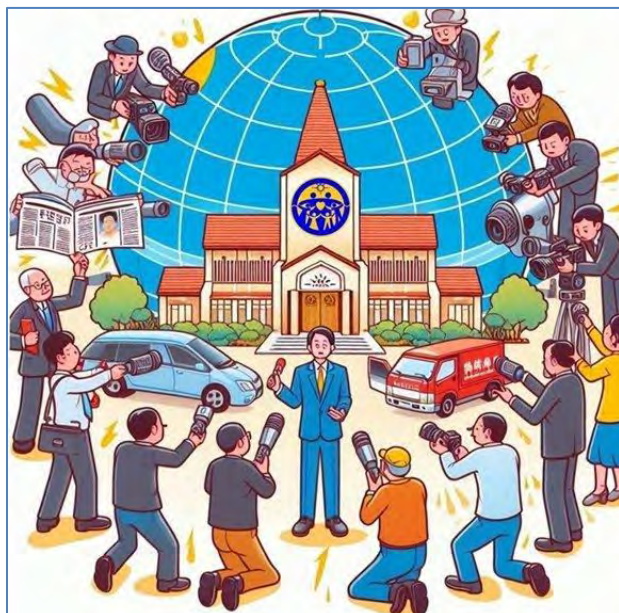


FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Journalist Uncovers Truth About Witch Hunt

Knut Holdhus
June 26, 2024



Media campaign against the [Family Federation](#) in Japan

Investigative journalist tells her amazing story of uncovering the truth about modern witch hunt



Masumi Fukuda speaking in Kumamoto 16th June 2024

Part 2 of a speech Masumi Fukuda (福田ますみ), Japanese investigative journalist and award-winning author, gave 16th June 2024 at the "[Kumamoto Conference to Protect Freedom of Religion](#)" at a hotel in Kumamoto, a city of ca. 740,000 inhabitants on the southern island of Kyushu. The [conference](#) was attended by members and supporters of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), protesting against the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's request for a court order to dissolve the [Family Federation](#) of Japan.

See [part 1](#)

However, since the assassination of former Prime Minister Abe two years ago, the [Family Federation](#) has been subjected to a lot of criticism. I have spoken at various symposiums on why I started covering the [Family Federation](#).

One reason I began was that after publishing "Unmasking Political Correctness" (ポリコレの正体 っていう) at the end of 2021, "political correctness", known as "PC" in America, is sweeping across the country. While writing about it, I felt like I was learning a lot myself, and I completed the book.

During that time, I wanted to interview someone well-versed in American affairs, and I came across an editorial board member of [Sekai Nippo](#) (世界日報), who had a dialogue with Masayuki Takayama (高山正幸), a former Sankei Shimbun [large newspaper] commentator, in the conservative monthly magazine "Will". Since the editorial board member seemed knowledgeable about American affairs, I decided to interview him.

However, when I mentioned this to the editor of the publishing house that put out "Unmasking Political Correctness," he asked, "Isn't [Sekai Nippo](#) related to the [Unification Church](#)? Is it okay?"



I didn't know much about it at the time, but I knew that [Sekai Nippo](#) was established by Reverend [Sun Myung Moon](#) of the [Unification Church](#). Despite the concern, I noted that many famous conservative figures were giving lectures at [Sekai Nippo](#) events and that conservatives were reading [Sekai Nippo](#). It had also published some scoops and provided useful references.

So, I thought, "It should be okay." I proceeded to interview the editorial board member of [Sekai Nippo](#) and got a very good impression of him.

He answered the questions I wanted to ask most accurately and thoroughly and was very kind. I tend to be a bit clumsy sometimes, and I made a mistake with my voice recorder running out of batteries during the interview, so I couldn't record. I was lamenting about it, as I'm not very good with machines, but he immediately changed the batteries in the voice recorder for me and reassured me, saying, "It's okay." His kindness left a great impression on me, and I believe we met about twice afterwards for some information exchange or something like that.

After that incident, when the assassination of former Prime Minister Abe occurred, and the intense bashing towards the [Family Federation](#) followed, naturally, I wondered if the editorial board members were okay. I wasn't sure if all the employees at [Sekai Nippo](#) were followers

of the [Unification Church](#). However, as the bashing worsened, I was contemplating whether to reach out.



At that time, a young editor from the Monthly Hanada magazine encouraged me and mentioned that he knew some people connected to conservatives at [Sekai Nippo](#), including the young editor himself. According to him,

"[Sekai Nippo](#) has high quality, and all the journalists there are good people. Fukuda-san, if you contact them, I'm sure they'll be glad."

So, I thought, "Maybe I should contact them. I'll send an email." But I hesitated a bit, wondering if it would be okay.

Around August, over a month after Shinzo Abe's passing, when I checked online, the bashing against the [Family Federation](#) was still going strong. However, amidst all that, there was one comment that stood out: "This is a witch hunt." Upon reading that, I thought,

"Yes, this is indeed a witch hunt. There's no substantial evidence, yet they're labeling them as such an anti-social group. Something is definitely not right."

I didn't fully understand everything yet, but I felt strongly,

"This level of bashing is abnormal. A situation where there isn't even anyone defending the [Family Federation](#) is strange."

So, I decided to email them. I remember the wording vaguely. I wrote a brief email saying,

"The situation is very difficult right now, but are you okay? This feels like a witch hunt. I think this is fascism. I'm thinking of writing something."

So, I sent that email, and I received a reply from him immediately. He wrote something like, "I was so happy that tears came to my eyes." I'm not sure if it was in that email or a subsequent one, but he wrote,

"The current situation is dire, threatening even our right to exist. I'm fine for now, but I have a daughter. If anything were to happen to her too, it would truly be unbearable."

This made me think,

"Wow, this is really a terrible time. Is the [Family Federation](#) really such a bad organization?"

It was as if there were a dark secret society within Japan, or so everyone was saying. I thought,

"And this person is a member of that society, and yet he is such a good person."



*Masaki Kito, leading activist
leftwing lawyer of National
Network of Lawyers Against
Spiritual Sales*

Within myself, I couldn't reconcile this inconsistency. Also, when I asked the editor from the Monthly Hanada magazine whether all the employees of [Sekai Nippo](#) are believers, he said he didn't really know.

I vaguely remembered hearing from somewhere that believers don't drink alcohol. So, I mentioned this, and the young editor from Monthly Hanada said, "Huh? The people at [Sekai Nippo](#) drink alcohol like crazy." (laughs) So I thought, "Maybe they're not believers after all?" However, later on, it turned out that almost everyone is a believer. Anyway, we had a lively conversation between the two of us. In the end, I thought, "Let's write something anyway."

Another reason I decided to start covering the [Family Federation](#) was when I saw Masaki Kito [leading member of left-wing activist lawyers' network hostile to the [Family Federation](#)] frequently appearing on TV programs like "Miyane-ya". What Kito was saying seemed quite extreme to me - things like prostitution for high donations, connections to organized crime, and claiming that all believers in Japan are victims. I wondered if a lawyer should really be saying such things. Also, I didn't even know that the name had changed from the [Unification Church](#) to the [Family Federation](#). Hearing Kito speak, I felt he harboured an extraordinary hatred towards the former [Unification Church](#).

To be continued. Part 3 coming soon.

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Persecuted Minority Religion Urged To Speak Up

June 25, 2024 • Knut Holdhus

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Part 1 of a speech Japanese investigative journalist and award-winning author Masumi Fukuda (福田ますみ) gave on 16th June



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2024 at the "Kumamoto Conference to Protect Freedom of Religion" at a hotel in Kumamoto, a city of ca. 740,000 inhabitants on the southern island of Kyushu. The



Location of Kumamoto on the southern island of Kyushu. Illustration: Maximilian Dörrbecker (Chumhwa) / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC ASA 3.0 Unp

conference was attended by members and supporters of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, protesting against the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's request for a court order to dissolve the Family Federation of Japan.

I am Masumi Fukuda.

Thank you very much for inviting me. [...]

Previously, at gatherings in Nagasaki and other places, I have mentioned that demonstrations are a citizen's right. Given the current situation with the Family Federation, I believe we should raise our voices in a noticeable way.

[...] In the 1970s, Scientology faced a similar situation in America as the Family Federation is facing now. At that time, believers from all over the world surrounded the federal courthouse in Washington, DC, in a significant demonstration, which they said was quite effective.

In the United States and Japan, there are different perceptions of demonstrations. In Japan, especially among conservatives, demonstrations are often viewed negatively. Many ordinary conservatives think that demonstrations are something left-wing people do.

However, given the current situation, as someone mentioned yesterday, remaining a silent minority is not an option. The media is heavily biased, and the true nature of the Family Federation is not being conveyed to the general public at all.

I think it is the believers themselves who should raise their voices and hold such demonstrations. I think the members in Kyushu [the large southern island] are the most enthusiastic right now. So, I hope they can show the most enthusiasm for these demonstrations and inspire a wave of support from all over the country.

Ultimately, we must hold these demonstrations in Tokyo. (Applause) Thank you. I have been talking about this with the headquarters, but it seems they are not very enthusiastic about it at the moment. However, at this point, doing nothing is not an option. It's not like you do nothing; you hold symposiums nationwide. But you still have to make your case to the general public.



Hachiko, the Loyal Dog (忠犬八子公) at Shibuya station in Tokyo. Photo: Stephen Kelly from San Francisco, CA, USA / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC Attr 2.0 Gen

During the Golden Week holidays in early May, people raised their voices at the bronze statue of "Hachiko, the Loyal Dog" (忠犬八子公) in Shibuya [in Tokyo]. So, I think this movement of raising voices and this enthusiasm are growing.

Anyway, the Family Federation is a religion that is currently misunderstood. As mentioned earlier, ordinary Japanese people often say, "We know about freedom of religion," and "We know religious persecution is wrong."

But they say, "The Family Federation is not a religion; it's just a money-collecting group disguised as a religion." That is entirely incorrect. It is

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outright religious persecution. (Applause)

However, it is really true that this is indeed religious persecution, and that the [Family Federation](#) is a legitimate religious organization. The teachings, such as the profound and systematic [Unification Principles](#), make it a genuine religion, perhaps even more so than organizations like Soka Gakkai. (Applause)



Front cover page of one version of [Unification Principles](#) in Japanese – 原理講論

While I have attended lectures on the [Unification Principles](#), I realized that its teachings are quite the opposite of my own lifestyle. (Laughter) I am not married, and I don't have a family or children. I believe marriage is optional, but the [Family Federation's](#) teachings emphasize the importance of the [Blessing](#) and having a family. This is something that is shared only among believers, not with the general public.

Although the teachings differ from my own views, I think it is still possible for someone like me, who doesn't align perfectly with their beliefs, to support the [Family Federation](#). I find this somewhat unique. (Applause)

As an ordinary person, before the assassination of former Prime Minister Abe, I didn't really think deeply about religion. However, I have come to learn some terms like "the created world", which is used in the [Family Federation](#). As I learned about "microcosm", such as the human body, and "macrocosm", such as the universe, I realized how well everything is made. This led me to think that perhaps there is some intentional will behind it, and at times I contemplated the will of [God](#). But I always felt that religion was not something close to me.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon.

Masumi Fukuda (福田すみ) is a Japanese non-fiction author and **award-winning journalist**, well known for her investigative journalism. She has written several in-depth reports about the persecution of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan and has exposed how a [leftwing network of lawyers](#) uses any means to have the [Family Federation](#) dissolved. Her articles have been published mainly in Japan, but several are republished by [Bitter Winter](#), the international online magazine on religious freedom and human rights.

Featured image above: Masumi Fukuda speaking in Kumamoto 16th June 2024. Photo: Screenshot from video recording.

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