



**UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF
ICRF PRESIDENT DAN FEFFERMAN
April 27, 2012**

Japan Delegation. Our group returned to the U.S. on April 7 after a very fruitful trip to Japan to demonstrate America's growing concern about human rights violations in Japan. After a full day of briefings from victims, church officials, independent journalists, and legal experts we spent the next two days in intense meetings with Diet members, bureaucrats and US embassy officials. The final day featured a trip the devastated earthquake-tsunami zone near Sendai.

Our visits to Diet members featured the personal testimony of recent faith-breaking victim Miss Kiyomi Miyama, whose "rehabilitation" required her to visit the confinement apartment of Mr. Toru Goto who was undergoing his ordeal a few floors above her own private prison in the same apartment building. Miss Miyama's testimony will play a key role in Mr. Goto's current civil trial against his abductors. Diet members were deeply impressed, and several agreed to communicate directly with the government ministers of the Justice Ministry and the National Commission on Public Safety. Through the statements of Mrs. Kathryn Porter and other key delegation members, we were able to drive home to fact that the issue is gaining the serious attention of U.S. lawmakers, human rights organizations and the United Nations.



Clockwise from bottom: Kathryn Porter, James Gavin, Dan Fefferman, Michael Jenkins, Ms. Miyama and Mr. M. Kajikuri meet with national legislators and bureaucrats in the Diet.

Although several Diet members gave us their strong support, the delegation was disappointed by the attitude of bureaucrats we met from the Bureau of Civil Rights, who took the attitude that police cannot interfere in "family matters" even when a question of religious freedom is at stake. One official went so far as to state that "there are no confirmed religious freedom violations" in Japan, according to the US State Department's *International Religious Freedom Report*. The meeting made clear to us where the real problem lies: in the Japanese bureaucracies who ignore Japan's own laws and international human rights standards to allow kidnappers and faithbreakers to operate with impunity.

In our later meeting with top officials at the US Embassy, we emphasized that the Japanese government was using their report's disclaimer (which says that our complaints could not be "independently verified") as a justification to ignore the human rights of UC members. We were very happy with the response: namely, that the recent Human Rights Without

Frontiers report constitutes independent verification, so that the current disclaimer will not appear in the upcoming State Department report.



Coastal town was entirely obliterated by the tsunami.

Sendai. The trip concluded with a trip to Sendai and the devastated area hit by last year's earthquake and tsunami. We were briefed by the provincial governor and tour the area hardest hit by the catastrophe. As a result, we come home determined to let Americans know both how grateful Japan is for the help given so far by the US, and also how much more help is needed.

Capitol Hill. James Gavin, Michael Jenkins, Kathryn Porter and Dan Fefferman met with a US Congressional leader on April 19th to discuss plans to expand our work to influence the Japanese government to uphold international human rights standards. Among the ideas we discussed were:

- Holding a briefing by Willy Fautre or Aaron Rhodes to explain the findings of the recent Human Rights Without Frontiers report on religious freedom violations in Japan.
- Setting up a meeting with Amb. Suzan Johnson Cook and other State Department leaders to report on our own recent fact-finding tour. Rev. Jenkins reports that the meeting is already agreed to, but we still have to confirm the logistical details.
- Mobilizing Congressmen and human rights experts to come to Japan to understand the issue first-hand.

Jim and Kathryn have been approaching many Members about possible upcoming travel dates. On the foundation of the success of our recent trip, several offices have expressed a desire to participate. We are also making plans to educate a number of people who have not yet received a detailed briefing on the issue.

Submission to UNHRC-UPR. UPF-USA has submitted a complaint to the UN Human Rights Council pursuant to the upcoming Universal Period Review for Japan, which takes place next fall. Human Rights Without Frontiers has also filed a submission. The UPF submission gives special attention to recent cases and documents the fact that human rights are **systematically denied by Japan's failure to live up to his commitments under international law. It concludes: "Religious believers in Japan are systematically denied justice at every level, from the local police, to prosecutors' offices, to the highest courts in the land. Japan's constitutional and criminal justice code have adequate provisions to address the problem. What is lacking is only the political will of the Japanese government to enforce the law..."** The complaints were drafted by ICRF. Once accepted, the complaints will become part of the UN's public record.

ICSA Conference. Our plans for participating in the International Cultic Studies Association's annual conference in Montreal in July are now solid. Dan Fefferman will attend on behalf of ICRF. Franco Fumaloro (UPF Canada) lives in Montreal and will also join the conference. Mr. Shunsuke Uotani will come from Japan. Dan's public participation will now include two sessions: 1) presentation of his paper "Are ICSA, Info-Cult, and the Unification movement ready for mutual dialogue?" on Thursday morning, moderated by Eileen Barker and 2) a panel discussion on Saturday morning moderated by Michael Kropveld entitled: "Ethics, activism against, and dialogue with cultic groups."

CESNUR conference. We are continuing to solidify plans for ICRF's participation in the CESNUR conference in Morocco in September. CESNUR is considering Dan's paper on the "theological dimensions" of the UC-UCI split, which will examine how the split as affected various trends in Unification Theology.

Daily Pennsylvanian Article. Controversy of the negative *Daily Pennsylvanian* article which suggested that UC members need to be "deprogrammed" has resulted in the newspaper taking corrective action, and a number of new doors have opened for Unificationists on the University of Pennsylvania campus. The following is excerpted by U of Penn CARP leader Crescentia DeGoede:

Today Megan Dickson and I met with three members of the DP: Executive Editor, Dana Tom; City News Editor, Julie Xie; and "Darker Side" author, Glenn Shrum. In my opinion the **meeting went well.** ...Although none of the three offered a vocal apology, they seemed sincere in their expressed desire to take action to make up for their incorrect portrayal of our movement in Philadelphia, use of inappropriate and offensive terminology and the negative impact of this article on our members, supporters and enemies internationally, as well as, come to better understand who we are and how we function as a movement today and better represent us in the future. At the end of the meeting, all three expressed gratitude for our willingness to communicate and meet with them and give them the chance to learn from the situation and make improvements in the future. Here are some of the important outcomes of the meeting. The DP has promised to:

The Daily Pennsylvanian

Some religious organizations near campus show 'darker side'

Called high-pressure groups, these organizations can have negative consequences for followers

By **GLAM LINDEN** April 5, 2012, 9:04 pm



Lewis' Life Ministries has a local branch at 411 and Sanson streets. Religious studies professor Stephen Dunning, who has studied the church, said it

1. Publish in their next issue at least a few of ANY letters to the editor our members submit to the DP before Wednesday, April 25th.
2. Publish a revised version of the "Darker Side" article on the Internet, in which they **will correct their use of the terms Moonie and deprogramming...The original version** of the article will cease to be available after this revision has been made.
3. Publish a notification of the revision to the "Darker Side" article in print, directing readers to read the revised article online.
4. Publish a follow-up article featuring our contemporary movement in Philadelphia.
5. Communicate and consult with us each step of the way.
6. Read any quotes they intend to use from interviews with our membership to us before they publish them, upon our request.
7. Meet with Dr. Dunning [the professor who was misquoted by them in the original article] to understand his point of view and take corrective action for the misdeeds against him. They will also be encouraging him to write a letter to the editor, which they intend to publish.

Bridgeport University. (Excerpted from familyfed.org) Members of a chapter of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) at the University of Bridgeport (UB) hosted an event to raise awareness of the religious injustices against Unificationists in Japan on Tuesday, **March 28, 2012. The chapter worked closely with UB's Student Programming Board (SPB).**

Second-generation Unificationist and mother-of-three Lena Yasutake gave a presentation about forced conversion in Japan at the "Religious Freedom: World Café" event at Bridgeport University. Participants discuss the human rights issues in Japan in small groups, through which organizers of the event hoped that people would be encouraged to act.

More than 110 people, half of whom had no affiliation with the Unification Church, attended the event, which was a cooperative effort from CARP and SPB and kicked off International Awareness Week at UB. UB's president Neil A. Salonen spoke about the importance of religious freedom, the right to practice one's faith. Luke Higuchi and Gail Veith shared their testimonies about forced conversion in Japan. Luke also showed the documentary "Japan's Hidden Shame."



Tour de Cause Trophies. To express our gratitude to Seijin Tranberg and Josh Wildman for their efforts in the Tour de Cause bike challenge this winter, ICRF ordered and sent special trophies to each of them. The multi-column trophies are 18 inches tall and feature a bicycle rider at the top, flanked by winged "victory" statuettes. The plaque at the bottom reads: "Seijin Tranberg (or Josh Wildman) –ABSOLUTE VICTOR—Tour de Cause 2012." The trophies were sent this week to each of their homes. Thanks again, Seijin and Josh. Job well done!

ICRF Office Moving. We are glad to report that plans have now firmed up for ICRF to move into the third floor of the Washington Times Building, probably early next week. We are now making preparations for this. Our special thanks go out to HSA-UWC and UPF for their support to make this possible, and to the WT staff for their help in working out the logistical details.

CONTACT: 7245-A Hanover Parkway, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Email: icrfusa@gmail.com
Website: www.religiousfreedom.com