

Hak-Ja Han Moon to Europe: True Love Activities Instead of a Culture of Plunder

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Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon, 'True Love Activities Instead of Culture of Plunder'

Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, 'Peace Starts With Me' Rally

- *'Sacrifices of the underground missionary work in Communist countries'*
- *'If more people yearn for peace, peace will come'*
- *30,000 'Second Generations of the International Wedding Ceremonies,' unfolding of 'peace and unification' in Europe*
- *Heat and excitement of young people during exuberant concert*

The event theme for the "Advancement of Peace in Europe Rally" called "Peace Starts With Me" was held on the 29th of April, at 3 p.m. at the "Wiener Stadthalle" in Austria. About 10,000 people from 60 countries entered the hall after going through a thorough security check.

The cavernous space was quickly filled with people from all races and ethnicities. One choir sang English songs of praise, while matching the energetic movements of the conductor and dancing lightly across the colorful stage. Quite a few people in the audience got up from their seats and joined in with the performance. Even some young participants from Britain, who were sitting next to me, joined in as well. The vast majority of the audience were youths.

Grammy Award Winners, Pop Stars and a famous Choir, ...

Even though it was a religious event, looking at the heat and excitement of these young people, it seemed more like a headline performance a famous pop star. Performances from the Grammy Award winner Yolanda Adams, as well as a Hungarian shadow dance group, which won the ITV "Britain's Got Talent" contest and the Austrian Longfield Gospel Choir just added to the excitement.

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (below Family Federation) arranged this rally to spread the message of "overcoming disputes and conflicts between individuals, religions, nations, as 'One Family Under God,' while striving for peace, reconciliation and unification" across the whole of Europe. Halfway through the program, the emcee suddenly suggested for the participants to talk and share with their neighbors seated next to them. Seeing people talking and shaking hands, even though they have probably never seen each other before, was pretty impressive.

Former prime ministers, former and current government ministers, as well as religious leaders, scientists, women's leaders and businessmen from various countries participated in the event. Dr. Michael Balcomb, the head of Family Federation in Europe stated in his greeting message, "Peace starts with me. If 10 people, 100 people, 1,000 people do this, true peace will follow. Like the coming of spring cannot be stopped, the coming of peace cannot be stopped either. You are the main characters."

Austria's former Minister of National Defense Werner Fasslabend mentioned, "While living a public life, I felt that achieving peace is very difficult. Keeping the peacefulness of a country is not easy, and establishing a framework for multinational security is difficult as well. Planting seeds of peace into a heart that has been destroyed before takes more than 10 years." Also, in the introduction of the keynote speaker, he said, "I, as a representative of Vienna, want to welcome the Head of the Family Federation Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon, who is practicing a life living for the sake of others and has committed her whole

life toward the realization of a world of peace."

Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon's keynote address

The keynote address of Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon was the highlight of the event. As soon as she went on stage, the audience rose from their seats to welcome her. In the Family Federation, the late Dr. Sun-Myung Moon is called "True Father," "the Only-Begotten Son," and Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon holds the title of "True Mother" and "Only-Begotten Daughter." Dr. Han replied to the warm welcome by calmly raising her hand.

Without using a transcript for her address, she said, "We worry a lot about what we should do so that we can live in a peaceful and happy world. But the things happening around us are making us even more concerned about our future." She also mentioned Europe being "a continent prepared by heaven" and further added, "Europe's modern civilization brought about monumental developments in science. However, many problems emerging showed that it alone cannot guarantee peaceful lives for the people or for the future of this earth. The power of humanity has reached a limit." She also stated, "Originally, humankind has to know about who God, the owner of the universe and Creator of all things, is. Only then will the people be able to solve their problems." She then continued to explain the 50-year history of the Family Federation in Europe.



'Through the underground activity, "Mission Butterfly" ...'

The history of the Family Federation in Europe reaches back 50 years. Europe's first members went on an underground mission providence called "Mission Butterfly," in order to liberate people who have been suffering under the iron rule of Communism. Knowing about heaven's dispensation, they charged forward with unchanging and absolute faith. Previously, Europe was unknowing about the essence of Jesus Christ. They did not practice true love and failed Christianity by building up a culture based on egoism. However, now we have come to know that God, our Creator, is our Heavenly Parent."

Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon said. "Our Heavenly Parent went through 6,000 years of pain and bitter tears, searching and longing for his children. The time has come for you to stand in front of Heavenly Parent to fulfill your responsibilities. Like your ancestors, who spread out into the world in Jesus' name, I earnestly ask you to become a Europe that can truly save the world."

Furthermore, she conveyed, "The people of Europe established a culture of conquest, while being unaware about the essence of Jesus. Those who egoistically thought only about the profits of their own country will surely come to an end." She therefore proposed a "Movement of practicing true love" as a countermeasure that concerns this issue. Another remark was that it is not enough for religious people to think about their own salvation, but they should rather go out and work for the salvation of their whole tribe. Dr. Hak-Ja Han Moon then emphasized that the true love and "Hyojeong" (효정[孝情] – Korean: meaning a heart of filial piety and love towards Heavenly Parents) are the way to a world of peace.

On the morning of the same day, the "Inauguration Ceremony of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD)" was held in the Parkhotel Schönbrunn, with 400 religious leaders participating. At this venue, Felix Unger, the president of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts said, "The human nature of sharing between neighbors is important. Religions have always been at the center of humanity and the activities of the major religions, which are based on the humanity of people, can become spiritual bridges that can guarantee for peace."

The Interreligious Association for Peace and Development held a founding and resolution conference in November, 2017, in Seoul. The goal of this organization is to overcome conflicts between religions, and to realize peace for humankind as one big family, through the concord of the world's leading religions and nations. About 500 religious leaders of 20 different religious groups from around 70 countries attended the event. Following this event, the organization is planning to establish itself on every continent. It did so in January this year by holding the founding ceremony for Africa in Senegal.

On April 28, the Youth and Students for Peace (YSP) had its founding ceremony for Europe in the Wiener Stadthalle. Around 1,000 young people from various races and nationalities attended and enjoyed the festivities. The president of Family Federation International, Sun Jin Moon, mentioned, "The young people of Europe should step over strong nationalism and bring peace and harmony to their generation." Two days later, on the 30th of April, a liberation ceremony was held for the Mauthausen Concentration Camp of Nazi Germany. The participants paid their respects to the 120,000 to 320,000 people who were sacrificed in this notorious site.

The ties between The Family Federation and Europe realized its beginning when Reverend Sun-Myung Moon visited Europe in 1965 and made 19 Holy Grounds in 16 countries. However, he was also persecuted during his missionary providence in Communist countries during the Cold War. In 1985, Rev. Moon convinced Dr. Morton Kaplan to declare the collapse of the Soviet Union at the conference of the Professor's World Peace Academy in Geneva, Switzerland. Just four years later, in 1989, the Soviet Union actually collapsed, making it a tremendous topic for that time. The CARP, which is an affiliated organization of the Family Federation, held a demonstration at the Berlin Wall with around 2,000 people demanding for it to be pulled down. This rally has been one of the biggest demonstrations for peace for that time since the construction of the wall.

The fruits of the international marriage ceremonies?

The international marriage blessing ceremonies are one of the defining icons of the Family Federation. Reverend Sun-Myung Moon and Dr. Hak-Ja Han held a joint marriage ceremony for eight couples on the 28th of March, 1969, in Essen, Germany. The international marriage ceremonies have spread around Europe since then. In 1992, the international wedding ceremony for 30,000 couples from all over the world was held in the Seoul Olympic Stadium, catching the world's media's interest and attention. Furthermore, 36,000 couples from all over the world married through the international marriage ceremony in 1995. Nowadays, there seems to be a tendency towards smaller-scale joint ceremonies in each region.

The members of the Family Federation who believe in the Unification Church believe that creating true families is the way to realize God's nation on earth. Also, they took part in the marriage blessing ceremonies in order for their families to have a good start. The families who have come together in this way are called "blessed families" within the Family Federation. The Family Federation elevated the meaning of normal marriage to a holy marriage ritual, and says that it can cure the harmful consequences of secularism, which have plagued society with decadence, sexual hedonism and injustice, through restoring family values.

A member of the Family Federation said, "The number of the second generation members, who were born to parents who took part in blessing ceremonies, has reach up to about 20,000 to 30,000 in Europe. If you would add the third generation, it would be way more." Many young people participated in the "Peace Starts With Me" event. However, it is estimated that many of them were the second generation of the mass wedding families.

There is a unique concept that the second generation received in their lives through the Marriage Blessing Ceremony, which was established Rev. Sun-Myung Moon and Dr. Hak-Ja Han. It seems that the second generation readily accepts Rev. Moon and Dr. Han as their True Parents. Most of these second generation children grew up attending the Unification Church by following their parents. The majority of them, just like their parents, attend the marriage blessing ceremonies and give birth to the third generation after forming their own families.

Compared to the Marriage Blessing Ceremony, general marriages put more emphasis on the "right to choose your own partner." However, it is said the divorce rate among couples of the marriage blessing ceremonies is lower. Having "chosen your own partner" might have an impact on the permanence and overall happiness of a family, but spiritual homogeneity between one's spouse and a sense of responsibility towards the family can also have a strong influence on the longevity of their marriage.

A member of the Family Federation stated, "The base of the Family Federation is growing bigger in each country through the increase in second generation and third generation members.

Following up on "Mission Butterfly" (an underground mission providence within Communist countries),

which was mentioned by Dr. Hak-Ja Han, Juraj Lajda, former president of Family Federation-Czech Republic, said that he spent "three years in prison after commencing Unification Church activities in the Czech Republic in 1973." Dr. Lajda later then gave birth to five children after raising a family with a woman who had also lived in prison before. The story of the university professor (philosophy, linguistics) of Dr. Lajda, was worthwhile hearing.



"Three years spent in prison"

Dr. Lajda telling his story said, "When I was young, I always wondered about which goal I should pursue. On a Saturday in March, 1973, 70 of my friends gathered to have a meeting. Among those, one of them suddenly started talking about the Principle of the Unification Church. This Principle was the answer to my questions. I related to the part that it can be put into practice right away, and that it is aiming at people in a personal way. After the time of democratization, called the "Spring of Prague," ended, I secretly started joining missionary activities. When the police came to know that the Unification Church opposes Communism, it was set under restraint. 25 people, including myself, went to prison. One woman among those even died in prison. This woman was regarded as a Martyr. In prison, I remembered stories about Dr. Sun-Myung Moon living in prison while taking care of others. I endured prison life while thinking about this. Then, after prison I was able to obtain a doctorate degree and I became a university professor.

Mr. Lajda mentioned the following about Dr. Hak-Ja Han, "She is able to continue the tradition of the Unification Church. Dr. Hak-Ja Han has substantial leadership. After the passing of Rev. Sun-Myung Moon, the Unification Church in Europe was unable to get back on track; however, this dilemma could be solved through the guidance of Dr. Hak-Ja Han.

The wife of Dr. Lajda, Mrs. Ernestina Lajdová said, "My father was an engineer and my mother a government employee. To me, the Principle of the Unification Church, that aims to achieve world peace, seemed to be superior to Marxism.

"Since the Unification Church was being severely persecuted, I had to go to prison. After that, I graduated from the university and started working in a research institute." Through the Marriage Blessing Ceremony in 1982, I was able to meet a pure husband who didn't smoke and didn't drink alcohol. I think it's almost like a miracle to have the fortune of raising such a happy family.

Dr. Lajda and Mrs. Lajdová's daughter graduated from Sun Moon University, which is affiliated with the Family Federation, and is now working as translator and interpreter. Mrs. Lajdová said, "We have good feelings towards Korea."

The president of Family Federation-Europe, Dr. Michael Balcomb, stated, "Here, in the city of Vienna, you can see the event's logos and posters everywhere. K-Pop is famous in Vienna, as well. It also promoted connections with Korea." He then proceeded to explain why peace was being brought up as the main topic of conversation in the following message.

'Hopes for North and South Korea to show a model for peace'

"Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Reverend Sun-Myung Moon had the common phrase of "peace starts with me." Many people think that the government creates peace, or that religion does so. However, peace is actually decided by my own actions. Gandhi said, "If there is a certain future you are yearning for, you have to change yourself, not others." There is a huge influx of Muslims in Europe. Because of that, the conflict between young people who were originally born in Europe and young Muslims who found their way to that country, is becoming more problematic. This sometimes leads to extreme violence (radical right-wing groups or followers of Islamic terror organizations). The concept of peace starting with me can help significantly in decreasing these kinds of violence and conflicts. True Mother often says, "The young people of Europe should not reject immigrants." The youth must become the new hope of the future, not a problematic child that only causes problems. The message of "Peace Starts With Me" contributes to this topic.

According to former President of Family Federation Austria Peter Zöhrer, the Family Federation has been registered as one of the eight confessional groups in Austria. Compared to Korea, the process that religious groups must go through to get registered is rather strict and tedious. Peter Zöhrer further added, "Rev. Sun-Myung Moon and Dr. Hak-Ja Han created powerful NGO organizations. The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) is an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, and the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) holds General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. "Because Vienna is a city that holds one of the United Nations offices, these two organizations share a deep connection with Vienna. The two organizations (UPF and WFWP) held numerous conferences inside the UN, and they have been taking the lead in resolving tensions between religions and ethnic groups, as well as leading peace activities, which are difficult to establish on a governmental level."