

# From Korea With Love



by John D. Marks

The two most widely seen faces in American cities today may well belong to the 15-year-old Indian guru named Maharaj Ji and a 53-year-old Korean prophet named Sun Myung Moon. Followers of these two men energetically force leaflets on innocent pedestrians and hang their leader's picture in fierce competition for poster space (and converts). Their success in littering the urban landscape may herald a new form of religious pollution.

The Indian, who calls himself the "Perfect Master," seems to have reached a plateau of sorts in November, when he failed to fill even half of the Houston Astrodome for a declaration of "a thousand years of peace." In any case, the faith he preaches—despite its appeal to former radical activists like Rennie Davis—is essentially spiritual, not political, in nature. His movement may be diverting ener-

gy from progressive causes, as *Ramparts* magazine has charged, but even the most bitter critics do not contend that the guru is interested in influencing American foreign policy or supporting the President on Watergate.

Directly in contrast, Sun Myung Moon interweaves politics and religion in the best tradition of the medieval popes. His Unification Church operates a vast network of affiliate organizations in over 40 countries, under the distinctly temporal banner of the International Federation for Victory over Communism. With the formidable task of selling a new messiah to the world, the Moonies (or "the Family" as they call themselves) are extremely media-conscious. Perhaps for this reason the American branch of the Victory over Communism effort has taken on the less strident title of the Freedom Leadership Foundation (FLF).

Political activities in this country are not nearly as developed as those in

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South Korea, where Moon operates a training school to which the government annually sends hundreds of thousands of civil servants, local officials, and military men for a course in militant anti-communism. Even as other Korean religious leaders have turned increasingly against President Park Chung Hee's authoritarian rule, Moon has stayed an enthusiastic backer of the regime. Moon's avowed interest is in fighting communism, not preserving democratic niceties, and, as FLF Secretary General Gary Jarmin asserts, "Even if Park got more dictatorial, we would support him."

Jarmin is a 24-year-old ideologue who has the earnest, well-scrubbed, closely cropped look that I learned to expect in meeting Moonies. He would like to recreate in the United States—a *la* General Edwin Walker—the kind of indoctrination system that Moon runs in Korea. "I disagree with our military," says Jarmin. "They teach our GIs how to kill but don't give them enough ideological training in the nature of communism."

Before Secretary General Jarmin is brushed off as a youthful extremist, it should be noted that by Moonie standards he is nearly middle-aged. The movement's American president, Neil Salonen, is only 28, and virtually all of the sect's 2,000 "core" members are in their early to mid-twenties.

Potential converts come to the sect largely from the ranks of disaffected young people, and there is no shortage of those. They exist all over the country—chafing under an unhappy lifestyle and looking for meaningful purpose in life. Whether they feel let down by their parents' generation, by organized religion, by conventional or radical politics, by the counterculture, or whatever, a messianic religion like Sun Myung Moon's offers something to believe in—at a time when credible institutions are in short supply. Older persons may share the same doubts, but they tend to be less willing to open themselves up to a radical new set of beliefs.

So far, at least, only the young

have been willing to make the full-time commitment that the sect demands and move into the communal living centers where the Family lives in all 50 states. Being a Moonie is not easy: forbidden in practice, if not by formal rule, are smoking, alcohol, and drugs. Absolutely taboo is premarital sex, which Moon rails against as "fornication." Even marriage between believers is a difficult proposition, since new converts are generally expected to have been in the sect for three years and to have achieved a high state of spiritual "perfection" before they wed.

For what does the Family make these sacrifices? Nothing short of "the kingdom of heaven on earth," as promised to it by its leader, who claims to have found the way through a series of revelations he received from Jesus Christ between his sixteenth and twenty-sixth birthdays. The sect's bible, called *Divine Principle*, is the fruit of these "revelations," and it tells how God's original plans for a perfect world fell apart when the archangel Lucifer (Satan) entered the Garden of Eden, seduced Eve, and thus caused the "spiritual fall of mankind." With the forces of the devil on the ascendancy, Moon doctrine teaches, God tried to recoup by sending Jesus, "the second Adam," to earth to marry, have "perfect" children, and kick off the messianic age. But Satan won again, and, contrary to God's intentions, Jesus was crucified. Now, the new messiah has come to "fulfill" the promise of the Old and New Testaments.

As for the identity of that messiah, *Divine Principle* does not give his name, except to say that he was born in Korea, "the new Israel," in the years after World War I. Ask a believer if Moon (born in 1920) is the one, and there is a standard reply: "Many of us believe that Reverend Moon is the messiah, but we consider this a personal matter." Moon, for his part, is perfectly aware that "many" of his followers regard him as the messiah, and he has apparently never made any

attempt to convince them that this is *not* the case.

*Divine Principle* is more explicit about the reasons for the sect's fierce opposition to communism, giving an analysis strikingly similar to the views of the late John Foster Dulles. In a lecture on the doctrine, Michael Beard, one of their preachers, explains that there are only two major blocs on earth, "the Communist and the Free Worlds," that they are locked in a "Cain and Abel-type" conflict, and that communism represents the forces of Satan. The fact that Moon's "revelations" reflect this early Cold War simplicity may be accounted for by the virulent strain of anti-communism to which he was exposed in Korea for over 20 years and also by Moon's own imprisonment by the North Koreans for several years prior to 1950 (just as the *Divine Principle's* reliance on intricate diagrams and concepts like "the law of polarity" to explain all relationships may reflect Moon's training as an electrical engineer).

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### Moon Over Moscow

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For whatever reason, the sect's Freedom Leadership Foundation opposes detente and works to "roll back the Iron Curtain." Secretary General Jarmin explains, "If we're willing to fight to the death to protect ourselves from communism, we should be willing to fight to the death to free other people, whether in Vietnam, Cambodia, or elsewhere." He confides in a conspiratorial voice: "Although we don't proclaim it, we're talking covertly about smuggling our ideology and materials into communist countries."

In its four years of existence, the FLF has started a number of programs which, while not coming anywhere near the ultimate goal—"Victory over Communism"—still are impressive in scope. Its specific target is the Marxist "enemy within" as well as the threat from abroad, and its three main areas of activity are:

1) The World Freedom Institute.

This is the "educational and training arm" of the FLF, and it offers programs, courses, and seminars to train students and other young people "in techniques to overcome Communism in the way it is working hardest in America—ideologically." The group plans an "international training center" in Washington and is already active on over 20 campuses. It worked closely with another Moonie group, the Committee for Responsible Dialogue, which up to a year or two ago attempted to "confront the negativity and falsehood of the radical left" on campus by organizing debates between leftist leaders and conservative spokesmen such as Senator William Brock and Representative Philip Crane. A related group in which the FLF as a whole was a leading participant was the American Youth for a Just Peace, which supported Administration policy in Vietnam and sent delegations of American youths to counterweight (in theory) the work of the anti-war movement.

2) *The Rising Tide*. This is a bi-weekly newspaper in its third year of publication which prints Moon's position on various foreign policy issues, publicizes dissidence in communist countries, and generally puts out news with a rightist slant. (The causes they support are not necessarily rightwing, but their approach to them certainly is. For example, not only does the FLF bumper sticker urge the viewer to "Free Soviet Jewry" but also to "Free Russia from Communism.")

3) Lobbying. According to Jarmin, the FLF is "already spending a lot of time on the Hill trying to influence" congressmen and senators on national security issues. Since the FLF (as well as the Unification Church) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Service's rules, it is forbidden to actually lobby for specific legislation, but Jarmin states it carries on "educational" programs especially for legislative aides. And soon, according to Jarmin, the FLF intends to spin off a separate, new organization which

will carry on direct lobbying and support selected political candidates.

The FLF spends about \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year, not including the labor costs of its eight full-time employees (who receive no salary and who, as "core" members of the Family, live together in their own communal center, with Jarmin serving as their spiritual as well as temporal leader). Jarmin maintains that most of the FLF's funds come from private donations and contributions from the parent Unification Church. He says there are 5,000 FLF members, including the 2,000 hard-core Moonies whose names were automatically inscribed on the organization's rolls when they joined the Unification Church.

Several rank-and-file Family members with whom I talked had no idea that they also belonged to the FLF, and indeed were almost totally ignorant of the movement's political side. In listening to roughly 12 hours of religious lectures at a weekend workshop designed to attract new recruits, I heard no mention of any of the group's political activities. What came across after a weekend's total immersion in the faith was an organization full of sincere people working feverishly to raise the spiritual level of mankind—not a political action group.

When I questioned Jarmin on why the political aspect of the movement was not mentioned, he admitted the omission was no accident: "People who attend the workshops have more concrete ideas about politics than about religion," he said. "We try to avoid politics. If we came on strong about Vietnam, it would chase people away. Our anti-communism is religious, so until we convince people of a belief in God, it is to our disadvantage to politicize."

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### From Anarchy to Apocalypse

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I saw what he meant when I talked to Jeff, a thin, extremely intense young man who earlier had searched for spiritual fulfillment in the leftist

Catholic Worker movement and in a monastery for nine months. A week before I met him, he had attended a two-day Family workshop—his first formal contact with the movement—had liked what he had heard, and "moved right in" to a communal living center. He admits to having been bothered by what he calls the "anarchy" of the Catholic left, and now he enthusiastically embraces the rigid discipline and absolute certainty of his new faith. He had seen the world in an "apocalyptic" state, but *Divine Principle* has convinced him that these "last days" were simply the prelude to the messianic age. Now his spiritual doubts have vanished, although he concedes "at first it hurt my intellectual pride that it was all so simple."

Jeff was long active in the anti-war movement and on one occasion was arrested for protesting outside the Pentagon—while his Marine officer father worked inside. When I spoke to him he was a week into his career with the Family. He asserted he was still a radical but admitted he knew little about the politics of his new religion. In any case, he doubted that the Family is "real conservative" and is sure, for example, that it would have opposed the coup d'etat against the Allende government in Chile. (In fact, the September 24 issue of the *Rising Tide* newspaper extols the "inevitable end" of the Allende presidency.) When pressed about any inconsistency between his vehement opposition to the Vietnam war and Moon's strong support of it, Jeff declared in exasperation, "All I know is that this is my calling."

That Moon's religion comes complete with its own brand of right-wing politics seems to bother only outsiders. Once newcomers are fully converted, they are all-accepting about every aspect of the sect. If Jeff turns out like the others I met, he will be that way after a few more weeks with the Family. Soon, perhaps, he will dismiss questions about Vietnam and South Africa as "irrelevancies," the

way former SDSer Felice Walton did to me. "What is important," she declared, "is *Divine Principle*."

Presumably in keeping with *Divine Principle*, Moon took out an immigrant visa and moved permanently to this country in 1972. Working out of a posh, 22-acre estate in Tarrytown, New York, he apparently intends to use America's potential as the Free World's most powerful and god-blessed nation as his base for establishing the "kingdom of heaven on earth." His effort moved into high gear in October when he launched a 21-city speaking tour, and his followers believe he is now making great progress in winning American hearts and minds.

But Moon's travels have shown him "a troubled land [in] moral and spiritual decline... mortally wounded in spirit and soul by the tragedy of Watergate." Moon says he hesitated to speak out, recognizing he was not an American citizen and waiting for "some great spiritual leader or evangelist [to] rally America around God above the Watergate." But even Billy Graham remained quiet, so on November 30, Moon issued a personal statement on the scandal. Declaring that "God is testing America through the Watergate problem," Moon said:

This nation is God's nation. The office of the President of the United States is, therefore, sacred. God inspires a man and then confirms him as President through the will of the people. . . . At this time in history God has chosen Richard Nixon to be President of the United States of America. Therefore God has the power and authority to dismiss him. Our duty, and this alone, is that we deeply seek God's guidance in this matter and support the office, itself. If God decides to dismiss this choice of His, let us have faith that He will speak.

Dan Fefferman, 25, and a former student and anti-war activist at Berkeley, is director of Moon's National Prayer and Fast for the Watergate crisis. In an interview, Fefferman asserted that while the Family is "not taking any stand on the President's innocence or guilt, we do feel he

should be considered innocent until proven guilty. The attitude of some sectors of the American public and press has been just the opposite." Stating that "Nixon is being made a scapegoat" and that "Watergate is tearing the country apart," Fefferman concluded that the scandal "inhibits the ability of government to move forward on issues such as the Mideast and the energy crisis."

While these words may sound like they were written by Ron Ziegler, Fefferman insisted that the Moonie effort is non-partisan and in support of the presidency, not the man. "We're not taking a political stand," he said, "but we have to recognize that any social action has political overtones." In this spirit, six members of the Family have been regularly "visiting" congressional offices of both parties and asking the legislators to sign a petition in support of Moon's Watergate "forgiveness" statement. "We're tax exempt, but we can lobby about attitudes," Fefferman asserted.

At the end of the year, this effort had been endorsed by four conservative Republican senators (Curtis, Fong, Hansen, and Thurmond) and 28 congressmen (mostly from the Republican right). Additionally, they have launched a seven-day public fasting campaign on the Capitol steps as part of the larger 40-day Prayer and Fast, and have tried without too much apparent success to organize interfaith support in their behalf.

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### And Then the Red Sea Parted

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On December 13, hundreds of Moonies—self-described as "well-dressed and prayerful"—rallied in front of the White House "to lift the spirit of the President," bearing signs reading "SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT" and "GOD LOVES NIXON." Shortly after 11:00 p. m., the President himself appeared to greet the Family. They knelt down when he came near and, according to Fefferman, "Mr. Nixon seemed moved." After a warm exchange of greetings,

the Family joined hands and blocked traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue so the President could return home. Jamie Canton, yet another earnest young man, who bears the title Assistant Director of the Media Team for the Watergate Crisis, describes, somewhat in awe: "We stopped the world for him and he passed between us."

According to Fefferman, Moon took money from his own personal funds to buy the numerous newspaper ads used to spread his Watergate gospel. The Unification Church—tax-exempt organization that it is—has since assumed the media cost, which the sect's 25-year-old financial advisor, William Torrey, says has amounted to \$72,000. Altogether, Torrey estimates that the Church is currently operating on about a \$3-million annual budget, not including the cost of supporting the 2,000 "core" members who must be housed, fed, and clothed—at a conservative estimate of another \$5 million a year.

Where does all this money come from? Well, until recently, Torrey claims the main source of income has been the hawking of decorative candles, followed by the contributions of about 2,500 sympathizers—but not "Family members"—who live and work outside the church.

As incredible as it may seem, in 1972, when a down payment was needed for the \$850,000 estate-head-quarters in Tarrytown, every Family member in the entire country—then about 1,500—dropped all other work and went out to sell candles for 40 days straight. Torrey reports this saturation campaign netted close to \$500,000.

However, as with other sectors of American life, the energy crisis has changed things—by making paraffin for candles scarcer and more expensive—and the Family has now switched from candles to hand-filled terrariums for their principal sales item. These little glass-enclosed rock gardens take a great deal of effort to make, but the 2,000 American Moonies are a ready source of free

labor. Their dedication is such that they work (and study and proselytize) seven days a week, without indulging themselves in what the rest of us call leisure activity.

But even their herculean effort at street peddling has its limits. While financial advisor Torrey claims that this technique, coupled with the contributions from fellow travelers, covered the rapidly expanding budgets of the last few years, he believes the sales now have about saturated the market. Already the Family is planning to move into labor-intensive businesses like house painting and cleaning. Moreover, they have opened a tea house in downtown Washington and hope to expand to other cities.

From the Family's point of view, tea houses are ideal—they make money and they bring customers into a congenial atmosphere where the general pleasantness thrown off by almost all Moonies (or at least the 15 or so I met) is a lure for potential converts. Moreover, the tea houses are an outlet for the ginseng tea which is exported from Korea by a company controlled by none other than Sun Myung Moon.

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### Moon's River of Riches

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While Moon's American operation is largely limited to penny-ante capitalism, in Korea he is a virtual conglomerate holding, besides the tea business, air rifle, pharmaceutical, titanium, and still other companies. His empire is worth well over \$10 million, but Torrey insists that all profits go into the Unification Church and affiliate organizations.

Torrey may well be correct, but there are those who do not think so, especially in the Korean exile community. Lee Jai Hyon, who was a top diplomat in South Korea's Washington embassy until opposition to the Park regime caused him to defect to the U. S. in June, 1973, equates Moon with another Korean messianic leader, Park Tae Sun, who, Lee says, also raised large sums of money from fanatic believers and grew rich from

his business holdings. Lee and his colleagues in the Korean democratic opposition see Moon as an opportunist who has supported the present government in return for personal gain.

The Park Chung Hee regime of course welcomes the backing offered by Moon, but its interest in his movement may well extend into the murky world of espionage. According to both Lee and State Department sources, the Korean government is actively concerned about improving its dictatorial image in this country, and they do not doubt that its intelligence organization, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), has on occasion secretly subsidized ostensibly private organizations for this purpose—just as the American CIA has done for the last 26 years.

The KCIA has in fact grown up in a skewed mirror image of its American big brother. It even suffered its own Bay of Pigs last year when it got caught, after the fact, kidnapping Kim Dae Jung, the losing candidate in the 1971 presidential election, from a Tokyo hotel room and spiriting him to Korea. Not known for its subtlety, the KCIA's harassment of Korean residents in the U.S. became so blatant in 1973 that the State Department ordered an FBI investigation of KCIA activities in this country and complained on at least half a dozen occasions to the Korean government. What is more, the KCIA is involved in virtually every aspect of Korean life, and it would be unusual if its interest did not extend to a burgeoning religious/political movement run by a Korean who supports virtually all of its goals and who is in a position to work and lobby for its government's position on the American political scene.

And Moon would have to be on good terms with the KCIA, or else he would not be permitted to operate his anti-communist school for Korean government employees. As Richard Halloran reported in *The New York Times* on August 20, 1973, one of

KCIA's bureaus "is in charge of internal propaganda and anti-communist indoctrination" in Korea, and Moon would not continue to hold the training franchise if he refused to cooperate.

If there is any intelligence connection between Moon and the Hee regime, it is almost certainly limited to the very top level of the Moon organization and probably involves the organization in lobbying or public relations work for the Korean government—and not intelligence collection.

None of the American Moonies would be likely to know of any intelligence relationship. Their interest in the movement comes from Moon's charismatic appeal and the message of salvation he preaches. For most, his political ideas had little or nothing to do with their conversion. In fact, the rank-and-file Family members do not even seem to know that they belong to a right-wing pressure group, and those who are knowledgeable firmly believe that the movement's politics are completely in line with god-given *Divine Principle*.

It would be wrong to take the Family too seriously as a political movement, but the ease with which its young members have overlooked or accepted the group's political aims may have its importance. We have for some time been in an era of retreat from politics into personal fulfillment and spiritual concerns, somewhat like the 1950s retreat into career. It's attractive for those in retreat to assume that politics will mind itself during their absence, or at least have the courtesy not to come bothering them in their new interests. The standard complaint against movements like Guru Maharaj Ji's is that they distract people from all political concerns. But as Moon's story shows, politics can chase them down and, when they're not looking, put them on the wrong team. When you can't even count on religion to ignore politics, then it is time to pay attention to the political beliefs of the religious. ■

# political book notes

*Public affairs books  
to be published in February*

**The American Food Scandal: Why You Can't Eat Well on What You Earn.** William Robbins. Morrow, \$7.95.

**Armageddon in the Middle East.** Dana Adams Schmidt. John Day, \$8.95. As instant history goes, this account of the 1973 Mideast war by the *Christian Science Monitor's* correspondent is quite solid and respectable. For those who have given up reading about the latest treaty disputes, the book's last section does a fine job of explaining the impasse and the underlying hatred.

**Bertrand Russell's America: Volume 1: 1896-1945.** Barry Feinberg, Ronald Kasrils. Viking, \$12.50.

**The Chicanos: Life and Struggles of the Mexican Minority in the United States.** Gilberto Lopez y Rivas. Monthly Review, \$7.95.

**Citizen Participation and the Urban Policy Process.** Robert L. Cole. Heath/Lexington, \$12.50. While equipped with all the pedantic baggage of a standard doctoral dissertation, this quantitative survey of Midwestern neighborhood participation programs contains some interesting factual insights about the much discussed, but little studied, question

of community control. According to Cole, the results of current decentralization efforts are decidedly mixed. For example, his finding that the participants were clearly unrepresentative of their neighborhoods raises the very real possibility that neighborhood self-government would generate its own unresponsive elite. Although these programs often have few concrete accomplishments, Cole found that they do significantly increase the participants' trust in government. Many armchair observers have taken great pains to distinguish between symbolic participation and real decision-making power. But Cole seems to indicate that the psychic rewards of participation (for the few who took part) are rather similar despite vast differences in the autonomy of the programs he analyzed.

**The History Makers: Leaders and Statesmen of the 20th Century.** Lord Longford, Sir John Wheeler-Bennett, eds. St. Martin's, \$10.95.

**How to Get to the Future Before It Gets to You.** Shepherd Mead. Hawthorn, \$6.95.

**Inquiry into the Human Prospect.** Robert L. Heilbroner. Norton, \$5.95.

**Israeli Ecstasies/Jewish Agonies.** Irving Louis Horowitz. Oxford, \$7.50. This collection of