

A Self-Proclaimed Saint

Second in a Series
By MARTIN TOOMBS

Sun Myung Moon and his approximately 7,000-member Unification Church are becoming the center of a broiling nationwide controversy. Parents have accused the church of brainwashing their children and forcing them to work for Moon. Unification church members defend their decision to join the sect, and call attacks the work of Satan.

Locally, the cult has become an issue since a fund raising center was opened in Savannah, in Wayne County.

Legal sanctions against the church have failed, as the members are at least 18 years old, and as a religion the church invokes protection under the constitution. Many parents have urged government investigation of the church and its tax-exempt status, but the issue is considered too controversial by many officials for them to become directly involved.

The man at the head of the organization is a 56-year-old Korean who calls himself "Reverend" Sun Myung Moon. A self-proclaimed saint, he was excommunicated from the Presbyterian church for his teachings. So far he has only implied his sanctity, at one time saying that "of all the saints sent by God, I think I am the most successful one."

Moon's theology is based on Christianity, but certainly is not Christian. Moon claims that Christ appeared to him in Korea in 1936 and gave him the "key to righteousness and restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth." He teaches that the task of purifying the world was given to Adam and then to Christ, but they both failed. Adam failed because he allowed himself to be seduced by Eve who had been seduced by Satan. Christ failed by allowing himself to be crucified before he could marry and father the perfect race. Moon says that a second Christ that was born in Korea in 1920 will take on the task. That happens to be when and where Moon was born.

A staunch anti-Communist, Moon claims that he was arrested in North Korea for anti-Communist activities in 1955, and escaped, carrying a wounded comrade on his back on a bicycle for 600 miles. Another version says the conviction was on morals charges resulting from a purifying rite that was part of the early Unification Church.

Granted a permanent visa to the United States, Moon now lives in the Belvedere estate in Tarrytown, N.Y. Re-named "New Eden", the 25-room mansion cost him \$620,000.

Regional Assembly Again Picks Riordan

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn — Charlotte Riordan was re-elected to the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) from the Cayuga-Seneca region at the regional assembly March 29.

The assembly voted to appoint four delegates from the Newman Campus communities in the region including Cayuga County Community College (CCCC), Auburn, Wells College, Aurora, and Eisenhower College, Seneca Falls.

Heated dialogue came over the proposal, subsequently defeated, that the region request the DPC to consider the pros and cons of a diocesan-wide collection to help defray the cost of the Eucharistic Congress.

It was pointed out the Knights of Columbus had announced the altar, being constructed for a week's use,

Organizations dedicated to helping parents who have children in the Unification Church or another of the religious cults have been set up. Three nationwide organizations parents can turn to for help are:

Citizens Engaged in Re-uniting Families (CERF), PO Box 5084, Arlington, Texas 76011 (214) 647-1071. Primarily for Unification Church.

The Citizens Freedom Foundation, PO Box 256, Chula Vista, Calif. 92012.

Return to Personal Choice, PO Box 159, Lincoln, Mass. 01773. Specializes in psychiatric help after de-programming.

Moon goes fishing regularly, in one of his two 50-foot-cabin cruisers. He has a personal staff of 35 "Moonies," as his followers are called. Moon controls a growing financial empire, benefiting from the zeal of his followers and tax exemptions.

Moon's followers lead a restricted life, one of constant fund raising for the church and very few comforts. But Moon's lifestyle isn't embarrassing to Church members. John Raucci, a former Catholic seminarian now a Unification instructor, (as quoted in the New York Daily News) explained that "the Rev. Moon can't live in rags and hope to influence people like the Mellons and the Rockefellers. If you look closely at history, as I have, you will see that there are many similarities between inspired men and tyrants. If you look at Jesus, and then at Hitler and Stalin, you will see many of the same traits." Another church leader has been quoted as saying, "Why must a religious leader be an ascetic? Look at the Pope."

Moon has become involved in politics on many occasions, and has managed to get his picture taken with presidents and senators. He uses what influence he has and reportedly a \$50,000 lobbying budget, to pursue anti-communism. Moon preaches that the United States should defend the "holy land," meaning South Korea and the government of President Chung Hee Park, from communism. To make his positions known, Moon has taken full page ads in major newspapers. One such incidence was a defense of President Richard Nixon before his resignation.

Moon stated that Nixon was God's selection to be president, and therefore should be allowed to rule. Two days after Nixon's resignation, Moon said that "there is a communistic power working behind the scenes. They came to threaten to kill him if he did not resign, and

would cost \$100,000. The resolution asked that "if after careful study it is concluded the congress is lacking in good works that the diocesan pastoral assembly recommend to Bishop Hogan that the financial aid be withheld and that he encourage the Catholics of the Diocese of Rochester to celebrate their faith in the Eucharist by spending our resources to help the poor of the world."

Msr. Joseph Gefell, regional coordinator, announced the team reviewing the parish council constitutions has completed its work and would be forwarding suggestions that would bring constitutions in line with the new guidelines.

He also announced money is available for the Apostolate of Religious Education for exceptional children through the K of C charities fund.

that's what compelled him to do so." He added that the president should "have the right to discharge or dissolve the Senate and the Congress."

In the Unification Church publication "Master Speaks," Moon is quoted as saying "if the U.S. continues its corruption, and we find among the senators and congressmen no one really usable for our purposes, we can make senators and congressman out of our members." Moon has also said that "the time will come, without my seeking it, when my words will almost serve as law. If I ask a certain thing, it will be done, if I don't want something it will not be done. If I recommend a certain ambassador for a certain country and then visit that country and that ambassador's office, he will greet me with the red carpet treatment."

In honor of the American Bicentennial, the church's American president, Neil A. Salonen, recently announced a nationwide celebration to be kicked off by a rally in Yankee Stadium June 1. Rental for the stadium is \$75,000.

Several groups have asked for investigations of the church, but most government officials are hesitant to act for fear of violating the constitutional separation of church and state. A meeting was held recently in Washington, by Sen. Robert Dole, in response to a petition of 14,000 people in his state of Kansas. During the meeting, attended by 400 parents and 50 former Moonies, Rabbi

Catholic Vets Cite Shaheen

The Catholic War Veterans of Monroe County have named Raymond C. Shaheen "Catholic Layman of the Year." He was saluted for "his many contributions to the community" at a breakfast April 4 at St. Thomas the Apostle Church.

Shaheen, president of Shaheen Paint Co., received the CWV award from James O'Connor, commander, and a plaque from Sister Seraphine for his support of the Holy Childhood School which she heads.

Cenacle Lists Program Events

The Cenacle Retreat House has scheduled the following events this season:

Father Benedict Ehmann will lecture on St. Elizabeth Seton for the St. Raphael Guild meeting and celebration of Mass at 7:30 p.m. on April 20.

Father Timothy Curtin, SJ will give a Sisters' retreat, April 23-25. Father Curtin is a professor of theology at LeMoyne.

A weekend retreat for men and women will be led by Father John Walchers, SJ the weekend of May 14-16. Registration opens at 6 p.m. on Friday.

Further information and reservations are available through Sister Marie Halligan, RC, 271-8755.

EGG COLORING CONTEST

The Monroe County Bicentennial Commission is sponsoring a Bicentennial Easter Egg Coloring Contest, with first prizes of \$25 savings bonds. Three eggs with the insides removed should be entered, colored red, white and blue. Entries may be made at the YWCA, 175 N. Clinton, or the Bicentennial Commission office, in the Chamber of Commerce building, 55 St. Paul St. Entries must be made before Easter Sunday, or at the Seneca Park Zoo at 2 p.m. on Easter. Judging, in youth and adult categories, will begin at 3 p.m.



Even though he speaks little English, Sun Myung Moon's lectures provide inspiration for the "Moonies." This recent photo shows Moon at his church's Barrytown training center. The woman on stage is Moon's wife. (RNS)

Maurice Davis of White Plains observed that "the last time I witnessed a movement that was totally monolithic, replete with fanatical followers (who) hate everyone and foster suspicion of parents was the Nazi Youth Movement."

200 Moonies, protested the meeting claiming that "the charges are being brought against the church by a group that has created this entire format to dignify their smear and hate campaign against us."

NEXT WEEK — The life of a Moonie and the financial empire they've built.

Salonen, leading a contingent of

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