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Shin’ichi Yamamoto offers three practical guidelines to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the young men’s division’s formation: 1) ‘establishing a strong foundation of faith, practice, and study’; 2) ‘having lofty ideals while being grounded in reality’; and 3) ‘forging unity among members.’

The dialogue between Shin’ichi Yamamoto and the Suiko-kai members was a true life-to-life exchange. At the end of the session, Shin’ichi added: “Those of you who haven’t received a message in calligraphy from me, please leave your names with the young men’s division leader. I want to present this to each of you as encouragement to commemorate the fresh start we are making here together. I am depending on you. Let’s work in unity to spread the Daishonin’s teachings around the world!”

Night fell on Amagi as Shin’ichi continued giving inspiration to the Suiko-kai members.

The young women’s division Kayo-kai training session was held on July 7, the following day. Once again, Shin’ichi answered the members’ questions, pouring all of his energy into encouraging them. He sensed that an age in which women would come to play a central role was near at hand, and that the very future of kosen-rufu hinged upon how many capable and wise women leaders the Soka Gakkai could nurture in the meantime. These training sessions for the Suiko-kai and the Kayo-kai were perfect opportunities to further strengthen the faith of the young men’s and young women’s division members, his youthful successors.

Shin’ichi’s mind was constantly occupied with the thought of how to educate and cultivate young people. Many leaders in society begin to raise successors only after having achieved success and recognition themselves. In the endeavor to create lasting peace through broadly spreading the Daishonin’s teachings, however, that would be too late. That is because it is a task requiring countless capable individuals whose stage of activities is varied and widespread. Aware of the possibility that he might die young, Shin’ichi felt an urgent need to foster a great many successors who could carry on with his vision and resolve, boldly assuming leadership in his stead.

He began to draw up new guidelines to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the young men’s division on July 11, in preparation for the beginning of the “essential phase” of the Soka Gak-kai’s development. It was titled “Youth, Become World Leaders!”

Shin’ichi’s pen raced: “The Soka Gakkai youth division will be the leaders of the new century. Mr. Toda’s essay ‘Youth, Be Patriotic!’ was a call to the youth to become leaders of not only Japan, but of the world. Mr. Toda clearly outlined his guidelines for the youth division in his two essays ‘Precepts for Youth’ and ‘Youth, Be Patriotic!’ These should therefore be the principles of action practiced by the youth division.

“The youth division of the new age must possess an even greater international outlook and be active on all fronts. They must develop into talented, first-rate leaders in their chosen fields of endeavor.”

In his guidelines, Shin’ichi also established for the youth division the goals of contributing to the welfare of all humanity and achieving world peace.

Shin’ichi went on to identify the source of the impasse facing humankind as a lack of

vision on the part of world leaders. New leaders with new guiding principles were needed, he insisted. “Now is the time,” he wrote, “for us to embrace as youthful reformers the highest ideals of leadership and show the way to realizing world peace.”

He then offered the youth three practical guidelines: first, “establish a strong foundation of faith, practice, and study of the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, the original Buddha”; second, “have lofty ideals while being grounded in reality, always advancing steadily, one step at a time”; and third, “forge unity among members.”

Expressing great hopes for his youthful successors, Shin’ichi elaborated on the second point: “Those who aspire to become world leaders should first consistently be winners at their places of work and in other areas of daily life. We build the foundation of our lives during our youth. That foundation must be deep and solid. I hope that you all become dignified, generous and courteous young people.”

Concerning the third point, he emphasized that they “should never forget that unity among our youth division members constitutes an eternal bond and a lifeline in the movement to lead people to happiness.”

Shin’ichi’s pen continued to move swiftly across the page: “The growth of the youth division is the progress of the Soka Gakkai. The progress of the Soka Gakkai is the progress of Japan. And we should be confident that our development is directly related to the creation of lasting peace.”

In conclusion he wrote: “The Daishonin states in ‘Actions of the Votary of the Lotus Sutra’: ‘Now, at the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law, I, Nichiren, am the first to embark on propagating, throughout Jambudvipa, the five characters of Myoho-enge-kyo, which are the heart of the Lotus Sutra and the eye of all Buddhas.... My disciples, form your ranks and follow me, and surpass even Mahakashyapa or Ananda, T’ien-t’ai or Dengyo!’ (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 765). Jambudvipa is another name for the entire world. Let us advance courageously under a banner of global citizenship that allows no sacrifice or destruction, committed to achieving the worldwide spread of Buddhism for the sake of the happiness and peace of all people.”

His passion for the growth of the youth surging within, Shin’ichi completed his article in one sitting. It would be published as an editorial in the August issue of the *Dai-byakurenge*, the Soka Gakkai’s study journal, and would serve as a spiritual appeal to the youth to open their eyes wide to the world, and to inspire in them an awareness and sense of responsibility as its future leaders.

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the
novel as Shin’ichi Yamamoto.
The events take place in 1963.