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Shin'ichi Yamamoto encourages a student division member: 'You say you want to protect me, but protecting the organization is protecting me. Protecting one, 10, a hundred or a thousand Soka Gakkai members is protecting me. This is because I have made the Soka Gakkai the sole purpose of my life.'

Shin'ichi Yamamoto offered the following guidance to medical student Naomi Takaoka: "You must not isolate yourself from others. You will only become deadlocked if you do. The Soka Gakkai is an organization that provides us with inspiration and encouragement, enabling us to open our hearts. You need to have the courage to engage yourself fully in Soka Gakkai activities and to work for the well-being of others.

"One day you will be a doctor, a profession in which the spirit of dedication to others, the spirit of a bodhisattva, is most important. Without it, no matter how skilled you become, selfishness and egoism will prevent you from making a real contribution to society."

Another time, a Kyoto University student attending one of Shin'ichi's lectures said: "To be honest, I do not like the Soka Gakkai as an organization. However, through attending your lectures, I have developed a desire to grow into the kind of person who can protect you and work together with you for the happiness of others."

Shin'ichi responded immediately: "You say you want to protect me, but protecting the organization is protecting me. Protecting one, 10, a hundred or a thousand Soka Gakkai members is protecting me. This is because I have made the Soka Gakkai the sole purpose of my life.

"Our aim of kosen-rufu can be called a bloodless revolution, but I am prepared to give my life for the sake of our members, for Buddhism and for society. Without such courage and determination, I could not lead our movement. I do not exist apart from the Soka Gakkai or its members. If you have even the slightest desire to protect me, I hope you will take a place at the front lines of this organization and work there to protect all our members."

Throughout these lectures to Kyoto University students on Nichiren Daishonin's "One Hundred and Six Comparisons," Shin'ichi paid close attention to the life-state of each student and gave guidance accordingly, thinking hard about what he should say and what he wanted to impress upon them. He did this for their lives, for their futures. In this way, he was teaching them the essential path that human beings should follow. It is through such diligent, painstaking and wholehearted effort that others are able to grow.

In fact, almost all of the participants in this lecture series showed great development and began to shine as "jeweled swords" in the endeavor to achieve world peace based on the widespread propagation of the Daishonin's teachings. They went on to realize great achievements and make important contributions to society in their various capacities as leaders of the Soka Gakkai, as doctors, as scholars, as members of parliament, as well as in many other fields.

Shin'ichi devoted his life to educating youth. Life is limited. Only so much can be accomplished in one lifetime. That is why the fostering of able successors who would carry on his work in the next generation was indispensable for achieving kosen-rufu.

Many members of the Soka Gakkai who saw the headline on the front page of the July 25 *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper, were astonished. There, in big letters, were the words "High Priest Issues Directive to All Priests and Hokkeko Members." What was the reason for this sudden directive from the high priest, they wondered? Two subheads for the article read: "Priests and Laity to Join Forces for Kosen-rufu." "With the Unity of 'Many in Body, One in Mind.'"

The newspaper's introduction to the directive began: "High Priest Nittatsu has issued a directive to all Nichiren Shoshu teachers [priests with the rank of teacher], general priests and Hokkeko members. The high priest has expressed his hopes that at this time of rapid development within Nichiren Shoshu and when the Soka Gakkai has initiated a fresh and brilliant advance toward the future, the priests and laity will further unite in purpose in order to spread the teachings of the school throughout both Japan and the world."

This introduction provided no clue as to why the high priest had issued a directive at this time. Only by reading the document itself could one get a sense, however vague, of what might be behind it.

There were actually two directives, one to all teachers and general priests, and another to Hokkeko members. The actual wording of both was very abstruse and literary, but the one to priests essentially said: "The Great Pure Law of the Daishonin, our founder and the sun of wisdom of the Latter Day of the Law, is flowing ceaselessly out into the world like a rising tide, and our school continues to flourish. For the sake of the Law and of Nichiren Shoshu, this is truly wonderful.

"The source of this tremendous development is the magnificent power of the Dai-Gohonzon, to which all people of the Latter Day of the Law should devote themselves and base their lives upon. At the same time, it is also due to the dedication of the Soka Gakkai members, who, under the leadership of their president, have united in the endeavor to spread the teachings of the Daishonin and realize his wish of worldwide kosen-rufu as quickly as possible.

"Their wholehearted efforts deserve our recognition. Already, some one-tenth of the households in Japan have discarded their faith in erroneous teachings and embraced the True Law, and are basking in the light of the Daishonin's great desire to save all humanity. In addition, the sincere donations of Soka Gakkai members have built the Grand Lecture Hall of True Buddhism as well as the resplendent Grand Reception Hall, which is now near completion. Furthermore, the number of temples nationwide that have been built and donated by the Soka Gakkai has already reached 80."

The directive highly praised the hard work of Soka Gakkai members to realize the widespread propagation of the Daishonin's teachings.

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