

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japan's Attacks On Minority Faith Backfire

Knut Holdhus
June 13, 2024



Dr. Michael Balcomb addressing a conference in April 2017

Spelt out at international conference: How Japan's attacks on minority faith are likely to worsen huge demographic crisis



The panel during session 8 at the 2024 CESNUR conference in Bordeaux, France

First part of a speech given by Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of the Europe and Middle East Region of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), at the 2024 CESNUR Conference. It was held from 12th to 15th June at the University of Bordeaux Montaigne in Bordeaux, France with the theme: "The Contribution of Minority Religions to Society".

The conference was co-organized by: Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), Université Bordeaux Montaigne - CLIMAS (Cultures et littératures des mondes Anglophones), and International Society for the Study of New Religions (ISSNR).

Dr. Balcomb spoke on 13th June, the second day of the conference, during session 8 (plenary, chaired by Dr. Eileen Barker), which had the theme "The Unification Church and Japan: What Is Exactly Happening?"

Part 1 of Dr. Balcomb's speech:

You've already heard from my colleagues about some of the painful consequences that the ongoing government persecution of our movement is causing in Japan.

From Attorney Tatsu Nakayama you've heard that the Japanese government's dissolution order may well be unlawful as well as being manifestly unfair. You have heard how [unscrupulous lawyers](#) have exploited the suffering of our members for financial gain.

From Moriko Hori you've heard of the collateral damage suffered by those innocent and needy children that the Women's Federation for World Peace has been serving around the world. You also heard how Japanese officials - for sure mostly men - have systematically trampled on the ordinary rights of Japanese citizens, judging that since they are "only" women, they can do this with impunity.

You've heard from Norishige Kondo about the background of the political enemies the [Family Federation](#)

has made over the years, drawing the ire of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) - yes, it still exists - and behind that the shadowy hand of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).



Attorney Tatsuki Nakayama



*Norishige Kondo speaking in Tokyo
10th Sep. 2023*



Suzuko Hirschmann

Suzuko Hirschmann shared about the harrowing and brutal experience of her own sister. Even though that was many years ago, this type of "deprogramming" - in reality, kidnapping, coercion and mental, physical and even sexual abuse - carried on for more than 40 years with [over 4,000 victims](#). Until quite recently the problem was simply ignored by a disinterested and morally supine Japanese judiciary and executive.

I would like to briefly comment on one more threat of this campaign, not just to [our movement](#) but potentially to Japan itself. That is the looming demographic threat.

You have probably heard that both Korea and Japan now have critically low birth rates. For example, Korea has now only 0.7 children per woman of childbearing age, the lowest in the world. That may not sound so bad, but when you run numbers, you find out that if nothing changes, for every 100 Koreans alive today there will only be 4, a hundred years from now.

In Japan the situation is a little better, but still there will only be 15 Japanese for every 100 living today.

We don't have to wait that long to see the results. I myself married a beautiful Japanese girl 42 years ago and we have five children and two grandchildren with another one on the way. I already can already see the effects of depopulation in my wife's hometown with many rice fields lying fallow.

For many years our Unification community, like other immigrant communities, has been a refreshing contrast to this decline, with many of our families having three or more children.

These intercultural and interracial marriages have done wonders in breaking down barriers of suspicion and even hatred between nations that have fought each other in the past.

However, I worry that the campaign against [our community](#) in the Japanese media, now apparently approved by a cowardly Japanese government and likely to be confirmed by courts that lack true independence, is having a serious effect on the morale of our second and third generations.

They are already confused enough in an era of fake news, AI-generated misinformation on social media, gender identity wars and so much more. It is hard for them to ignore the barrage of propaganda of their national government, hard for them not to want to simply walk away from the discrimination they now

face in education, employment and access.

Other immigrant and faith communities in Japan face similar pressures. Mixed race children born in Japan are often called by the pejorative "hafu" or half.

The result is that each year fewer and fewer are keeping the strong marriage and family traditions of their faith community. Fewer are getting married, either within their own tradition or even outside it. The number of children born to those who do marry is down as well, and for the first time, the birth rate is below the replacement rate.

If we cannot reverse this trend, then [our movement](#), like the nation itself, may face extinction. It is a hard thing to say, but it is the iron law of demographics.

The grey men of the Japanese government seem to have no solutions of their own. Instead, they continue to foster or at least permit religious and racial prejudice, by action and inaction, turning their backs on those communities that may be able to lead the way out of this crisis.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon.

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Japan Following The Way Of China

October 17, 2023 • Knut Holdhus

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Media shaping public opinion in Japan according to leftwing lawyers, the way of China

17th October 2023 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper Sekai Nippo. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#)

Problems with the media's aim to influence state power and give 'death sentence' to religion

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Man And Woman Together

'Monitoring-power', boldly stated

The media often boasts of "monitoring state power and preventing tyranny", but now the media use that state power to suppress religion. They are about to get away with such barbarism in a democratic country. This is about the issue of requesting the dissolution of the *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification* (hereafter referred to as the **religious organisation**). If "the dissolution order is a death sentence for a religious corporation" as a member of the *Council of Religious Corporations* called it in *Mainichi Shimbun* 11th Oct., it is aiming for a "second murder", following the shooting incident of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. I consider this to be a notable "media conspiracy" in postwar Japan.



Logo of the Sekai Nippo

What on earth is the problem? First, the problem with the religious organisation did not arise from criminal proceedings, that is, criminal cases in which the police and prosecutors crack down on criminal acts. It was triggered by "public opinion" that the "motive" for the shooting of former Prime Minister Abe was a grudge against the **religious organisation**. If the media makes a fuss about it, it becomes a "social problem" and is treated as if it were a "criminal act", and religious freedom is easily destroyed. I can't shake off the impression that this is the case.

The epicenter of "public opinion" is the *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales* (Zenkoku Benren), which fights civil lawsuits against religious groups. It consists mainly of left-wing lawyers, but they launch legal battles against anything, be it a corporation or a government office. Immediately after the incident, on 12th July last year, the *National Network of Lawyers* declared the **religious organisation** an "antisocial group" at a press conference and called for its dissolution.



Activist leftwing lawyer Masaki Kito from National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales. Photo: Screenshot / Bitter Winter

At a meeting of the *Diet Committee of the Japanese Communist Party* held on the 26th July 2022, Masaki Kito [leftwing activist lawyer from the *Network of Lawyers*] claimed that damage in excess of 1 trillion yen had been caused. He blurted out that "the damage caused by spiritual sales is the largest consumer damage in the history of constitutional government" (In reality, no such damage exists).

Public opinion warfare with China

The media jumped on this, and the gunman was portrayed as "victim". A "public opinion" of hatred of the **religious organisation** was formed. On 2nd August 2022, the Communist Party Chairman Kazuo Shii announced in the executive report of the *6th General Assembly of the Central Committee* that the religious organisation was an anti-social cult group, and that he would thoroughly investigate its "collusion with the LDP and other political circles". This is the logic of the Chinese Communist Party.



Kazuo Shii 30th March 2023. Photo: Attribution: 首相官邸ホームページ / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC Attr 4.0 Int. Cropped

China has outlawed the **religious**

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[organisation](#) as an “evil cult” and praised itself saying, “(the Abe incident) showed the correctness of eradicating cults in China” (Global Times, Mainichi Shimbun / online version dated 30th July 2022). The Japanese media agreed with this and launched a public opinion campaign to “wipe out the cult”, with the editorial “The *Liberal Democratic Party* should investigate the actual situation and cut ties” (*Asahi Shimbun*, 3rd August 2022).

Second, with the backing of “public opinion”, freedom of religion, speech, association, and political activity guaranteed “to anyone” is easily stripped away. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida came under media fire and declared his farewell to the [religious organisation](#) on 31st August last year motivated by “countermeasures against public opinion” (self-preservation). Leftist newspapers took his word for it and waged a “witch hunt”.



Fumio Kishida 14th July 2022. Photo: 首相官邸 / Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC Attr 4.0 Int](#). Cropped

Third, when state power is influenced by “public opinion”, the interpretation of laws and regulations can easily be changed overnight. In the past, there have been only two cases of dissolution because of violation of laws and regulations, *Aum Shinrikyo* and *Myokaku-ji Temple*, both of which were based on final criminal law convictions for criminal acts. At first, Prime Minister Kishida stated that civil law cases would not be included, but in his reply to the Diet on 19th October last year, he had changed his position overnight,

saying that civil law torts could also be included, which the media agreed with.

Policy decisions already made before the meeting of the Council of Religious Corporations

Fourth, if something is in line with “public opinion”, the government will be recognized even if it makes a political move like “to decide on dissolution from the very beginning”. A member of the *Council of Religious Corporations*, an advisory body to the *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology*, testified in an interview with the *Mainichi Shimbun* 11th October that the government’s policy had already been decided before the council was asked for its opinion in September. The political schedule of an extraordinary Diet session and the supplementary elections to the *House of Representatives* is involved, and “the Prime Minister’s Office is in control.”

According to the *Sankei Shimbun* 13th October, there were objections within the council to the way the request was being made, but the *Agency for Cultural Affairs* visited the homes of the committee members and tried to build a consensus by complaining that “the Cabinet would be blown away.” It was like a political campaign. In the end, the request for dissolution was granted. Therefore, a pastor living in Hyogo near Kyoto expressed his concern in the *Asahi Shimbun*, saying, “Isn’t this dangerous?” (Editorial Board Member Emi Tadama in *Taji Kanron*, a series in the newspaper, on 14th Oct.).

In fact, it is dangerous. The left-wing media is trying to use the dissolution of the [religious organisation](#) the way “a small hole (蟻 (あり) の穴 – ant hole) will sink a large ship” to destroy freedom. This conspiracy should not be overlooked.

Featured image above: From Falun Dafa parade in Berlin in 2007, portraying persecution of Falun Gong members in China. Photo: Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC Attr 2.0 Gen](#)

“Japan Following the Way of China”: text: Kiyoji Masu

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