

**Publication of the Daishonin's Writings**  
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**pen name of SGI president Ikeda**

In the early 1950s, the Soka Gakkai decided to publish a complete edition of Nichiren Daishonin's writings. Nichiren Shoshu rejected the idea out of hand, but the Soka Gakkai went ahead.

As an organization directly connected to Nichiren Daishonin, the Soka Gakkai's unchanging basis will always be his writings, the Goshu.

Immediately after becoming second president of the Soka Gakkai, my mentor, Josei Toda, decided to publish the Daishonin's complete writings. He announced this project in June 1951, during celebrations for the 700th anniversary of the Daishonin's establishment of his teaching, which would come April 28 the following year. That left only 10 months to bring this ambitious undertaking to completion. Compilation and proofreading continued day after day, late into the night.

Mr. Toda always said with great conviction that the reason so many Soka Gakkai leaders recanted their beliefs when persecuted by the authorities during the war was that they did not have a deep understanding of the Daishonin's teachings, a firm foundation in Buddhist study. He concluded that the only way to successfully carry out kosen-rufu was for each and every member to engrave the teachings of the Daishonin's writings in his or her life and thus establish unwavering faith.



At around the same time, the Minobu school was also compiling the Daishonin's writings for publication. Nichiren Shoshu, however, was pursuing plans to commemorate the 700th anniversary by publishing a new edition of sacred texts, but it would only be selected passages from the Lotus Sutra and the Daishonin's 10 major writings.

When Mr. Toda heard that, he said, "Nichiren Shoshu is going to let Minobu best them once again!" At the time, Nichiren Shoshu did not have its own complete set of the Daishonin's writings, and Soka Gakkai members were forced to study using compilations published by other Nichiren schools. But those compilations did not contain a number of significant texts written by the Daishonin and entrusted directly to his legitimate heir and successor, Nikko Shonin. So they did not communicate the Daishonin's true message accurately and completely.



Nevertheless, when Mr. Toda proposed that Nichiren Shoshu publish a volume containing the Daishonin's complete writings, it rejected the idea out of hand. The head temple did permit the Soka Gakkai to go ahead with such a publication, but it wasn't prepared to help with the project.

Mr. Toda later shared his feelings: "I knew that trying to publish the Daishonin's complete writings would be an enormous undertaking, yet when the priesthood announced that it wouldn't assist us, I felt an irrepressible surge of anger...." At the time, the priesthood was most interested in casting a new bell for Taiseki-ji. Not only had Nichiren Shoshu prohibited the printing of the Daishonin's writings during the war, out of fear of government persecution, but it had cooperated in the war effort, offering the head temple's

bell to the military authorities to be melted for materiel. Now the priests were intent on collecting donations from lay believers to cast a new bell in time for the 700th anniversary.

The Soka Gakkai, on the one hand, was determined to publish a complete edition of the Daishonin's writings in order to communicate his spirit faithfully and accurately to others and advance the cause of kosen-rufu. The priesthood, on the other hand, gave top priority to increasing the physical grandeur and authority of their head temple.

Mr. Toda sternly reprimanded this distortion of faith in his *Seikyo Shimbun* column, "Epigrams": "The priests in their mountain retreat are more devoted to producing *goshu* [Japanese sake] than publishing Gosho."



The laborious work of compiling the new, comprehensive edition of the Daishonin's writings was ultimately taken on by the former high priest Hori Nichiko, who had retired to Hatake in Izu. All the other tasks, such as proofreading and raising the ¥9 million to print the new edition, were assumed by the Soka Gakkai.

Though Mr. Toda's business had passed the crisis stage, it was far from fully recovered. He wasn't sure how he'd raise the money to see the work through to publication. I supported the project behind the scenes by spending all my time and energy to get Mr. Toda's business back on its feet. Only Mr. Toda knew how hard I struggled.

Finally, on April 28, 1952, the new Soka Gakkai edition of the Daishonin's writings was complete. It was a tremendous achievement, an impossible dream come true. The first printing consisted of 6,000 copies. In that same month, Mr. Toda composed this poem for me:

*Filled with the strength  
To surmount towering obstacles  
Spur your youthful self on  
To fight bravely  
On the path of the Mystic Law*



Study of the Daishonin's writings by Soka Gakkai members resulted in tremendous progress in introducing others to the teachings, and that in turn produced a huge increase in the demand for the volume. In November 1953, Mr. Toda decided to reprint.

On that occasion, as a Study Department representative, I helped proofread. After work and after attending Soka Gakkai meetings, I would rush to the printing plant to help with the proofreading until late into the night.

It was a noble, important task. Wishing to produce a perfect edition for later generations, we were determined that there would not be a single misprint or mistake in the entire edition.



In his preface to the volume, Mr. Toda proclaims, "It is my unceasing wish that this precious sacred text will spread throughout Asia, throughout the entire world." I have devoted every ounce of my being to realizing my mentor's dream, and I have succeeded. The Daishonin writes, "Those who call themselves my disciples and practice the Lotus

Sutra should all practice as I do” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 298).

The Soka Gakkai is the only organization that faithfully accords with the Buddha’s will and decree, the sole body of believers that has based itself entirely on the Daishonin’s writings. Directly connected to the Daishonin, it is advancing the cause of kosen-rufu just as he did.

The Soka Gakkai has inherited the lifeblood of faith in the Daishonin’s Buddhism and the true noble cause of upholding the Law. The Soka Gakkai is also the direct path to immeasurable benefit and the goal of Buddhahood in this life.

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