

april 28th, 2013

Statement by Sokun Tsushimoto Roshi

After not associating with Mr. Ritskes for a long time, the recent revelations came as a “bolt from the blue.” Then reading his recent responses, frankly speaking I can’t help but feel deeply saddened and angered.

Although the problem may seem complex, it is not. Rather, the basic issue is very simple and straightforward. It comes down to the question I first asked Mr. Ritskes, namely: “Why did you publicly state that I gave you formal authorization as a Zen master in 1999?” Why doesn’t Mr. Ritskes directly answer this simple question? Does he feel there is no need to answer? Or could it be that he cannot answer?

Instead of directly answering, he avoids the real issue and insists on differing interpretations about me giving him a *Rakusu* and, according to him, the title *Dai-Osho*. If Mr. Ritskes had the experience or the qualifications and was worthy of being authorized as a Zen master (*Rōshi*), he would not need to try to twist and turn his way out by giving forced and far-fetched interpretations concerning the plain *Rakusu*, nor would there be a question of being called *Dai-Osho*. However outlandish these interpretations of his are, they cannot turn *Rakusu* and *Dai-Osho* into formal authorization (*Inka Shōmei*) as a Zen master!

I clearly state: “Mr. Ritskes has never been authorized as a Zen master, nor has he met any of the requirements for doing so.” However much he may try and turn his way out or go on about “differing interpretations,” it won’t work. These are the facts, clear, obvious, and undeniable.

Mr. Ritskes has publicly announced that now he is ‘breaking with his Japanese master’, ‘breaking with the Japanese line’ and will continue as an ‘independent modern new Dutch shoot’. He has offered criticisms of traditional Zen. He changed his recent itinerary in Japan and brought his training gear to Tenryūji. We can’t help laughing at this display – because Mr. Ritskes has never had any formal connection to break. While Mr. Ritskes seeks to appear as someone with deep connections to Tenryūji, in fact there is hardly anyone who has ever heard of him there. We have had enough of his foolish antics and his boasting.

To repeat, my question to Mr. Ritskes is nothing difficult: “Why did you publicly state that I gave you formal authorization as a Zen master in 1999?” A child could answer. All the subsequent problems arise from Mr. Ritskes’s inability to answer. Lies cannot give birth to anything real. I am ready and waiting for a sincere and honest answer.

To everyone, I humbly ask you to directly confront the essential problem with a clear eye, and trust you will be guided by wise discernment. May this problem be solved as quickly as possible.

Gasshō (Palms pressed together),

Sokun Tsushimoto