

Training program for 120 British students in the USA

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August 31, 1973



The much-awaited training program for the 120 British students commenced at Belvedere on the 18th of July and concluded on the 31st of August in the most remarkable fashion when at 7:00 in the morning an important announcement pulled the students out of their beds in a manner never seen before in Belvedere for the past 40 odd days of the course. In effect, they were racing against time to catch a plane back to London scheduled for a 10: 00 a.m. flight from New York.

At the beginning, on their arrival the students were greeted very warmly and it is only pertinent to mention here that some of them were both staggered and surprised to have been attended to in such a manner.



At first the students, understandably, had difficulty in settling down quickly enough. Even though some had a fair idea of what the program would be like, most students were quite lost and so naturally eager to acquaint themselves with exactly what was supposed to happen during the next 40 odd days. But as always in this type of situation there were those whose responses to the proceedings were surprisingly satisfactory and they were stimulating to the staff as much as they were inspiring to the program directors.

Exposing the revolutionary truth of Principle to 120 intellectuals full of academic pride was indeed the most heroic achievement on the part of the lecturers.

Moreover, one sensed the appreciable amount of English sarcasm with respect to American wisdom and the situation deteriorated until they were told that the revelation came from

the land of Korea. This restored everything back to normal in the lecture room. In the light of these facts it was still a miracle to behold some students who absorbed the most important points in the Principle as if they knew only too well that experience is not only sensory but imaginative and spiritual as well.

The students found lectures of Victory Over Communism and Unification Thought more edifying -- especially Unification Thought which seemed to challenge them with an air of academic philosophy. Indeed, during the entire duration of the program there were several who carried textbooks of conventional philosophy, metaphysics and orthodox religion.

Family members were consistently aware that students enjoyed being analytical and critical on most occasions with a hundred and one concepts of energy and humming themes, such as the wave-particle duality of matter, not to forget the fact that Buddhism appeals to both the intelligentsia and the laity alike. Some brilliant young scientists or students always pestered family members by the one statement that spiritual phenomena were not empirically verifiable. Family members also came to observe that while American methods of education stressed that scholars be empirical and practical in their approach, the British were highly theoretical and conventionally academic.

In the later weeks the staff consisting of family members directed themselves at serving the students with total unconditional love, prompting them to open their hearts more and more -- thus making a good base for a deeper relationship with them. The students were quite moved by the love and concern that was present amongst family members who were attending them. The more perceptive students sensed a new standard of life ever present in the family. One of sheer dedication and service of unconditional love based on, and arising out of a pure love for our Heavenly Father. At times when the family sang, some of

these students were deeply moved emotionally.

Family members always acknowledge the gratitude that we have for the Japanese family in Belvedere who at a most critical time of the program invited the students to a ginseng tea party and afterwards raised their spirits so high and succeeded in setting on a mass song and dance session on the floodlit lawn, the conclusion of which sent the British boys scuttling to their beds that night intoxicated with Oriental hospitality and humor and exhausted with physical exertion from the dances. The following morning one student encountered me and said "I say old boy what an evening we had. I'll join your church any day if you have parties like that every evening."



Audience at welcoming party entertainment

However, the Japanese hospitality alone was not sufficient at this stage and the family members worked hard at sharing even better relationships with students and so it was on the various outings and trips that followed, that such an idea had a base to manifest. Magnificent trips were arranged to New York City, the UN Buildings, a boat trip around Manhattan Island, West Point, Bear Mountain, some beaches in New Jersey and so on. Nearly all the students enjoyed these outings tremendously and during the third and fourth weeks of the course some students responded quite well.

The Washington trip which lasted five days was like a dream in a wonderland for all the participants. Some students, soon feeling the loving atmosphere within the family, which was now strengthened with members from Washington, really expressed their gratefulness for being able to be in this program. Many hours of sightseeing and a stage musical in the J. F. Kennedy Center were the highlights of the Washington trip. Also, the students got a fair deal out of the activities in discussion groups which were initiated for the first time into the program.

Back in Belvedere everyone admired the estate's beautiful setting and its surroundings were extremely warm and pleasant. The grass, although parched in some places, looked at its best in places as yet unworn by thudding feet. The lovely trees covered in clouds of bright green leaves, the summer flowers that dropped and left a sticky essence on the grass, and the famous Hudson, relieved of floods and flowing serenely in the background, left the British boys with countless sentimental memories.

They found the food rather tasty too. The delicious smell of vanilla always seemed to fill the Belvedere kitchen, and due to this the students weren't unduly bothered or feeling homesick. Besides, the American pancakes with maple syrup, the homely salads and sandwiches of peanut butter and jelly proved good substitutes for English treacle tarts and dreamy dishes of salmon.

The women in the family proved to be excellent. Those in the kitchen made food with loving hands and great concern while those who served did so with great love and care. Clearly, they were favorites among the students. Almost everyone acknowledged and applauded their tremendous dedication. These things really mattered in that it moved the hearts of the visitors and seemed to bring them nearer the hearts of the hosts. It was apparent even in conversation the relationship of give and take between students and family

members were becoming much more like the subject-object relationship, in that the positions of subject and object changed instantaneously as well as spontaneously. This was very encouraging and inspiring to have observed a proper subject and object relationship which in effect would be a reflection of God.

Further discussions on Principle, more lectures on the advanced study of it and of the History of Providential Restoration made it possible for the keener students to grasp the true meaning of God's relationship to man. On the entertainment side there were movies and sing-song sessions, almost every evening. Although not all students were making good progress, the program directors were satisfied with the keener, positive ones. All activities at this stage were directed at the culmination of the course in Denver, Colorado, where the Anglo-Japanese Joint Conference was going to be held. Also, a group of students who were positively interested in Principle and wanting to observe the typical life-style of members in the various centers were given the opportunity of visiting centers in Providence, RI; Boston, Massachusetts; Durham, New Hampshire; and Burlington, Vermont.



Banquet at Freedom Leadership Foundation's Fourth Anniversary

The trip to Denver, Colorado was received with a great amount of zealous enthusiasm. On arrival at the airport, there awaited buses for the party to go sightseeing and indeed the whole of the afternoon was devoted to looking around the fantastic sights of the fabulous Rocky Mountains. There was excellent fellowship between the British and Japanese students that evening. The much-awaited joint conference turned out to be an unqualified success, and both British and Japanese students in the respective panels responded magnificently to the call. There was a variety show in the evening and members of the family and the British and Japanese students all performed together.

The scenic beauty of Colorado and the surrounding mountain ranges at Estes Park where the conference took place rejuvenated the entire conference party, as did the sports competitions that took place there. The high point of the stay in Denver was undoubtedly the talk by the founder of the International Unification Church, Reverend Sun Myung Moon, who spoke on the "True Way of Life." He said that the most important things for man were Love, Life and Hope. After the talk, everyone who was present seemed to be engaged in discussing the topic of the talk and its contents in remarkable ways for quite some time. The students both British and Japanese seemed to be quite vociferous.

One student remarked that the beauty of Rev. Moon's speech lay entirely in the emotion which he imparted to it. It was indeed the greatest thrill for family members to have witnessed the coming of our Leader face to face with the students. So, ended a most memorable occasion.

Back in Belvedere there was a course evaluation in the form of reports and answers to questions. Some reports consisted of genuine inspiring material.

Lewis Rayapen, of the University of Wales, now researching into the contemporary French novel, writing in praise of the Divine Principle added "I would be extremely interested in any study that would lead me closer to God and to my fellow men, and enable me to participate actively in the Divine plan of Restoration."

Graham Hawkins of Leeds University, a research student on polyesters wrote: "Hearing the Principle itself has been an extremely good experience for me. During my visit to other centers we were best able to see the work and new life style in action. I may now develop an entirely new way of looking at life, considering the existence of God and the spirit world which although a very basic step, I may never have considered otherwise."

Godfrey Camrass of Bristol University, a law student wrote: "My understanding of people has very widely increased by my meeting all the various family members and the Americans and Japanese students. My Christian beliefs have been strengthened by the experience -- this point cannot be emphasized too highly. The personalities and the attitudes of the family members and the impressions of the church has improved my thoughts on my views of life. It is indeed now a more optimistic view. This I think must explain itself. I would certainly like to study Principle further."

Richard Blazek, a graduate of Cambridge University now researching in biochemistry wrote: "I learned that I could relate to individuals which I did not like at first sight. Before coming on the course I had few friends, and sometimes wondered whether I had any value. I found on the course that I did have value. I discovered that the questions which I had been asking about life were being asked by more people than I thought. Previously I had the tendency to think that people with negative approaches to many things were not bothered about such questions. I realized more fully the truth of the statement, 'The more you give, the more you get in return.' Many of my internal conflicts about the relationship between a man and a woman were resolved. I found that true happiness is more than a theoretical concept, and that it can be attained by anyone provided they are willing to work to achieve it. Study of the Divine Principle? Yes, I am determined to become fully conversant with as many aspects of it as possible."



Rev. Moon addresses Japanese and British students at Estes Park

Peter Hutton also of Cambridge University wrote: "I learned about growth of understanding of spirit world, new perspective on the meaning, purpose and nature of life, insights and meaningful interpretation of the Bible and also the understanding and the realization of new ways to increase the rate of spiritual growth. I am also interested in going into more thought and ideas on how the Divine Principle can be applied to practical, social and political problems on the modern world."

Kevin Moye, a mathematics undergraduate at Cambridge University said: "I enjoyed the course very much and I am very sorry to leave so early. The Divine Principle talks of love and I think we should try to unite the world in this way even though it may seem difficult."

Patrick Rix, yet another Cambridge University student wrote: "I should like to put on record my appreciation and thanks to every member of the family for the tremendous amount of love and effort they have put into this course. I am positive that all the students have gained something from it, whether it be a challenge to their own beliefs or simply a glimpse at a different way of life, which seems to hold some potential for good insofar as it makes a positive attempt to eliminate the selfishness which is the cause of so many problems in life today."

Dominic de Prochnow, a classics graduate from Exeter University wrote: "I feel I have increased in tolerance and general decency towards others."

The course has undoubtedly made me less selfish than I was before I came. Also, I have started to think about matters which I had not greatly considered before."

Charles Delaney of the University of Dublin in Ireland wrote: "In particular, the analysis of evil as

misused love and the definition of freedom and so on, are obvious to me now and it amazes me that I have never thought in these terms before. The course has also caused me to ask many questions.

In fact my desire for greater understanding of things in general has been stimulated far more than ever before in these six weeks!" Anthony Whitehouse from Edinburgh University in Scotland wrote: "My understanding of life has grown an infinite number of times since I have been here. Mainly because before I came I had no understanding of life and did not think too much about it. However, I am now in the process of asking myself a whole host of questions about life in general and about my life in particular. My appreciation of the world we live in has been greatly enhanced, particularly an understanding of what is meant by the spirit world and also by an appreciation of my own relationship to the physical world around us."



Summertime singing and lectures on the Belvedere lawn

The last few days at Belvedere were usefully spent by the students. There was a test on Divine Principle and it was here that the staff at Belvedere were deeply inspired in the process of being mystified. Exactly as in their conversational attitude of late on the Divine Principle, the presentation of answers on their scripts showed that inspiration came to them, not via a process of highly intellectualized form-filling but rather the broad context of emotional communication. On the evening before their departure there was a farewell party in Belvedere, and here certificates of merit were awarded to those who had participated in the program with distinction. The farewell party was well attended by members of the New York Center as well as those of the Japanese family, who made the proceedings rather lively.

As the final goodbyes approached, there were many students who were moved by their feelings at that moment, and others who were quite positive that they wanted to stay for another week at beautiful Belvedere. However, amidst the melancholic air around the students, some of whom felt genuinely sorrowful to leave the United States, program director, Michael Warder asked one of them whether he wanted to delve deeply into the Principle. The student gave a prompt answer explaining that what he had heard of the Principle was sufficiently convincing and therefore he did not think that he wanted to study further, but he did most specifically say that he wanted to be very directly involved in God's dispensation for the restoration of mankind.

All in all the family members who served with the Staff during the course gained invaluable experience. To be united within the family was as important as to be united with the purpose of the whole. At times it was most trying for some family members and at the same time there were others who enjoyed the program joining in with the British in almost every activity. In my opinion it was an extremely good life experience for all the family members who were given the opportunity to serve the British students.