

## Regarding the Little Mongol State



**R**EGARDING the fact that the men of the little Mongol state have come to attack the great nation of Japan, no one among my disciples or lay supporters should speak to others or offer any comments on this matter. If anyone should disobey these instructions, it should be understood that that person is to be removed from the company of my followers. These in-

structions should be made known to all persons.

Nichiren

The sixteenth day of the sixth month in the fourth year of Kōan [1281], cyclical sign *kanoto-mi*

To my followers



### Background

This brief message was written on the sixteenth day of the sixth month in 1281, ten days after the Mongol forces began to attack southern Japan. Immediately on receiving this news, Nichiren Daishonin warns his followers to refrain from commenting on the event. He had predicted in his 1260 treatise, *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, that as a consequence of the nation's support of erroneous Buddhist teachings and its slander of "the one true vehicle, the single good doctrine [of the Lotus Sutra]" (I, p. 25), Japan would suffer foreign invasion. That prediction was fulfilled when the Mongol forces attacked Japan in 1274 and again in 1281.

In 1276, the Daishonin wrote to Nanjō Tokimitsu, "As to an impending

Mongol attack, I have not received any word. When I mention this subject, people say that the priest Nichiren rejoices whenever he hears that the Mongols will attack our country, but this is unwarranted. Because I suggested that such a thing would happen, I have been attacked as a foe or an enemy by people everywhere" (I, p. 678).

The Daishonin refers to "the little Mongol state" and "the great nation of Japan" from the Buddhist viewpoint. By the time this letter was written, Buddhism had nearly disappeared in China, which was then part of the Mongol Empire, while Japan was the country where the "great vehicle" teaching of the Lotus Sutra was being spread.