

**Know the Difference: A Control Issue**  
**By CRAIG GREEN & AND JEFF FARR**  
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Why did the priests have this underlying prejudice against the SGI? It stands to reason that the SGI members must have done something to incur such contempt. In fact, they did — they dared to propagate the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin.

Nichiren Shoshu was a small order of priests until the Soka Gakkai initiated the spread of the Daishonin's teachings, encouraging the burgeoning membership to help suffering friends. No one can deny that little propagation was done before the Soka Gakkai was formed; and that from 1930 up to the split in 1990, the SGI members did the lion's share of propagation, introducing more than 10 million people worldwide.

The organization's growth, especially in the postwar years, changed everything — men who had been priests of a dormant sect found themselves stewarding millions of people. For many of the priests, it became a question of how to control the people.

A case in point: the Soka Gakkai's donation of temples to the priesthood. From 1930 to 1970, the Soka Gakkai donated more than 320. Not until the 1970s did the Soka Gakkai begin to focus on building its own community centers. The priesthood became anxious over this, seeing it as a move toward the Soka Gakkai's independence. This concern turned to something darker when the priesthood started publicly attacking the Soka Gakkai in the late 1970s.

The sheer growth of the organization and its proactive efforts for world peace meant that reforms in the priesthood would be necessary. It was a loss of control the priests were not willing to accept.

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