

Philadelphia's Unification Church hosts a Day of Unity Banquet

Marc Lee
April 7, 1977



The New Hope Singers entertain in Philadelphia

On Thursday, April 7, the Philadelphia Unification Church hosted a "Day of Unity" Banquet to give parents, business associates, ministers, and other friends a closer look at the Unification Church. Featured events of the evening were entertainment by the New Hope Performing Arts members, a speech by President Salonen, and a showing of the Washington Monument film.

After an opening reception, Marc Lee, Pennsylvania state leader, officially welcomed the guests to the Garden Terrace room of the Benjamin Franklin hotel in downtown Philadelphia. The dinner was preceded by an invocation by Reverend John Price of the Faith Fellowship Baptist Church, a contact from the Washington Monument campaign. A medley of songs was performed after dinner by an ensemble from the New Hope Singers International, followed by a dance by a member of the Korean Folk Ballet.

Mr. Salonen explained to the audience the reasons why the Unification Church sponsored the God Bless America festivals, relating the ideals forming the foundation of our nation to the basic principles of the Unification Church.

America was unique among nations, he said, because her people had faith on three levels. First they had to have had faith in themselves in order to risk their lives in the dangerous journey across the Atlantic. Faith in the nation gave them courage to take on the British Empire, an unheard of action in the early days of our country. A strong faith in God was also manifested by the leaders of the new nation. This faith in God sustained America through her first two crises, the revolutionary war and the civil war. "God blessed the fruits of this nation and this nation prospered," said Mr. Salonen. Now, he explained, we are facing our third great crisis -- a spiritual crisis reflected every day in the newspapers, in the divorce and suicide statistics.

Comparing the Unification Church to the Jesuits, he said that both our members and the followers of Saint Ignatius of Loyola saw something desperately wrong with the world, and in doing something about it, both groups have faced persecution.

Mr. Salonen reminded the group that, as a nation of immigrants, America has been taught what she needs to know by those from other countries." He put Reverend Moon in this context, explaining that "the meaning of America is not to have a common race or language or set of customs but it is to have a common ideal."

In conclusion he asked the audience to continue their open-minded approach to the Church: "We have no goal except to teach young people to center themselves upon God's purpose and accomplish what God wants to accomplish. If we seem different from our contemporaries settling down in split-level houses, it is because we feel a calling of a different nature. We only ask that others accept and respect us, just following the Biblical advice to judge the tree by its fruits."

After the Washington Monument film, many guests lingered to talk with members, some for close to an hour. Besides parents guests included officers of a candy company supplying fundraising product, insurance agents, realtors, ministers involved in the Washington Monument crusade, and other people who have dealt with the Philadelphia Church in business matters. Both sustained and new relationships were warmed by the experience.