

This week in history, November 13-19:

Michael Mickler
November 14, 2016

November 13, 2014

Japan High Court Landmark Ruling against Kidnapping and “Deprogramming”



The Unification movement in Japan won a major victory on November 13, 2014, when Tokyo’s High Court ruled in favor of Mr. Toru Goto in his civil suit against family members and “deprogrammers” who had held him captive for 12 years and five months (September 11, 1995 to February 10, 2008) in order to force him to abandon the Unification faith. The court ruled that this amounted to kidnapping and “an unlawful suppression of freedom of action.” It ordered three family members to pay compensation of 22 million yen (2.2 million US\$). The lead deprogrammer was ordered to pay 11 million yen (1.1 million US\$) in compensation. Over the past 45 years, more than 4,300 persons, mostly Unificationists and 80 percent of them women, have been kidnapped for the purpose of breaking their faith. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and the U.S. State Department previously filed reports critical of Japan for inaction on this human rights abuse. Mr. Goto’s initial effort to press criminal charges was denied in 2009 by the Tokyo Prosecutors’ Office, which cited “insufficient evidence.” He subsequently filed a civil lawsuit, which resulted in the 2014 decision. Japan’s Supreme Court dismissed appeals by the defendants in the case and upheld the verdict by the Tokyo High Court on September 29, 2015. This concluded Mr. Goto’s seven-year legal battle and put an end to kidnapping and deprogramming as a legal option in Japan.

November 15, 1984

True Father Awarded Honorary Doctorate by the University of La Plata

More than 500 people filled the United Nations Delegates’ Dining Room on November 15, 1984, when True Father and Dr. Bo Hi Pak were awarded honorary degrees of Doctor Honoris Causa from the Catholic University of La Plata, Argentina. True Mother received the degree on behalf of True Father, who at the time was incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution at Danbury, Connecticut. Monsignor Antonio Jose Plaza, archbishop of La Plata and chancellor of the university, traveled to New York to bestow the award despite objections from the Vatican. True Mother thanked the chancellor and university for their “courageous stand . . . in recognizing and honoring my husband at this difficult time.” True Father previously had received an honorary doctorate in law from Ricker College, Maine, in 1975. During his time in Danbury, he received four additional honorary doctorates. The first was awarded by La Plata University, also in Argentina. The second, on May 11, 1985, was conferred by the Shaw University Divinity School, affiliated with the Methodist Church. The third, on May 28, 1985, was from the Bible Theological Seminary of the State of Florida, and the final one was awarded by Vennard College on

August 15, 1985.

November 15, 1985

The First Assembly of the World's Religions



Dr. Huston Smith, author on world religions, greets True Father at the assembly

More than 600 spiritual leaders, clergy, professors, artists, students and professionals from 85 nations gathered at the Americana Great Gorge resort, in McAfee, New Jersey, for the first Assembly of the World's Religions from November 15 to 21, 1985. Sponsored by the International Religious Foundation (IRF), it was envisioned as the first of three assemblies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. The theme of Assembly One was "Recovering the Classical Heritage." Stylistic banners representing the world faith traditions were created for the occasion by the famed banner-maker Norman Laliberte. Participants gathered daily for meditations, plenary talks, discussion groups, and informal presentations

of song and storytelling. A practical outcome of the assembly was the launch of the Religious Youth Service (RYS).

In his Founder's Address, titled "Dialogue and Alliance," True Father memorably stated, "As far as I know, God is not sectarian. He is not obsessed with minor details of doctrine. We should quickly liberate ourselves from theological conflict, which results from blind attachment to doctrines and rituals, and instead focus on living communication with God." He contended, "Only through a religious and spiritual revolution bringing great harmony, love and compassion will we finally realize the ideal world of peace." He also expressed three goals for the assembly:

First, that the world's religious traditions respect each other and at least work to keep in check any inter-religious conflicts and wars. Second, that the assembly serve the world by becoming a cooperative community of religions ... calling religious people to practical action, encouraging all people to live by God-centered values, and fostering the development of human minds and spirits. Third, that the assembly develop into an organization in which the major leadership of all religions participate.

November 15, 2001

True Father Proclaims Cheon Il Guk

True Father proclaimed Cheonju Pyeonghwa Tongil Guk (the Nation of Cosmic Peace and Unity), abbreviated as Cheon Il Guk (CIG), on November 15, 2001. Cheon Il Guk is the Unification equivalent of the Kingdom of Heaven and the culmination of True Father's ministry. Previously True Father declared a fundamental shift in the order of salvation from the individual to the family. Cheon Il Guk advanced beyond the family to the creation of a heavenly nation. True Father defined the Cheon Il Guk "era" as the period during which the foundation of Cheon Il Guk was to be established. He said the movement was on a "tight schedule" of twelve years, extending until 2013. True Father's proclamation of Cheon Il Guk energized the Unification movement and marked a new stage in its development.

November 16, 2004

Mrs. Shin Wook "Lady Dr." Kim Ascends



Mrs. Shin Wook "Lady Dr." Kim ascended on November 16, 2004, at age 90. She converted to the Holy Spirit Association from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1956 and was an obstetrician and gynecologist, having delivered more than 5,000 babies, including five of True Parents' children. She also was a "spiritual doctor," and that was the title and mission True Father assigned to her in America. She immigrated in 1971 and was well known among early American members for her wise and warm counsel. Prior to the Cheongpyeong providence, she also played a major role on issues related to ancestors and the spiritual world. During the Washington Monument campaign, she conducted an important ceremony to

sanctify the grounds and protect True Father's life.

November 16, 2009

11.16 Blessing Ceremony for Unificationist-born Couples



On November 16, 2009, 173 Unificationist-born couples from 28 nations took part in a Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony before 1,200 parents and others at the Cheongpyeong Heaven and Earth Training Center. All participants met the Cheon Il Guk matching standard of purity, never having kissed, dated, had any physical relationship or made any exclusive romantic commitment. They also met the standard of openness to form an international or intercultural couple. On that foundation, True Parents matched the couples individually.

November 17, 1989

Soviet Journalist Interviews True Father



The Soviet interview with True Father was reprinted in major U.S. newspapers

In a sign of things to come, True Father granted his first interview in 13 years to Za Rubezhom ("Abroad"), a Soviet newsweekly with a circulation of over 1 million that was read by intellectuals and policy leaders throughout the Soviet Union. Za Rubezhom titled the interview "A Spiritual Revolution Is Needed" and published it the week of November 17-25 in its "Religion and Society" section. The interview was translated into English and published in advertisements in major newspapers around the United States under the banner head "Rev. Moon Breaks His Silence."

True Father spoke about his daughter-in-law Hoon Sook (Julia) Moon's dance performance on the stage of the Kirov Theatre and his respect for Russian artistic traditions; President Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts to launch glasnost ("openness") and perestroika ("restructuring"); and the need for the Soviet Union to support religious freedom and develop "a wider-based individual incentive system" for its commerce. He said that he welcomed the "lessening of tensions among the nations of the world" but that lasting peace would come only when we "settle our peace with God."

"What our world most needs," True Father stated, is "a spiritual revolution. Then we can successfully solve our economic and social problems." True Father's interview with Za Rubezhom culminated a decade of groundwork by the World Media Association in cultivating contacts among Soviet journalists and was a steppingstone to the 11th World Media Conference in Moscow and True Parents' meeting with President Gorbachev in April 1990.

November 19, 2007
1,000th Cheongshim Baby Born



The parents of the 1000th Chungshim Baby, Yeong-cheol Pak (right) and Mayumi Okawa, November 19, 2007, Chungshim International Hospital

On November 19, 2007, at 6:47 pm, the 1,000th Cheongshim baby was born in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of Cheongshim International Medical Center. The newborn was the eldest son (2.98 kg) of Yeong-cheol Pak and Mayumi Okawa (a 360,000 blessed couple, South Korea). The obstetrics and gynecology department of Cheongshim International Medical Center reportedly had the highest percentages for natural delivery and breastfeeding in all Korea, combining Western and Oriental approaches to medicine.