

## The Japanese Communist Party's "Final War" Against the Unification Church

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Thanks to Dr. Moon and Dr. Yoon for the wonderful work they continue to do on behalf of religious liberty.

I come from a country, Italy, which had for almost fifty years the largest Communist Party of the West. The main leader of that Party, Palmiro Togliatti, developed a strategy to deal with religion that had the full blessing of the Soviet Union.

Togliatti was regarded as so loyal to the Soviets that when he died in 1964 a large Russian city, Stavropol, was renamed after him as "Tolyatti." Courtesy of Vladimir Putin, it keeps the name to this very day.

The Italian Communist strategy for religion was based on three principles. First, do not attack religion in public and find some believers who would become members of the Party and act as "useful idiots," claiming in public that Communism and religion are perfectly compatible.

Second, at the same time continue to spread atheistic propaganda discreetly within the Party.

Third, while smiling at believers who are either friendly with or "soft" on Communism, attack mercilessly the religious organizations that fight Marxism openly and ideologically, be they Catholic or non-Catholic.

Outside of Japan, not many know that the Japanese Communist Party has been for many years among the largest non-ruling Communist parties in the world and may well be today the second largest after its Indian comrades.

The firm reaction of the Japanese authorities, police, and intelligence persuaded the Party to withdraw the "1951 Program."

One of the by-products of this withdrawal was that the Japanese Communists adopted an attitude that scholars have described as similar to the Italian Communist Party's on several issues, including religion. Party publications started insisting that Japanese Communists were not against religion. By 2007, the Party's official organ "Shimbun Akahata" was advertising that Party members included Buddhist "priests, priests' wives, Shinto priests, Christians, Tenrikyo devotees, and other religious people." At the same time, Party members continued to be formed on the sacred texts of Marxism, which are intrinsically atheistic. Well after it had repudiated the "1951 Program," the Party kept in its Central Committee Bunkichi Okada (岡田文吉), who had been one of the founders of the Anti- Religious Struggle Alliance (反宗教闘争同盟) and the creator of the Japan Militant Atheist League (日本戦闘的無神論者同盟).

In the same year 2007 when it boasted it had religionists as members, the Japanese Communist Party also wrote that it wanted "the Unification Church to be dealt with as a criminal group."

In fact, the Communist Party's plans to destroy the Unification Church had started much earlier. In 1968, Reverend Moon founded the International Federation for Victory Over Communism (IFVOC). It played a key role in containing the Japanese Communist Party and its Socialist allies.

Last month, November 2022, journalist Soichiro Tahara and Communist Party Chairperson Kazuo Shii discussed the Unification Church/Family Federation issue and presented the post-Abe-assassination campaign as the "final war against the Unification Church."

Certainly, not all are Communists in the Japanese "final war against the Unification Church."

We should, however, not miss an important point. Communism does not win all its wars.

Religions normally last more than anti-religious ideologies. And the last laugh is theirs.

Today, we all feel like we are Japanese members of the Family Federation. But it is not enough to proclaim it. Those who really love religious freedom should stand up and defend it where it is under threat. Today, it is Japan.