

Part 4. The Evening of Hopefulness

A Secret Meeting at Nishiyama Hot Spring

Around 5 PM on December 25, 1990, just after Nikken met with Isao Dan, Jiro Oshiki, and Kojoyun Takahashi, several men arrived at Kei'unkan Inn at Nishiyama Hot Spring in Yamanashi prefecture, which is located 23 kilometers north-northwest of Mount Minobu. They were Kunio Naito, an anti-Gakkai writer; Isao Dan, another anti-Gakkai writer and the same man who just met with Nikken; Masao Okkotsu, editor of *Keimyo*, organ of the Shoshinkai group; Takashi Harashima, former Soka Gakkai study department chief; and a few others — a total of seven individuals. Hotel rooms had been reserved under Okkotsu's name. As was the case with any inn, a blackboard was displayed by the gate of the inn and white characters on it read: "Welcome, Mr. Okkotsu and His Entourage."

The whole group first enjoyed an outdoor hot bath. Shortly after 5:30 PM, Naito was paged by Tsugio Ishida, a former top leader of the Soka Gakkai during Mr. Toda's days. After talking to Ishida, Naito said, "Nikken-san has finally decided to cut off Daisaku Ikeda. It seems that he'll take action within this year. Mr. Ishida told me not to mention this information until the 28th."

The entourage was overjoyed at this news. During their celebration of this news, Naito touched the hip of a female worker at the inn, perhaps because he was so overjoyed on that day or because doing such an obscene thing was his habit. In any case, the group disapproved of his base behavior. But overall, they could not contain their excitement, saying to each other "Ikeda is finally done."

They all moved on to a snack bar, and started singing karaoke songs. They could not help talking about how great Nichiren Shoshu's upcoming anti-Gakkai actions would be.

In jolly spirits, Harashima sang a Japanese popular *enka* song "Tsugarukaikyo Fuyugeshi (Winter Scenes at Tsugaru Straits)," but he was out of tune, perhaps because he was not used to singing a song in public or maybe because he was tone-deaf. Then the entire group, joined by two other customers, sang "Subaru (the Pleiades)," a popular song of trailblazing. Their party came to an end a little after 10 PM.

Then, they had a private discussion until midnight. Outside it was totally dark and a black mountain towered in front of the hotel. The wind was piercingly cold, and the sounds of a brook running gave a sense of coldness to those who stayed inside. The weather was great in the daytime, but atmosphere was very different at midnight.

The Group Visits Mount Minobu the Following Day

It was snowing the next morning. Mountains that had towered in the darkness were now covered with white snow. The group left the inn at around 10:30 AM and they headed for Kuon-ji temple, the head temple of Nichiren Shu, on Mount Minobu. It was raining on Mt. Minobu, when they arrived at 11:30 AM. They all offered incense to the sect's object of worship. Climbing up the stone stairs leading to the main temple, they were in cheerful spirits.

The source of their joy came from the fact that their dream of destroying the Soka Gakkai was being materialized. Indeed, the news from Ishida to Naito that "High Priest Nikken will cut off Daisaku Ikeda" overjoyed them all. It could not have been a coincidence that those who were working to disparage the Soka Gakkai visited the Nichiren Shu temple that day.