

## Part 2. A Glimpse of Conspiracy

### Jitoku Kawabe – Nikken’s Right-Hand Man

I visited the Soka Gakkai Headquarters building around December 10, 1990. What I heard there from a top leader was, “No matter who from the Soka Gakkai tried to reach out to Nichiren Shoshu, none of the sect’s key figures want to talk to us. At this point we have no idea of what they have in mind.” I was shocked to hear this. Of course, I was somehow aware that a new tension was growing between the Soka Gakkai and Nichiren Shoshu, but I never expected that their relationship had deteriorated that much.

I thought to myself, “I may have no choice but to see Jitoku Kawabe, Nikken’s right-hand man, in person.” The top management of Nichiren Shoshu and that of the Soka Gakkai hadn’t talked to one another for quite some time. Nichiren Shoshu had been ignoring the Soka Gakkai’s call for dialogue. This showed me that their relationship had reached a really dangerous point. It also showed that Nichiren Shoshu must have been ready to implement its drastic plan. I thought it necessary for me to see Kawabe and find out what Nichiren Shoshu was thinking. With a keen sense of urgency, I called Kawabe at Nissho-ji temple in Hokkaido, where he was chief priest.

I had maintained a personal connection with Kawabe for more than ten years. We have been on such good terms that we could honestly exchange our individual views with one another. I thought it best to see Kawabe and find out from him what was going on in the depths of the heart of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood. And since Kawabe was the man who could influence Nikken the most, I thought Kawabe would be able to stop Nikken if he had an appalling scheme against the Soka Gakkai.

I phoned Nissho-ji temple two or three times, but Kawabe did not return any of my calls. That he didn’t call me back was very strange — usually he loses no time in returning my call. Later on, I called him several more times, but got no response from him. It seemed that Kawabe was absent at Nissho-ji temple, so I gave up trying to call him. A few days later, just before December 20, Kawabe gave me a ring.

He said, “Mr. Kitabayashi, I’m sorry I couldn’t return your calls. I’m now at the Haneda Airport. For now, I can’t meet with you, Mr. Kitabayashi. Did anyone ask you to call me?”

“No one asked me to call you. This is my own initiative. I really want to see you as soon as possible,” I replied.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t see you right now by any means. If you’ve got anything that you want to convey to me, please write it down and mail it to me.” Kawabe’s attitude was very unfriendly at that time, a rare thing between him and me.

At that time, I didn’t know that Nichijun Fujimoto, the General Administrator of Nichiren Shoshu, had sent a document dated December 13 on behalf of Nichiren Shoshu to Soka Gakkai President Einosuke Akiya. The document was later called “Inquiry about the Speech Made by Honorary President Ikeda at the 35<sup>th</sup> Headquarters Leaders Meeting (in other words, the “Inquiry” document). It was a letter of cross-examination from Nichiren Shoshu to the Soka Gakkai. Nichiren Shoshu chose the contents of the honorary president’s address as a reason to begin an open attack on the Soka Gakkai. Nichiren Shoshu took issue with fifteen different statements in his speech. However, there were many basic errors in the transcription of the tape of the speech that Nichiren Shoshu presented to the Soka Gakkai.

Furthermore, making reference to Soka Gakkai members’ singing at their meetings “Ode to Joy” from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Nichiren Shoshu claimed that the Gakkai was praising a nonBuddhist teaching by singing such a Christian song.

The Inquiry document also requested that the Gakkai respond in written form to the Nichiren Shoshu Administrative Office within seven days. Nichiren Shoshu had been plotting all along to corner Soka Gakkai Honorary President Ikeda.

#### *The Backgrounds of Those Whom Nikken Was Ready To Meet*

I had no clear idea of what was happening to the Nichiren Shoshu top management. I almost gave up contacting Kawabe, but I soon received an incredible piece of information. I learned that Nikken would meet at the head temple Taiseki-ji on December 25 with two individuals famous for their open hatred of the Gakkai: Jiro Oshiki, who is anti-Gakkai Yukimasa Fujiwara’s man, and Isao Dan. This meeting was facilitated through the auspices of Kojun Takahashi, Dan’s brother and a Nichiren Shoshu priest.

Yukimasa Fujiwara had been a Tokyo Metropolitan Assemblyman of the Komei Party for twenty-six years. And he had developed a grudge against the Soka Gakkai, because he was never nominated to run for the House of Representatives. He had previously schemed to oust Mr. Ikeda, then president of the Soka Gakkai, from his position, so that Fujiwara's son Noriaki could become president of the Soka Gakkai. Fujiwara believed that his son was the reincarnation of Soka Gakkai Second President Josei Toda.

On September 18, 1988, Fujiwara had asked a Japanese gangster to assassinate Honorary President Ikeda. Fujiwara promised the *yakuza* 250 million yen to accept this assignment and another 250 million yen to accomplish it.

Fujiwara created something called the "Ikeda Issue Task Force Office," and employed Jiro Oshiki as its director. This "office" was located within a mansion that Fujiwara owned in Suginami, Tokyo. Meeting with people related to the mass media, Oshiki was engaged in manipulating information with regard to the Soka Gakkai. Oshiki gathered information by wiretapping the two radio lines (Seikyo 1 and Seikyo 2) of the Seikyo Press and the radio communications among security people for Honorary President Ikeda near the Soka Gakkai Headquarters building. Oshiki then leaked to the press information about the movements of Honorary President Ikeda, pretending there was a spy among the leaders close to him.

Kojun Takahashi, who was also supposed to meet with Nikken along with Oshiki, was chief priest of Hon'ou-ji in Gunma prefecture. He was one of the most anti-Gakkai priests. During 1981 and 1982, when many anti-Gakkai priests (Shoshinkai priests) were expelled from Nichiren Shoshu, Takahashi tactically stopped disparaging the Soka Gakkai to avoid expulsion. He was in fact part of the remnants of the Shoshinkai-minded priests within Nichiren Shoshu, a core member of these anti-Gakkai priests, who were burning with grudges against the Gakkai in their hearts.

Isao Dan, a freelance writer, is Takahashi's younger brother. Through his contact with Takahashi, he constantly wrote anti-Gakkai articles in weekly magazines such as *The Shukan Post*, *The Shukan Bunshun*, and *The Shukan Jitsuwa*. He was also very critical of Nikken, and did not accept Nikken as a high priest, insisting that Nikken did not really receive the heritage of Nichiren Shoshu from High Priest Nittatsu.

I was surprised to hear that this very Isao Dan would personally meet with High Priest Nikken, along with the other two anti-Gakkai individuals. Notably, Dan had been on a very friendly terms with Masatomo Yamazaki for many years. Yamazaki was always the force behind Dan's repeated criticisms of Nikken in weekly magazines.

The fact that Nikken was meeting with these anti-Gakkai individuals at Taiseki-ji showed that Nikken's frame of mind had already reached a boiling point. He was ready to work with anybody whose stance was against the Soka Gakkai. Another possibility — something that was formerly inconceivable — was that Nikken might invite the Shoshinkai priests, who were allied with Yamazaki, back to Nichiren Shoshu to use them as ammunition to attack the Soka Gakkai. I realized then that Nichiren Shoshu had come to a point where it had never been.

### *Going to Hokkaido To Meet Kawabe*

Kawabe had played a key role in expelling the Shoshinkai priests from Nichiren Shoshu. He was always a key player in the significant decisions that Nikken made in Nichiren Shoshu's administrative matters. And I knew through my years of association with Kawabe that he had a deep-seated hatred toward Yamazaki.

If Nikken was to meet with Oshiki, Takahashi, and Dan, I needed to see Kawabe before their meeting and persuade him to do something to stop Nikken's insane behavior. At the very least, I needed to find out what was on the minds of the top management of Nichiren Shoshu. I decided to visit Kawabe's temple in Hokkaido to see him in person, even if he should attempt to avoid me. I needed to see him before Nikken's meeting on December 25. I believed that Nikken would most likely agree with Oshiki, Takahashi, and Dan and start taking some rash action. I needed to see Kawabe to hopefully halt some disastrous move.

On December 23, I managed to get an airplane ticket to go to Sapporo from Tokyo with Takashi Hirano (fictitious name), an employee of my company Ho'on Sha. It was so difficult to get two tickets for this flight at Christmas time. Every flight to Sapporo on 25<sup>th</sup> was already sold out and quite a few people were waiting. I felt that we needed to reserve two seats in any flight available to Sapporo. Finally, because of some cancellations, we were lucky enough to get seats on JAL

Flight 523 to Sapporo on the 24<sup>th</sup>. This flight was nearly the last flight of the day and it was the only flight available.

We then had to struggle to secure two hotel rooms in Sapporo on Christmas Eve. It was hard to find two rooms because there were so many romantic people who wanted to spend Christmas Eve in Sapporo.

We decided “Why don’t we go to Sapporo, anyway? Let’s look for a place to stay after we get there.” After such a conversation, we called up more than ten hotels in Sapporo, until we found the Hotel Arthur Sapporo, where we were able to reserve a twin room, thanks to an unexpected cancellation. By the way, we didn’t have any trouble finding a return flight to Tokyo on the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup>.

I was almost certain that Kawabe would stay at Nissho-ji temple on the afternoon of December 25, in view of the temple’s schedule of events on that day. I made up my mind to visit the temple on the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> to meet Kawabe. It was a gamble. I prepared a letter that I would leave at the temple, in case I could not get to see him. I had Hirano prepare a shoulder phone (a cellular phone was not yet available at that time) and a word processor for record taking.

We left the Haneda airport at 6 PM on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and arrived at the Chitose airport at 7:25 PM. We took a bus at the airport to go to Sapporo. On the way into town, I saw an electronic signboard that showed the temperature as minus 5 Centigrade. I felt, “It’s cold here in Sapporo, as I expected.” Since I am from Hiroshima, a much warmer area than Sapporo, I was a little bit uncomfortable about moving around in such cold weather. I may have felt that way because I was also concerned about how our meeting with Kawabe would turn out. As the bus moved into Sapporo, I saw monotonous dark scenery from the window. It was a series of quiet and wintry scenes that were quite a contrast to the year-end bustle of Tokyo. I felt sad inside. I felt anxious about the future of the Soka Gakkai.

I got off the bus in front of All Nippon Air Hotel. We took a taxi from there to the Hotel Arthur. After checking in, I settled down in a room on one of the hotel’s top floors. From the window, I watched snow-covered Sapporo in the evening. Tail-lights of cars looked very bright. Their red and white streamlines were still vivid in my vision even when I closed my eyes to sleep. “Certainly, this year was a

strange one," I felt. I was reminiscing what had happened throughout that year.

*In 1990, Those Hostile to Honorary President Ikeda Start Taking Action*

The first issue of a small periodical titled *Fukuden* (*Paddy Field of Fortune*) was published in January of that year (1990). Its publisher was Santo-jiyuku. I saw that the address printed in the pamphlet was the same address as that of Toshio Umezawa. Umezawa was a man who had worked with Yamazaki and had engaged in anti-Gakkai manipulations. I knew him well — I had known him since 1973.

The pamphlet's name *Fukuden* came from Kojun Takahashi, then Chief Priest of Hon'ou-ji temple. This title on the cover was handwritten by Takahashi in *sumi* ink. And, for the first issue of this periodical, Takahashi used the pen name Gan Toida to write an article entitled "Nichiren Daishonin Kenbunroku (My Observation of Nichiren Daishonin)."

The first issue of this pamphlet also carried a dialogue titled, "Sosei eno sentaku (My Choice for Revival)," between Genjiro Fukushima, former Vice President of the Soka Gakkai, and a man called Hakusan Nanjo, who was later found out to be Takashi Watanabe, a former district leader of the Soka Gakkai in Saitama prefecture. These former members were well-known for their anti-Gakkai sentiments and their dialogue focused on criticizing the Soka Gakkai. It was noteworthy that Fukushima appeared in *Fukuden* whose publisher was Toshio Umezawa, a man under Yamazaki.

Former Vice President Fukushima was the man who had openly criticized Nichiren Shoshu in his speech in Ohmuta, Kyushu, in March 1979. His speech directly referred to High Priest Nittatsu by name, and this incident triggered President Ikeda's resignation. After the mistake that Fukushima made in Ohmuta, he was given a disciplinary demotion in the Soka Gakkai. Realizing that he would never become president of the Soka Gakkai, Fukushima rebelled and turned to disparaging Honorary President Ikeda. Fukushima's appearance in *Fukuden* showed that Fukushima was at the mercy of Yamazaki. This fact alone deserved our attention.

Although it appeared that a close associate of Yamazaki, Umezawa, had founded the new periodical, I sensed that Yamazaki had openly started putting into action the plans he had been harboring in his

heart for many years. I also suspected that he would be more visible from then on. Because I had worked with Yamazaki for many years, I was very aware of the way that Yamazaki thought and how he would start a new campaign. With his preparations done well, he would then begin a new series of manipulations. The founding of this new publication seemed to have Yamazaki's fingerprints all over it — I knew that *Fukuden* was created to support his machinations.

The second issue of *Fukuden* was published in April 1990. It created a stir in the media because one article purported to be the memoir of Takashi Makita, an incumbent vice president of the Soka Gakkai. However, there was no such vice president in the Soka Gakkai and the contents of the memoir were totally groundless. The Makita memoir read in part:

“Producing the numerous counterfeit copies of the Special Okatagi (wood-block) Gohonzon, the Soka Gakkai made 10 billion yen by today's monetary value. The Soka Gakkai also made 200 billion yen by developing cemeteries.”

The article was written as a form of revelation by a “phony” vice president who allegedly confessed that the Soka Gakkai had created many counterfeit Gohonzons. Such a fabricated story in a small periodical is usually ignored by weekly magazines; however, because the story was about the Soka Gakkai, some of the mainstream press jumped on it. This false reporting created a groundswell of similar falsehoods throughout Japan. It was Isao Dan who took this Makita memoir (actually written by Umezawa) to the other weekly magazines, in an effort to create a buzz about it. Actually, what Dan brought to the magazines was a copy of the manuscript, because the second issue of *Fukuden* was not yet printed.

From April through July, such publications as *The Yukan Fuji*, *The Tokyo Sport*, *The Fhukan Jitsuwa*, *The Shukan Shincho*, and *The Shukan Bunshun* published similar malicious stories, alleging that the Soka Gakkai had made a fortune by producing counterfeit Gohonzons. Anti-Gakkai journalists Isao Dan, Kunio Naito, and Masao Otsukotsu wrote these fabricated stories.

And the public believed the memoir written by the fictitious vice president because of its wide coverage in the press. The campaign staged by Umezawa and the *Fukuden* group (with Yamazaki behind the scenes) gained momentum. The wife of Tsugio Ishida attended a panel discussion sponsored by this anti-Gakkai group in June. Tsugio

Ishida was a core leader of the youth division of the Soka Gakkai during the time of President Toda, however, he later developed ill feelings toward President Ikeda, backslid in faith, and turned against the Gakkai.

At one point, some old leaders who had hard feelings toward President Ikeda spread the rumor that Mr. Toda had wanted Mr. Ishida to be the third president of the Soka Gakkai. Such a rumor was created by people who were not involved in the Soka Gakkai in the 20's and 30's of the Showa period, or during the time between 1945 and 1955, when young Daisaku Ikeda really struggled to assist the leadership of President Toda.

*A Glimpse of the Insanity Behind the Manipulations*

A teachers' guidance meeting was held at the head temple Taiseki-ji at the end of August 1990. At this meeting, a notice was given to all Nichiren Shoshu priests about twenty-one self-disciplinary guidelines that they were to follow. Nothing was extraordinary about many of the points made in this notice, because so many priests' lifestyles were decadent in those days. One of the guidelines reads:

"As Nichiren Shoshu priests, you should always remember not to be greedy. You should always be prudent in your behavior in your everyday life. You should not indulge in seeking pleasure. You should be careful about your language and conduct, so that you won't be criticized or frowned upon by believers and people in general."

Another goes:

"Any behavior that will tarnish your dignity as a priest is banned. You should not seek a gaudy and luxurious lifestyle. This also applies to the family members of any priest."

Another one, which is very much detailed, reads:

"In choosing a car, you should take care not to buy an expensive one. You should also exercise good judgment in selecting the kind of the car you will buy. You should buy the type of car that suits your status. Your car should be conservative enough to maintain your dignity as a priest. In this regard, the color of the car you drive should not be gaudy. Especially, the red color is prohibited for your car. The family members of any priest should also discipline themselves in this respect."

The action that the press took at that time was incomprehensible. Many articles stressed that the Soka Gakkai and Nichiren Shoshu would soon split. Some articles even introduced a surreptitious document that urged Nichiren Shoshu to oust Mr. Ikeda, the honorary president of the Soka Gakkai.

In parallel with these comments in the press, voices against the honorary president became louder within Nichiren Shoshu. These critical voices chiefly came from the remnants of the Shoshinkai sympathizers who had chosen to stay on within Nichiren Shoshu. Emotional remarks attacking Honorary President Ikeda were already heard here and there within Nichiren Shoshu in early 1990. After the notice of self-discipline was issued, the priesthood began to spread rumors about the ousting of the honorary president.

About a week before I visited Sapporo, I heard a rumor that said, when the attack begins in earnest against the Soka Gakkai, the first act will be to dismiss Honorary President Ikeda from the position of the head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies (*sokoto*). My feeling was that Nichiren Shoshu would go ahead and do it. I had been through so many incidents in the past, and my honest impression at that time was that something different and much more terrible would occur. Nikken had accumulated so much religious authority and power that it seemed inevitable to me that he would turn next to crushing the Soka Gakkai. I saw a glimpse of insanity in the relationship between Nichiren Shoshu and the Soka Gakkai. In addition, it was obvious that the insanity that was growing in the minds of the priesthood was not the kind that I had ever seen before. My feeling was, "The Soka Gakkai may split into two pieces. What will happen will be much more large-scale than what we saw in the previous temple issue." I expressed my anxiety to Hirano who accompanied me in this trip and he was stunned.

### *Making Our Way to Kawabe's Nissho-ji Temple*

After checking out of the hotel at noon the next day, December 25, I ate lunch with Hirano. Then alone, I took a taxi to Nissho-ji temple, where I believed Kawabe would definitely be on that day. In the taxi, I remembered a previous conversation with Kawabe. He was talking about his experiences when he was chief priest of Myoin-ji temple in Koto Ward, Tokyo. He said, "There is one thing that we want the Soka Gakkai to do after the honorary president's death." He then

became quiet, pondering over something in his mind. "What is it?" I asked. "I can't tell you right now," he responded. He firmly refused to answer my question.

Based upon this past conversation with Kawabe, I had come to realize that Nichiren Shoshu had already firmly decided on its actions for after the honorary president's death. If Nichiren Shoshu was about to take some kind of drastic action against the Soka Gakkai, I thought that Kawabe, based upon his strategic vision, would stop Nikken from carelessly taking a horrendous action against the Gakkai.

At 2 PM, I found myself standing in front of the main gate of Nisshoji temple. I went inside, telling a receptionist my name, and expressing my desire to see Chief Priest Kawabe in person. After awhile, the receptionist told me, "I'll guide you to a guest room."

I went upstairs and chanted three daimoku at the main Gohonzon room. After that, I came back downstairs and went into a Japanese-style guest room.

I found Kawabe in a very bad mood, a thing I had hardly ever encountered in my many years of acquaintance with him. He was obviously observing me to find out why I had to visit him in person. I first said:

"The information route that exists for the top management of Nichiren Shoshu is not well balanced. The Kojun Takahasi route or the Soka Gakkai's International Center's "I" route ("I" was a staff member of the center who later quit) is too biased."

Then I cautioned him, "You'll make poor decisions if you're influenced by manipulated information."

Kawabe responded: "Nichiren Shoshu won't be swayed by input from somebody like Kojun. We can't trust 'I' because his personal life is messed up. Nichiren Shoshu bases itself upon trustworthy information. Lately, something is not right with Honorary President Ikeda. We listened to his speech at the recent leaders meeting of the Soka Gakkai. In it, he was badly critical of Nichiren Shoshu."

I knew that Kojun Takahasi, together with Jiro Oshiki and his younger brother, Isao Dan, were meeting with Nikken that same day. I was not sure whether Kawabe was pretending to be different from

the way he actually felt, or whether he was truly not aware that Nikken was meeting with these anti-Gakkai individuals.

I said, "Kojoyun has been broadcasting here and there, saying 'Let's dismiss Honorary President Ikeda and take action quickly to get as many members as possible out of the Gakkai. Inevitably the Gakkai will choose to be independent of Nichiren Shoshu.'" I was curious as to how Kawabe would respond to this.

"I don't think that the Soka Gakkai would choose to be independent. It would take time for the Gakkai to become independent — it would have to prepare itself well to become free from Nichiren Shoshu," said Kawabe, attempting to sound objective.

I said, "Kojoyun is not the only person who's been saying such a thing. From the beginning of this year, quite a few priests have been saying that the Soka Gakkai will be excommunicated after the celebration of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the head temple Taiseki-ji."

Without responding to this remark of mine, Kawabe said, "When I received the call from you the other day, I was under the impression that the Soka Gakkai had lost all its channels to communicate with Nichiren Shoshu."

He continued: "This isn't the time for me to take any initiative. I am not being asked to do so, either. If an explosion is to take place, such an explosion (between Soka Gakkai and Nichiren Shoshu) had better happen. Things may have to go all the way in order to settle down correctly."

Kawabe also said: "However, I'd be able to quiet down the current situation. I know how to do it. But I can't share it with anybody for now. In fact, I have been asked to get involved, but I've turned down his (Nikken's) request."

Hearing that, I perceived that Nichiren Shoshu was determined to take the offensive against the Soka Gakkai. Kawabe was very emotional and passionate throughout our meeting.

Kawabe then asked:

"What if you tell the Gakkai members, 'Unless you follow the high priest and put your absolute faith in him, you won't be able to see the Dai-Gohonzon'?"

Through this question and his body language, it was obvious to me that Nichiren Shoshu was ready to axe the Soka Gakkai.

*“Many Priests Can’t Live with the New Self-Disciplinary Ordinance”*

“Now I have at last heard the true voice of Nichiren Shoshu,” I thought. Taking the members of the Soka Gakkai by dint of the authority of the high priest was the true agenda of Nichiren Shoshu.

Kawabe said: “When I was at Kyodai-ji temple in Tokushima prefecture, Shikoku, there was an incident in which Daijo-ji temple in Kochi prefecture severed its ties with Nichiren Shoshu. And about 1,000 believers apparently chose to go along with Daijo-ji temple’s decision. At that time, I met with each believer, one by one, saying to him or her, ‘Are you going to leave the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary?’ In the end, only some 30 believers left Nichiren Shoshu. The same thing will happen with those Gakkai members — they may at first choose to stay with the Gakkai. Then we’ll ask them, ‘Are you ready to leave the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary?’ Each member of the Soka Gakkai will have to make such a difficult decision.”

It was then very clear what was the true intent of the top management of Nichiren Shoshu. Regarding the current sources of Soka Gakkai information for Nichiren Shoshu, Kawabe said, “Nichiren Shoshu is receiving information from a very important person. The Soka Gakkai will collapse, should I mention his name.”

From Kawabe’s melodramatic way of speaking, one specific individual’s name occurred to me. Instead I asked Kawabe, “Who is he?” Kawabe wouldn’t reply to my question.

Changing the subject, I then asked: “By the way, there was a notice issued at the teachers’ guidance meeting in August. It concerned the ordinance of priests’ behavior in daily life, didn’t it?”

“I took the initiative in this matter,” Kawabe replied without losing any time.

“But some priests are simply ignoring it. They are still playing golf as they please,” I said.

“Are you sure? Are they still playing golf?” he asked. Kawabe was shocked at my statement. I cited several examples of decadence on the part of some priests. And I warned him, “You’ll see many examples of confrontation between priesthood and laity in Nichiren Shoshu temples across the country. There will be unbridgeable gaps between them.”

“Aren’t we going to see lots of revelation of scandals by both sides?” replied Kawabe dispassionately.

“Many priests won’t be able to put up with attacks from their lay believers,” I said, sharing with him more examples of the priesthood’s corruption.

My talk with Kawabe that day lasted for two hours and forty minutes. When I left Nissho-ji temple at 4:40 PM, Mrs. Kawabe saw me off at the front gate of the temple. When I looked back after stepping out of the gate, I saw her bowing to me with her three fingers touching the carpeted floor at the threshold of the temple. When I saw this, I felt that she was bidding me an eternal farewell. From her gesture, I sensed a firm determination on the part of leaders of Nichiren Shoshu.

I hurried back to the hotel and met with Hirano at the lobby. Immediately I had him record in detail my notes of the conversation with Kawabe. I shared my notes with Hirano at the hotel’s tea lounge, in the bus, and at the gate of the airport. We got aboard the JAL flight that left at 8:20 PM. As soon as I arrived in Tokyo, I took a cab and headed straight for the Soka Gakkai Headquarters building.