

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: 50 Years Since Communist Crackdown in Bratislava, Slovakia

Knut Holdhus
November 27, 2023



Featured image above: Some of the members on the panel in Bratislava 13th November 2023

Communist crackdown in 1973 commemorated in Bratislava by Barbara Grabner



Slovakia (in red)



Historian Lubomir Gorbacher (left) and early member Anton Uhnák 13th Nov. 2023

50 years ago, dozens of early members of the [Unification Church](#), now called the [Family Federation](#), in Czechoslovakia were arrested. To commemorate the unfolding drama unknown to the wider public, an event was organized 13th November 2023 in Bratislava, Slovakia for members and friends. Despite bad weather, the hall in the "Ambasáda Mieru" (Peace Embassy) was filled to its maximum capacity. In the audience was former Prime Minister Ján Čarnogurský, a renowned human rights advocate during the communist era.

The introductory message was given by early member Miloš Klas. Historian Lubomír Morbacher from the Slovak Nation's Memory Institute (UPN) outlined the persecution of believers during the 1970's until 1989. After the end of the Prague Spring in 1968, churches and committed believers were put under incredible pressure. Communist agents infiltrated many dissident groups. Dr. Morbacher praised the courage of the first members of the [Unification Church](#). He condemned their mistreatment by state authorities and lamented the lack of acknowledgement until today.

In 1971 and 1972, the movement was thriving, with pioneers being sent to numerous towns. Everything seemed to be going well - until September 1973. The communist regime had

not known about the [young movement](#) until priests warned their congregants from the pulpits, and some parents wrote to the secret police to intervene!

Then, a drama of historic dimensions took its course: Secret policemen raided apartments throughout the nation. Within a few weeks, nearly 30 members were imprisoned. 200 persons were interrogated, while nearly 40 members were prosecuted. In 1974 the courts sentenced 37 members to imprisonment, about

one third of them conditional; they served a total of 50 years in several prisons.

A power point presentation was shown during the commemorative event in Bratislava, portraying individual members telling how and where they had been arrested.



Dr. Štefan Detvai 13th Nov. 2023



*Betka Danišková, the first
[Unification Church](#) leader in
Czechoslovakia*

The second speaker was Štefan Detvai, former President of the Slovak Bar Association. He served as defence attorney for our members. In 1973, he was an advocate with few years of experience, but a huge enthusiasm. He was an acquaintance of Anton Uhnák, one of the members, before the troubles started.

Dr. Detvai explained in detail how he was surprised to find no evidence for any crime whatsoever and was shocked that such pure minded, excellent students were treated like criminals. His sincere effort to prove the innocence of our members almost landed himself in jail! The today renowned lawyer revealed fascinating facts which kept the audience captive. He remarked several times, that for years he himself was traumatized by the verdict. He realized that the persecution was politically motivated and sheer injustice.

Afterwards a panel discussion with some of the persecuted members took place: the first [church](#) leader Betka Danišková, Dorota Šimeková, Miloš Klas, Anton Uhnák and his wife Maria, Juraj Lajda and his wife Erika, and Štefan Jakubáč explained how they felt when they were arrested, what worried them most during the interrogations, the reaction of their family and friends, and how they today view their imprisonment and its impact on their life from then on.

The participants had the chance to buy the book "The Faith that Broke the Iron Curtain" written by Julian Gray. Gifts and letters of thanks were given to the persecuted. Tasty food was served, and picture-taking completed the evening. Dr. Morbacher said that he felt honored to have been part of the commemoration.

Text: Barbara Grabner, journalist

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Communists Of China Exploiting Assassination

December 23, 2022 • Knut Holdhus

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Communist China exploiting assassination of Shinzo Abe to persecute Family Federation in Japan



Michael Pillsbury, author and leading authority on China, told an international conference in South Korea on 17th December 2022 that we clearly can see China exploiting assassination of Shinzo Abe

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Michael Pillsbury

assassination of Shinzo Abe. Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Japanese Communist Party both believe they can use the assassination – and the alleged grievances the assassin has against the **Unification Church** – to tarnish the church’s reputation, tarnish the legacy of Abe and undermine

religious freedom in Japan and other countries. Since 2014, Pillsbury has been the director of the Center on Chinese Strategy at the Hudson Institute, an influential American think tank, in Washington, D.C. and has also been an adviser to almost every American president since Richard Nixon.

Pillsbury said:

“Let me say a few words about Chinese strategy. Xi Jinping wants to exploit Abe’s tragic assassination on July 8th and demonize all his allies, including the **Unification Church** and the Liberal Democratic Party Abe faction.

Speaker Newt Gingrich has pointed out in a Washington Times op-ed that the chairman of the Japanese Communist Party has revealed their plan in an interview. Communist Party chairman Shii said openly that the starting point in the history of this, was an anti-communist organization that was united with the **Unification Church**. They called this half a century of historical collusion between the two organizations.



Kazuo Shii. License: CC ASA 3.0 Unp, 2.5 Gen, 2.0 Gen and 1.0 Gen

It’s obvious to me why China also wants to undermine the memory of Abe. Abe was the most anti-Chinese Communist Party Prime Minister in Japanese history. The Japanese Communist Party not only attacks the Abe wing of the LDP, but also the work of the **Unification Church** in Japan and around the world. China attacks the **Unification Church**. At the same time, it attacks everything Abe worked for.”

Via a pre-recorded message, Pillsbury made the statements at the “Second Conference for Hope for Universal Human Rights and Religious Freedom” organized by the Washington Times Foundation and the Universal Peace Federation in Gapyeong, South Korea. The first conference took place on 12th November. Pillsbury elaborated on how it is in Communist China’s interest to persecute the **Unification Church / Family Federation**:

“Now I want to address these four questions. Why does China oppose Korean unification? Why does China oppose the **Unification Church**? Why does China oppose Prime Minister Abe’s anti-communist supporters? And why does China persecute Chinese Christians?

No one would have imagined the successful Trump meetings way back 30 years ago. In 1991, **Reverend Moon** first met with Kim Il-sung, then the North Korean president, to discuss ways to achieve a



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peace on the Korean Peninsula, as well as on

*Sun Myung Moon and Kim Il-sung
6th Dec. 1991*

international relations and tourism. In 1992, Kim Il-sung gave his first and only interview with the Western news media to The Washington Times reporter Josette Sheeran.

In 2012, Moon was posthumously awarded North Korea's National Reunification prize. On the 1st anniversary of Reverend Moon's death, North Korean chairman Kim Jong-un expressed condolences to his family, saying Kim Jong-un prayed for the repose of Moon, who worked hard for national concord, prosperity and reunification and world peace. Last August, Kim Jong-un again sent condolences via the North Korean Peace Advisory Committee. On the 10th anniversary of Moon's passing, Kim again provided condolences and respect to Madame Han.



*China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan.
Public domain image. Cropped*

China has opposed and fears Korean reunification. China's own approach has been to persecute anything foreign about Christianity and to oppose the Unification Church, even calling it an evil cult.

The Chinese have a five-year plan to change the Chinese style Christianity. They're rewriting the Bible according to this five-year plan. One example is an egregious affront to the Bible the Christians hold sacred. They've revealed they have a crusade to sinify, or Chinesify, Christianity. It's in a regulation of religious affairs that was released in 2018. It's part of China's national strategy to replace America as the world leader.

According to recent reports, the Chinese authorities have altered Chinese textbooks. The famous biblical verse, in which Jesus forgives a woman who commits adultery, has been rewritten so that Jesus himself stones her to death. Chinese school children are taught that religion is a superstition. They remove party members for participating in religious activities. Christianity is not exempt from the long arm of the Chinese authorities. Churches that operate outside government approval, termed house churches, have been closed and even defaced. The CCP is determined to prevent external influence, foreign influence, from escaping any government control.

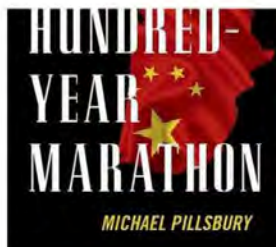
Of the five poisons China says are dangerous to national unity, three are religious groups. Some estimate that there's been a dramatic growth of the Christian population in China to nearly 100 million in spite of this repression. Foreign influence, they are afraid, is going to lead to the overthrow of the Communist Party from within. A Christian unified Korea adds to this nightmare for the Chinese Communist Party."

In his presentation, Pillsbury mentioned his book "The Hundred-Year Marathon", which was a bestseller in the US, Japan and South Korea. In the book, he shows



through internal Chinese documents how China plans to dethrone the United States as the world's leading superpower.

"Communists of China Exploiting Assassination" – Text: Knut Holdhus



Featured image at top: The connection between the Japanese Communist Party and the Chinese Communist Party goes back a long way. Here: Kenji Miyamoto, the chairman of the Japanese Communist Party 1958-1977, being welcomed by top officials of the Chinese Communist Party in Guangzhou, China in January 1965. Photo: 《人民画报》/ Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain image](#)

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