

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Assassination Exploited By Japan's Left To Attack Unificationist Faith

Knut Holdhus
March 20, 2024



Just months before assassination: Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in March 2022

Abe assassination exploited: perfect opportunity for the left to attack minority faith



Toshikazu Masubuchi

[Bitter Winter](#), the online magazine for human rights and religious freedom, published as a series of three articles a report titled "The [Unification Church](#) Case in Japan: A Politician Speaks Up." It was written by a member of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Toshikazu Masubuchi, who served as speaker of Tochigi Prefectural Assembly 1991-2011.



28th February 2024, [Bitter Winter](#) published the 2nd of its 3 articles. It was headlined "Spies and Fake News". There, Masubuchi reveals that the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was exploited by the political left as

the perfect opportunity to launch an all-out attack on the [Family Federation](#) and other organisations founded by [Sun Myung Moon](#) and [Hak Ja Han](#).

On [part 1](#) in the [Bitter Winter](#) series, [part 2a](#)

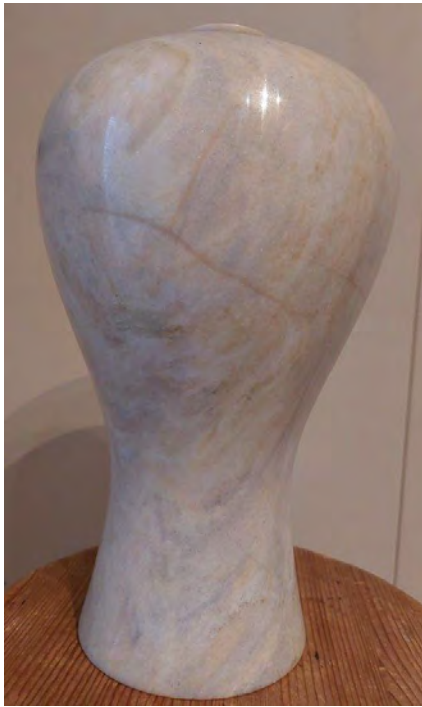
Since 1975, Masubuchi has maintained ties with IFVOC and, starting from 2010, he has also been involved with the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (FFWPU), previously known as the [Unification Church](#). One notable observation from his interactions with the [Family Federation](#) members is their profound earnestness and self-sacrifice for the betterment of society and the world. He says,

"It is evident that they are fundamentally different from left-wing activists who believe in fiction and lead people to unhappiness."

Masubuchi points out that leftwing lawyers frequently raise objections about the so-called "spiritual sales" issue when criticizing the [Unification Church](#). However, understanding the concepts of "faith" and "religious spirit" is crucial in grasping this matter. Masubuchi himself purchased a marble vase and a seal with the intention of supporting the [church](#). He emphasizes that there should be no issue if both parties are satisfied with such transactions, whether for spiritual artifacts or to support a religious organization, even if significant sums are involved. Any subsequent dissatisfaction shouldn't be construed as "suffering", but rather as a change of perspective. Masubuchi explains,

"Left-wing lawyers seize the opportunity to criticize [FFWPU](#) and IFVOC, emphasizing the 'suffering' of those who bought the artifacts, but shifting from the essence of the matter is their usual tactic. Knowing

the actual situation, I have assisted in settling some such disputes."



Marble vase, similar to some of those that Unification Church members sold in Japan

The sarin gas incident in the city of Matsumoto in Nagano in 1994, followed 9 months later by the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack in 1995, exposed these as crimes planned and carried out by the 1987-founded religious group Aum Shinrikyo and its head, Shoko Asahara. Subsequently, new religious movements in Japan, including the [Unification Church](#), faced accusations of being "cults", leading followers to eventually cease the sale of items like vases and pagodas.

The LDP politician mentions that the [Family Federation](#) also draws criticism for large donations, but this practice is common in Christianity. The amount contributed reflects an individual's level of faith and isn't a matter for external judgment. Donations sustain the activities of religious organizations, without which their functions would be impossible. Denying religious organisations the right to seek donations echoes the arguments of communists who dismiss all religions as opium for the people.

Masubuchi comments on certain accusations against two movements coming from South Korea,

"There are individuals who criticize [FFWPU](#) and IFVOC as 'anti-Japanese'. However, such criticism is usually from left-wing individuals who are 'anti-Japanese' themselves. The

intention is likely to create divisions among conservatives. Considering the efforts made by IFVOC to preserve Japanese traditions, it should be unthinkable to easily criticize them as 'anti-Japanese.'"

Toshikazu Masubuchi recalls well 8th July 2022, the day Shinzo Abe was assassinated,

"The realization that a former prime minister could be a target of an 'assassination' and the awareness of Abe's significant political influence struck me simultaneously. A few days later, the 'confession' of the shooting suspect, Tetsuya Yamagami, was leaked to the media, and it was reported that Yamagami's crime was motivated by 'resentment towards the former [Unification Church](#)'.



Terrorist in Japan, hero for Koreans: An Jung-geun, Korean independence activist who assassinated the Japanese prime minister in Harbin, China in 1909

Having previously read materials concerning events such as the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and of Japanese Prime Minister Hirobumi Ito in 1909 by Korean activist An Jung-geun [안중근 - 1879-1910, Korean independence activist], I was aware that political motives were always intertwined with how assassination incidents were reported."

Consequently, Masubuchi says he harbored suspicions about the authenticity of the confession, especially considering subsequent contradictions in the reporting. Despite these doubts, media outlets, particularly those with left-leaning bias, repeatedly framed the incident solely as an act of resentment towards the [Family Federation](#), exploiting it to tarnish the organizations' reputations.

This biased narrative, coupled with the questionable handling of the suspect's confession, calls for a cautious approach to media reporting.

Masubuchi explains,

"However, the media, despite the suspect's confession being the only information available,

repeatedly reported a one-sided narrative as if there were no motive other than 'resentment towards [FFWPU](#)'. For the left-leaning media that already harbored strong antipathy towards [FFWPU](#) and IFVOC, this presented a perfect opportunity to attack these organizations, stirring public opinion significantly. However, the posture of some authorities leaking such confessions, and treating them as if they were

unquestionable facts, raises doubts. Furthermore, in this reporting, not only left-leaning media outlets but even Yomiuri Television followed the same direction."

The former Tochigi politician says that former Prime Minister Abe's lifelong resistance against media misinformation further highlights the need for skepticism towards such narratives.

However, as long as the truth behind the shooting remains uncertain, the government's push for the dissolution of the [Family Federation](#) appears unjustifiable. Religious freedom is a cornerstone of democracy, safeguarding individual beliefs and thoughts. Media reporting that undermines such principles warrants scrutiny.

To be continued. Part 3 coming soon.

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Red Hatred For Movement To Protect Japan

March 17, 2024 • Knut Holdhus

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The origin of half a century with fierce persecution is simply red hatred for movement working to protect Japan and provide clear alternative to communism

Bitter Winter, the online magazine for human rights and religious freedom, published as a series of three articles a report



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titled "The **Unification Church** Case in Japan: A Politician Speaks Up." It was written by a member of the *Liberal Democratic Party* (LDP), Toshikazu Masubuchi, who served as speaker of *Tochigi Prefectural Assembly* 1991-2011.



Toshikazu Masubuchi.
Photo: *Bitter Winter*

On 28th February 2024, *Bitter Winter* published the 2nd of its 3 articles. It was headlined "Spies and Fake News". There, Masubuchi explains how an initiative by the *International Federation for Victory Over Communism* (IFVOC), founded by **Sun Myung Moon**, against foreign spies was **one of the main reasons the political left of Japan kept attacking his movement**.



Stanislav Levchenko.
Photo: *Bitter Winter*

On *part 1* in *Bitter Winter* series

Even though Japan was a liberal democracy, it earned the reputation of being a "spy haven" because it lacked laws to prevent espionage. Masubuchi tells about KGB major Stanislav Levchenko, a former Soviet agent who worked four years as a spy in Japan, before he defected to the USA in 1979 and bore witness in front of the *U.S. House Intelligence Committee*. He stated that the

absence of laws against espionage in Japan facilitated his work.

Levchenko disclosed the names of no less than **200 Japanese politicians and journalists who were involved in espionage activities**. Those included leading members of the *Japan Socialist Party* like Seiichi Katsumata (勝間田 清一 – its leader 1967-1968), Shigeru Ito (chairman of the *Policy Deliberation Council*), and Tamotsu Sato (secretariat chief of the *Socialist Association*). Levchenko's disclosure of the **huge Japanese spy network** was truly significant.



Spying for the Soviet Union: Seiichi Katsumata (勝間田 清一), leader of Japan Socialist Party 1967-1968. Photo: 文藝春秋 / Wikimedia Commons. Public domain image.

Also, **North Korean agents** worked as spies in Japan, and the **lack of laws preventing espionage** made it impossible for the police to counter it effectively. If anti-espionage laws had been in place, occurrences such as North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens from 1977 to 1983 could have been avoided. Given Japan's advanced industrial status, protecting its industries from industrial espionage was also crucial.

In response to these national security concerns, the *International Federation for Victory Over Communism* (IFVOC), founded by **Sun Myung Moon**, sought the backing from resource persons across various fields – politicians, businessmen, academics, journalists, lawyers, diplomats, religious leaders, and individuals with security experience – in order to set up the "*Spy Prevention Law Enactment Citizens Conference*".

Local branches were formed in all prefectures to raise awareness for the introduction of the law. The "*Spy Prevention Law Enactment Promotion Citizens Conference*" was established in February 1979 with Seiichi Uno (1910-2008), a professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo, as chairman. A meeting of the founding members took place at Sankei Hall in Tokyo with 300 scholars, intellectuals, and businessmen attending.

Five years later, in April 1984, a large meeting was convened at



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the National Diet Building. About 300 lawmakers and experts came together and discussed the formation of the “Parliamentarians and Experts Discussion Group for the Promotion of the Spy Prevention Law,” chaired by Nobusuke Kishi (1896-1987), Prime Minister 1957-1960.



Nobusuke Kishi (岸 信介)
15th June 1961. Photo:
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Toshikazu Masubuchi describes his work to promote the adoption of an “Opinion Statement Calling for the Enactment of the Spy Prevention Law” in the *Tochigi Prefectural Assembly* on 25th March 1982. A representative from the *Socialist Party* was strongly against it and tried to use so-called obstructive tactics. The heated debate lasted until midnight, when a resolution in favour of the opinion statement was at last passed. Masubuchi became secretary-general of the *Tochigi* prefecture branch of the *IFVOC* and traveled throughout the prefecture delivering speeches.

Law enforcement officials in charge of national and public security commended this initiative warmly. A subcommittee consisting of “security professionals” within the movement that supported the enactment of the anti-spy law included former top officials such as a former head of the *National Police Agency* and former top officials of the *Tokyo Metropolitan Police*.

Despite discussions in the Diet regarding the enactment of the *Espionage Prevention Bill*, it did not gain sufficient backing. No action was taken on serious national security concerns.

To be continued. Part 2b coming soon.

On [part 1](#) in [Bitter Winter](#) series

Featured image above: [Sun Myung Moon](#) writing calligraphy at the founding of the *International Federation for Victory over Communism (IFVOC)* 13th January 1968 in *Cheongpa, Seoul, South Korea*. Photo: *IFVOC*

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