

Building a Platform for Peace

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On February 26, the Fourth Think Tank 2022 Forum for the reunification of North and South Korea was held which featured former U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper. Appearing with him were former military leaders, former senior officials, and academics from the United States, South Korea and Japan. Afterwards, Secretary Esper took questions from the public of these nations, including students.

Think Tank 2022, which developed as an outgrowth of the eight Rallies of Hope for the reunification of North and South Korea that began in August 2020, is holding numerous such events throughout the world, focusing on leaders in government, religion, business, the academic world, women leaders, etc.



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In my view, these Rallies of Hope and Think Tank forums are intended to provide the platform for Mother Hak Ja Han Moon to work for peace if she is able to visit North Korea, as she has stated she would like to undertake in the near future. Thereby, she hopes to build on the work for Korean reunification of her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, when they traveled together to Pyongyang and met with North Korean President Kim Il Sung in December 1991.

Let us look at platforms and the purpose of building them. First, we should recognize that this is a methodology that True Parents have used throughout their ministry. In the 1980s, Rev. Moon built a platform to prepare for his trip to Moscow, where in April 1990 he and Mrs. Moon met with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, accompanied by a large delegation of former heads of state and government.

Rev. Moon began constructing his platform with the *Washington Times* newspaper, which President Ronald Reagan is said to have read every day. He added leading academics in the field of Soviet studies through the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA), which held a major conference in Geneva in 1985 titled "The End of the Soviet Empire." He further built his platform with the World Media Association, which gathered journalists from major media outlets including the Soviet press agency, Novosti, and a delegation of former heads of state and government brought together under the Summit Council for World Peace and AULA. He extended his platform to the realm of sports, when he asked Unificationists to offer warm hospitality to the athletes from communist nations at the 1988 Seoul Summer Olympics.

This was the broad platform by which Rev. Moon demonstrated both strength of conviction and solicitude for the communist world. Upon that platform, he was able to meet with President Gorbachev. Without such a powerful and distinguished platform, it is doubtful Rev. Moon could have met with Gorbachev, or even if they had met, for Gorbachev to treat him with commensurate respect.

The significance of that meeting was to open the gate for religion to return to the Soviet Union, as hundreds of Unificationist missionaries subsequently entered the country to teach the Principle. Protestant missionaries as well began evangelizing the Russian people. Russian Orthodox churches reopened and were rebuilt. Less than two years later, the Soviet Union collapsed and the center of worldwide communism was no more.

Rev. Moon's meeting with President Gorbachev also paved the way for the resumption of Soviet relations with South Korea in June 1990. Thus, it became part of the platform upon which Rev. and Mrs. Moon could meet North Korean leader Kim Il Sung in December 1991. Yet another piece was the Unification Movement's large investment at the time in China, where businesses founded by Rev. Moon were building a factory to produce automobiles.

At their meeting, Rev. Moon and President Kim embraced as brothers. This resulted in opening up North Korea to joint economic ventures with the Unification movement in tourism and automobile assembly, and additional meetings in Pyongyang with former senior U.S. officials brought through Rev. Moon's American Freedom Coalition and delegations of former world leaders from the Summit Council. The

meeting helped create the diplomatic environment for the signing of the December 1991 inter-Korean Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, Cooperation and Family Exchanges.

However, Rev. Moon's platform was not embraced by South Korean governments at the time. Although South Korean President Kim Dae Jung attended the 1999 celebration of the tenth anniversary of the *Segye Times* newspaper with Rev. Moon, President Kim undertook his "Sunshine Policy" towards North Korea on his own. He worked apart from South Korea's NGO sector, including the Unification movement, despite the opening with the North that Rev. Moon had brought about. As a result, although the first inter-Korean summit took place between Kim Dae Jung and North Korea's Kim Jong Il in June 2000, its impact was short-lived. In hindsight, we can perhaps say that although Rev. Moon had built a strong platform in the United States and the communist world, his platform in South Korea was inadequate.

Biblically speaking, platforming was the methodology that Jacob used to overcome the resentment of his brother Esau, so that his reunion with him would go well. Jacob labored for 21 years in Haran to create his platform: this was his wealth in sheep and cattle. When he was about to meet his brother, he first presented it to him:

From what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. These he handed over to his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me and put a space between drove and drove." He instructed the first, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?' then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a present sent to my lord Esau. And moreover, he is behind us.'" He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau when you find him, and you shall say, 'Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us.'" For he thought, "I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterward I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me." (Gen. 32:13-20)

By preparing this platform, Jacob wanted Esau to know that he had become a man of substance who should be treated with respect. Jacob was no longer that conniving younger brother who had skedaddled out of town right after deceiving his father to gain the blessing, being rightly afraid of his brother's wrath. Now he was a successful man whom God had blessed with riches.

Remarking on the significance of this platform for Jacob, Rev. Moon said:

Through these gifts, Jacob wanted to make his elder brother think: "My brother is a fearful man. Indeed, God blessed him. It was my mistake that I sold my birthright so cheaply; hence I deserve to be less successful than my younger brother. So, when my brother comes, I should not reject him. I should rather welcome him." In this way, Jacob could move Esau to recognize that God was with him, and to acknowledge that he was in the position of Abel.

This is the path we should walk; this is the tradition we should follow. It is a formula, applicable in any situation and in every age. (*World Scripture and the Teachings of Sun Myung Moon*, p. 455)



The full video of the Fourth Think Tank 2022 Forum on Feb. 26, 2022.

Clearly Rev. Moon followed this formula and built his own platform when preparing to meet President Gorbachev, and again when preparing to meet President Kim Il Sung. Mother Moon is following the same formula today.

The methodology of building platforms of support is a fundamental feature of messianic thought. God wanted to build a platform for Jesus through the ministry of John the Baptist. He had built a large following among the Israelites by his ministry of baptism in the wilderness. Then John met Jesus at the Jordan River, where through revelation he testified that Jesus was the Son of God (John 1:34). If John had then united with Jesus, his foundation of widespread support would have been the platform for Jesus to appear as the rightful Messiah to all Israel. But John failed to join with Jesus and contribute his following to that platform, which left Jesus to set out on a difficult path that ultimately led to the cross.

At the time of the Second Advent, God labored in advance to prepare a platform for him so that he would not meet the same fate. This platform is the democratic world that upholds freedom of religion:

God's spiritual providence during the two thousand years since Jesus' day has prepared a democratic social and legal environment which will protect Christ at the Second Advent. Jesus was killed after being branded a heretic by the Jews and a rebel by the Roman Empire. In contrast, even if Christ at the Second Advent is persecuted as a heretic, in the democratic society to which he will come, such accusations will not be sufficient grounds for him to be condemned to death. (*Exposition of Divine Principle*, pp. 282-83)

Not only that, democracy provides the space for Christ at the Second Advent to create a platform among the people for establishing the world of God's sovereignty:

When the Messiah returns to societies under the rule of democratic governments well-nurtured by the Christian spirit, he will be able to establish God's sovereignty upon the earth with the wholehearted support of the people. (*EDP*, p. 340)

In contrast to politicians who lead from above, the returning Christ will lead efforts to establish God's sovereignty by the will of the people. Only the will of the people can overcome the egoism of politicians who put their own glory ahead of taking the hard steps required for peace. The will of the people needs to be cultivated by building a robust platform.

As a Unificationist, I would ascribe much of the failures of our past efforts for peace to the inadequacy of our platforms. Rev. and Mrs. Moon's meeting with President Kim Il Sung in 1991 did not lead to Korean unification at that time because the Unification movement's platform in South Korean society was too weak to attract the support of the Korean presidents.

Furthermore, lack of acceptance of the Unification movement within the highest circles of successive U.S. administrations resulted in Rev. Moon's counsel regarding the former Soviet Union falling on deaf ears. After the USSR's collapse, he would have had America invest in a major effort to help the Russian people rebuild their country and improve its institutions, as it did for Western Europe after World War II through the Marshall Plan. America's failure to fully embrace and love the Russian people in the early 1990s is the reason that today the world has to deal with an angry and aggressive Russia that resents and distrusts the West.

It is in this light that we can understand the purpose of the Rallies of Hope and Think Tank 2022 forums. True Mother is working to rally leaders of all sectors of society: government, religion, education, business, the military, and ordinary citizens to build a broad-based platform for Korean reunification. She intends that this platform will be deep and wide enough for her to act freely and confidently when hopefully in the near future she will be able to visit North Korea. Having a platform that includes leaders from all sectors of society in Korea, the United States, Japan, and around the world, she will be better positioned to lead the world to begin taking concrete steps to knit together both Koreas into a unified and harmonious nation.

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