

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japan's Humorless Comedy Of Dishonest Government Ministers

Knut Holdhus
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Japanese government ministers lacking integrity create comedy that no one laughs of

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An "unfunny comedy" based on the integrity of Education Minister Moriyama, Prime Minister Kishida, and MP Konishi

by Seisaku Morita

"Doesn't even qualify as a joke."

There are "principles of good faith" in the Civil Code. The idea is to act in a way that does not betray the trust of the other party. Among those principles is the principle of "clean hands" which says that you cannot receive legal protection if you are not honest.

Japan's Civil Code is based on strict moral principles such as "faithfulness" and "honesty". But what about the world of politics? Looking at the battle between the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports,

Science and Technology, Masahito Moriyama, it is tempting to say that politicians are quite far removed from moral principles.



In his own YouTube program, lawyer Masaru Wakasa pointed out the following, citing the principle of "clean hands", "In that sense, it is incompatible for Minister Moriyama to file a request for a dissolution order at the same time as he has considerable ties to the former [Unification Church](#)." In other words, he was disqualified as the minister who demanded the dissolution. Masaru Wakasa assessed the current situation with great clarity and added, "It doesn't even qualify as a joke; it's nothing more than a laughing matter."

While lawyers and politicians are different, it can be said to be a matter of lacking integrity when a politician who received support from a [religious organization](#) during elections tries to dissolve that same organization. Masahito Moriyama is said to have received election support and a letter of recommendation from an organization associated with the [religious group](#).

Avoiding the issue, now he claims to have no recollection of it.

However, Wakasa, who has previously run for the House of Representatives and has long been engaged in the study of lies, says almost categorically, "I believe he is lying."

The reasons for stubborn denial

For this reason, Wakasa says, "It will be quite difficult for Minister Moriyama to go through with a lawsuit for a dissolution order." Wakasa also raised the fundamental problem that Prime Minister Fumio Kishida was suspected of having ties to the [religious organization](#). Therefore, instead of the Cabinet applying for a dissolution order, prosecutors should have done so based on the Religious Corporations Act. In other words, this can be interpreted as an indication that the government believed that if left to the prosecutors, it would be unable to dissolve a [religious organization](#) that had never been subject to criminal

penalties.



Fumio Kishida 14th July 2022

If the [religious organization](#) were truly "anti-social", then politicians who had connections with it would not have clean hands, and they would lose the qualification to request a dissolution order. However, it is an unfunny comedy that the Liberal Democratic Party government, which had close ties with the [religious organization](#), recognized it as anti-social and filed for dissolution.

If Moriyama were to admit to have had ties to the [religious organization](#), it wouldn't only cost him his ministerial position. Wakasa emphasizes, "The very act of him filing for a dissolution order poses a huge problem, which is collapsing in on itself. That's why even if he wants to admit he had ties, he cannot." In other words, Moriyama's steadfast denial of his connection with the [organization](#) is crucial because without it, the request for a dissolution order would be untenable, leading to the collapse of the Cabinet.

There is another unfunny comedy. On 19th October 2022, Prime Minister Kishida abruptly changed his response overnight regarding the requirements for filing a dissolution order. The previous day, he had claimed that torts under civil law "do not apply." Then, suddenly he asserted that they "do apply".

In the autumn, he was boasting about it



Hiroyuki Konishi in March 2020

Hiroyuki Konishi, a member of the House of Councilors from the Constitutional Democratic Party, said in the 22nd February issue of Weekly Shincho, "Prime Minister Kishida had no desire to request a dissolution order against the [organization](#), but at the same time he felt a sense of urgency to avoid being cornered by the government being called the 'patron saint of the former [Unification Church](#)'." The following is the more important part of the story. It's a bit long, but I will retell it here.

So, Prime Minister Kishida did his calculations and chose to overturn the legal interpretation overnight in order to avoid damage to the government. He had no faith in "upholding the interpretation of the previous cabinet" or "thoroughly resolving the issue of the former [Unification Church](#)". In the end, Prime Minister Kishida decided on a political stance by gauging the direction of the wind. This is something that should never have been done in a country governed by laws. I feel ashamed.

This is what makes you dumbfounded and unable to speak. Last autumn, I wrote in this column that Hiroyuki Konishi boasted in two YouTube videos about suggesting to Prime Minister Kishida how to respond [to questions] by using lies. If it's true what Konishi boasted about, then the very person who threatened to blame the Prime Minister again and again for being "the patron saint of the former [Unification Church](#)", and in addition made Kishida do something "absolutely not to be done", he [Konishi] is now criticizing Prime Minister Kishida for being "pathetic". It's unbelievable. It seems that politicians are indeed devoid of integrity and credibility.

"Unfunny Comedy of Ministers Lacking Integrity" - text: Seisaku Morita. Published 22nd Feb. 2024 at 11:14 Pm, updated 23rd Feb. 2024 at 1:10pm.

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The Japanese monthly opinion magazine Seiron (正論) published in its December 2023 issue a

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Opposition Inciting



The first page of the feature article in the December 2023 issue of *Seiron* (正論) with the title "Doubts about the Request for a Dissolution Order".

In its December 2023 issue a feature article on the outrageous persecution of the [Family Federation](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) in Japan. The article by Makiko Takita, well known journalist and editor-in-chief of the magazine, presents a conversation with Rev. Haruhisa Nakagawa (中川晴久), President of *Japan Christian Theological Institute* and Secretary of *Tokyo Christian Theological Institute* (東京キリスト教神学研究所), and Professor Tsutomu Nishioka (西岡力), from the *Ethics and Moral Education Foundation*, professor at the *Institute of Moral Science*, *Tokyo Christian University*.

On 18th January 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), the leading international online magazine on religious freedom and human rights, published the second of six parts of the English version of the original *Seiron* article. (See the [whole Bitter Winter article](#).) Read more on [article 1](#), [article 3](#), [article 4](#), [article 5](#), [article 6](#) in the [Bitter Winter](#) series.



In the second part, Rev. Nakagawa describes how the government body *Agency for Cultural Affairs* (文化庁) has **ignored several serious and crucial issues** in its request to the *Tokyo District Court* to issue an order to dissolve the [Family Federation](#).

The Christian leader points out that the information that the government has based its request on, is **completely one-sided and not to be trusted**. In fact, much of it appears to come from *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales* (全国霊感商法対策弁護士連絡会), a group of activist lawyers, many of them leftwing, who are hostile to the [Family Federation](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) and have been campaigning against it for decades.

Rev. Nakagawa explains that the network of lawyers,

"has been **using such former believers – who were abducted and forcibly converted [de-converted by faith-breakers] in confinement for many years** – to develop court battles in pursuit of the [church](#) and its assets."



Haruhisa Nakagawa. Photo: Private

In other words, the network of **activist lawyers exploited cynically a situation** where more than 4,000 members of the [Family Federation](#) were kidnapped, held in forcible detention, sometimes for years, and forced to undergo horrendous faith-breaking sessions controlled by professional deprogrammers. If and when a believer would finally agree to abandon his faith, he would be introduced to lawyers who encouraged him often **under duress** to sue the [Family Federation](#) for damages. Rev. Nakagawa describes the situation,

"The Agency for Cultural Affairs used as the basis for the dissolution request 128 of the 231 plaintiffs in the 22 civil lawsuit judgments (increased to 32 at the time of the request). These cases were the ones the [Unification Church](#) lost in court. These cases were also often these where the people suing the church had been forced to apostatize through the same kind of abduction and confinement tactics. We believe that this **could violate Article 38 of the Constitution**, which states, **'No confession made under compulsion, torture, or intimidation, or after unreasonably long detention or imprisonment, shall be admissible as evidence.'**

Hence, it is hard to understand that the **government** does not see that these people are being "trapped" in losing their

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see that they may be **acting illegally** in **basing their dissolution request on civil cases largely masterminded by hostile lawyers** who support methods like kidnapping, forcible detention, and testifying under duress.



Illustration of how **Family Federation** member **Toru Goto** was abducted by his own family. Photo: **Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion**

Nakagawa describes how some parents of adult members of the **Unification Church** were involved in the forced de-conversion of their sons or daughters. The **parents were thoroughly instructed by faith-breakers** for a period of up to half a year, **learning how to carry out the kidnapping, forcible detention,**

and faith-breaking. Haruhisa Nakagawa says,

“Parents claim they tried to compel their abducted children to leave the church out of love. However, it is important to note that these ‘children’ were adults.”

The Christian leader also mentioned how the forced de-conversion

“damages the parent-child relationship and leaves a big scar. Even if the adult believers say they are happy to have left the group, they may still be tormented by the memory of the moment of abduction and confinement, and a rift between parent and child may eventually develop, and the wound may never heal.”

Rev. Nakagawa also explained that such **faith-breaking hardly exists in other nations.**

“However, **in Japan, deprogramming has continued.** This is because the National Federation of Bar Associations [short for *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales*] has a **well-established system of inducing deprogrammed believers to file lawsuits.**”

Nakagawa goes into this in further details,

“On the surface, the lawyers and former believers say, ‘We were deceived by the **Unification Church,**’ and ‘The **Unification Church** is reprehensible,’ but behind the scenes, they pursue the **Unification Church** as plaintiffs in court by committing **serious human rights violations and trampling on the dignity of individuals.** But the system behind the scenes is **hidden from the public,** and the fact that even Christian pastors and lay leaders have been involved in these human rights violations is still not mentioned at all.”

The Christian leader also points out that he is **astounded that the network of hostile lawyers has been asked to take part in the government's investigation** prior to requesting the dissolution order.

He emphasizes that

“there is already a **precedent in the U.K.** of an attempt to dissolve a religious corporation through the concerted efforts of an ‘anti-cult’ organization/activists and the government. In 1984, the



Masaki Kito, activist leftwing lawyer who was brought in as advisor to the Kishida administration by

British government joined forces with anti-cult movements to eliminate the charitable status of the [Unification Church](#), which is equivalent to Japan's efforts to revoke its status as a religious corporation.

administration by [China-friendly government minister Taro Kono](#). Photo: [Screenshot / Bitter Winter](#)

The **British government's investigation relied almost entirely on the anti-cult groups**, and deprogramming experts gathered testimonies from ex-members who had been forced to apostatize. But much of this information was exaggerated or disproven, and eventually the **British government lost in court and had to pay** the [Unification Church](#) \$6 million, or about 850 million Japanese yen."

Read more on [article 1](#), [article 3](#), [article 4](#), [article 5](#), [article 6](#) in the [Bitter Winter](#) series

Featured image above: Some of Fumio Kishida's cabinet on 13th September 2023. Kishida on the left and Taro Kono on the right. Kono, Minister for Digital Transformation and Minister for Consumer Affairs and Food Safety, is known to have lobbied Kishida to get the [Family Federation](#) investigated. In August 2022 Kono appointed Masaki Kito as expert advisor in a study group Kono established in the Consumer Affairs Agency for the issue of the [Family Federation](#). Kito is an activist radical leftwing lawyer who has been campaigning against the [Family Federation / Unification Church](#) for decades. Photo: [首相官邸ホームページ / Wikimedia Commons](#). License: [CC Attr 4.0 Int](#). Cropped

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