

Crisis in the Unification Church after Rev. Moon's death

Hong Keun Song, Shin-Dong-A Magazine
May 2013

Translation of pro-Hyun Jin Moon article by supporters of Hyun Jin Moon

Rev. Moon's 4th son and 7th son are also overthrown - Secretary rises as new influential figure

Last September 3rd, the "controversial leader" passed away. Rev. Sun Myung Moon was born in the district of Jeong Joo in Pyung Book in 1920. The following is written in his autobiography "As a Peace Loving Global Citizen" that was published in 2009.

"I am a controversial person. The mere mention of my name causes trouble in the world. I never sought money or fame but have spent my life speaking only of peace. The world, though, has associated many different phrases with my name, rejected me, and thrown stones at me. Many are not interested in knowing what I say or what I do. They only oppose me."

Even though the discussions over its theology are far from over, the Unification Church is the most successful religion in the 20th century among those that started in Korea. The Unification Church is both a religion and a business. There are some who even say that it is "a nation".

They increased their influence and minimized the image of a cult by initiating activities in the areas of education, media, academia, sports, arts, etc. The Segye Ilbo, Yong Pyoung resort, Sung Nam Il Hwa soccer team, Sun Won Construction, Saeil travel agency, etc., all belong to the Tongil Group. The American newspaper Washington Times, the Japanese Sekai Nippo newspaper, the Universal Ballet foundation, the Little Angels all belong to the Unification Church. Sun Moon University, Cheong Shim International High School, and Sun Hwa High School were also founded and are managed by the group. The assets of the Tongil Group are estimated at 1.73 trillion won (2009).

The Unification Church is being shaken as it enters a 'post-Sun Myung Moon' era. There have been ground shattering changes to the successor structure as well. How the world evaluates Rev. Moon will change once again depending on the image that the Unification Church takes on from now onwards.

The Fall of the 4th Son who Controlled Funds and the Organization

On March 24th, Kook Jin Moon (43) was dismissed from his position as chairman of the Foundation for the Holy Spirit Association for World Peace and Unification (from here on will be referred as "Tongil Foundation") and as president of the Tongil Group. The Tongil Foundation and the Tongil Group oversee 13 companies and manages other church assets. And the 7th son, church president Hyung Jin Moon (34) also lost his actual power of command. What is going on?

After Rev. Moon's death the Unification Church had the 4th son Kook Jin in charge of the Foundation and Tongil Group, while the 7th son Hyung Jin would be in charge of the religious aspect centered on their mother Hak Ja Han (70). That was the successor structure. The 4th and 7th sons were considered the victors in the so-called "revolt of the princes". Although the 7th son Hyung Jin is the official successor of the Unification Church, the person who actually controlled assets and organizations was the 4th son.

The 3rd son who is also currently the eldest is Hyun Jin (44 – GPF chairman). He leads an NGO engaging in a ‘peace movement that goes beyond the box of religion’. He is walking a path independent from the current Unification Church regime. The first and second sons of Rev. Moon each passed away in 1984 and 2008. There is a significant number of Unification Church members who follow the 3rd son. It is said that many who support the 3rd son are considered elite with a higher education.

The 3rd son is working based on the UCI foundation that was established in 1977 by the Unification Church. UCI also holds a substantial amount of companies like the Tongil Group does. UCI holds True World Group seafood company, Washington Times Aviation (WTA), Il Sung Construction, etc...

In the Unification Church there has been a situation dubbed the “revolt of the princes” that’s been going on since 2010. At the center of this is the 3rd son Hyun Jin Moon, the 4th son Kook Jin Moon (former Tongil Foundation chairman), and the 7th son Hyung Jin Moon (33 – international president). Whereas the 4th and 7th sons have emphasized the Unification Church as a religion, the 3rd son has been preaching that a ‘Unification Movement’ that goes beyond the box of religion is his “Father’s Will”. On April, 2011, the 3rd and 4th sons each had an interview with Shin Donga. This is what they each said.

"My brother is Satan and a fallen archangel who went against the will of the Founder. The successor problem is over. It is not appropriate to frame it as a succession struggle. Rev. Moon designated International President Hyung Jin Moon as successor and representative of the Unification Church. Church members around the world have welcomed this decision and respect him. That is Rev. Moon’s absolute prerogative, and the succession has been concluded." (4th son, former chairman Kook Jin Moon)

“Regardless of how my younger siblings may act, I believe I must maintain the dignity of an elder brother. Position, power, or money do not make you a leader. Unlike a business that has clear boundaries of ownership over assets, in the realm of faith, like with religion, do you think you can ‘own’ the followers or the people? The answer is no. It is different from a company that owns physical assets. I do not know who started this successor issue, but I do not believe it is an important issue. It is nothing but a sideshow.” (3rd son Hyun Jin Moon)

On June 5, 2010, Rev. Moon wrote a declaration with the help of his wife where the 7th son Hyung Jin Moon is designated as a successor. The content of that declaration is the following:

“King of Kings is the only one God. True Parents is the only one parents. All people of ten thousand generations are the people of one lineage and the children of one Heavenly Kingdom. The headquarters of cosmic peace and unification is the absolute and unique headquarters. Its representative and inheritor is Moon, Hyung Jin. The others are heretics and destroyers. The content above is the proclamation of True Parents.”

Removed from his position for losing in the lawsuit

The 4th son Kook Jin Moon, former chairman of the Tongil Foundation, published on the Tongil Group’s official homepage the declaration that named the 7th son Hyung Jin Moon as the “successor” and “inheritor”. The 4th son initiated lawsuits in Korea and America claiming that he would get back the assets that were under the 3rd son. The most well-known of these lawsuits is the legal battle over the “Yeouido land.” The Tongil Foundation has lost in both the first hearing and in the appeal of this case. In this process some members of the church called for chairman Kook Jin Moon’s removal. Former Tongil Heavy Industries Representative Mr. Dong Woon Kim represented members who made that call.

“The faith of the members is wavering. We are not generating any new young members. The most serious problem is that church donations are being wasted because of lawsuits. We believe that the core of this problem lies in chairman Kook Jin Moon’s destructive administration of the Tongil Foundation. He’s waging legal warfare in Korea and abroad through meaningless lawsuits and wasting donations. When the church loses in the Yeouido lawsuit, the damage will be enormous. The amount the church will have to pay in damages for delaying the construction will be an astronomical amount of money. Members calling for the chairman to step down is

something without precedent and unimaginable in our church. Think how bad things must be for us to have to stand up like this.” (Representative Dong Woon Kim)

The Tongil Foundation said that, “Chairman Kook Jin Moon was dismissed from his position as he was held responsible for losing in the Yeouido lawsuit.”

No Hi Pak (72) was elected as the new chairman of the Tongil Foundation and president of the Tongil Group. Chairman Pak is the younger brother of Bo Hi Pak (83) who is a close aide to Rev. Moon’s couple. Mr. Chang Shik Yang (59) who was the continental leader for America was called to Korea to take over the position of church president of Korea which was previously the role held by International President Hyung Jin Moon. At some point, public and official memos which were usually sent out in the name of International President Hyung Jin Moon began to bear President Chang Shik Yang’s name and signature instead.

After president Yang’s recent inauguration the vision and format of the church were changed back to what it was before International President Hyung Jin Moon was inaugurated. In early 2010, International President Hyung Jin Moon had changed the name of the organization to “Unification Church”. Under President Yang the organization’s name was changed back to “Family Federation for World Peace and Unification”. It is known that Chairman Hak Ja Han directed to “go back to the spirit of 1997 when the Family Federation was founded.” President Yang used to be at the forefront of interreligious work in America and worked for harmony between different religions. After President Yang’s inauguration, the Unification Church revealed it would move forward as a lifestyle religion that engages nations, societies, and other religions. This line of thought is similar to what the 3rd son Hyun Jin Moon has been calling for.

Last September, International President Hyung Jin Moon (7th son) returned to America and took the role of overall president of the church of America. However, on February 14th, he was removed from his position as president in America by a vote of the board of directors of the Unification Church of America. In the end, the International President is only holding onto the title itself, but has lost his actual authority and power related to that position. From being the person who was once designated as “successor” and “representative” and was leading the Unification Church, he has now fallen from power and toppled. In a letter written by Hyung Jin Moon to the church members in America he says the following:

“True Mother (Chairman Hak Ja Han) announced that we will be let go from our role as president of HSA-UWC America. My wife and I were a little surprised as this is the third time that we have been ‘let go of’ since Father’s ascension with no prior guidance or explanation given for termination. It would be dishonest to say that it does not hurt (again) or baffle us, but we have always had a positive outlook on life and that won’t change.”

In short, the successor structure of the Unification Church centered on the 2nd generation (religious aspect – Hyung Jin Moon, business aspect – Kook Jin Moon) has been either ‘effectively canceled’ or has been put on hold. But that doesn’t mean that the new chairman of the Tongil Group Mr. No Hi Pak or Korea church president Chang Shik Yang are the new power in the church. The general view within and outside the Unification Church is that these two fulfill their roles and hold power only in practical terms, but they are not the people holding the actual power in the ‘post-Sun Myung Moon’ era.

Gatekeeper holds actual power

After the two sons of Rev. Moon were removed from core positions, the Unification Church is currently in a structure where “chairman Hak Ja Han rules directly” (according to Ho Yeol Ahn, Unification Church director of public relations). The other person besides Chairman Han who holds actual influence is Mrs. Hyo Nam Kim. In the Unification Church Rev. Sun Myung Moon’s mother Kyung Kye Kim is called ‘Choong Mo’, and Hak Ja Han’s mother Soon Ae Hong is called ‘Dae Mo’. It is said that Hyo Nam Kim channels the spirit of Mrs. Hong. The Unification Church believes that the spiritual and physical worlds are connected. Mrs. Kim is called ‘Hoon Mo’. It is known that Chairman Han holds Mrs. Kim in very high regard. One Unification Church official said, “Hoon Mo Nim’s influence has increased significantly after Rev. Moon passed away.” Mrs. Kim leads one of the

main generators of donations in the Unification Church in Cheong Pyoung through ancestor liberation ceremonies.

It is believed that Chairman Han demanded that 4th son Kook Jin Moon step down from his position as chairman immediately after Rev. Sun Myung Moon passed away. But Kook Jin Moon did not accept this demand and tried to stay in power. Last October there was a public announcement posted on the official Tongil Foundation facebook page about this situation that said:

"Kook Jin Nim (former chairman Moon) asked True Mother (chairman Hak Ja Han) that he be relieved of his position in the Tongil Foundation by a majority vote of the Foundation's board of directors. He said he was acting in response to True Mother's decision to turn the Foundation over to new leadership. Though he is not resigning, he will not resist the board of directors as they move to relieve him. He said he would like for this process to play out in the next seven days so that he can leave Korea and return to the United States. Kook Jin Nim said that he was grateful for the support and assistance during his eight years at the Tongil Foundation and that he hoped the church and its organizations would continue to develop after his departure."

A board meeting was held on October 23rd following the request by former chairman Kook Jin Moon. However, the meeting took an unexpected turn and chairman Kook Jin Moon was not dismissed from his position. Then on October 27th, chairman Moon was inaugurated as president of Segye Ilbo newspaper and actually expanded the range of his activities. And then he initiated an aggressive propaganda campaign to show the results of his business performance. It is explained that right before the board meeting to dismiss him chairman Kook Jin Moon made up his mind he would not step down, and that Chairman Hak Ja Han decided not to force the issue immediately.

The news of the conflict between the 4th son and his mother reached the members of the church and there was a stronger push calling for the 4th son to step down. In February of this year former chairman Moon was deprived of authority and position over the Unification Church of Japan, which happens to be the church's main funding source. The people considered to be 'Kook Jin Moon's people' were removed or changed from their positions through personnel changes. One representative of the Unification Church said, "Bad words about Kook Jin Moon and Hyung Jin Moon reached Chairman Hak Ja Han's ears. There are suspicions that this is related with an issue of extending Rev. Moon's life through life support."

Last September, 7th son Hyung Jin Moon went back to America and his role was reduced to only being in charge of America. But as mentioned earlier he has now been dismissed from his position as president of the church of America. Before International President Hyung Jin Moon was given the position of president of the church of America, his elder sister In Jin Moon held that title. However, she was dismissed from her position due to inappropriate relationships between In Jin Moon and a follower being revealed. Each one of Rev. Moon's children were pushed away from their core positions for this or that reason.

In this process Rev. Moon's secretary Hyo Yool Kim (vice chairman of the Mission Foundation) has emerged as the person who holds actual influence and power. Unification Church members call him by his American name "Peter" Kim. Peter Kim has "served" Rev. Moon closely for 40 years. He was also the butler of Rev. Moon's family at one time. As Rev. Moon's secretary and personal assistant Peter Kim took the role of being Rev. Moon's "ears". And that's why Peter Kim understands the ins and outs of the Unification Church internal power structure and knows the (good and bad) characteristics of the core leaders.

Early this year chairman Hak Ja Han expressed that Peter Kim was "a person who is above all institutions". Within the leadership in the church there's been a recent tendency of greater authority and influence given to leaders who are from the Ho-Nam region of Korea, which just so happens to be the same region where Peter Kim came from. Mr. Sang Kwon Park who was the president of Pyung Hwa Motors, Sun Jo Hwang who is the president of Sun Moon University, Yong Chul Song named president of the church of Japan, Suk Byung Kim in charge of the History Compilation Committee of the Unification Church, Ho Yeol Ahn in charge of public relations of the Tongil Group and others are considered to be part of the "Peter Kim Group". One Unification

Church official said:

“If we were to make an analogy, it would be more appropriate to call the situation the ‘revolt of the eunuchs’ instead of the ‘revolt of the princes’. As all the Children are removed from the scene Peter Kim, the person who was the secretary, becomes the person who exerts power and influence over the organization and funds. He’s been dubbed the ‘person above all institutions’. As we look back to what the press and media had once called the ‘battle of the princes’, we realize that Peter Kim was actually at the center of each situation and each lawsuit. For a long time Peter Kim played the role of being Rev. Moon’s mouth and ears. Although it may not be the best analogy, it reminds me of the Han dynasty in China when the eunuchs carried power and arbitrarily had their way. If we were to compare this to Korean history, Peter Kim is the person who kicked out the eldest prince and had a crucial role in establishing the youngest son as the successor. But now, the 7th son who was in charge of the religious aspect and the 4th son who was in charge of the businesses have been pushed out of the picture. The Gatekeepers have taken over the church with the vacuum left by the Children who were kicked out.”

4th Son held on to the bitter end

Peter Kim also played a crucial role in removing the 3rd son from the picture of the successor structure. A few days before the 7th son was declared successor and inheritor on June 5, 2010, Peter Kim sent the following email to one of his staff members:

“I prepared a powerful written directive that includes True Father’s (Rev. Moon’s) signature to send out to the whole world, but Dr. Yang went to Yeosu and came back empty handed. We will take some more time and within a few more days we will absolutely obtain that written directive.”

Peter Kim sent the following email to a church leader in South America immediately after the 7th son was declared successor and inheritor in a declaration:

“Are the members eating up the proclamation that we got TF to sign and sent to you this time? One regretful thing is that we didn’t get to carve the three words “Hyun Jin Moon” into the proclamation. If we need [another proclamation] in the future, we will make it to include his name and it could work as an ultimatum.”

According to Si-Sa Journal magazine, Peter Kim said to church leaders at an International Leader’s Meeting held in February 2010 that ‘Mr. Hyun Jin is ignoring Rev. Moon’s authority and he is dismissing the successor’s position’. The secretary began to criticize Rev. Moon’s 3rd son. According to reports, Richard Bach (Jin Yong Park) who is the in house lawyer of the Unification Church said that ‘The Washington Times Aviation which is controlled by Mr. Hyun Jin has sued Hak Ja Han’. The very framing of the so-called “Revolt of the princes” began with the claims by Richard Bach and Peter Kim and then the attacks spread to the rest of the Unification Church.

The following incident happened right before Rev. Sun Myung Moon passed away. Kook Jin Moon and international president Hyung Jin Moon went to Peter Kim asking him to present questions to an ailing Rev. Moon with regards to what were his dying wishes about the Unification Church. They said [Peter Kim] should ask these questions because if his children ask him those questions he will not be objective. It is understood that Rev. Moon did not give any response to the questions [Peter Kim asked him on Hyung Jin and Kook Jin’s behalf]. The 4th and 7th son even tried to have their questions answered in a “Yes” or “No” format, but they did not receive any answer. According to an audio recording, Peter Kim spoke to the members right after Rev. Moon’s death. He said the following:

Unification Church claims “There is no confusion”

“Yesterday or the day before yesterday--I can't remember very well--early in the morning they call for me. Mr. Kim. They call and say ‘Let us go see Father’. So I quickly took them to Father. As we got there how can they even think of this? They told me to whisper several questions into Father's ear and get answers from him while the

whole thing is filmed on video. They said it was urgent. They said they wanted to hear from Father the decisive answer on these great providential questions. So I said to them, 'But, Hyung Jin Nim you speak Korean so well, and Kook Jin Nim your Korean is good enough. Why are you asking me to do such a thing?' It wasn't because I didn't want to do it, but I said 'I decline.' So, then Kook Jin Nim said 'We need to be objective. If one of his children asks him a question [and say that Father answered in such a way] then people will say that Father answered that way because it's his child.' So, Mr. Kim, you should ask him. I don't know why but for some reason on that day Father had his eyes shut close and did not even move or respond in any way at all. I will not tell you what the questions were, but they were expecting Father to answer with a yes or a no. They wanted him to respond "yes for this, no for that". They would go that far to receive an answer."

One Unification Church official said, "There's a big chance that the questions the 4th and 7th sons tried to ask were related to [who has] authority over the church." But when Peter Kim revealed to members that the 4th and 7th sons attempted asking questions to an ailing father, Mr. Kim's words damaged their situation.

Peter Kim also played a crucial role in the dismissal of former chairman Kook Jin Moon. The 4th son's translator and former public relations official of the Tongil Group, Mr. Timothy Elder, wrote in Facebook that, "A board meeting called by the chairman (Kook Jin Nim) in Pearl River, NY, failed to reach a quorum, when the four board members who requested the meeting did not appear. The four held a separate meeting of their own at midnight, Korea time, in Cheongpyeong. It was here that Kook Jin Nim was removed." The 4th son resisted and struggled with Peter Kim and the other Tongil Foundation board members to the bitter end until he was removed.

There were 7 board members in the Tongil Foundation. It is understood that former chairman Kook Jin Moon, Hyung Jin Moon (7th son), and Mr. Jin Sun Ahn were against the vote to dismiss [Kook Jin Moon]. The board members who voted to dismiss him are Peter Kim, Jung Ok Yoo, Joon Ho Seuk, and Dong Han Lee. One Unification Church official said, "If the vote had taken place in New York [as chairman Kook Jin Moon wanted], there was a chance that one of the votes would have abstained and the situation would have been very different."

With the structure of the Unification Church being said to be managed centered on Chairman Hak Ja Han, the influence of those called the "Peter Kim Group" became stronger. At a 'Special meeting of the providential organizations in 2013' that took place on January 7, 2013, Chairman Han said that "Peter Kim is special. He is above all institutions." And she also said, "I have raised a lot of second generation, but I think the second generation still need time. I think we need to raise them. It's the same with the children in my family. That's why I will take the lead."

Ho Yeol Ahn, public relations officer of the Tongil Group said, "You can say that Chairman Han is directly involving herself. Although former chairman Moon was removed, the international president [Hyung Jin Moon] still holds the title of international president, even though he left the church in Korea. The defeat in the first trial and appeal of the Yeouido lawsuit influenced the decision to dismiss Kook Jin Moon. The view that Vice-Chairperson Peter Kim is the person who holds actual power is not true. The church is stable with Chairman Han at the center of it. It is not correct to report that there is any confusion."

Many voices express their concern for the future of the Unification Church as the successor structure is shaken again. The Unification Church is the most successful religion that started from Korea in the 20th century. Will the Unification Church be able to maintain itself in the "Post-Sun Myung Moon" era?