

**FORMER HOKEKKO CHAIRPERSON'S WIFE  
URGES HIGH PRIEST TO RESIGN  
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The wife of the former chairman of the Hokkeko Federation has called for High Priest Nikken Abe's resignation. Prompted by the high priest's destruction of the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo), Hisako Hirasawa, wife of the late Masukichi Hirasawa, wrote a letter to the high priest on April 22 to urge him to resign immediately. (The Hokkeko Federation is the umbrella organization of the groups that belong directly to their individual local temples of Nichiren Shoshu.)

Mrs. Hirasawa's request for the earliest resignation of the high priest, which also serves as her wake-up call to all temple members, is significant as it can be viewed to represent the voices of the many temple members in Japan.

Mrs. Hirasawa starts her letter by lamenting the plight of the head temple under the leadership of High Priest Nikken. She says: "High Priest Nikken, the beautiful settings surrounding the head temple of Nichiren Shoshu have been in constant decline in recent years as you have destroyed many important buildings on its grounds, one after another. Even the Grand Main Temple, which had been highly regarded by the world's people, was brought to ruin in dark smoke and ashes."

Mrs. Hirasawa asserts that the high priest is solely responsible for the decay of the sect. She then points out the significance of Judge Fumio Shimoda of the Tokyo District Court clearly stating in the recent ruling in the Seattle Incident trial that High Priest Nikken's remarks can't be trusted.

While she refers to the reasons why High Priest Nikken's legitimacy as a Nichiren Shoshu high priest is doubtful, she delves into another deep-seated cause that propelled him to run counter to the former high priest, Nittatsu, and the SGI. She states: "It seems to me that you, High Priest Nikken, deeply resented the fact that High Priest Nittatsu did not nominate you as next high priest before he died. Your grudge against him prompted you to destroy the hallmarks of his accomplishments, one after another. Your dark emotions coerced you to destroy even the Grand Main Temple."

She then states: "I most reverently and wholeheartedly empathize with the following people in conjunction with the destruction of the Grand Main Temple: First, how would Nichiren Shoshu High Priest Nittatsu feel about its destruction? How would all the priests and their family members who participated in making offerings for the construction of the Grand Main Temple feel about its destruction?

"Second, how would Daisaku Ikeda, who was then the head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay societies, who initiated the construction of the Grand Main Temple feel? How would the 8 million believers who made offerings for its construction feel?

"Third, how would Mr. Kimio Yokoyama, who put his life into designing and constructing it to reply to the high expectations that were placed upon him by all those people, feel now?"

"Foolish as I am, I can never forget the sight of its destruction I saw it on video. I can't resist crying, due to the sorrow I feel each time I recall the sight of the Grand Main Temple falling."

Touching upon the authoritarianism that crept into Nichiren Shoshu after High Priest Nikken took office in 1979, Mrs. Hirasawa cites this example: "In the days of the former

high priest, Nittatsu, it was indeed a honorable thing to take a position in the Hokkeko, since it was based upon an appointment system. However, these days when we are assigned to a new position, the certificate we receive says ‘you are now ordered to fulfill the responsibility of...’ The wording in the certificate sounds like a lord giving an order to his subject.”

She then describes how she feels toward the head temple: “When High Priest Nittatsu was in office, it was a great pleasure to visit the head temple. But nowadays, we don’t want to go to Taiseki-ji. I don’t feel like paying a visit to the head temple, where acolytes don’t smile at all. They always look nervous and give me the impression that they are scared of something.”

Mrs. Hirasawa then calls to each temple member as follows. “The current chairperson of the Hokkeko Federation shows up occasionally at Kuon-ji temple of Mount Minobu. Dear Hokkeko members, don’t you care that the correct faith of Nichiren Shoshu is being lost? ... I urge Hokkeko members to open their eyes and judge things correctly with the sharpened eyes of faith.... Blessed with an extended life span thanks to faith in Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, I am still alive at the age of 80. All Hokkeko members, please take what I wrote here as a sincere old believer’s heartfelt cry.”

Mrs. Hirasawa ends her remonstrations with High Priest Nikken saying that “I am ready to sacrifice myself for Buddhism any time. With this resolution, I wrote this to refute the slander of High Priest Nikken.”