

The Unification Church works for Rev. Moon's Madison Square Garden Event

Joy Schmidt [Pople]
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About 600 young members of the Unification Church gathered at Barrytown, New York on August 10 to prepare for an all-out campaign to turn New York upside down -- spiritually.

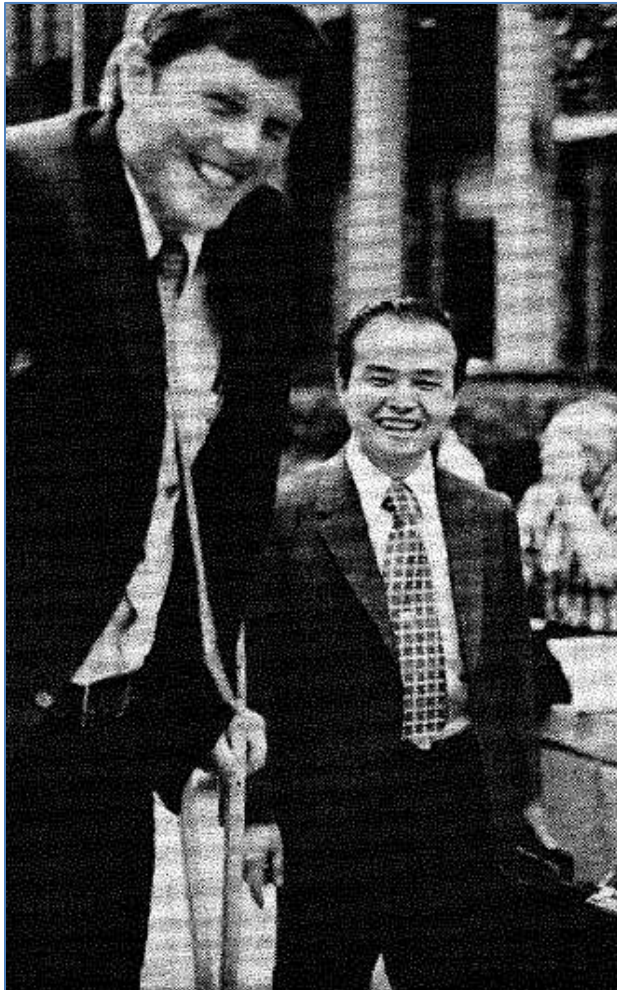
This third New York campaign in the three years of Reverend Moon's public speaking tour of the United States created the greatest spirit of unity and brotherhood, according to participants. The International One World Crusade teams had participated in Reverend Moon's 21-city tour in 1973 and 32-city tour last spring as well as in the Celebration of Life programs last summer.



"We are using the successful pattern we developed during the 32-city campaign," explained Rev. Paul Werner, coordinator of the ten teams. He outlined the organization of the teams. Each team has a primary section to work in (part of Manhattan) and a secondary one (in Queens, Brooklyn, New Jersey, etc.). Everyone rises at 5:45 a.m. and eats breakfast. By 7:00 everyone is downstairs, ready to leave for their areas. Throughout the day they speak to people, persuading them to go to Madison Square Garden on

September 18. Each person receives \$1.00 per day and a bag lunch. They eat supper when they return to the Paris Hotel at 10:00 p.m. and meet by teams and regions for sharing and planning.

After the initial five days of training at Barrytown, the teams went to New York to devote full time to working on the streets and door to door, giving away tickets and persuading people to come to the meeting. Initially, there were four lectures per day at the 475 Fifth Avenue office downtown. Each of the lectures was about an hour and a half long and briefly covered the entire scope of the Divine Principle -- God's ideal, the fall through disobedience, the importance of the family, God's providence in history, and the birth of the Messiah after 1917. After lectures, interested guests stayed for question and answer sessions. "Through the lectures we created a spiritual environment at the Fifth Avenue office," explained Dr. William Bergman, IOWC commander in the New England area. "News people always came during lecture times. They would meet a member on the street and follow him or her back here. Walter Cronkite taped part of my lecture and then interviewed members from eight countries, asking 'Who is Reverend Moon to you? A prophet or the Messiah?'"



At the Paris Hotel for a while all-day study programs were held for interested students. In addition, two three-day workshops at Barrytown drew a couple hundred guests. A number stayed on for more extensive training programs and returned to Manhattan near the end of the campaign to invite people to the Madison Square Garden speech. I met one such team of about eighteen men and women handing out tickets near Times Square. They gathered for a spirited rally of singing and street-speaking.

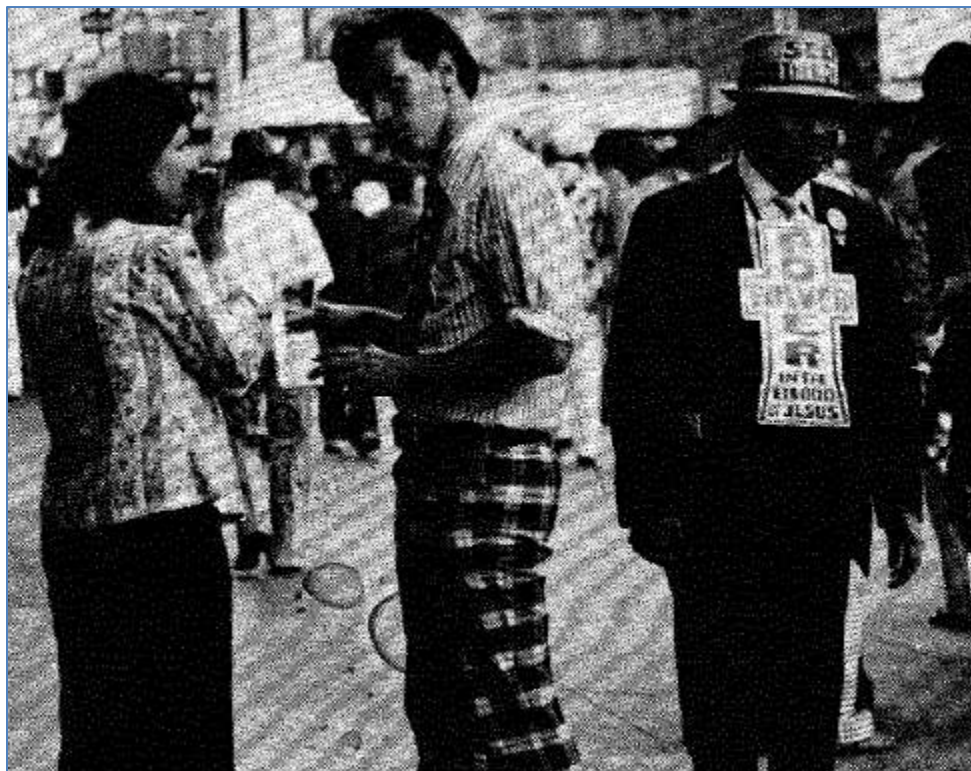
About ten days before the end of the campaign, lectures and workshops were discontinued in order to place total emphasis on distributing tickets and gaining firm commitments to attend the Madison Square Garden program.

Wednesday mornings and Sunday mornings, all the IOWC members, New York Unification Church members, and (in the last week) Unification Church members and friends from around the country, gathered at St. Michael's Cathedral near the Paris Hotel for services. On September 15, Reverend Moon inspired the members to win New Yorkers with their smiles and their love. "These last three days are like the last three steps to the victory," he explained. "God has been looking for men of faith for 6,000 years that faith will be most glorious! Blessed. In the worst situations instead of complaining, just give your humble heart to God." Many of the teams held small, spontaneous rallies from time to time. Dr. Bergman's team met on Wall Street about every other day to sing, pray and speak to passing people. Dr. Bergman reported that the number of people who stopped to listen to the songs and speeches was proportionate to the amount of heart the individuals put into their effort.

Mr. Hugh Spurgin's IOWC team rented a storefront near Columbia University to use as a lecture room

and eating place. They organized a forum on the campus for September 16 entitled, "Who is Reverend Moon and what are his future plans?" The Attica Brigade, the largest Communist organization in New York, planned to disrupt the forum with sixty violent demonstrators, so it was cancelled.

In addition to talking to people on the streets, some IOWC teams went to parks, door to door, in shopping centers, or to eating places such as McDonalds. Television commercials and news coverage enhanced the interest and response of the public. The IOWC leaders commented that Manhattan was probably the most difficult place to carry out religious work; by far the greatest percentage of people ignore efforts to give them a leaflet or engage them in conversation, but on the other hand people come up to team members to ask for tickets and information.



Mr. Perry Cordill, IOWC commander in the mid-South, led a team visiting people living in Flushing who had been contacted by other teams. "The response is good now," he commented. "But at first, people would say, 'I'm Jewish,' or 'I'm not Christian; I'm Catholic.' Our general impression is that people are so much more prepared now and that they are really desperate for the love of God. They have realized that they have come to the end of the rope of whatever they have been doing -- drugs, family conflicts, or whatever. I think more than ever, when I look at people on the streets, of the need to save the lives of New Yorkers. I really feel the longing of God's heart."

Mr. Cordill and Joe Stein and others who had participated in all three New York Day of Hope campaigns commented on the different spirit this year. Joe Stein observed, "I feel a much greater sense of responsibility and a much deeper sense of the meaning of the campaign itself. There is a greater feeling of united effort, whereas last year there was much more competition."

The five days training at Barrytown before moving to the streets of New York City rated high in Mr. Cordill's evaluation of the success of the campaign. "People this year are much more united in tradition, and the members are far more grown spiritually. The five-day Barrytown training was a stroke of wisdom. In their evaluation sheets the trainees told of new realizations of the Divine Principle and their relationship with God. Younger and older members alike received great energy and stamina to carry out our Father's will."

Dr. Bergman noted that although there was little time for individual counseling of team members by the IOWC commander, the work of the campaign itself has strengthened and deepened new members. Each evening he listened to highlights of the day and then spoke inspirationally to his team on whatever theme he felt they needed to hear.

"Many people are impressed by our group," he added "by our sincerity and by our international scope. The Messiah comes in an unexpected way, but we all agree that he must come to unite the people of the world. Our movement is able to provide a very visible example of a world-wide movement, particularly through IOWC teams. We have to restore unity in our team before we can go out and tell others about unity. Our team includes ten nationalities and is not only a resolution of East and West, but also of the various European ancestries which have been at conflict with each other."

Having been raised in a Jewish family, Dr. Bergman finds Jewish businessmen and families inspired by a

group really doing something to counter problems of crime, drug abuse, family breakdowns, etc. "I am touched when I go to Saint Patrick's Cathedral or Trinity Cathedral," he mused. "When I look at the statutes there I can see that those people were cognizant of what it means to live a life of faith. I am really touched by Christian history, but now present-day Christians must have an openness to the spirit of God."

Adequate housing in New York has posed a perennial problem for Unification Church leaders. An indispensable element of the campaign was the Paris Hotel, a dilapidated relic on Manhattan's West End available for under \$1.00 per person per day. Enough livable rooms were found on the first seventeen floors for about 700 IOWC members. Because of the dubious character of some of the other residents and the five burglaries the first two days the teams lived there, IOWC commander Martin Porter organized a system of security guards for each floor.

Kris Bick, Day of Hope secretary, could not recall one dull day at the Paris Hotel. She told me of "Bishop Saint John," who played the organ and preached all hours of the night in his room; on other nights, his guests played noisy card games. One day the water pipes on the mezzanine broke, and rusty water dripped in jungle fashion into all parts of the kitchen. Ingrid Batavier and her staff of twelve who prepare breakfast and lunch for 1250 and dinner for 750 each day pled with Kris to find some help to clean up the kitchen for dinner. After hours of seemingly fruitless search, Kris went down to the kitchen to find about a dozen volunteers from all over scrubbing pots and floors and counters.

The hotel and its residents will not soon be forgotten. Mrs. Reiner Vincenz adopted one of several generations of cats as a mascot for her team. These cats have lived in the trash room for several generations and have never seen daylight.

Rev. and Mrs. Reiner Vincenz are heading a large team of half the IOWC members accompanying Reverend Moon on the Day of Hope tour. At Belvedere following the Madison Square Garden speech, Reverend Moon personally selected the 400 members of this traveling team. The remaining IOWC members returned to their regions to continue spiritual work there. A team of fund-raisers was selected from the mass group to raise the money for the campaign and the expenses of the IOWC teams working in regions.

After a meal of fresh tuna and Korean food at Belvedere, the IOWC teams organized for their new activities, and Rev. and Mrs. Vincenz led the traveling 400 to Philadelphia to prepare for the September 26 and 27 programs there.