

# Moon church director: brainwash image absurd

By E.K. Casaccio

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church has been compared by some to the Nazi youth movement. Others say its members (Moonies) are thin, bleary-eyed and easily brainwashed from a starchy, meatless diet and 16-hour workdays.

In a telephone interview, Marc Lee, director of the Unification Church in Pennsylvania, called this image "absurd."

Lee said members eat meat, vegetables, bread and milk. He said Moon eats the same food and one of Moon's favorites is McDonald's hamburgers.

Lee, who has planned two of Moon's speaking tours, is an assistant to Unification Church President Neil Salonen.

Lee describes Moon as a "wonderful, warm-hearted, loving, family man." Moon has nine children.

"He treats his members like children also," Lee said. "All needs are provided."

Lee, 25, grew up in San Francisco and attended the University of California at Berkeley for a year. The following summer he said he joined the Unification Church "as a time in my life when I was interested in Eastern philosophy."

This was six years ago when, he said, the church had about 100 members. Today more than 30,000 Moon followers are in the United States.

Lee said he wants to get married and have children because "the family is instrumental to creating a better society."

Lee said he is happy in the Unification Church.

"There has been nothing that brought me greater joy," he said. "We believe in joy. Joy comes through hard work."

The work for most members is at least 12 hours of fund raising a day, six days a week, followed by evening prayer meetings.

Members are given a "missionary allowance" of a few dollars a day, Lee said. Recreation includes an occasional trip to the beach or to a movie.

"We don't feel we have so much time for fun," Lee said. "This is a time when sacrificing is not too popular. America is in a more critical state than most people realize. We feel communism poses a major threat to the free world, in that it opposes God."

"I feel like anybody who tries to take a member from our church is opposing God," he continued.

Lee said members believe Adam and Eve failed in their mission to form the first God-centered family. Christ came, he said, as the "second Adam to restore the individual and then the perfect family."

"We see Moon as a prophet or a modern-day instrument of God. God is speaking through him to prepare people for the Second Coming—the same position as John the Baptist."

"The Messiah will bring the kingdom of Heaven on earth," Lee said. "Many think he (Moon) is the Messiah. He has never said he is."

Lee said he thought Moon could be the Messiah because Moon is trying to bring the world together.

"I want to bring God to America and to make God a substantial part of everyone's life," Lee said. "My goals are the goals of the Unification Church."

He said the charge that members are brainwashed and need "deprogramming" is ridiculous. He compared brainwashing to torture and said the Unification Church uses "traditional educational methods."

Lee called deprogramming "an outrageous process—it's kidnapping."

Deprogramming is when a member is taken—usually by parents—from the church. A former member then tries to convince the member, using Bible passages, that he or she has been deceived by Moon's teachings.

Lee said his parents like the Unification Church and members are encouraged to "write and visit their parents as much as possible."

"The door is open and we can walk out. Some members do leave," he added.



## Parents unite to inform about cults

By E.K. Casaccio

Cheryl is convinced laundry work is a unique job. Cheryl is a Moonie.

A Moonie is usually a young adult of legal age who belongs to the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. The Unification Church is a cult based on Korean evangelist Moon's Divine Principle, a 500-page document explaining the religion.

According to Barbara Warnke of Omaha, Cheryl's mother, Cheryl became involved with the Unification Church last fall after attending a weekend meeting with her boyfriend at a Greenville, Iowa indoctrination center.

Cheryl returned, quit school at Kearney State College after one month and lived at the Unification center at 4016 Davenport St. in Omaha, Warnke said.

She said she last saw her daughter before Cheryl was sent to New York in November 1975.

Warnke said she and parents like her decided to start a local organization in Omaha called Save Our Children, Inc., to combat Moon and other cults. As vice president of the group, she says she hopes to help other parents and "make the public aware of what these cults are."

Dennis Whelan, executive director of Council Bluffs' Total Awareness, Inc., and a part-time private detective, also works for the group. Total Awareness works with young adults with problems. Many are runaways or drug users.

Whelan said he believes two-thirds of the 30,000 American youths involved in the Unification Church are fund raisers.

"Each kid (fund raiser) averages \$100 a day, six days a week," Whelan said. "Multiply that by all year and that's that man's (Moon's) income."

"The only thing we've found in common between the cults is all the leaders are getting wealthy," he added. Moon's wealth has been reported between \$15 million and \$20 million.

### Some contact

The Warnkes, unlike some cult member's parents, know where Cheryl is and occasionally talk with her on the phone.

"She lives there (the New Yorker Hotel that Moon owns) and works in the laundry," Warnke said. "She tells us she loves it and they have her convinced it's a unique job."

"She doesn't have any spending money of her own. I just talked to an ex-member who had seen her and she didn't even have a toothbrush. I don't think they have a good diet."

Whelan said a diet of mostly rice and vegetables, with no meat or protein, along with 12- to 14-hour lecture sessions are part of Moon's methods.

He said he has taken about 50 members out of cults for their parents.

Once home, he said, these kids have to be deprogrammed. He says this is a "process used to bring a person back to a natural or normal state."

Whelan said former Moonies need to get involved in something like deprogramming.

"They have to have a purpose to replace serving the leader," he said.

Warnke said Cheryl was a "scholarly-type person, got good grades in school, was a great artist and had a quiet personality, but enjoyed dating."

### Talks like a zombie

"She had personality even in her voice. Where as now she talks like a zombie," Warnke said.

"She just does what they tell her to. She doesn't have any plans of her own. There's something there that changes the mind so radically, some kind of mind control or brainwashing, that they're a different person, and not for the good."

Cheryl's reasons for joining the cult "had nothing to do with what went on at home," Warnke said. In fact, they tell them that they are sacrificing and making a better world for their family, she said.

"Cheryl tells us too, 'I'm doing it for you,'" she said.

"Most of these kids are idealistic and naive. They (the cults) just catch them at a vulnerable point in life where they want to do something for the world and say, 'this is the way to do it,'" she said.

Whelan said the cults form a group and try to recruit college students. He said two Unification groups under other names have operated at UNL. They use other names, he said, because they sometimes can't get on campus with the Unification name. He said some of those names are One World Crusade, Project Unity, Collegian Association for Research of Principles, and Freedom Leadership Foundation.

Campus Police Sgt. Brod Stone said he has not known of any campus or off-campus religious groups connected with the Unification Church.

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