

## Part 5. Scheme Leaked About Surprise Attack

### *Operation C*

It was on the evening of December 26, 1990, that the Soka Gakkai first learned about Nikken's conspiracy, or "Operation C." Yu Fuwa, editor of the *Jiyu*, a daily fax correspondence issued by Nichiren Shoshu Freedom Correspondence Association, wrote about this plan in his foreword to *Selected Works of Jiyu* published by Ho'on Sha. Incidentally, the *Jiyu*, which literally means "emerging from the earth," is the fax correspondence that was sent daily to each local temple of Nichiren Shoshu, starting on January 1, 1991.

Yu Fuwa wrote: "It was around 10:30 PM on December 26, 1990, that I first came to know about the existence of 'Operation C' within Nichiren Shoshu. This conspiracy by Nikken to oust our mentor, Honorary President Ikeda, to destroy the Soka Gakkai, and to get Gakkai members under the control of Nichiren Shoshu temples, was documented with a timeline. The contents of this document were so appalling that it was obvious that the entire Soka Gakkai, if this conspiracy should be executed, would fall into a huge confusion."

Fuwa continued, "Operation C should have been completed by January 15, 1991, if executed successfully as planned." Fuwa further stated:

"Nikken and his cohorts schemed to attack the Soka Gakkai without any prior notice. Their purpose is to bring the Gakkai to ruin. Along with the news of Operation C, the priesthood was also planning to move the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary from the Sho-Hondo to Hoanden in February. This is according to the information that I obtained."

He went on:

"It was indeed an unpardonable action. Anger welled up from within as I listened to the report of this conspiracy by Nikken and his cronies. Nikken is attempting to deny the significance of the Sho-Hondo that was built based upon the heartfelt offerings from millions of lay believers. How can Nikken be a religious leader if he can't fathom the depth of people's sincere faith? We must fight against Nikken and protect the Soka Gakkai, the organization built with the mandate of the Buddha. We've got to protect our mentor,

Honorary President Ikeda. A passionate thought of this sort permeated my entire being.

“I recollect that, on April 24, 1979, President Ikeda was forced to resign, and the regret and chagrin that we as his disciples went through at that time were immeasurable. We don’t want to experience the same thing. We will win this time, no matter what. There is no doubt that all the members of the Soka Gakkai will naturally unite around our mentor, Honorary President Ikeda, when they become aware of this reckless conspiracy of Operation C.

“The Soka Gakkai was not so successful in dealing with the previous case of the temple issue, because the information was not shared with the membership. In this new instance, I felt it absolutely necessary for the Gakkai to expose every relevant piece of information to the members. The Gakkai members, who have been devoted to fighting for kosen-rufu, must be able to make an informed decision once they get accurate information. At the same time, I felt that in order for every Soka Gakkai member to challenge himself or herself to overcome this persecution by the priesthood, they would each have to become convinced that the Soka Gakkai is the organization that is fulfilling the Buddha’s mandate. Each member needs to become aware of the significance inherent in the position assumed by our mentor, Honorary President Ikeda. The moment I heard about Operation C, my blood boiled up in me in anger. At the same time, I was cool-headed enough to think about the importance of disseminating all available information to prepare for an all-out confrontation with the priesthood.

“At 12:15 AM, I went to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters building with the information about Operation C. The validity of the information I brought to the Soka Gakkai was proven the next day, when the Nichiren Shoshu assembly convened and virtually dismissed Honorary President Ikeda from his position as head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies. The pretext they used was the revision of the Rules of Nichiren Shoshu. As planned, Operation C has gotten under way. The only way to fight against this conspiracy was for all Soka Gakkai members, the children of the Buddha, to stand up against religious authoritarianism. An all-out war with the priesthood has now become unavoidable.”

*The Soka Gakkai Took Action in Time*

The *Dai-Nichiren*, the organ magazine of Nichiren Shoshu, included in its February 1991 issue an article about the 130<sup>th</sup> session of the Nichiren Shoshu Assembly that was held on December 27, 1990. At this meeting, Nichijun Fujimoto, General Administrator of the Administrative Office, stated:

“As we are prepare for a new year that marks the 701<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the founding of the head temple Taiseki-ji, we need to confirm the prime point of Nichiren Shoshu faith. We need to base ourselves reverently upon the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism and the high priest who alone has inherited the heritage of the Law. Doing this with absolute obedience to both fulfills the fundamental teachings of our school. Always keep this in mind: we should devote ourselves to faith, practice, and study, thereby fulfilling our commitment to the holy undertaking of kosen-rufu.”

Fujimoto then presented a proposal with the partial revision of the Rules of Nichiren Shoshu. According to the traditional version of the Rules, Article 158 and Subject 2 read:

“One who has quit from the position of head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies shall be automatically appointed the honorary head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies.”

However, the proposed new version read: “The term of the head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies shall be five years. The term of all officers of the Hokkeko Headquarters other than the head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay-societies shall be three years. All these lay-officers may be re-elected.”

With this revision of the Rules, the position of head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies was abolished. The Rules then had a new provision, which reads: “The officers of the Hokkeko Headquarters shall lose their positions in case of resignation or fulfillment of their term or for any other legitimate reason.”

The new Rules also had a supplementary provision, which read: “Following this revision in the Rules, those who previously assumed positions as officers of the Hokkeko headquarters, shall automatically lose their positions.” Through this revision in the Rules, Nichiren Shoshu dismissed Honorary President Ikeda from the position of the head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies.

Furthermore, envisioning a possible counterattack from the Soka Gakkai through its publications, Nichiren Shoshu added the following clause allowing expulsion "...in case believers criticize, disparage, or slander the high priest through their speeches or written documents."

Nikken and his followers planned to give Honorary President Ikeda a copy of the Goshu as a token of their seeming appreciation to him, while waiting for his traditionally scheduled arrival at the head temple Taiseki-ji on January 2, 1991. This is according to the Operation C document typewritten by Kido Fukuda, then secretary of Nichiren Shoshu Overseas Bureau. The priesthood was ready to attack Honorary President Ikeda, and to claim that he had no faith, should he show any sign of dissatisfaction at the priesthood's dismissal of him.

On top of that, Nichiren Shoshu was planning to give him the following order:

"Mr. Daisaku Ikeda shall be a mere lay-believer with no other title than the honorary president of the Soka Gakkai.

"His secretariat, the Daiichi Shomu, shall be disbanded.

"The majority of the responsible officers of the corporation of the Soka Gakkai shall be priests nominated by Nichiren Shoshu Chief Administrator (high priest).

"No articles of Honorary President Ikeda shall be allowed published in any Gakkai publications, including the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

"The overseas organization of the Soka Gakkai shall follow the direction of the Overseas Bureau of the Administrative Office."

By setting a deadline for the Soka Gakkai and demanding it to respond within two weeks (or before January 15, 1991), the priesthood was planning to expel Honorary President Ikeda as a lay-believer from Nichiren Shoshu if he did not agree to the above conditions. Not only that, the priesthood was scheming to eventually excommunicate the entire Soka Gakkai.

However, just before Operation C was implemented, the Soka Gakkai came to know its existence. And the Soka Gakkai responded on a nationwide scale right after Nichiren Shoshu dismissed

Honorary President Ikeda from the position of head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies on December 27.

An emergency headquarter leaders' meeting was held on the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> throughout the country. The next day, the 28<sup>th</sup>, district leaders' meetings were held in every prefecture or ward. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, each district had its own planning meeting. This way, the Soka Gakkai members knew immediately about the baseness and cruelty of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood.

What was disclosed to the entire Soka Gakkai membership was that Honorary President Ikeda was dismissed from the position of head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies through the revision of the Rules of Nichiren Shoshu at the Assembly on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Also, they were informed that Nichiren Shoshu had sent to the Soka Gakkai the document of the Inquiry on December 13, and the Soka Gakkai had sent Nichiren Shoshu its response to the Inquiry on December 23.

The copy machines at every Soka Gakkai community center and the copy machines of leaders throughout the country were being used to distribute all this information. The original data were quickly shared with as many members as possible. It was a tremendous challenge to even obtain blank paper at that time, since many stationery shops had already closed early for the New Year's Day holidays. Creating copies of all the relevant information was done continuously day and night for a few days in a row. Urgent meetings were held one after another throughout the country. Nikken and the priesthood's deceit were thus conveyed to millions of Gakkai members across the country within a matter of three days at the end of the year.