of his / her perceptions. Here comes the question of faith in leadership, faith in a mentor, and determination to follow the mentor. Faith in a mentor is one of the corner stones of *Human Revolution*.

The concept and practice of *Satyagraha*, as visualized and developed by Gandhi can be better understood when it is examined in the context of modern concept and practice as exemplified by *Human Revolution*. Satyagraha, an Indian word is a combination of two words. Gandhi coined this term in South Africa. "Sat" means truth while "Agraha" means holding on. Thus "Satyagraha" means holding on to truth, to hold on to truth like a baby clings to his mother. A baby holds on to its mother in such a way that it is not easy to separate the baby from the mother. Gandhi meant it as 'Love Force' or 'Soul Force' or 'Truth Force'.

Call for action – the basis of Satyagraha and Human Revolution

Such a holding on to truth, holding firmly to one's faith, to oneself, to the ideals of life and to the Ultimate, requires infinite and undiluted faith. Only then can one become a genuine *Satyagrahi* (a votary of Satyagraha). A Satyagrahi is one who commits oneself to the highest ideals of life. Let us transfer this to the concept of *Human Revolution*. Surprising similarity characterizes both.

I fail to see much difference; on the contrary there is a remarkable closeness and a kind of symbiotic relationship between the two. In both the concepts of 'Satyagraha

of Gandhi' and in '*Human Revolution*' of Dr. Ikeda we can see a call for action besides emphasis on individual transformation, empowerment and nonviolent social change.

The Satyagraha, introduced by Gandhi 100 years ago, sought individual empowerment, moral rearmament, societal transformation and nonviolent conflict management. This novel idea soon became a matchless and dynamic weapon in the hands of the multitudes of suppressed and voiceless humanity. In the hands of Gandhi it also became a highly potent and effective tool. The Core of Satyagraha is action.

Dr. Ikeda, inspired by his mentor, President Toda, transformed the concept of *Human Revolution* into an effective platform for developing heightened sensibilities. Besides translating into action his mentor Toda's dream of mobilizing latent human energy for productive purposes and leadership for change, one sees a rare commitment to values and a strong determination even to die for a cause, if need be. During one of my visits to Kansai Town I saw this as a grim determination among the members. They call this determination, the *Kansai spirit*. *Human Revolution* fosters this spirit of revolution, action, readiness to effect change.

The alchemy of converting poison into medicine

Do we have this determination to pursue a cause? Most of us display sufficient determination to acquire wealth and enhance material comforts. But do we have the determination and courage to die for a cause? How do we promote happiness and prosperity of other persons? Do we care about the welfare of others? Can we be at least in a small measure, become the agents of change? What is the alchemy of transforming poison into medicine? *Human Revolution* provides a key to the amazing and baffling challenges of life and answers to all these questions.

Gandhi's perception of change was in conformity with his vision of life and the role of each individual as agent of change. He believed that change is the law of life. If there is no change, life becomes static and stale. The wheels of change keep on rolling from time immemorial, heralding progress of sorts. The inescapable vicissitudes through which humanity has traveled characterize the grim determination of man to effect change, come what may? There is no denial of the fact that all the progress humanity has registered in its onward march to progress and survival from the Cave Age to the Cyber Age of today also indicates the resolute determination of humanity to seek out change. To Dr Ikeda, this is *Human Revolution*.

To prepare humanity to be aware of what lies ahead is one of the important aspects of *Human Revolution*. We do not know what changes are in store for us tomorrow, how the rhythm of our life might change.

Heroism of the Mother

What is the one factor responsible for it? That is undeniably the desire for change. Many might not be conscious or aware of the texture and nature of change while brave souls display courage to strive towards changes, material, psychic, corporal, personal, and societal. This process of change is long, very often frustrating, arduous and painful. It is like the delivery of a child.

Let us remember in this context that the most poignant moment in life is the birth of a child. The mother is prepared to die for the sake of her child, making motherhood the most sacred facet in human life. Let us salute the bravery displayed by every mother in the world to die for the child, if need be. This is not an ordinary heroism. This is heroism of the highest order.

The agent of any change at micro level is the individual, and not the society. It's the individual, his family, his society, it might be his school, the village he grew up, or the college he has studied which act as the nurseries and fodder. It might be the place one works or the groups of individuals with whom one interacts. Then comes the county or the prefecture, or the state, and on and on. Catch hold of the individual at the micro level and empower the individual and prepare the individual to face the challenges of life to discover him / her and help them to see that nobody is independent in this life.

The notion of independence is a myth. We grow and survive only in groups. Gandhi proved this. Before Gandhi, many persons strove for establishing the efficacy of this truth.

Shakyamuni was among the foremost teachers of humanity who highlighted the importance of the interconnectivity and cosmic relationship among all creations. We articulate not only on the basis of our own perceptions but on the basis of the realities of the dreams of the other persons. We find ourselves reflected on other's realities. This awareness binds humanity together and unless dissensions and pettiness cloud our mental horizon, we are destined to gallop towards the cherished goal of common humanity, as dreamt by Dr Ikeda.

The Shields of the Brave

Gandhi developed the concept and practices of Satyagraha in a unique way. His primary purpose through Satyagraha was to prepare every human being to recognize evil. To identify evil needs courage and it must be followed by strong determination. Resolute determination is what is required to face challenges. Sometimes one will be arrested, ex-communicated, and even persecuted. Sometimes one will be put on the Cross. Sometimes one will be given hemlock. Sometimes one will be stoned to death or eliminated by bullets. History has witnessed all this.

Yet the surprising thing is that there is a bigger force which defied and continues to defy these. It is the determinations of brave hearts to face challenges smilingly and court even death to uphold the cause they hold dear to their heart. Determination, conviction and courage are the shields of those motivated souls. They also muster spiritual courage.

Unfortunately, a large number of people are reconciled to their fate and do not display any courage at all. They accept every thing with passive resignation. They are afraid of their own shadows and curse their Karma. It is difficult for them to appreciate the worth of what others do. The inspired souls march ahead unmindful of hazards and knowing full well that when they embark on fighting a system, the system will fight back with its inherent power. That is nature's grammar. That means any social reformer or any one who tries to change should be ready to face defeat also. Let us not think life is a bed of roses alone. It is quite possible that there will be more thorns than roses on our way. This is the hard and inescapable truth of human life.

When Gandhi initially thought about launching Satyagraha, he had before him the stark realities that existed in South Africa those days. Denial of human rights was the first thing that compelled him to look for alternatives.

It might not be out of context here to remember at this point that all the great men and women who moved the earth and who is part of history now are men and women who strove for alternatives. It is not easy to develop alternatives. To go in a group or follow a leader is easy. To move away from the leader's path and look around for something new is not easy. The greatness of a person can be gauged or judged on the basis of his ability to look for alternatives and to be independent.

Dr Kurihara, one of the learned speakers at this symposium, made a very poignant reference to Gandhi. She referred to the strategies Gandhi employed to bring in millions and millions of women for the first time in human history to the forefront of political agitation in South Africa and India.

This was possible for Gandhi because he recognized the great role women could play in societal transformation. He believed in the equality of sexes and said again and again "the quality of a nation will be judged on the extent of freedom their women enjoy." Very few before Gandhi have given such a beautiful explanation of women's role in social action -- not even the women's liberation movement leaders of those days.

Gandhi thought loudly on women's conditions. His love and respect for his mother, wife, and other colleagues around him grew to such a level that he developed an attitude which gave him the insight that unless women are made equal partners societal transformation would remain a dream and not a reality. Women, according to Gandhi are not only value creators; they are the basis of life. He believed "A society which does not respect its women has no future." In a different context he

urged his colleagues to trust them, believe them, encourage them, in order to make our future secure.

Unfortunately, even today the situation that prevails in many societies is far from satisfactory. Even while making loud assertions on improving the conditions of women such as, "oh! we have to respect women, we have to do everything to improve their condition," precious little is being done towards women empowerment.

The male-dominated society looks at this issue in a condescending manner. The age-old male domination still continues and women are treated as subordinates in many societies. Gandhi tried to liberate women from the hang-over of the past by giving them respect and trusting them. He hated even expressions such as superior and inferior. He believes that both men and women should be partners in all walks of life and should be complementary to each other. Should we not make an assertion that we are all equals? We are truly equals.

Can any one imagine for a minute a society where no men are there or a society full of women? It will be very ugly and unrealistic. The beauty of nature is borne out of the reality of co-existence and co-operation. And what is required to foster this is cultivation of profound respect for each other.

Our common future revolves around the irrefutable factors such as: 1) We are all equal 2) We are all inter-related 3) None is superior to anybody else 4) We are not inferior and 5) Our common future lies in respecting these realities and nurturing these truths.

It might be of great interest to reflect on some of these aspects on the occasion on the 100th anniversary of the Satyagraha Movement which Gandhi had launched in 1906 in South Africa.

50th anniversary of Toda's announcement for abolition of nuclear weapons

Interestingly this is also the 50th anniversary of President Toda's historic announcement that war is evil and unless humanity abolishes this genocidal and most demonic weapons of mass destruction, humanity's future is at stake. It speaks volumes of the visionary nature of Toda's perceptions and commitments for world peace. It also indicates how deeply committed President Toda was to human survival. That Fifty years ago, at a period even before UN ever thought of nuclear arms abolitions here was a visionary making a historic announcement like this, that humanity has to stand up and fight this weapon of mass destruction reveals President Toda's determination to fight this menace.

Probably President Toda was among the first modern leader who showed such courage to stand up and identify nuclear weapons as evils and consequently made such a declaration. This is historic.

This is something very significant and very profound. On this historic occasion of the 50th anniversary of President Toda's call for elimination of nuclear weapons I salute all of you. The Soka Gakkai should also be congratulated on its principled and committed stand and efforts on the elimination of nuclear weapons. You are great promoters of peace and nonviolence. You are all messengers of peace and bodhi sattvas of the earth. You are also to be congratulated on celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the bold declaration made by one of the greatest visionaries of humanity. I am happy to note that Soka Gakkai and Soka Gakkai International all over the world are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of President Toda's declaration for elimination of nuclear weapons in a befitting manner. This speaks volumes of the commitment of Soka Gakkai International to world peace.

If I am allowed to make a brief biographical reflection at this point, I might remember that this is also the 23rd year of my association with Soka Gakkai and President Dr Daisaku Ikeda. I first came into contact with Soka Gakkai in 1984 when I came to this university for the Second International Conference for Buddhism for Peace. That day was December 24. It was a glorious day.

That day probably was almost like a canonization for me. I met the president who was like a magnet to me – a human magnet. And our association continues till today. I admire him and respect him and think that he has a great role to play in the shaping of humanity and the way he has been leading humanity to the path of nonviolence and peaceful social order, is something that is to be emulated by other leaders.

Einstein, Gandhi and Ikeda

I am reminded of what Albert Einstein said about Gandhi in 1939: "Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked on this earth." Gandhi's life was such that it was very difficult for anybody who did not know Gandhi, see Gandhi in person or come into day to day contact with Gandhi to believe all what was written or said about Gandhi to be true. Gandhi's life and work was extraordinarily significant and different. As a leader he was unique.

I would use perhaps the same quotation to describe Dr Daisaku Ikeda's amazing personality, leadership, and work. It will be very difficult for humanity to believe that over the three, four or five decades of Soka Gakkai's leadership, particularly the 76 years of Soka Gakkai that this movement would grow in such a magnitude, such a manner that it would influence human history in a very big way.

I congratulate all of you who are participants and witness to this amazing, rather miraculous achievement. I salute Dr Daisaku Ikeda and the Soka Gakkai leadership. I salute everybody who is privileged to be part of this movement which is moving the world as a creative force. You are value creators. You are peace promoters and trend-setters. May I also congratulate all of you?

Satyagraha and Human Revolution

Let me come back to the second point. We have before us two ideals. One is 'Satyagraha' of Gandhi and the other, 'Human Revolution', assiduously championed by Dr Daisaku Ikeda. What do we see in both of these? I take you back to the earlier point I made that in both the concepts the individual is at the centre.

The Satyagraha concept underwent over the 100 years, lots of changes. Initially, Gandhi used Satyagraha to educate people on their condition. Two, he used this as a tactics to empower them. Three, he used it as a technique to mobilize them and to encourage them to move along activities which were specific, which included lot of physical suffering. Dr Kurihara in her presentation a short while ago mentioned a young lady who was a part of Gandhi's army of young fighters' for freedom in South Africa during the early part of Gandhi's struggle. That young lady was Valliammal, hardly 16 years old, but promising and very committed to social change.

She joined Gandhi's army of nonviolent fighters. She became a most spirited, dedicated worker and fighter for justice and Human Rights. She was among the first batch of workers who were arrested and put in to jail for several days. And finally when she was released she had contracted tuberculosis, followed by high fever, accentuated by malnutrition. Very soon the young girl died. A grief-stricken Gandhi himself carried her dead body and he was in tears. Gandhi was inconsolable and he kept on asking, "Daughter, why did you do this? Why are you leaving us? Will not the gods whom I worship give back your life to me? You are so precious."

This is an instance which illustrates how a genuine leader cares for even the most ordinary member in his organization and how he is able to influence his disciples for a cause and how the leader also, in turn, gets influenced by the disciples. This also illustrates the strength and nature of the mentor-disciple spirit besides revealing the hidden quality and greatness of a genuine leader. A truly genuine leader will be guided only by the welfare of his disciples and the masses. The disciples also, very often are not worried about the suffering involved because they know that this leader has in his mind only the good of all.

The long fight of Gandhi for freedom, justice, equality, fraternity and human rights for 21 years in South Africa and another 32 years of work back in India, making it 53 years, until he was assassinated on the 30th of January 1948, when he has 79 years old, was characterized by a total dedication to the welfare of people everywhere.

This honesty and purity was well reflected in his statement, “My Life is My Message” – an assertion which went well with the masses.

He was a perfect votary of truth and a genuine Satyagrahi. He was an incarnate of what he believed, what he said and what he practiced. This is Human Revolution at its best. A leader trying to identify with the aspirations, with the frustrations, with the hopes, with the perceptions and with the dreams of people, everywhere, irrespective of caste, community and nationality, color of the skin or upbringing is bound to influence peoples.

They break the narrow local and national frames and grow as universal preceptors or leaders. They become light houses, shedding lights across the seas. They become a *Mahatma* (a great soul) or a *Sensei* (a great teacher and seer). Gandhi and Dr Daisaku Ikeda are examples.

If Soka Gakkai has membership in over 190 countries now, if millions and millions of people do their daimoku every day with great commitment and passion, are these not eloquent testimonials to the impact of chanting of *Nam-myoho-rengo-kyo* on the collective psyche of these millions as well as the success of the unique and inspiring leadership provided by a leader like Dr Daisaku Ikeda? Dr Ikeda, like Gandhi has succeeded in integrating the dream of a generation to live in peace and harmony with the individual capacity of each person by becoming one with the Law and transforming our fundamental attitude.

Daimoku for enlightenment

This transformation is facilitated by several factors and chanting of *nam-myoho-rengo-kyo* is the key to enter the treasure trove. I believe, that offering the daimoku is not a mechanical process with any member of the Soka Gakkai family. It is a spiritual process of great significance. It's a process or effort to transfer their energy, their innermost faith, their desire, and in a large sense, all their being. They are converting this into electric energy and from electric energy it is transferred into spiritual energy.

Nobody does any daimoku for selfish reasons. That is why while one is doing daimoku one gets elevated and ultimately it acts as a road to enlightenment. At times one experiences a dizzy state of being. One identifies oneself with the entire cosmic reality and one is motivated to dedicate oneself to the welfare of the entire humanity. This is the soul of *human transformation*, which at its purest spiritual form is *Human Revolution*.

Gandhi, King, Ikeda and their world-view

At this level and in this form the *Human Revolution* of Dr Ikeda, the *Satyagraha* of Gandhi and the *Beloved Community* of Martin Luther King are complementary and display great similarities. While these three great leaders of humanity are deeply rooted in their religious traditions, they have risen to universal adoration because of their contribution to humanity. They could view entire humanity as one and they are harbingers of hope in a hopeless world. They have reason to climb such heights of inspiration and they are now the 'voices of the voiceless'.

This is why I admire and support the Soka Gakkai movement and its leadership. Creating such confidence in people's minds and encouraging them to dedicate themselves to the welfare of others, encouraging them to forget their own personal sorrows and empower them to face hardships and helping them to transfer their energy for productive purposes and ultimately to offer them such powers to convert poison into medicine entail bold and imaginative step and leadership. This is human transformation besides human empowerment.

If Satyagraha aims at individual empowerment and change, *Human Revolution* seeks to encourage human transformation. Human empowerment and human transformation complement and coalesce, reinforcing each other. Gandhi and Ikeda inspire humanity in several ways.

Gandhi who is no more but whose philosophy is vibrant and very much alive and inspiring, sweeping and rising like a tidal wave from one end to the other end of the earth. Dr Ikeda imbued with the highest type of dedication and missionary zeal and moved by high sense of commitment to translate his mentor's dream of a world with out war and violence travels all over the world, corresponds and communicates, dialogues, encourages cultural activities; starts educational institutions; organizes exhibitions to promote friendship among people, striving for abolition of nuclear weapons; encouraging members to plunge into community building activities, has become a rallying point of humanity's right to exist.

He reminds us of Gandhi's passion for justice and freedom. Without exaggeration one could say that he is a living Shakyamuni, a living Gandhi, representing the best that humanity can aspire.

Road to human transformation

Dr. Ikeda undoubtedly represents our dreams. He also represents the common man, and the common woman. He also represents in every sense the inalienable right of every body to develop positive qualities latent in every one of us. This is the road to human transformation. What else, if this is not human revolution?

This is the message for a new world order. This is deeply rooted in religious values. But then, this is all rooted in life affirmation which comes from the best traditions of religions. It has become fashionable to decry the role of religion in human affairs. Even those who are shouting publicly that religion is dead, realize the role of religion. Even those people who call themselves atheist, they also belong to a particular sect.

Religion is the fountain-head of the values which we need. There is a difference between animals and human beings. I don't know whether animals have a religion. But human beings have religions. Someone is a Buddhist, a Christian, a Muslim or a Jew, a Jain, a Parsee or a Sikh, or a Hindu in his / her practice. But where are human beings? To remain human beings and celebrate the glory of being human one needs spiritual nourishment, ethical support, moral lessons, human values and visions which come from our religious traditions.

Human revolution is the key to human transformation and enlightened global citizenship. It is both scientific and spiritual. Knowing Dr. Ikeda as we do - as one of the finest poets - he is a Poet laureate, an institution-builder, a spiritual leader, a teacher, a philosopher, he combines several attributes of exquisite splendor. His address at the entrance ceremony yesterday was yet another revelation of the continuous spiritual growth of this great man of both history and destiny. As I was listening to him yesterday I felt a rare vibration which is difficult to explain.

Human Revolution is not a textbook approach or any propaganda. It's a spiritual and scientific guide to human survival. In the present cyber age which is different in from the other ages humanity has left behind how do we cope with the changing realities which are both baffling and amazing? Here lies the question of leadership. Ikeda Sensei and the Soka Gakkai International and all of you who are value-creators have to play a distinct role.

Commitment to Value Creation

Value-creation is not a slogan with the Soka Gakkai nor is it a mere platform for a committed and missionary leader like Dr. Ikeda. For him, it is an article of faith, commitment, and devotion. Who creates values in this world? This is a world which cares largely for the value of money. The only value, before a 21st century person is money making.

I am not decrying the value of money. Money has certainly its value but it has its limit too. Beyond money there is the hard reality of life. Let us look back. Which is the one force which has sustained human race in its long journey of transformation and progress from the flesh-eating, cave-dwelling human beings into the cyber age and the human beings of today? Is it not the spirituality of humanity?

Besides the great role spirituality and religion have played in refining and sharpening human sensibilities we have the third focus, namely science? Religion, spirituality and science have sustained humanity. There were ages when religions played a decisive role and though they were also responsible for the bloodiest wars in human history. There were fights in the name of spirituality too. This was probably due to the lack of understanding of the 'Spirituality' that lies behind spirituality.

It is true that science has developed atomic bombs and weapons of mass destruction, but it has addressed many of the basic problems of humanity. So to denounce science as evil is also bad. Similarly, to denounce religion as totally demonic is equally bad. To denounce spirituality as archaic and unscientific will also be unscientific. What we need is a judicious balancing of these three integrative forces in improving the texture and quality of human life.

Shakyamuni Buddha also was a great scientist in his own way. The parable from his life, the manner in which his message is handed over to the humanity through the great *Lotus Sutra* is purely scientific. Let us not dismiss it as a fable of no consequence. The *Lotus Sutra* is one of the greatest literary texts of profound wisdom.

Blending of Science, Spirituality and Religion

Blind acceptance of spirituality will be unscientific and irrational just as unlimited and unchecked growth of science and technology will be equally disastrous. It might also be remembered that every thing that goes by spirituality is not profound truth. The same thing could be said about religions and the many of the practices associated with them.

What we need is a blending of all three - science, religion and spirituality - in such a way that this blending will lead to blossoming of human potentiality and conversion of human energy for inspired initiatives to enrich the quality of life on the planet earth. Life, like the cherry blossoms, provide humanity a wonderful canopy all over, spreading the brilliance of life, reminding us that life is the most precious jewel.

Let us understand the preciousness of life and also show our gratitude to this wonderful gift. Let us remain grateful. And gratitude is a key factor in our survival as an enlightened group. What we need is a genuine desire to foster humanity, develop compassionate attitude, an approach to look life in its totality. Each of us should become an agent to promote this. This is *Human Revolution*.

So, when you think of the significance of the 100th anniversary of Satyagraha and 50th anniversary of President Toda's bold announcement to abolish nuclear weapons what comes to my mind is the need to strengthen our commitment, devotion and determination to the causes each one of us has identified as the goal of our life.

Gandhi once said: "I will give you a talisman: think of the poorest man whom you may have come across in your life, and ask yourself in which way the decisions that you take will improve the quality of the life of this person. Then you will see your doubts melting away."

Don't you think this is a very profound invocation to what is being human? And when Dr Daisaku Ikeda said: "I have a mission" I found the same feeling and concern repeated. What is that mission? That mission is to educate the younger generation, the less privileged, the women who are at the receiving end, and to educate people on the need to undertake courageous initiative to rid humanity of the evil of war, fight intolerance and arrogance and become agents of change.

Conclusion

When Dr. Ikeda introduced kosen-rufu and when he undertook the historic visit to Hawaii, critics could not initially understand the magnitude of this mission. To a committed leader who is inspired by a missionary spirit of a restless soul and who is committed to the welfare of humanity, there is nothing impossible. The term impossible doesn't exist in his dictionary.

Human Revolution and kosen-rufu are definite keys to a new, braver, better, happier 21st century. It will be a century of happiness and a Soka Century.

Before I close this presentation let me confess that I consider as a great privilege that I got opportunities to meet with President Ikeda, exchange ideas with him and engage him in dialogue besides writing four books on his remarkable personality and inspiring leadership and highly valuable work to promote peace. While I am proud of being a child to my parents and to have a wonderful family, I am delighted to have friendship and acquaintance with this man of destiny. I should express my profound sense of gratitude to Prof Glenn D Paige of Centre for Global Nonviolence, Hawaii for introducing me to the President and my good friend Dr Akash K Ouchi for offering me literature and academic inputs.

Ever since I met with Dr Daisaku Ikeda I thought that he is a living Gandhi. I haven't had the fortune to see Gandhi in person. In fact, when Gandhi was shot dead, I was a child of 4 years. But then I had the fortune to realize my Gandhi from my father who had worked in some of the major campaigns of Gandhi. My father was identified in our village as the Gandhi man and he was a tower of strength and inspiration to me particularly. It was my 'karma' that I have the privilege to work in the National Gandhi Memorial in New Delhi as its Director for 12 long years.

After I met Dr Ikeda in 1984 I found in him 'the Gandhi in Action' since to me he appeared to be striving to complete the unfinished agenda of Gandhi for world peace, social order, individual transformation, and human revolution. Inspired by Prof. Paige I began studying the philosophy of Dr Ikeda, look at his work from a

non-Buddhist, humanistic and Gandhian perspective. The 4 books that I wrote on him and the 5th book that Dr Miller, Dr Lawrence Carter and I jointly edited 'The Global Ethical Options in the Tradition of Gandhi, King, Ikeda' which is a text book are the expressions of my profound faith and conviction that Dr. Ikeda is the future of humanity. For a warless world, he is our leader, our future and the leadership that he gives is highly significant.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi I bow my head in reverence before this great visionary, philosopher, institution builder and champion of humanistic education for a warless world and global citizenship.

Thank you all and may you be blessed with all happiness.