

## **Let’s achieve Japan’s “Hendoku Iyaku”**



As the September 11th 2001 incident 10 years ago has changed the world, the “March 11th Tsunami” this year will surely greatly change the society of Japan. Now, Japan is facing its worst situation in history after the World War II. It is impossible to estimate what kind of serious influence we are going to receive from the nuclear power plant’s explosion. The reconstruction will probably take many long years.

Fortunately, the journalism from abroad appreciates the attitude and the behavior of Japanese people at this critical and emergent time. The world marveled at the calm possession and the spirit of the people to help each other. We are very grateful that so many countries are kindly offering their support. Now is time, I believe, for all Japanese citizens to bring out, to the most extent, their latent abilities and demonstrate the hidden power within.

Watching TV and reading the newspapers make us think “What kind of support can we provide for the victims of this disaster?” I believe the most needed support we can offer at this moment is relief donations.

Incidentally, 6 days after the earthquake, March 17th, was my 70th birthday to commemorate “Koki”. (“Koki” is a long year tradition in Japan to celebrate his/her longevity of a person reaching the age of 70.) Needless to say, one may quite naturally be age 70 only once. So I had a plan to celebrate the day, by having a modest, but a little bit sumptuous meal for dinner with my family. But I canceled it. Instead, I decided to deposit the intended money to cover the meal to the bank account for raising funds for the disaster victims.

The very fact that I am alive and healthy makes me happy. I believe, the donation had a far more profound significance for me than what a tiny aged adult would have for having a luxurious dinner. Therefore, this act filled my heart with a sort of satisfaction. After this, I also participated in the fund collection campaign of the group and the institute that I belong to. As for donations, I think, the will or the way of thinking of each individual

is most important. Anyway, I sincerely hope that as many people as possible will participate in this campaign.

In Japan, volunteer activities have expanded widely from the time of the Hanshin/Awaji great earthquakes (as of 16 years ago this was known as “the first year of volunteer activities”.) Regrettably, however, there are still many Japanese even now who have no consideration for others and think only of themselves.

The governor of Tokyo said, “We need to wash away once one’s own greed, especially for money and material objects”. He used the word “Tenbatsu” (punishment from the heaven) to refer to the calamity. This inconsiderate attitude toward the victims should never be allowed. To our regret, it is true that, in Japan today, there have been so many Japanese in our society, who seek only after his/her own desires.

The Soka Gakkai is centers as shelter for victims Hanshin/Awaji earthquakes. Tohoku area are concerns of their own encourage the victims who many people, besides Soka Gakkai leaders are also doing their best to



attend to the victims.) As for me, I am participating in the volunteer activities of translating for those foreigners in Japan who may have some difficulties in understanding Japanese at this emergent occasion.

now offering many culture as it did at the occasion of the Members and leaders in endeavoring, without damages, to support and are suffering. (Of course, so

I would like to cite a passage of the writing of Nichiren’s Buddhism that I take faith.

**“More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body and the treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all. From the time you read this letter onward, strive to accumulate the treasures of the heart!”**

**“Treasure in a storehouse”** indicates material assets and money. **“Treasure of the body”** means such things as health or acquired skills. **“Treasures of the heart”** means an inner richness like a strong will to live

or a merciful heart toward others. Even though the first two treasures may be destroyed, the last one will never be washed away.

That is, even if we may meet with disasters and calamities, they cannot destroy our hearts. Nothing can destroy the treasures of the heart. Every adversity is but a trial for us to overcome so that we can attain eternal happiness. In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, our practice of faith in the Mystic Law enables us to transform all poisons into medicine without fail.

We need to change the way of thinking. As the developments of civilization definitely make happier human beings out of us, the thought that the richness of materials will surely bring happiness to us may falter. Now is the time, I believe, for us to ask ourselves from the very basic perspective: "What is the best type of society or what is the best way of living?"

Currently, perhaps many Japanese are awakened to this thought: "Let's move from the world of material to the world of the heart!"

To be sure, I believe the calamity at this time will be converted into a cause to achieve "**Hendoku Iyaku**" (**changing poison into medicine**) for the better future of Japan. I believe, this is one of the most important concepts we need to adopt for the reconstruction of Japan.

