

Professor Polunin asks why politicians are not saving the world. The responsibility to mould the future and to use our increasing knowledge with wisdom and to good purpose lies not only with politicians but also widely with scientists and technologists, with industrialists and organized labour, with journalists, parents, and teachers — in short, with all citizens. Apart from their own positions, theirs are the voices and votes which most influence politicians.

The danger as I see it is not outside but within ourselves and the mores that we set. My own reply to the question is that, in India, we are bending all our energies to safeguard the future, again and again drawing attention to crucial points in public and private pronouncements and in our national and foreign policies which are designed to diminish disparities within our country and between countries, to reduce tensions which might lead to confrontation and conflict, and to match hostility with understanding and friendship. Our aim is not merely material advancement, necessary though it is, but also to enable our people to develop their own inner resources to full capacity, and to rise to greater and greater heights of consciousness.

### A Memorial to Ryoichi Sasakawa (1899–1995)

Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation (formerly known as the Sasakawa Foundation), passed away on 18 July 1995. He was, as reflecting the vitality and enthusiasm which he poured into his work right up to his final months, 96 years 'young' (Fig. 1).

It was Ryoichi Sasakawa's cherished creed that 'The world is one family; all Mankind are brothers and sisters'. For the human family to live in peace and harmony, he was convinced that it would first be necessary to alleviate human suffering — particularly that caused by disease, hunger, and warfare. To put his beliefs into practice, he initiated the establishment of Japan's first large-scale non-profit philanthropic organization, the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation (later called the Sasakawa Foundation), and built a revenue-generating system through motorboat racing to finance its wide-reaching assistance programmes. Through these programmes he made major contributions to the complete eradication of smallpox and to the campaigns against other devastating diseases such as leprosy and AIDS. He was not only quick to offer emergency aid when famine or natural disasters struck, but also implemented far-sighted projects to increase staple food production in such regions as sub-Saharan Africa. He, moreover, steadfastly gave his support to the peace-fostering efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations.\*

All of Sasakawa's philanthropic endeavors notwithstanding, it was perhaps the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (SYLFF), which truly transcends national borders and ethnic, religious, and ideological, barriers in its effort to help foster tomorrow's generations of able leaders, that is in the fullest sense a testament to his personal commitment to bring all the world together as 'one family of brothers and sisters'. This steadfast urge, which is central to Ryoichi Sasakawa's unwavering creed, will remain our guiding beacon as we continue to develop the SYLFF programme and other human-resource development programmes in the years ahead.



FIG. 1. Ryoichi Sasakawa at the age of 95, when he was still working 12–14 hours daily without recognizing weekends or taking holidays. It was thinking of him, particularly, that we included a category of 'benefactors' among those qualified for inclusion in our Foundation's *World Who Is Who and Does What in Environment & Conservation* (see footnote\*). Particularly towards the end of his long life, Ryoichi Sasakawa was probably responsible for more financial encouragement and much-needed help passing to the environmental movement than any other individual ever. — N.P.

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\* Including some of our very small Foundation's, such as our International Conferences on Environmental Future when our personal share of an early International Sasakawa Environment Prize covered our remaining debts for one of them, and a generous donation on behalf of our *World Who Is Who and Does What in Environment & Conservation* enabled us to push on with its preparation so that the first edition is now in press and due for publication through Earthscan, London, this year. — Ed.