

**THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF THE FUJI SCHOOL  
THE ORIGINS OF THE TEMPLE ISSUE  
CHAPTER 16: THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GRAND MAIN TEMPLE**

*This installment has been compiled by the SGI-USA Study Department. The last installment in the June issue examined the significance of the SGI's conferral of the Gohonzon by tracing the Fuji School's history in terms of the transcription of the Gohonzon. This installment examines the priesthood's motivation behind the destruction of the Grand Main Temple and what we can learn from it. This concludes the series.*

**(1) THE GRAND MAIN TEMPLE**

In his sermon at Taiseki-ji on April 5, 1998, High Priest Nikken revealed his plan to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon from the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo) to the newly renovated Ho'an-den on the head temple grounds.

After attributing Japan's recent earthquake, volcanic eruption and tsunami to "the great slander of Ikeda's Soka Gakkai," Nikken stated that the SGI has become "the organization with which the great Law of Nichiren Shoshu must not be allowed to have any relationship." He then referred to the Grand Main Temple as "the largest thing to which they [SGI members] were related in the past." The high priest justified his decision by saying, "In order to completely refute the great slander of Ikeda and others, it is now most appropriate to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon out of the Grand Main Temple as quickly as possible."

Toward the end of his sermon, Nikken also stated that he would take "measures appropriate to the current circumstances" about the Grand Main Temple, which he described as "useless ruins of gigantic stature." He also hinted at his plan to build a new hall of worship, which he called "Ho'an-do." The demolition of the Grand Main Temple soon began, despite strong voices of protest from SGI members as well as from architectural and academic communities around the world. By the end of 1998, the once-majestic structure was leveled.

The Grand Main Temple was built in 1972 to house the Dai-Gohonzon. Its construction was supported by approximately 8 million Soka Gakkai members in Japan and overseas who donated over ¥35.5 billion (approximately \$100 million at the exchange rate of the time). At the time of the temple's completion, Nittatsu Hosoi, the 66th high priest, declared the Grand Main Temple to be "a great edifice that shall be the high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching at the time of kosen-rufu."

On October 11, 1972, when the Dai-Gohonzon was transferred from the Ho'an-den to the Grand Main Temple, Nittatsu further clarified the significance of the new building: "I have decided that from now on and for all eternity, we will worship this Gohonzon of the high sanctuary at this Grand Main Temple and pray for the believers' attainment of Buddhahood in their present forms as well as for the fulfillment of their great desires of the present and future existences, thereby designating [the Grand Main Temple] to be the great edifice in which to pray for world peace."

Nichiren Shoshu's doctrines concerning the lineage and infallibility of the high priest state that the pronouncements of a high priest must be upheld and honored as sacred. Yet Nikken's transfer of the Dai-Gohonzon out of the Grand Main Temple clearly contradicts the previous high priest's intentions.

This and the building's subsequent demolition also contradict Nikken's past statements in support of his predecessor. For example, on March 26, 1972, Nikken, who was then Nichiren Shoshu Study Department chief, stated, "Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu, the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'"

Nikken abruptly reversed his position immediately after implementing Operation C. He announced his sudden change of stance in sermons on January 6 and 10, 1991, shortly after the priesthood took the first of its punitive measures against the SGI by dismissing Daisaku Ikeda as chief representative of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations. He indicated that the significance of the building as the high sanctuary at the time of kosen-rufu was not a certainty. In retrospect, it is clear that through this reversal, Nikken was laying the groundwork for his demolition of the Sho-hondo, the Grand Main Temple.

In these January 1991 sermons, Nikken claimed that Ikeda arrogantly overstepped his bounds as a lay believer by referring to the Grand Main Temple as the high sanctuary at its groundbreaking ceremony on October 12, 1968. The high priest claimed that no one in Nichiren Shoshu—not even High Priest Nittatsu—had ever referred to the Grand Main Temple as the high sanctuary mentioned in the Daishonin's "On the Three Great Secret Laws." Nikken asserted that Ikeda dared to define the significance of the Grand Main Temple without the high priest's instruction. He attributed the conflict between the priesthood and the SGI to Ikeda's alleged arrogance and subsequent failure to issue an apology.

But when the text of Nikken's two sermons appeared in the February 1991 issue of the *Dai-Nichiren*, the priesthood's study journal, there were some significant revisions. Added to the texts of his sermons was the statement: "I wish to amend my remarks because I discovered some statements made by High Priest Nittatsu prior to 1968 regarding the significance of the Grand Main Temple, which make reference to 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'" This correction effectively nullified Nikken's accusations.

Although the SGI, in an open letter to the priesthood, pointed to the lack of grounds for his accusations, Nikken never responded to the SGI or amended his position regarding the significance of the Grand Main Temple. It is now clear that as early as the beginning of 1991, Nikken was attempting to lay a doctrinal basis for the demolition of the Grand Main Temple. (For more information about Nikken's 1991 sermons and the SGI's letter of inquiry, see *Issues Between the Nichiren Shoshu Priesthood and the Soka Gakkai*, vol. 4, published by the Soka Gakkai International in 1992.)

Nikken's removal of the Dai-Gohonzon from the Grand Main Temple and his subsequent demolition of the building have important implications. First, Nikken's sudden decision is symbolic of his autocratic rule within Nichiren Shoshu. Although some reformist priests had warned of the possibility of the Dai-Gohonzon's removal from the Grand Main Temple as early as 1997, the high priest's announcement and subsequent transfer of the Dai-Gohonzon came as a surprise to most of the more than 700 chief priests of Nichiren Shoshu temples, including those assigned to lodging temples on the head temple grounds.

The notice outlining the high priest's decision was transmitted by facsimile to branch temples on the night of April 5. It states that the high priest, "reflecting upon the recent great slander committed by Daisaku Ikeda's Soka Gakkai, gave the profound guidance that it would be in accord with the true intent of the founder Nichiren Daishonin to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon of the high sanctuary of True Buddhism back to the Ho'an-den from the Grand Main Temple, which was built at the request of Daisaku Ikeda."

The removal of the Dai-Gohonzon was planned and implemented by Nikken's close asso-

ciates and Taiseki-ji's Department of Internal Affairs. Compared to the openness and grandeur of the transfer ceremony held in 1972 upon completion of the Grand Main Temple, the 1998 transfer was conducted by a small group of priests at dusk. At a service held the next day, the high priest explained that the plan had been carried out abruptly due to "circumstances that allowed no prior discussion." He apologetically added that the details of the decision would be published in the April 10 issue of *The Daibyakuho*, the organ of Nichiren Shoshu's lay organization. One can easily speculate that the suddenness of the move, and its communication only after the fact, was intended to forestall any opposition from within the ranks of the priesthood or the Hokkeko laity. Once the Dai-Gohonzon was moved, opposing the decision was an exercise in futility. Such tactics underscore the autocratic nature of Nikken's leadership.

The second important implication of Nikken's removal of the Dai-Gohonzon and his destruction of the Grand Main Temple is the contradiction of his predecessor's instruction. According to the current priesthood, all successive high priests have received a mysterious transmission from the Daishonin, so each high priest's instructions must be revered and followed as if they were the instructions of the Daishonin himself. Nikken's contradiction of his predecessor's teaching regarding the Grand Main Temple is of note since it indicates the priesthood's current dogma regarding the high priest's infallibility is arbitrary. It is cited only where it is convenient in silencing criticism toward the current high priest. Nikken claims to have received the lineage of the high priest position from the 66th high priest Nittatsu. Yet, by destroying the Grand Main Temple, Nikken clearly went against his predecessor's instructions. On April 28, 1972, Nittatsu issued an official statement titled "Admonition" to clarify the significance of the Grand Main Temple. It reads: "The Grand Main Temple is the actual high sanctuary of this time.... In other words, the Grand Main Temple is the supreme edifice that shall be the high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching at the time of kosen-rufu." In his sermon on April 5, 1998, Nikken claimed that the Soka Gakkai "applied pressure" on the priesthood to define the Grand Main Temple as the high sanctuary at the time of its construction. Yet, Nittatsu himself, in the face of similar allegations by anti-Gakkai factions within Nichiren Shoshu, clearly stated: "My true intent does not lie outside my admonitions and sermons." The demolition of the Grand Main Temple, in this sense, was the demolition of the priesthood's own doctrine concerning the authority of the high priest.

Furthermore, Nikken's decision also constituted a gross deception of the laity. Previously, he had made many statements in support of Nittatsu's view on the Grand Main Temple. For example, in March 1972, as Nichiren Shoshu Study Department chief, Nikken stated: "Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu, the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'" In the postscript of *On the High Sanctuary* published in December 1974, Nikken states: "It is clear from the admonition of April 28, 1972, that the current Grand Main Temple will become the main hall of the Temple of the True Teaching at that time." Furthermore, in October 1982, commemorating the tenth anniversary of the completion of the Grand Main Temple, Nikken states as high priest: "The Grand Main Temple is a fundamental place to observe Buddhist teachings and precepts where the people of the world repent and eradicate their sins. It is an edifice that is most suited for the conditions of the present time of world kosen-rufu both in its name and substance." If Nikken was pressured, as he claims, into adopting the position of Nittatsu and the Soka Gakkai, then, as Study Department chief of the priesthood, he was knowingly misleading eight million believers in supporting their donation of millions of dollars to a construction project whose funda-

Title: The Untold History Of The Fuji School

Subject: Living Buddhism 07/99 v.99 n.7 p.39 LB9907p39

Author:

Keywords: Chap. Destruction Fuji Grand History Main Priesthood School Temple Untold

mental significance he did not believe in.

In his April 1998 sermon, Nikken explained that he decided to remove the Dai-Gohonzon “in order to completely refute the grave slanders of Ikeda and others.” Thus Nichiren Shoshu under Nikken has set forth a doctrinal basis for the destruction of the Grand Main Temple. Because it was built by the Soka Gakkai and Ikeda, whom the priesthood has deemed to be slanderers, it should be torn down. Nikken seems somehow to be implying that the tearing down of temples donated to his school by those he now deems slanderers is an act of refuting slander. Yet many temples in Nichiren Shoshu were once temples of other Buddhists sects. They were built and donated by people with erroneous views of Buddhism. Yet they have never been torn down. In fact, neither Nichiren Daishonin, nor any high priest of the Fuji School before Nikken had ever demolished a building on the grounds that it had been built or donated by slanderers. There is absolutely no doctrinal or historical precedent for such an action.

In addition, if the Grand Main Temple must be destroyed simply because it was built at the request of the SGI president and by the donations of Soka Gakkai members, logic and faithfulness to principle would demand that Nichiren Shoshu also vacate, if not demolish, all other buildings and properties donated by the Gakkai. Approximately eighty percent of Taiseki-ji’s current real estate holdings as well as a number of large structures and numerous lodging temples on the head temple grounds were donated by the Gakkai. Since Ikeda was inaugurated as the third president in 1960, the Soka Gakkai built and donated 320 temples to the priesthood. In addition, the Gakkai has funded the complete or partial renovation of many existing temples. While Nikken claims that the Grand Main Temple had to be destroyed because the SGI has become “the organization with which the great Law of Nichiren Shoshu must not be allowed to have any relationship,” he clearly fails to apply the same logic or principle to the priesthood’s other buildings and properties donated by the Soka Gakkai. This lack of consistency and self-contradiction can be best understood when we view Nikken’s justification of the destruction as the elimination of slander as a pretext. The purpose of this pretext was to rationalize an act that was actually arbitrary and motivated by emotional resentment.

## **(2) THE MEANING OF THE HIGH SANCTUARY**

The demolition of the Grand Main Temple, in an ironic reversal of Nikken’s intent to “refute the slander of Ikeda and others,” actually awakened many SGI members to the essential meaning of the high sanctuary in the Daishonin’s Buddhism.

The high sanctuary is one of the Three Great Secret Laws; that is, one of three core elements of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. They are the object of devotion of true Buddhism (i.e., the Gohonzon), the invocation of true Buddhism (Nam-myoho-rence-kyo) and the high sanctuary of true Buddhism. These are called “secret” because they had been never revealed before the Daishonin. Needless to say, the Daishonin’s intent was to make those “secrets” to happiness and peace known to all people. While it is easily understandable that both the Gohonzon and Nam-myoho-rence-kyo are viewed as essential to the Daishonin’s Buddhism, the importance of the high sanctuary, which is really a building, needs some explanation.

The term high sanctuary is an interpretation of a Chinese term which, more literally, means “precept platform” or “ordination platform.” This originally meant a place of religious practice where people accept various ascetic precepts—rules of practice and discipline—which they agree to uphold to achieve their salvation. In the Daishonin’s Buddhism, however, there is no need to keep such austere precepts, because practicing with sincere faith in the Gohonzon is alone equivalent to accepting all the Buddhist precepts. All we need to

Title: The Untold History Of The Fuji School

Subject: Living Buddhism 07/99 v.99 n.7 p.39 LB9907p39

Author:

Keywords: Chap. Destruction Fuji Grand History Main Priesthood School Temple Untold

attain enlightenment is our faith and practice.

For this reason, wherever people practice the Daishonin's Buddhism with faith in the Gohonzon is generally regarded as the high sanctuary of true Buddhism. But the Daishonin also talks of the high sanctuary with more specificity: "When the sovereign of the nation establishes this Law, the high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching shall be built at Mount Fuji" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1600). So, while the high sanctuary is generally where people practice Buddhism with faith, he also envisioned a very specific place where those committed to propagating the Mystic Law would gather.

It must be noted, however, that the Daishonin does not simply ask his future disciples to build a hall of worship. He makes it clear that the high sanctuary be built "when the sovereign of the nation establishes this Law." In other words, the high sanctuary must be built only as a result of the wide spread of his teaching. "The sovereign of the nation" in our present democratic age essentially means the people. Put simply, the substance of the high sanctuary cannot be limited to a physical structure; it essentially lies in the propagation of the Daishonin's Buddhism. The true meaning of the high sanctuary is to be found in our faith as well as in our efforts to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism. In this sense, it may be said that three most important elements in the Daishonin's Buddhism (i.e., "the Three Great Secret Laws") are the Gohonzon, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and the wide spread of Buddhism through individual believers' sincere faith. The Daishonin established the first two himself, and he entrusted his future disciples to accomplish the last, which gives meaning to the first two.

Nikken's demolition of the Grand Main Temple, in a sense, helped SGI members remind themselves of the real significance of the high sanctuary and reaffirm their commitment to propagate the Daishonin's Buddhism. As long as SGI members continue to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism, the Three Great Secret Laws remain intact, even though the Grand Main Temple no longer stands. However, if efforts for propagation cease, then the Daishonin's Buddhism becomes incomplete, no matter how magnificent an edifice may be built.

Thus, Nikken's destruction of the Grand Main Temple, has encouraged SGI members to internalize the meaning of the high sanctuary. And to fully realize the inner implications and significance of any event or phenomena is the proper spirit of Buddhism.

### **(3) EPILOGUE: LEARNING FROM THE PAST**

This present series traced the history of the Fuji School, a denomination of Nichiren Buddhism, founded by Nikko at Taiseki-ji toward the end of the thirteenth century. A review of the school's history helps to shed light on the current condition of Nichiren Shoshu, and the current priesthood's assertions—especially, its dogma concerning the high priest's infallibility.

Like any other religious movement, there are light and dark sides in the Fuji School's seven-century history. The school has seen some exemplary priests who earnestly strove to extol, protect and spread Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. For example, Nikko, the school's founder, upheld his mentor's intent against the corruption and distortions perpetrated by the five senior priests whom the Daishonin designated to help Nikko lead the Buddhist order after his death. By taking an uncompromising stance toward the five senior priests, Nikko proved the validity of the transmission of Buddhism that he had received from the Daishonin. The legitimacy of Nikko, in other words, rested entirely upon his faith and understanding, which he demonstrated in his practice and efforts of

Title: The Untold History Of The Fuji School

Subject: Living Buddhism 07/99 v.99 n.7 p.39 LB9907p39

Author:

Keywords: Chap. Destruction Fuji Grand History Main Priesthood School Temple Untold

propagation not only when the Daishonin was alive, but also after his death. The transmission of Buddhism from the Daishonin to Nikko, in this sense, serves as a prototype for present practitioners as to how they may inherit the Daishonin's Buddhism and practice it.

Another exemplary priest in the history of the Fuji School is Nichikan, the twenty-sixth high priest. Like Nikko, Nichikan proved himself as the Daishonin's true disciple by challenging the erroneous teachings that his predecessors had brought into the school. Just as Nikko strictly pointed out the errors of the five senior priests in worshipping Shakyamuni's statue as an object of devotion, Nichikan refuted the same errors committed by his predecessors and reestablished the Gohonzon as the correct and only object of devotion in the Daishonin's Buddhism. Without Nikko and Nichikan, it would be hard to imagine that anyone today could have a correct understanding or practice of the Daishonin's Buddhism. Their legacies serve as a guide to our practice.

Whereas some high priests at Taiseki-ji, such as Nikko and Nichikan, exemplified the Daishonin's Buddhism through their actions and intent, their number is unfortunately few. As we have learned from the Fuji School's recorded history, many high priests distorted the Daishonin's Buddhism while asserting the authority they had inherited. Their actions betrayed the Daishonin's intent. For example, in the fourteenth century, Taiseki-ji was divided into two camps that for more than 70 years fought bitterly over claims to the head temple property. During the seventeenth century, several high priests accepted and promoted erroneous traditions from other Nichiren schools, such as the worship of Shakyamuni's statue. As recently as the twentieth century, high-ranking priests contended for the seat of high priest through a fraudulent election process. As this series has highlighted using the school's own records, such examples of corruption and error among leading priests abound in the history of the Fuji School. But what value is there in reviewing these errors of the past?

First, through understanding the history of the Daishonin's Buddhism, we can view the present condition of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood in context. The current problems within the priesthood that have resulted in its attacks on the SGI did not begin suddenly 1990 when Nikken hatched his plan to do away with the lay organization. Nikken was able to do what he did because conditions that were conducive to his plan already existed within the priesthood. The majority of priests held that they were inherently superior to lay believers, with many feeling threatened by and jealous toward the large and growing lay Buddhist movement. Viewing the high priest as an absolute authority was a quite familiar concept. For many priests, direct control over believers took priority over the spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism. Temple services and rituals, such as conducting funerals and the sale of memorial tablets, had long been viewed primarily as sources of income. These conditions made the idea of protecting their authority, and the enterprise that stemmed from that authority, a cause that most priests could support. The perceived threat to that authority in the minds of many priests was a lay organization that was enthusiastically supported and appreciated by the believers. Put another way, the unprecedented development of the SGI stemming from the pure faith and effort of the laity juxtaposed with the priesthood's seven-century-old pattern of authoritarianism and corruption made the current situation a historical certainty. If it weren't Nikken, someone else within the priesthood would have taken advantage of tensions that arose between the two groups. By understanding more about the school's history, we can gain insight into the causes of the current problems, causes that are rooted centuries in the past. With knowledge of the past, we can gain a broader perspective on the present—the reason why things are the way they are, and insight as to what should be done.

Title: The Untold History Of The Fuji School

Subject: Living Buddhism 07/99 v.99 n.7 p.39 LB9907p39

Author:

Keywords: Chap. Destruction Fuji Grand History Main Priesthood School Temple Untold

A second benefit of learning about the Fuji School's past is our realization that at the core of the priesthood's corruption lie human weaknesses we are all familiar with: arrogance, jealousy and greed. Cloistered behind the veil of clerical authority for centuries, these delusions became deeply rooted in the collective psyche of the priesthood. This is not a unique situation in the history of religion. Any religious movement can become corrupt and degenerate when its leaders cease to be diligent in combating those human frailties within themselves. In order to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism and ensure its transmission to future generations, therefore, we must not repeat the errors of the priesthood. We are not immune to the potential for rigid authoritarianism and dogmatism simply because ours is a lay movement. With an understanding of the past, we can better guide ourselves and our Buddhist movement into the future.

Finally, by tracking the tortuous path of the Fuji School over the past seven centuries, we can better grasp the significance of the SGI and its mission in a broad historical and global context. Following the deaths of Nikko and Nichimoku in 1333, the true vigor and spirit of the Daishonin's Buddhism became dormant for centuries, with a few sporadic periods of revival, such as that of Nichikan's tenure in the early eighteenth century. The Daishonin's teaching gave rise to many different schools of so-called Nichiren Buddhism. But their tenets and practices stray significantly from the Daishonin's original intent. As we have examined in this series, the same is true of the Fuji School. When Makiguchi and Toda founded the Soka Gakkai in 1930, the Daishonin's Buddhism had been existing in form but not in substance; that is, its practitioners had not been dedicated to its spread for the happiness of all people. And until Soka Gakkai members brought the Daishonin's Buddhism to the rest of the world, the Daishonin's promise for the global spread of his teaching had rung hollow. It was the Soka Gakkai, in fact, that revived the Daishonin's Buddhism after almost seven centuries of dormancy. Through the efforts of SGI members, the Daishonin's teaching has taken on concrete meaning in the lives of more than ten million people throughout the world.

It is no coincidence that this unprecedented spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism by lay believers rattled the priesthood's authoritarianism at its core, bringing about a religious oppression of a unprecedented magnitude. Our understanding of what has transpired in the years since the time of Nichiren Daishonin, Nikko and Nichimoku, makes us aware that we are practicing the Daishonin's Buddhism at a most important juncture in its history. That is, our understanding and practice of the Daishonin's teaching will determine its further development or decline from this point on.

We stand at the threshold of an entirely new stage of development. In light of this realization, the so-called temple issue no longer pertains merely to the priesthood's misconduct. It is really about the unprecedented renewal of Nichiren Buddhism—the true renewal of Buddhism and humanism—into the new millennium. As such the term “temple issue” is a bit limiting.

We can make sense of history when we understand how it affects us today, when we understand that the past is part of our present lives. It may be difficult to say what effect the event that took place at Taiseki-ji in 1482, for example, has on our practice today. In this year, the ninth high priest, Nichiu, transferred the office of high priest to a 13-year old boy. Following the appointment, Nikkyo, one of the young high priest's strong supporters, began a series of writings extolling the lineage and authority of the high priest. Nikkyo may be considered one of the key authors of the dogma of the high priest's absolute authority.

Needless to say, understanding the history of the Fuji School does not provide us with everything we need to grasp the circumstances surrounding the issues between the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood and the Soka Gakkai. More than ever, we must return to a thorough study

Title: The Untold History Of The Fuji School

Subject: Living Buddhism 07/99 v.99 n.7 p.39 LB9907p39

Author:

Keywords: Chap. Destruction Fuji Grand History Main Priesthood School Temple Untold

of the basics of the Daishonin's Buddhism and deepen our understanding of what it means to practice his teaching today. Knowing our past, however, helps us realize the importance of taking such action. □

*The end of the series*

**ON THE GRAND MAIN TEMPLE:**  
*Comments, past and present*

**1) NITTATSU (66TH HIGH PRIEST):**

“When the Daishonin was alive, because everyone who came to Minobu was a believer, everyone there was able to directly worship the Dai-Gohonzon. Therefore, it is proper that today the Dai-Gohonzon of the high sanctuary be enshrined in the Grand Main Temple so that people may come there to worship it.” (From the first meeting of the Grand Main Temple Construction Committee, February 16, 1965)

“I, Nittatsu, proclaim that the Dai-Gohonzon of the high sanctuary of true Buddhism will be enshrined in this Grand Main Temple in the hope that all people of the Latter Day of the Law will believe in it and there find the source of attaining Buddhahood in their present form.” (“Admonition,” September 12, 1965)

“President Ikeda is a great leader of propagation for the achievement of kosen-rufu. Nichiren Daishonin willed that his disciples ‘establish the high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching at [the foot of] Mount Fuji.’ Following this directive of the Daishonin, President Ikeda has pledged to construct the Grand Main Temple where the Dai-Gohonzon of the high sanctuary is to be enshrined.” (From a speech at the Soka Gakkai Headquarters leaders meeting, October 17, 1965)

“We shall soon conduct at the head temple of Nichiren Shoshu the groundbreaking ceremony to commence the construction of the Grand Main Temple, which by all rights should be called the actual high sanctuary of true Buddhism.” (From *The Daibyakurenge*, the Soka Gakkai study journal, January 1967)

“The time has now arrived, and with Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations, as the initiator, construction of the Grand Main Temple, which is in fact the high sanctuary of true Buddhism, is now under way.” (From Nittatsu's words at the annual scroll-airing ceremony at the head temple, April 6, 1969)

“Needless to say, the Grand Main Temple is the sacred hall, where the Dai-Gohonzon of the high sanctuary of true Buddhism will be enshrined, and which will be attended by Bonten, Taishaku and the other gods.... The inscription [on the cornerstone] reads: ‘This Grand Main Temple is the actual great high sanctuary of the essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra, in which the Dai-Gohonzon bestowed upon all humanity shall be enshrined.’ I must say that this is profoundly significant.” (From the cornerstone-laying ceremony, October 12, 1969)

“At this time, I, Nittatsu, hereby clarify the significance of the Grand Main Temple for

everyone within and outside the Nichiren Shoshu community, thereby leaving proof of its significance for future generations. The Grand Main Temple is the actual high sanctuary of true Buddhism of this time, which holds the significance described in the 'Minobu Transfer Document' and 'On the Three Great Secret Laws.' In other words, the Grand Main Temple is the supreme edifice that shall be the high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching at the time of kosen-rufu." ("Admonition," April 28, 1972)

## **2) NIKKEN THEN (BEFORE 1991):**

"Some 680 years after the founder Nichiren Daishonin fulfilled the purpose of his advent, the present high priest Nittatsu, and Mr. Ikeda, head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations and leader in the protection of Buddhism, are for the first time about to shed great light upon the Daishonin's mandate to achieve the kosen-rufu of the True Law and build the actual high sanctuary." (From *Dai-Nichiren*, November 1967)

"Naturally, at the time of kosen-rufu the Grand Main Temple of Taiseki-ji will become the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document.'" (From chief priests guidance meeting, March 26, 1972)

"I think the expression in the admonition [Nittatsu's 'Admonition' of April 28, 1972], [the Grand Main temple] which holds the significance described in the 'Minobu Transfer Document' and 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' is very important. We can interpret this part of the admonition as indicating [High Priest Nittatsu's] desire that the 'Grand Main Temple shall be the actual high sanctuary of the Temple of the True Teaching at the time of kosen-rufu.' This is so indicated in the admonition." (At the Fuji Seminary, June 18, 1974)

"It is clear from the admonition of April 28, 1972, that the current Grand Main Temple will become the main hall of the Temple of the True Teaching at that time. We have to say that the high sanctuary mandated by Nichiren Daishonin will thus come to fruition." ("Postscript" to the second edition of *On the High Sanctuary*, December 1974)

"It is indeed presumptuous of me to try to fathom the high priest's thoughts, but when I think about why he has decided on building the Grand Main Temple, which will become the main hall of the Temple of the True Teaching at the time of kosen-rufu, it is because the number of Nichiren Shoshu believers amounts to ten million and several hundred thousand." ("Postscript" to the second edition of *On the High Sanctuary*, December 1974)

## **3) NIKKEN NOW (AFTER 1991):**

"Do you believe that the Grand Main Temple truly embodies the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document'? .... It seems no one thinks so. Can I take it to mean that none of you thinks the Grand Main Temple itself embodies the mandate of Nichiren Daishonin? [The audience replies: 'Yes.'] You agree with me." (From the sermon to priests on January 6, 1991)

"Therefore, what High Priest Nittatsu defined and determined was that, in short, the Grand Main Temple does not embody the high sanctuary mandated in 'On the Three

Great Secret Laws' and the 'Minobu Transfer Document' per se." (From the sermon on January 10, 1991)

"In order to completely refute the great slander of Ikeda and others, it is now most appropriate to transfer the Dai-Gohonzon out of the Grand Main Temple as quickly as possible." (From the sermon on April 5, 1998)

In the same speech on April 5, 1998, Nikken referred to the Grand Main Temple as "a useless ruin of gigantic stature" and stated that he would take "measures appropriate to the current circumstances," indicating his plan to demolish the structure.