

## True Father: The Washington Monument Rally Was an Unqualified Victory

Neil Salonen  
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"I proclaim to you that the Washington Monument Rally was an unqualified victory. It is a victory for God and a victory for the Providence, and it is a fact. It has been recorded as truth in heaven and earth"

Reverend Sun Myung Moon's words brought spring sunshine into the hearts of his followers when he spoke them - two days after 200,000 to 300,000 people had gathered at the Washington Monument to hear Reverend Moon proclaim the necessity for unity of religions in order to create a unified world.

They came from many continents, many states, and for many reasons. Hundreds of parents of Unification Church members came from Japan and Europe for the occasion. Some 40,000 people arrived on chartered buses from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York. Another 30,000 took advantage of 600 shuttle buses in Washington D. C., to get there. An estimated total of 160,000 to 260,000 people attended from Washington.

"World unification is a tremendously huge task, yet success is determined by an accumulation of little things," Reverend Moon said in his victory speech. "Gigantic accomplishments are composed of success in millions of little tasks. You must be a most thorough person in everything you do."

### Target Reached

It was such an accumulation of successful tasks that built the victory at Washington Monument, a victory that laid the foundation for the Unification Church to continue to work for the renewal of America's God-centered spirit. "No matter what they say," Reverend Moon told his followers, "you know that I came to America to teach young people, to create a new breed of leaders who can save this country in the future... The first phase of the ministry that I initiated when I came to America in 1972 has been successfully concluded. The target has been reached..."

"We won a victory at the Washington Monument, but do not be boastful or vain or arrogant," he warned. "Thus far we have fought together in a collective battle, but from now on each individual will fight his own battle to show how worthy he is, so an even greater battle is ahead for each of you... You must prove your worth in the sight of God."

But before we move on to the future tasks that lie ahead in restoring this nation and this world, let us look back at one day, September 18, 1976, that will stand out as a landmark in history for future generations.

It had rained two days previously and Saturday was also cloudy and windy. With memories of Yankee Stadium Day rain still fresh in their minds, the members in the Washington, D.C., area went to their areas early in the day to help coordinate the bus shuttle service provided on pre-arranged routes. Perhaps the uncertain weather was the cause, but thousands of D.C. residents used other means of transportation, and our members watched in dismay during the day as near-empty buses drove by. But their surprise was that much greater when they too joined the sea of people that filled the entire area around the Monument grounds. Out-of-state buses had begun arriving in early afternoon. New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk had had the opposite problem too few buses for too many people, due partly to the fact that not all the bus companies honored their commitments. Bus captains kept their flocks together with placards held high.



### **Festival Atmosphere**

Chicken dinners were provided for those who had reserved them. Others brought their own picnics. Blankets were spread, children were running around, and soon a festival atmosphere was created. Entertainment began in mid-afternoon, provided by the Go-World Brass Band, the Voices of Freedom, the Korean Folk Ballet, Sunburst, the New Hope Singers International, and guest performances by the Southland Mission Gospel Singers and folk dance troupes from Eastern Europe and South America.

Over 20 different nationalities were represented among the guests, with a strong representation from Captive Nations. Well over 300 Vietnamese and a contingent of Cambodians, as well as almost every cultural and national group in the Eastern Europe Captive Nations, were represented. Several thousand Koreans came from Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, and Washington.

The night before the Rally, 280 parents from Japan, and other groups of parents from Germany, France, Austria, England, Sweden, Norway, Guyana, South West Africa, and America were hosted at a reception in the Statler Hilton Hotel by Col. Bo Hi Pak and President Neil Salonen. The international parents sat in a special section reserved for them in the front at the Monument grounds on Saturday. More than 100 American parents joined them. The European parents also spent a week in New York sight-seeing and visiting the Church's facilities at Belvedere and Barrytown.

Press attendance for the Rally included the national TV and radio networks, local TV and radio stations, AP, UPI, Reuters, and representatives from the Washington newspapers and the New York Times. Sixteen international media were represented, several religious news media, and a variety of others.

When the program formally began at 6 p. m., President Salonen greeted the guests, then all joined in singing the National Anthem (accompanied by the New Hope Singers International and the Go-World Brass Band) and in saying the Lord's Prayer. Entertainment was provided by the New Hope Singers, the Band, Sunburst, and the Korean Folk Ballet, before Mr. Salonen introduced Reverend Moon.



## Spectacular Fireworks

After Reverend Moon's half-hour address on "America and God's Will", the world's greatest international fireworks began. The spectacular, 10-part display created especially for the God Bless America Festival by California Fireworks, creator of displays for Disneyland and Disneyworld, was widely acknowledged as superior to the July Fourth display in Washington.

It was estimated that 500,000 people watched the fireworks display throughout the Washington area, in awe punctuated by exclamations of appreciation. Donated by the Unification Church International, the fireworks expressed the diverse character of the world's six continents, each segment accompanied by narration and music. The special salute to America's bicentennial concluded with a volley of red, white and blue to form a backdrop for the words "God Bless America." As the words faded, hundreds of shells filled the Washington skies with a multitude of colors and flashes, bringing the dazzling spectacular to a fitting conclusion. Thirty thousand brightly colored balloons filled the sky, illuminated by spotlight. The following words from Reverend Moon's Yankee Stadium speech closed the evening on a reverent, thoughtful note:

*"As one nation under God, America must build the model of the ideal nation of God. With that done, the rest of the world will follow America's example and will build the Kingdom of God upon their respective lands. Then we shall all truly become brothers and sisters under our Father God. This will be a world of love, a world of happiness. Our planet will be one home, and mankind will be one family. This will be the eternal, ideal world of God. Indeed, it will be the Kingdom of God on earth."*

After the crowds left, work began again. Scores of members, previously assigned to the task, began to clean up the Monument grounds and de-poster the local neighborhoods. The grounds were clean by 11 p.m. A subsequent Washington Post article quoted the National Park Service as saying it was the first time any group of demonstrators had followed through on a promise to clean up its own trash.

The victory was won. We had done it!



## Accumulated Success

And the victory had been won by the successful accumulation of little tasks: the crew that painted signs to identify bus routes for those returning from Washington Monument to "let on the right bus; the crew that filled the balloons; those that planned the local bus routes, that performed the numerous tasks essential for a production such as this to run smoothly. And it all did run smoothly.

Perhaps one of the most stirring tales of perseverance and dedication is the job done by the Technical Missionary Corps (TMC) under Bobby Wilson in setting up and dismantling the stage and backstage areas. His staff of 50 people, including carpenters, high-climbing scaffold builders, truck drivers, supervisors, purchasers, laborers, electricians, communications men, sound men, heavy equipment operators, had been working for two and a half days (18-21 hours a day) building the stage when rain deluged everything early Thursday morning.

Bobby Wilson told me the rest: "Every piece of equipment began to sink into the mud -- fork lifts, cranes, trucks, the equipment needed to lift the sound and lighting, to build the scaffolds. We didn't have time to cover anything before it got soaked through.

"We had been told by the Park Department not to leave one tire mark on the park. We bought 200 sheets



of plywood to cover the ground, but the ground was so mushy that the boards just cracked and sank into the mud. It became a disaster area. Work on the stage deck stopped completely. We couldn't even get the trucks in with the plywood on them. Our equipment broke down from too much strain.

"At that point we knew that no matter how many hardships we went through, we had to break through. Then God could begin to work. We began to work like steel-fisted men. Nothing would stop us. That driving, penetrating force of the working man was the spirit that was in the pioneers who forged America. I took them all up to the Lincoln Memorial to read Lincoln's words -- so we could really feel the power of what was taking place.

"The harder we worked, the harder the rain came. Our men worked straight through from 10 a.m. Thursday to 9:30 Friday night -- a magnetic working force determined to prove victory. During the dress rehearsal (originally scheduled for 1 p.m. Friday afternoon) they rested for three hours. But the speakers, the stage, the decorations, were still not set up. The grounds were a disorderly mess, a preposterous stage of disorderliness. People were soaked to the bone. Wires were buried under the mud. We had only 14 or 15 hours left to production time.

"Those men worked like I've never seen people work before. We worked right up until the time President Salonen walked on stage. We were supposed to have picked and trained a staff of 20 stage hands but we hadn't had time and everyone was covered with mud. We had to be on stage in 20 minutes. Fortunately, eight men had run back to the hotel and showered so they were on hand while the rest hurried to clean up. God was able to provide the knowledge we needed and everything went off well.

"After the final victory, they were so exhausted after eight days of 3 hours sleep a night, working in the mud and the rain, that finally they just collapsed. At noon Sunday they met at the stage. Everything was still there. The TMC's job was to restore the entire area in 36 hours. And we did it!"



*The Technical Missionary Corps worked non-stop for three days after heavy rains delayed finishing construction of the stage. Afterwards, everything was restored to its original condition*

### **Saving a Nation**

Reverend Moon told his followers after the victory. "People criticize me for making slaves of you, because you work harder than anybody else. But... you are driven not by force but by your own willing desire to join this crusade and give your lives and sweat and labor for the purpose of God. I could never force you to work like this... Go ahead and speak out. Tell them, 'We are working hard to save this nation, to preserve the dignity and pride of the American people. America has too much to be ashamed of; we cannot let her fall still farther. That is why we are working so hard.

After Washington Monument, Reverend Moon went on, "Ask yourself, 'Where am I going? What am I going to do? What kind of person am I?' Today you must set your respective individual goals and pledge your life to bring victory to Heavenly Father. Today is the day to plan your own campaign, your own Washington Rally. Follow in my footsteps, in the tradition I have set, but resolve to move even faster, to go even farther. That should be your determination... From now on you don't have to walk each step but can race forward, progressing by leaps and bounds."

A new chapter in Unification Church history begins.