

# Aikidosphere

**Moriteru Ueshiba**

**Third Doshu**

**Dojocho Aikikai Hombu Dojo**

## **An Interview with the New Doshu, Moriteru Ueshiba - Part 2**

**By Peter Bernath & David Halprin**

Editor's note: Following is the conclusion of an interview conducted at the US Aikido Federation Eastern Region Summer Camp held at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts in August, 2000. It is featured in New England Aikikai's video documenting Doshu's visit. We would like to thank Kanai Sensei for allowing us to present this transcript on Aikido Online. Also, we would like to thank Kei Izawa for his translation during the interview.

Peter Bernath, 6th Dan is Chief Instructor of Florida Aikikai and David Halprin, 6th Dan is Chief Instructor of Framingham Aikikai.



### **What are the key technical principles that students should observe in their Aikido practice? What are the key mental principles?**

It's very difficult to separate the technique from the spirit or the spiritual principles of Aikido. It is through practice that you have to combine them and bring them together.

In the Japanese tradition, by practicing you train your body, mind and soul at the same time. Also, the Founder promoted the spirit of protecting everything — all of the things surrounding you. It is something that comes out of a very keen training of body and mind together. So you have to combine the two.

In brief, to make it very simple, Aikido's training is already designed to do that, so it is not only one-sided training, either the physical side or the spiritual side. The Aikido training itself already combines the two.

### **What are your hopes and goals for the future development of Aikido worldwide?**

What the Founder has created and what Kisshomaru Doshu has spread, my interest would be to increase the exposure of Aikido to many more people, so that they can have a very rich social life. That is something I have in mind, to grow Aikido.

### **What thought do you have on the desire of some Aikido practitioners to have Aikido become an event in the World Games or the Olympics?**

As to the world games, Aikido is already being shown in some locations. The International Aikido Federation has already participated in exhibitions in Germany, Netherlands, Denmark and some other ones in Finland.

As to Aikido participating in those to demonstrate Aikido's general picture, that is not something to which I object. However, it has to be done so that Aikido's spirit and principles are not changed. In that sense, if Aikido is demonstrated, I have no objections.

**Similarly, some people have expressed an interest in**



**introducing competition. What thoughts do you have on that?**

Ueshiba Morehei, the Founder, created a martial art whose purpose was not to determine who was stronger or weaker. Therefore, if competitions are introduced in order to achieve that, it's not the Aikido as created by the Founder. So, in that regard, it's not acceptable.

**Could you tell us what thoughts you have on when the title of Shihan should be awarded?**

Currently, Hombu Dojo, the headquarters of Aikido, is working on the international regulations as to how to grant Shihan rankings overseas, so we will be able to find out more when the time comes.

**This is your first visit to the United States as the new Aikido Doshu. Do you feel different this time? What thoughts or impressions do you have?**

The feeling has not changed very much because I became Doshu and came to the United States. My feeling is the same, the training is the same. My attitude toward training is that, even within strict training, we have to reach some mutual understanding. That has been my approach and that has not changed.

Naturally in the past, the situation was that I was under the guidance of previous Doshu, Kisshomaru Doshu, and now that the situation has changed, all that responsibility comes towards me. And in that sense, there is a higher sense of responsibility in me this time, and it's not as easy going as before.

**Do you remember playing baseball with Kanai Sensei when he broke a window in the dojo?**

The window! I remember. (laughing)

**Kanai Sensei told us that your parents wouldn't believe him when he said he broke the window and thought he was just covering up for you. (more laughing)**

That's probably so. (laughing)