

The Freedom Society: Headwing Thought or Tea Party Politics?

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The Freedom Society philosophy as explained by Kook Jin Moon pits private ownership and free enterprise against big government. He argues that:

Government has undermined the role of the family and community by using tax money, expropriated by coercion, to provide welfare benefits to undeserving people promoting a cycle of dependency;

The free market system is self-governing and government oversight is unnecessary;

Government is in an “archangel position,” an instrument of the devil that usurped the positions of God, parents and individuals as free agents.

The role of government should be limited to lawmaking, a justice system and defense. Every other function should be managed by the private sector.



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These positions, minus the theological jargon, are those of the far right on the political spectrum, advocated by Tea Party proponents like senators Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, and governor Sarah Palin, among others. However, these are not the views of our founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

One way to understanding Rev. Moon’s perspective on global politics and economics is to examine his vision for a restored United Nations. He cultivated relationships with representatives of the world’s religions which led to the creation of the Interreligious Federation for World Peace (IRFWP). He fostered relationships with political and civic leaders, from both sides of the aisle, with the common values of faith, family and freedom, under the banner of the Federation for World Peace (FWP). In 1999, this process led to the creation of the combined Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP). In 2005, to further the effort to renew the United Nations, IIFWP became the Universal Peace Federation (UPF).

A key purpose of UPF is to transform the UN. Rev. Moon proposed that an interreligious council comprised of representatives of the world’s religions be added to the UN. He observed that religions transcend national boundaries. They share common values, and the nature of conflict in the world today is less about geographical boundaries and more about historical, irreconcilable cultural/ethnic hostilities. If representatives of the world’s religions can work together to resolve ethnic conflict and cultivate higher spiritual, moral and ethical standards, nations will cooperate more easily for the greater good instead of fighting for their own national interests.

Among the goals of a transformed UN are: 1) to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict; 2) to re-unite the Korean Peninsula, and; 3) to promote an international highway including establishing an international free zone and a connection between North America and Eurasia across the Bering Strait.

Rev. Moon’s UN interreligious council proposal is a model that reveals how he envisioned the vertical relationship between spiritual leadership and political leadership (the relationship between the upper and

lower deliberative bodies). Additionally, his vision includes a cooperative, horizontal relationship between the public and private sectors to accomplish purposes that serve God and humanity.



*A 2010 UPF video for an interfaith council at the United Nations
www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSj70sFAI74*

In a restored UN, the interreligious council would occupy a deliberative position as part of the United Nations organs. The conversations of religious leaders would be driven by the motivation to seek out the desires of the Creator and best interests of humanity beyond race, nationality and religion. The vision of that council would naturally be very broad in scope and far reaching.

This model suggests there ought to be a spiritual entity operating as a global “mind,” and a nuts and bolts system operating as a responsive “body.” There would exist a vertical relationship of an “Abel” spiritual/visionary body and a “Cain” international political/industrial/nonprofit body. Just as the body should be a “second mind,” there should be no disharmony between the upper and lower assemblies. In a restored world the relationships would be that of subject and object.

Two examples Kook Jin Moon uses in his argument to support the position that government should keep its hands off economic development are the Transcontinental Railroad and the creation of the Internet. He claims they are creations of the private sector “with little government involvement.” In fact, the U.S. government provided financial support and real estate for the Transcontinental Railroad to the tune of \$30,000 per mile (in 1886 dollars). Land grants in the Midwest were made possible as a result of the Louisiana Purchase during Thomas Jefferson’s presidency (despite objections the land grab was unconstitutional).

The progenitor of the Internet, ARPANET, was funded and developed by the Department of Defense in the early 1960s as a safeguard in the event of nuclear attack. The DOD brought in other government agencies including the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation in the 1970s. The Internet was not commercially available until the late 1980s. Then-senator Al Gore was the first U.S. legislator to recognize the potential value of the Internet to the private sector and introduced legislation that led to the creation of Mosaic, the first web browser, and the Dot-Com revolution.

NASA launched space exploration which put satellites into space, making developments possible in the fields of telecommunication, satellite imagery, global navigation, and deep space research. NASA also spins off technology that quickly makes its way into the private sector. One of the largest American construction projects ever completed was the U.S. Interstate Highway System, a government enterprise initiated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Social services comprise a large portion of the national budget. I work in the field of human services, having retired from the insurance industry. Government has assumed the role of providing support for the elderly, people with disabilities and the disenfranchised (the health and welfare aspect of government is the most contentious, which I will address in a subsequent article). No corporation or non-profit (including churches) has the capital or incentive to take on projects of this scale. However, myriad private companies and agencies are contracted to provide services for government programs.

Viewed from the perspective of the purpose of the whole and purpose of the individual, there exists a horizontal Abel/Cain relationship between government (Abel) and private enterprise (Cain). Government exists to protect and provide for the public interest. Private enterprise exists to make a profit for shareholders. Government acts to provide benefits equitably. Private enterprise competes to gain market share in its sector of the economy. Both are necessary. Of the two, government, as moderator, has a

parental role. However, the government is not made up of only a handful of people, but representatives of all walks of life, as illustrated in the UN model mentioned above. Besides elected officials, it draws on the expertise of every field to stay current with best practices and professional ethics.

It's not the system that spoils everything, it is selfishness – and that permeates every aspect of human endeavor.

Consider if the world did undertake the creation of an international highway and free zone. How would it be possible to do so without cooperation between governmental, non-profit and corporate entities? Before construction, consider the research and planning involved. That alone is beyond the resources and scope of private companies. The purpose of a private company is to increase value for its shareholders. Only governments can make large investments with no foreseeable return. Corporations compete for market share. Government entities, motivated by the best interests of the public, are necessary to negotiate contracts and public use of territory. Leadership within the government must stay inspired and focused over the long-term to accomplish projects on this scale or larger.

Public-private partnerships (PPP) abound in the fields of education, social services, municipal and state infrastructure, international health issues, disaster recovery, drug interdiction, public safety, research and development, international relations, management of public lands, managing the national and global economies, and military intervention in dangerous parts of the world.

Many believe the public and private sectors have an adversarial relationship. Certainly it often seems that way. However, looking at the big picture, they should, and most often do, work cooperatively. Government has grown beyond the vision of the Founding Fathers, but so has the infrastructure of large municipalities, our means of transportation, telecommunications with both its positive and negative effects, and the advance of science and technology which has enriched and prolonged our lives. All of these created opportunities for businesses large and small to profit in new and expanding markets.

It is painful to look at our paystubs and see that as much as 30% of our income goes to withholding for state and federal taxes. However, consider what the country would be like without the services mentioned above, which result from public-private cooperation. Again, the common enemy is selfishness.

As Unificationists, we ought to think in terms of moving forward with promoting interreligious cooperation to the point where adding a UN interreligious council comprised of men and women of profound depth and faith inform and inspire our national and international leaders. Cheon Il Guk is a world where the public and private sectors are interdependent for mutual prosperity among all people based on universal values.

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