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78

International Forum on World Teachers' Day: Exchange of Words of Conscience and Wisdom

Congressman Ed Royce Lauds Dr. Hong Tao-Tze for His Efforts in Promoting World Peace

Reporter Cici Han, Los Angeles

October 5th is UN World Teachers' Day; political leaders, such as Congressman Ed Royce, Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee, California State Senator Bob Huff, Mrs. Huff, Mayor John Wuo of the City of Arcadia, and Council Member Mary Su of the City of Walnut, and distinguished educators attended the "International Forum on the Awakening of Conscience IV" at Pacific Palm Resort in La Puente, California. In response to World Teachers' Day, the event, co-organized by 18 organizations in 7 countries, including Tai



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Ji Men Qigong Academy, the Association of World Citizens, NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC and associated with the UN DPI, and the Federation of World Peace and Love (FOWPAL), honored teachers at all levels and continued the positive energies generated in the movement of An Era of Conscience.

Congressman Ed Royce, Senator Bob Huff, and Council Member Mary Su each presented a certificate of recognition to Dr. Hong in recognition of his efforts in promoting world peace. Congressman Royce praised the success of the forum and its positive values brought to our society. Senator Huff also acknowledged Dr. Hong's contribution in spreading the messages of love and peace all over the world.

Congressman Royce; Senator Bob Huff; Michael Selfridge, FOWPAL Director of Communications; Adjunct Assistant Professor Robert Vos of spatial sciences at University of Southern California; Dr. Kylie Hsu, director of the Chinese Studies Center of California State University, Los Angeles; Dr. Chung-Ming Liu, Professor Emeritus of National Taiwan University; Christopher Villalobos, an English teacher at Arcadia High School; Muriel Tsai, principal of Walnut City Chinese Center; etc. shared their insightful reflections and suggestions for education as part of the panel discussion.

Dr. Hong Tao-Tze, the initiator of the movement of An Era of Conscience,

President of FOWPAL, and Zhang-men-ren of Tai Ji Men, mentioned in his opening remarks, “The key to any good education lies in the conscience of each individual involved. When conscience is the core of education, we capture the true essence of education, which is to inspire people to better themselves.” Dr. Hong also indicated in the presentation of his thesis: “The awakening of conscience is the soul of education, like a compass pointing to the right path of life. It guides people to tell right from wrong and to know the difference between pride and humility. It prevents one from being greedy and enables one to conduct oneself properly and become truly enlightened, balanced, happy, and selfless. Following conscience is the way people can become peaceful and bring peace to the world. Education that includes conscience at the core, combines the essence of traditional and modern education, strikes a balance between technology and spirituality, and creates opportunity for the sustainable development of the Earth and humanity.”

After Dr. Hong’s presentation, Congressman Royce stated, “I enjoyed talking with Dr. Hong, and especially enjoyed his presentation. It’s profoundly important and significant that we’re reaching, especially through the new modes of being able to do this over the Internet, so many young people whose conscience can be inspired and who can commit themselves to the important role that they need to play in helping this world become a more peaceful place, a place in which there is justice but also solutions. His words resonated with me today.” Congressman Royce reflected that it is critical to “instill a greater depth of conscience and responsibility” in three key aspects: (1) instill values, (2) instill discipline, (3) and instill collaboration.

Dr. Liu , Professor Emeritus of National Taiwan University, and Dr. Vos, Adjunct Assistant Professor at USC, both commented at the forum that the top issue which affects the world conscience is climate change, and that an education toward a better understanding about and solution for it should be paramount. In order to show the magnitude of the challenges and damages caused by climate change, Dr. Vos compared the damage done to the world from human-induced climate change to the damage done by an asteroid impact.

Dr. Hsu asserted the need to provide an education that nurtures young students, helps them set big goals, and yet grounds them with core values. Chris Villalobos, an English teacher from Arcadia High School, advocated that the role for teachers is to provide inspiration to the younger generation to make a difference in the global community. Villalobos also underscored the importance of conscience with the concept of the collective common mind as studied by academics in the past. Villalobos closed his presentation by emphasizing conscience as “to do the right thing when no one is looking.”

The theme of this year’s World Teachers’ Day is “Invest in the future, Invest in teachers.” The organizers believe that education is the foundation of the shaping of personality, social stability, and national development; teachers play a very significant role in the society, and conscience is the soul of

education. Therefore, the "International Forum on the Awakening of Conscience" was meant to awaken the conscience in everybody's heart and to offer wise and conscientious reflections and advice about education to promote an era of love and peace in every corner of the world.

The movement of An Era of Conscience was initiated at the beginning of this year, and to date, more than 2,100 organizations from 185 nations have jointly participated in this movement. Teachers, principals, and students at various schools across the globe have shared their words of conscience and aspirations for world peace and love on ANEOC website. Everyone is invited to logon to the website for further detailw: www.aneoc.org/en, and to endorse the Declaration for the Movement of An Era of Conscience.

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