

## The Washington Times was founded by Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han as America's Newspaper

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Forty-three years ago, The Washington Times was launched in the nation's capital as the world was locked in a struggle between East and West, between freedom and totalitarianism.

The ideological battle lines had been drawn between the essential role religious faith played in the foundation of America and its free society versus the faithless communism that was creeping across the globe, powered by the Soviet Union.

Marxist-Leninist thought, which proclaimed that God was dead and people should look only to the government for their freedoms and rights, had grown to occupy more than two-thirds of the world. And there was fear in some quarters that the leaders in Washington and the nation's elite didn't have the strength to win the global fight.

But Dr. Hak Ja Han and her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, kept their faith in America's God-inspired mission to defend freedom, family, and faith worldwide. Instead, they found a way to create a new daily newspaper, not only to report and educate but to inspire and stand as a voice of truth. The Washington Times entered the fray on May 17, 1982, determined to become "America's Newspaper."

A core task of The Times was to stand against Marxist-Leninist thought that was "coming right up to America's nose," Mrs. Han recalled in 2016, when she launched the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace in an event hosted by the late Senator Orrin Hatch in the Kennedy Caucus Room of the Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.

"America had been complacent and did not recognize how serious the situation had become," she said. Before she and Rev. Moon founded The Times, "Washington, D.C., which we might call the world capital, had only one major newspaper, The Washington Post, and just based on the common sense of democracy, this was something that should not be."

The Times' earliest editorial pages naturally supported the freedom-fighting principles of the Reagan administration.

"We're sometimes accused of wearing our love of America on our sleeves, and we probably do. If 'I love you' are the three most important words in the language, we think it doesn't hurt to say them occasionally to the land we love," former Editor-in-Chief Wesley Pruden said of The Times.

"We call The Washington Times 'America's Newspaper' not because we're the biggest, the richest, the

grandest or even the most important newspaper in America, but because we reflect the good, the worthy and the best of America," Pruden added.

The 1980s were a time of global awakening, as people from Moscow to Tallinn and Berlin to Sofia seemed to finally stand up and shake off the chains of atheistic communism. With nuclear war a constant concern, the Reagan administration proposed a bold, space-based, missile defense system called Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) - also known as "Star Wars."

Opposition to SDI was enormous, especially since the president sought an eye-popping \$53 billion over 10 years in funding, making SDI the "largest single research program ever developed by a Western government," said the United Nations University.

Mrs. Han understood that the reason for the founding of The Washington Times came down to a situation like this. The Times' editorial leadership launched its support of the Reagan SDI initiative amid a full-blown political battle. Mrs. Han later said to close associates, "This fight will have historical proportions. It will be a pivotal struggle for freedom in this century."

Soviet members of the Academy of Sciences even privately complained to a visiting delegation of Western journalists sponsored by The Washington Times Foundation, saying, "Reagan's 'Star Wars' is forcing us to spend ourselves into bankruptcy." These were prophetic words because SDI played a crucial role in the demise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

By the end of the decade, Germany's Berlin Wall came down in November of 1989, and the Soviet Union itself collapsed in the last months of 1991.

World leaders took note of the effect of The Times on the geopolitical struggle against the atheist government of the Soviet Union and its allies.

After President Reagan left office at the end of his second term, he recognized The Times' contribution to ending communism.

"You, my friends at The Washington Times, have told it to them. It wasn't always the popular thing to do, but you were a loud and powerful voice," Mr. Reagan said. "Like me, you arrived in Washington at the beginning of the most momentous decade of the century. Together, we rolled up our sleeves and got to work. And, oh yes, we won the Cold War."

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also praised the reporting and commentary coming from The Washington Times.

"In difficult times, even more than in easy ones, the voice of conservative news must make itself heard in the media," she said. "It isn't always easy, but of this we can be sure: While The Washington Times is alive and well, conservative views will never be drowned out. And if they are heard, they will prevail."

Distinguished scholar and former Washington Times Editorial Board Member Dr. Harry Jaffa wrote: "It is fortunate that the founding principles of The Washington Times are in alignment with the founding principles of the United States," which honor God.

President Donald J. Trump, in a speech by video in 2022 to the Universal Peace Federation's Rally of Hope, said, "I want to thank the UPF and, in particular, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, a tremendous person, for her incredible work on behalf of peace all over the world. Her story of escaping from North Korea at five years old at the outset of the Korean War, is an amazing example of the power of faith in Almighty God. I also want to thank Dr. Moon for founding, with her late husband Reverend Moon, the Washington Times, which has made a priceless contribution to the defense of Truth, Faith, and Freedom both here in America and all over the globe. They have done an incredible job."

For the great many Americans who cherish freedom, family and faith, the moral and spiritual alignment set forth at our nation's founding - and rekindled 200 years later by The Washington Times, "America's newspaper" - still guides us toward a life of sacred honor, Mrs. Han said in her Capitol Hill speech in November 2016. "If America had stayed in that defenseless state, the America of today would not have come to exist," she said.

Mrs. Han, having escaped from North Korea as a child, has continued to call for the strengthening of The Washington Times and its role to inform and enlighten the world, including America's leaders and faith communities, through its pages. "From the perspective of Providence," she said, "America must overcome all challenges and become a nation that would achieve God's dream of religious freedom and peace for all the world."