

## Unification Church Brings Multi-Million Dollar Suit Against *The New York Times*

Neil Salonen  
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*Church member Dan Fefferman lead hundreds of members in prayer at a demonstration in front of The New York Times building. The demonstration, attended by nearly a thousand members and supporters, coincided with the Church's announcement of its lawsuit against the Times*

On Monday, March 20, Unification Church President Neil A. Salonen announced the initiation of a ten-million dollar lawsuit against *The New York Times* by the Unification Church. The suit was stimulated by a March 16 Times article alleging that the Church was founded by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Following are the Church's statement about the article and President Salonen's letter of protest to the Times.

In *The New York Times* of March 16, 1978, an article appeared written by Richard Halloran with the headline "Unification Church Called Seoul Tool", and with the subheading "House Panel Releases Documents Linking Sun Myung Moon to Korean Lobbying Efforts". The article primarily singled out an unevaluated tentative, 1963 report from an unidentified informant on file with the CIA, alleging that Reverend Moon's Unification Church was "organized in 1961 by a director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Kim Chong Pil". The article also referred to another intelligence memorandum which contained the allegation that the Korean Cultural and Freedom Foundation formed in 1955 was the forerunner to the Unification Church in the United States. Halloran gleaned these reports from a 708-page book of documents published by the House Subcommittee on International Organizations. The following are objections to Mr. Halloran's report and to the action of the Subcommittee itself:

-- Passages on the Unification Church were contained in a United States Central Intelligence Agency report that was clearly labeled as "unevaluated... and tentative." In an unconscionable omission, however, Halloran fails to mention the status of this report, thus seriously misleading the reader.

-- The 708-page book itself is replete with contradictions. For example, on page 459, a December 18, 1964 memorandum by the CIA source says that Kim Chong Pil started the Unification Church one year ago; on page 460 another memorandum dated the 4th of January 1965 states that Kim Chong Pil has been using the Church since 1961. This would have preceded the alleged founding of the Church itself. Such obvious contradictions were never researched by Halloran and apparently never caused any concern to the Subcommittee staff.

-- Halloran never contacted the Unification Church for comment or verification on the story, despite the drastic effect his report would (and has) have on the reputation of the Church and the dignity of its members. If he had called us, he would have found out the well documented fact that the Unification Church was founded in 1954 in Seoul, by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon; and that Rev. Moon in fact began teaching the basic tenets of the Church as early as 1946 -- years before Kim Chong Pil and his KCIA even appeared on the scene. Even if he could not reach the Church for comment, these facts are on file with the Times itself.

-- Halloran's reporting became even more biased when he misinterpreted one of the intelligence reports and alleged that the Korean Cultural and Freedom Foundation was founded in 1965 as a forerunner to the Unification Church in the whole United States! Again, Halloran made no attempt to talk with Church officials to test the veracity of such assertions. If he had, he would have learned that the first Church missionary came to the U.S. in early 1959, and that the national Church was formally incorporated in 1961, and that the Washington, D.C. branch was opened in 1964 -- all before the creation of the "forerunner."

-- The Times itself falsely and irresponsibly amplified Mr. Halloran's errors on March 19, when it reported in its "Week in Review" section that Congress has now "simply stated as fact what many Americans already believe -- that the Unification Church of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon was a Korean Government operation," thus blatantly misinforming the public that an unevaluated report from an unidentified source has been officially judged "fact."

The article critiqued above is just one example of the unprofessional standard displayed by Halloran and *The New York Times* in their report of the Unification Church.

-- On June 5, 1977 in another New Turk Times article, Halloran quoted Kim Hyun Wook, former director of the KCIA who was soon to testify before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, as saying that Reverend Sun Myung Moon and Bo Hi Pak, his translator were KCIA agents. However, when Mr. Kim actually testified under oath before the Subcommittee on June 22, he said that he was not even aware of the name of Sun Myung Moon until he (Mr. Kim) arrived in the United States in 1973. This is long after Mr. Kim had discontinued his association with the KCIA and the Korean government. Mr. Kim even said in answer to questions posed by the Subcommittee that Bo Hi Pak was definitely not connected with the KCIA!

In his article of June 23 in *The New York Times* reporting this testimony, Mr. Halloran conveniently ignores the contradictions between Mr. Kim's testimony under oath and his alleged interview appearing in the June 5 article.

This record of shoddy journalism in *The New York Times* is further documented by an article on May 25, 1976 by Ann Crittenden which carried earlier unfounded allegations of the Church and Reverend Moon being connected with the South Korean government. Miss Crittenden contacted the Church only one hour before this story went to press giving the Church that much time to answer such rumors as the Church receiving special favors from the right wing Japanese industrialists, the Korean government, the U.S. Justice department and the KCIA. In this instance, the South Korean government issued a statement on May 26 denying any connection with Reverend Moon or the Church.

When the Church offered to debate Miss Crittenden on the charges, she declined. The Church did hold a press conference refuting the article.

These abuses are further multiplied by other newspapers which picked up the Times' News Service and use *The New York Times* allegations as a springboard for more outrageous attacks on the Church.

-- For instance, on October 24 and October 28 the Chicago Tribune printed stories speculating as to whether or not the source of income for the Church was from the KCIA. To be specific, on October 24 the story alleges that federal auditors are investigating whether the Church's "\$12 million annual income" comes solely from "selling trinkets" or from "another source", an apparent insinuation that our funds come from organizations such as the KCIA. The October 29 story reverses direction and asserts that the IRS is investigating the Church to determine whether any of its "\$40 million income" is turned over to the KCIA.

-- The recent stories by *The New York Times* were picked up by numerous papers both in the U.S. and abroad. A Washington Star headline reads "Moon's Church Founded by Korean CIA Chief as Political Tool, Panel Says". Several Japanese papers carried the story with banner headlines on the front page.

It is obvious that Richard Halloran of *The New York Times* has been fed a great deal of information about the Unification Church from the House Subcommittee on International Organizations chaired by Congressman Donald Fraser. This Subcommittee has flagrantly abused its power and Mr. Halloran has compromised good journalistic standards by being a mouthpiece for the Subcommittee. A list of the Subcommittee's abuses follows:

1. On May 27, 1976, Unification Church President Neil A. Salonen met with Representative Fraser, the Chairman of the Subcommittee. At that time, he volunteered all information relevant to the question before the Subcommittee and offered to be available to answer any other questions that might arise. Concerned that this inquiry would be misinterpreted by the public as a Congressional investigation of the Unification Church and its religion, and that Church members would suffer embarrassment and discrimination as a result, Mr. Salonen sought to resolve the Subcommittee's questions quickly and

quietly.

On that same day, Congressman Fraser responded with assurances that he would show respect for the privacy and religious freedom of Unification Church members, but less than a month later, he "invited" Mr. Salonen to appear in a public hearing against unqualified and prejudiced "witnesses". Even without Mr. Salonen's participation, this format instigated a trial-by-media of the Unification Church.

2. Witnesses called by the Subcommittee to testify in public session have been unqualified and irresponsible, and have made unfounded sensationalistic charges, using the Subcommittee as a platform to play the media. Robert Roland, who testified June 22, 1976 has no expertise in Unification Church affairs whatsoever, but has sought any forum possible to attack the Church because his wife joined the Church more than 10 years ago. Chris Elkins, who testified September 27, was an unstable Church member for several months, leaving and re-joining the Church on no less than four occasions. He held no position of any stature in the Church and his testimony is replete with falsehoods. Allen Tate Wood and Jai Hyon Lee overstepped their areas of expertise to indulge in speculations, innuendo, and groundless allegations. The Subcommittee let these smears pass unchallenged into the public record.

3. The Subcommittee has repeatedly leaked confidential information to the press in frequent violations of its own rules. *The New York Times* reported Richard Halloran apparently obtained a copy of Unification Church President Neil A. Salonen's confidential testimony, given in executive session. Mr. Halloran quoted from this highly sensitive, private material in articles published by *The New York Times*.

4. Members and former members of the Unification Church with no apparent relevance to the Subcommittee's mandated area of concern have been contacted by the Subcommittee investigators and threatened with subpoena if they declined to cooperate. The Subcommittee has refused to clarify its purpose in its pursuit of such individuals.

5. The father of one Church member was contacted by Subcommittee "investigators" and ridiculed for approving of his child's membership. The conduct of Subcommittee staff in this and other instances has demonstrated that -- far from impartial investigators -- staff members are actively working to damage the Unification Church.

6. In formal session, the Subcommittee exceeded both its mandate from the House of Representatives and its authority under the Constitution in probing the personal and religious association of Dan Fefferman, National Missions Coordinator for the Unification Church.

The aforementioned abuses both of *The New York Times* and the Fraser Subcommittee are not just isolated and unrelated incidents but have caused a chain reaction of religious intolerance and bigotry. Because of allegations of political motivations, the Unification Theological Seminary charter was postponed for years; in New York City, tax exemption was not granted for Unification Church properties; and nationally, Unification Church members have been subjected to ridicule and abuse because of the false charges of political connections against their religion.

We call upon all responsible members of the press to help us rectify the damage that has been done by the Fraser Subcommittee, *The New York Times*, and Richard Halloran.