

An Unforgettable World Day 1974 in New Zealand

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Wellington Unification Church welcomes guests to tea

As time progresses, changes seem to shake this country with increasing rapidity. June has seen Reverend Moon's Unification Church move in leaps and bounds towards uniting the people of New Zealand into an international brotherhood. The climate in this country has fallen to its coldest ever, and widespread flooding has hit most parts of New Zealand. Many houses, cars, shops and entire farms have been destroyed. Several lives have been lost due to the flooding.

However, the spiritual climate in New Zealand is at the other extreme. At the beginning of this month we had our most successful Parliamentary meeting ever.

Minister of Parliament, Gerald O'Brien, invited us to a meeting a week after he had completed a tour of Australia and the Pacific Islands. Near the meeting time we rang Mr. O'Brien to confirm the arrangements and then Graham Dun, Robin Bracefield, and I went to the Parliament House to see him.

We waited for nearly an hour before Mr. O'Brien arrived. He was very pale and weak looking. As he approached us he staggered and slumped against the corridor wall. Graham and Robin grabbed him and helped him into his office. I ordered a cup of coffee while Dr. O'Brien sat down to rest.

With his head in his hands he told us how an old back injury was paralyzing his neck and shoulders. His tour of Australia had been a particularly rigorous one and on several occasions he had to consult doctors.

After he had recovered sufficiently we offered to leave and return at a more convenient time, but he made us stay. He cancelled all telephone calls and shut his door to all his visitors. He said it was enlivening to see such "young, fresh, healthy and hopeful faces." The circumstances obviously were not conducive to any deep discussion about Divine Principle, but perhaps even more important we were able to come to know Mr. O'Brien as a person.

From the beginning our meeting was placed on a very human level. There was none of the pomp and ceremony surrounding the usual Parliamentary meeting. As circumstances would have it, we were able to communicate in a plane free of seniority.

From the deepest corners of his heart Mr. O'Brien spoke of his ideals, his hope for New Zealand, the world, and his own life in relation to his aspirations. Mr. O'Brien has set his sights at the top-world peace.

Often as he spoke about his past -- his achievements and failures -- tears welled in his eyes. "I haven't even told my wife these things; why am I telling you?" he said at one stage.

He reached an emotional peak when he quoted the words of St. Paul: "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three-but the greatest of these is love" (I Cor. 13: 13). He believes and lives as close as he can to these words.

He was recently elected vice-president of the New Zealand Labour Party and is very likely to win the presidency when it is next contested.

As we were leaving, Mr. O'Brien kissed me on both cheeks and said "God bless you." He embraced Graham and Robin and spoke some words of encouragement. He was really moved by our meeting and when presented with a copy of *The Way of the World* was overjoyed to see an article about the wife of the Minister of Education, Mrs. Jill Amos. He was very happy that other government ministers were hearing about Divine Principle. He took the copy to the afternoon's Parliamentary Session to read more fully about the international progress of the Unification Church. When we parted he promised to invite us for another meeting very soon.

World Day 1974 was a day New Zealand will never forget. On World Day four people moved into our Unification center. One new member is a Dutch boy, one a Scottish boy and the other two a married couple.

The married couple, John and Jessie, understood the full meaning of Divine Principle a couple of days before World Day but we hoped that on this day of celebration their hearts could be won and they could move in with us.

Reverend Moon's World Day 1973 talk was read during the evening and it was these words that really won this couple's heart. Both went home that night and began packing their belongings ready to move in. It was so much to talk, sing and laugh about with four new members in our Wellington center.

We spent World Day touring Wellington in our vans, and then went for a trip over some hills and to a farming district outside of the city. It was a really beautiful sunny day for the middle of winter and the scenery was picturesque. The day was full of joy, as we sang in the vans and experienced the beauty of God's creation. It really was a World Day.

Leading up to World Day we all spent several full days talking to people on the street. Many of our contacts came straight from the street to the center. On the Sunday after World Day all the members from other cities returned to their centers by plane. The greatest joy was to see two sisters, Rosie and Robyn, board a Dunedin-bound flight to set up New Zealand's fourth Unification center. Dunedin is in the far south of the South Island and the second largest city in the South, after Christchurch. The city was founded by Scotsmen and still retains a strong Scottish flavor. The name Dunedin means "Eden of the South." Rosie and Robyn are determined to substantiate this name.

Rosie and Robyn met some girls on their way to Dunedin and were offered a rent-free room in a flat very close to the city center. This offer was accepted with all possible gratitude. It meant that the girls could concentrate on finding a permanent center and also speak to people in Dunedin's city center -- the Octagon.

Two days after arriving in the city the two girls found a suitable four-bedroom house, ideal for a center. The process of restoration is now beginning on the house and then they will go full speed ahead for New Zealand's fourth center. Our Heavenly Father has prepared Dunedin well for this occasion.

Also we have organized a permanent four-person mini-mobile team. The team will travel in a van throughout the whole of New Zealand, beginning in Dunedin. We plan to feed more and more members into the team to establish a strong hard working mission team.

But most of our prayers are with Reverend Moon and all our brothers and sisters throughout the world. May we all unite in the love of our Heavenly Father.