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Forced Conversion in Japan: Justice Turned Upside Down

By Dan Fefferman

Japanese people often joke about how everything we do in the west is backwards. We read from left to right; they read from right to left. We greet each other "horizontally" by shaking hands; they greet each other "vertically" by bowing. We sleep on our sides or stomach, facing the earth; they sleep on their backs, facing heaven. This time though, the Japanese are the ones that have got it backwards.

In several shocking court cases, Japanese judges have given a virtual free pass to the practice of forced religious conversion, while criminalizing voluntary arranged marriages in a religious tradition.

The legal controversies involve adult members or ex-members of the Unification Church, founded by the Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon of Korea. In theory, Japanese law recognizes all of those involved as adults responsible to make their own decisions in matters of religion and marriage. But in practice, the courts seem to

have ruled that they not dealing with adults acting of their own accord, but either with children in their mid-late 20s or with people not acting under their own free will.

Earlier this year, after an adult Unificationist had been physically kidnapped and forcibly confined against her will for 70 days in order to make her leave the church, the Tokyo District Court refused to grant either injunctive or monetary relief to the victim. The victim, Mitsuko Antal, currently lives in Korea with her American husband. She was forcibly confined on two separate occasions. Today, after the court refused her request for an injunction against further attempts to "deprogram" her, she fears even to bring her two children to her hometown to visit their grandparents.

While the Japanese courts thus refuse to protect the freedom of Unificationists to believe and practice their religious faith, ex-members of the church receive lucrative judgments. On August 22, another court granted damages of 9



Confined Japanese believer pleads for "help" from passersby.

million yen (\$75,000) to three plaintiffs who alleged that the Unification Church (UC) had "forced" them to marry "against their will" in one of the church's mass marriages ceremonies. In this case, there was no question of physical force, while in the Antal case, the court found that physical force was indeed used.

Worse than the monetary damages for the church is the court's finding that in this case the church's practice of ar-

continued on page 6

What's Inside

<i>Meeting Jefferson at Monticello</i>	2
<i>Lingering Controversy over Archbishop Milingo Erupts in Zambia</i>	3
<i>Religious Freedom Around the World</i>	4

Meeting Jefferson at Monticello

By Dan Fefferman

I'd been meaning to make a pilgrimage to Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, ever since I moved to the Washington, DC area in 1971. My wife and I finally got around to it in July of this year, as a preview of coming "empty-nest" attractions while our youngest daughter was away for camp, our older daughter already having moved away from home.

As a young man, I was attracted to Jefferson's passionate commitment to the ideas so eloquently expressed in the American Declaration of Independence. His famous summary of the Lockian principles of civil government contain some of the most important words in history:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

I visited the Jefferson Memorial for the first time in 1970. Throughout the 70s, I remember attending prayer meetings on the White House Ellipse where one stood midway between the current president's home and the first president's Monument, with Jefferson's statue standing distant vigil in its open domed cathedral to the southwest, backlit in a golden light. The words engraved around the ceiling of his shrine remain etched in my memory:



"I HAVE SWORN
UPON THE ALTAR
OF GOD ETERNAL
HOSTILITY AGAINST
EVERY FORM OF
TYRANNY OVER
THE MIND OF MAN."

I studied the works of Jefferson off and on over the years, especially in the mid 1970s when I worked at the Freedom Leadership Foundation to develop a critique and counterproposal to the Marxist ideology that had become all too pervasive among student activists on American college campuses. In the late 1980s, Jefferson's thought again came to the fore in my work with the American Constitution Committee to educate Americans during the period of the Constitution's bi-centennial.

It seems I'm destined to be haunted by the ghost of old Tom Jefferson. When I came to the International Coalition for Religious Freedom in 1997, his ghost was waiting once again. One simply cannot work in the field of religious freedom without encountering his spirit on almost a daily basis.

In 1785, when other US states still officially discriminated against such groups as Catholics, Jews, Quakers and Unitarians, the State of Virginia passed Jefferson's bill guaranteeing that:

"No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer, on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil rights."

This legislation became the standard for religious freedom standards throughout the US and even the world. Its principles are seen today in the language of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and several similarly-worded international covenants, which affirm:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, alone or in community with others, and, in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Touring the house and grounds of Monticello, Susan and I were struck by the way even the house's architecture reflected the ambiguities of Jefferson's personality. This man, so passionate about freedom, was torn between the knowledge that slavery was evil and his realization that the lifestyle of Virginia planters depended on it. Here was the wine-bottle dumbwaiter he invented, because, it turns out, the slavery of his many servants was an embarrassment to him when he entertained.

continued on page 8

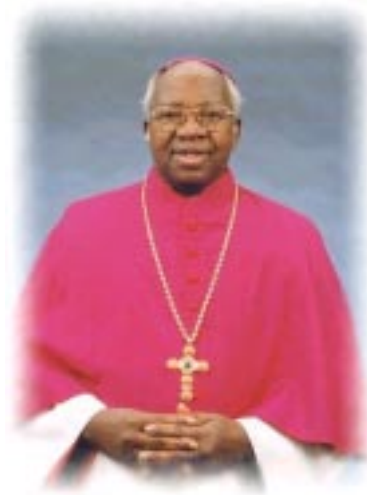
Lingering Controversy over Milingo Erupts in Zambian Brouhaha

By Alex Colvin

Judge Lombe Chibesakunda of the Zambian Human Rights Commission began hearings in August to determine if Catholic Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo, a Zambian native and former Archbishop of Lusaka, was being held incommunicado against his will. A few days earlier, Ngoni Chief Mpezeni announced that if the archbishop is not allowed to return to his homeland in Zambia, the chief will ban the Catholic Church in his tribal area. Mpezeni is the chief of the Ngoni ethnic group from which Milingo comes. Five hundred thousand people live within his territory.

Meanwhile, on August 20, Italian supporters of Milingo demonstrated at St. Peter's Square waving "Free Milingo" placards.

"We don't know where Milingo is. But the real problem is that his followers, the people who love him and whom he loves, haven't known for a year where to find him," said Radical Party



Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo

secretary Daniele Capezzone. "I hope it's a voluntary period of silence and prayer, but I fear it's something else. I fear he's not a free man."

The Vatican responded by releasing a statement saying that Milingo is currently on retreat in Argentina and that he will soon return to Rome, where he will be free to conduct public meetings, something he has not been al-

lowed to do for more than a decade.

Protestors wanted to insure that Milingo's human rights were being respected and to protest the lack of transparency in the Catholic Church.

"The cover of silence kept by the Vatican bureaucracy is the sign of something," said Marco Cappato, a member of the European Parliament. "It is a sign of the fear that the Church has when it has to deal with sexuality."

What is going on? Archbishop Orlando Antonini, the Vatican representative to Zambia, maintains that the Catholic Church is victim of a disinformation campaign organized by followers of Reverend Sun Myung Moon who are disappointed that the archbishop repented his marriage to Maria Sung. Reverend Moon married Milingo and Maria in a well-publicized international marriage blessing ceremony May 2001.

[More recent Vatican reports quote him as saying he now believes he may have been "brainwashed" by the Unification Church members. However, as we go to press in mid-September, Milingo himself has still not appeared in public.-ed.]

At the time of his marriage, Archbishop Milingo said that, "After a lifetime of devotion to the Church and to my priestly vows, the Lord has called me to take a step that will change my life forever..." He still considered himself a faithful Catholic and wanted to begin a ministry for married priests.

The Vatican demanded that
continued on page 7

Milingo Changes Tune (again)

Reportedly writing in a just-released book in Italian, Archbishop Milingo now claims that he "wanted to provoke shock" in the Vatican by marrying Maria Sung after being removed from his Vatican post. He says he had tried in vain to meet with the Pope after his dismissal but his requests were "lost in the ceremonial bureaucracy" of the Vatican, the Associated Press reported September 17.

Meanwhile, the Lusaka Post reported Milingo's Vatican handlers have finally allowed him to speak by phone to his brother, Martin Chilumbu, to verify his well-being. "Maria Sung is free to marry another man," Chilumbu reported. The paper quoted Mrs. Sung as saying "If Milingo wants to be free, I will not stand in his way, but I don't trust what was said and published in the media."



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

By Rick Hunter

Azerbaijan

Pastor Vahid Nagiev, his wife and four children were forced to leave their hometown of Nakhichevan immediately prior to a visit from President Heidar Aliev to the area. Nagiev headed a Seventh Day Adventist church of 20 which met in his home. Police officers claimed the family could be preparing “terrorist actions” against the president. They were earlier told that the town would not allow a Christian church in its center. Azerbaijan is 97 percent Muslim.

Belarus

A repressive religious registration bill which bans all religious groups not active 20 years ago and favors the Russian Orthodox Church was passed 82-2 by the lower legislature. The bill would require all religious literature by small religious groups to be submitted to a state board before distribution. It further forbids organized prayer by any denomination which has less than 20 Belarus citizens.

Cambodia

The Dalai Lama will not be invited to the World Buddhist Summit in Cambodia in December because of a request by China. The presence of the Tibetan spiritual leader would draw attention to the Tibetan struggle for autonomy from China. A spokesman said that Cambodia supported China’s claim that Tibet was a part of China. China has also requested that the Taiwan delegation to the

Cambodian summit be designated as coming from a Chinese province.

China

A nun and thirty others were arrested in southeastern China for participating in an “illegal religious activity.” Sister Chen Mei remains in detention for teaching a religious class in the underground Roman Catholic Church which rejects the authority of the government-approved China Patriotic Catholic Association.

Five Tibetan monks from the Drepung monastery outside Lhasa were taken into custody shortly before this year’s Shoton Buddhist festival which draws tens of thousands of pilgrims. Three of the monks were detained for listening to cassette tapes of pro-independence songs and two for raising a Tibetan flag at the festival last year.

Colombia

A Pentecostal clergyman has been shot dead in the south of the country, in an area occupied by left-wing rebels belonging to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC. The Christians for Peace Foundation said Abel Ruiz was in church with a group of his followers when he was killed. Another clergyman was shot dead in similar circumstances two weeks earlier.

Cuba

Four years after John Paul II’s visit, the Catholic situation in Cuba has declined remarkably, according to reports. “After the enthusiasm that followed the Pope’s visit, today we are once again faced with a hostile climate toward the initiatives of the Church,” said a spokesman for the Catholic organization Aid to the Church in Need. He said that 40 priests who arrived in 1998 have been excluded from access to the media, schools and to public places.

Ethiopia

A mob of Orthodox Church members led by priests attacked and killed an evangelical Christian pastor in his home in Merawi, a town in northwestern Ethiopia. Brother Dantew was fatally injured on the evening of July 17, several hours after he had asked for police protection for his church’s new property and its members. Although police said they were outnumbered by the mob that night, they eventually arrested some 40 rioters, including six priests.

France

1. Traditionally, the passing of an amnesty for certain types of offences follows a change in the national government in France. This year, however, there has been an attempt in the parliament to introduce blatantly discriminatory amendments to the amnesty to exclude minority religions from its provisions. The Justice minister calls this a legitimate “fight against sects.”

Alain Vivien, who resigned in June from the Inter-ministerial Commission to Battle Sects and Cults in France (MILS), has been exposed as having taken, together with other MILS officials, over 88 trips to 43 countries and French territories between 1999 and 2001 to export his brand of religious intolerance and advise governments on the repression of "sects" deemed dangerous to society.

2. A 13-year criminal investigation into the Church of Scientology and 16 of its leaders for fraud and the illegal practice of medicine will not go to trial because of lack of progress and the expiration of the statute of limitations according to a Paris judge. Church officials, who had deemed the investigation a "witch hunt" were "overjoyed with this victory after so many years."

Georgia

Unidentified thugs ransacked an office of religious freedom advocates destroying computers and furniture and beat its director and several other employees. The Institute for Freedom, which has publicly criticized a Georgian lawmaker, Guram Sharadze, for his proposal to ban Jehovah's Witnesses from Georgia, has also criticized a defrocked priest for book burning of Jehovah's Witnesses material. The day of the attack, Sharadze supporters organized a rally demanding the institute apologize to him.

Indonesia

Indonesia's 700-member People's Consultative Assembly changed the constitution to allow direct presidential elections and to end reserved seats for the military in Parliament. Both reforms will take effect in 2004. The legislature also rejected the imposition of "sharia"

or Islamic law in the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Iran

A popular cleric, Ayatollah Jalaeddin Taheri, has resigned as a mosque preacher to protest the increasing influence of hardliners in the Islamic establishment. Taheri accused hardliners of paralyzing elected institutions and seeking to justify violence in the name of religion. He also denounced the continued house arrest of senior dissident cleric Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, who also had questioned the extent of the clerics' power. Meanwhile, a reformist university professor, Hashem Aghajari's, was ordered detained and has been charged with insulting Islamic sanctities.

Italy

The desecration of almost 40 graves in the Jewish section of the historic Verano cemetery caused Italian Deputy Premier Gianfranco Fini to say that the desecration "unfortunately shows that our society isn't immune from the risk of new and odious forms of anti-Semitism." The new anti-Semitism, he said, is "often masked by a violent criminalization of Israel."

Japan

Tomomitsu Niimi, a former Aum Shinrikyo leader, was sentenced to death for the murder of 26 people in seven separate attacks, including the 1995 Tokyo subway gassing that killed 12 people and sickened thousands. Niimi at first refused to enter pleas and pledged eternal loyalty to Aum guru Shoko Asahara. He has since reportedly admitted to all charges brought against him except involvement in the subway attack. He claimed he

was following Asahara's orders and shouldn't be subject to the death penalty.

Mexico

Protestants have made particular inroads among the country's 10 million Indians. They bring doctors and schools to impoverished indigenous communities and distribute Bibles translated into most of the country's 62 Indian languages. Census figures show 7.3 percent of Mexicans over the age of 5 are Protestants, up from 4 percent in 1990. The southern state of Chiapas, with a 30 percent indigenous population, has a larger share of Protestants than any state at 23 percent. More than 30,000 members of this fiercely traditional community have been expelled for rebelling against the elaborate and costly Catholic rituals that form the backbone of Chamulan culture.

Russia

Three Muslim women filed with the court in Russia's Tatarstan region that they not be forced to take off their headscarves for official identification photographs on internal passports that are required for all adult citizens. The women say forcing them to be photographed without headscarves violates the modesty required of them under the Qur'an.

The last few months have seen an increasingly intense campaign by the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow against the alleged proselytism of Roman Catholic clergy in Russia. It has also seen a new crackdown by Russia's secular authorities against the Catholics.

United States

The Supreme Court ruled 5-4 in favor of a Cleveland program of school choice for parents includ-

Forced Conversion in Japan

from page 1

ranged marriages was “illegal.” Such a finding strikes at the heart of the church’s theology and tradition, in which members usually opted to have Reverend Moon recommend a marriage partner.

In a second deprogramming case tried this year, 20 deprogrammers and their colleagues had used chains and a lead pipe to break into a church building and brutally attack the pastor with a stun-gun. Their target was Hiroko Tomizawa, a 31-year-old female UC member. The deprogrammers dragged the struggling Mrs. Tomizawa out the door and forcibly confined her in secret for 15 months. She finally escaped and returned to the church.

After a drawn-out court battle, the Hiroshima High Court overturned a lower court’s decision to grant the her injunctive relief and reduced the monetary judgment to a mere \$1,200—including only \$800 for damages and \$400 for her attorney’s fees. Again this was despite the court’s finding of fact that physical force was clearly used both to kidnap and to confine Mrs. Tomizawa for an extended period of time in order to get her to renounce her faith.

Unification Church members say they feel victimized by the current climate of intolerance toward new religions brought about by Japan’s understandable outrage against the Aum Shinrikyo sect. They also point out that Japan’s judicial policy protects the illegal actions of certain rival Christian ministers who are actively involved in the deprogramming activities.

According to the testimony of Mitsuko Antal, a mainstream Christian minister named Yoshio Shimizu both advised her parents to confine her and actively participated in her attempted forced conversion, knowing full well that she was being held against her will. She also claims that he pushed her around the locked apartment in which she was confined, struck her on at least one occasion, and threatened her with further violence if she did not renounce her plans to marry her fiancé in a UC wedding.

Antal eventually decided to pretend that she had lost her faith in order to find a means of escape. She claims that Shimizu agreed that the special locking devices on the apartment’s windows could be removed. While her captors’ guard was down, she opened the veranda window and dropped two floors to the ground, fracturing her hip in

the process. Despite extreme pain, she was able to escape and return to her fiancé and their church.

Mitsuko’s husband Chris is intent on getting justice for himself and his wife, who is now the mother of their two boys. “It’s not just for ourselves that we want this,” says Chris. “We need to send a message to the deprogrammers that their crimes will not go unpunished.”

The practice of forcible deprogramming of adult members of new religions was common in the US during the 1970’s and ‘80s until criminal cases and lawsuits such as the Antal’s put the deprogrammers out of business.

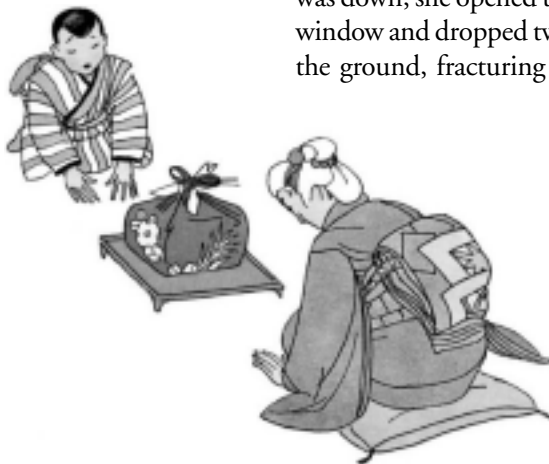
Despite numerous complaints to Japanese police by deprogramming victims, however, Japanese prosecutors have not filed even one criminal case enforcing their laws against kidnapping or forcible confinement in such cases.

Japanese judges have given a virtual free pass to the practice of forced religious conversion, while criminalizing voluntary arranged marriages in a religious tradition.

In Brief

from page 5

ing vouchers that would allow them to send their children to parochial schools. In essence, this can provide government money for religious schools, something that has been resisted strongly by the National Education Association, the national teachers union, which says it will siphon money from struggling public schools. The ruling only affects the Cleveland program, but leaves open the door for similar programs in other struggling school districts.



Milingo Controversy in Zambia

from page 3

Milingo separate from Maria Sung and sever ties to any organization connected to Rev. Moon or he would be excommunicated.

Milingo has been no stranger to controversy. In 1983, he was recalled from his archbishopric in Lusaka to Rome. Milingo had developed a large following conducting mass healings and exorcisms. Subsequently, Milingo gained a European following appearing on television and conducting public healing services. Milingo's unorthodox ministry raised ire in some Vatican Quarters and he was banned from conducting public healing ceremonies.

When the Vatican threatened to excommunicate him, he traveled to Italy hoping to gain an audience directly with the Pope to explain his position. After arriving, he was met by Vatican officials and taken to an undisclosed location.

Maria's daily fasting and praying in St. Peter's Square drew worldwide media attention. The drama appeared to end when Milingo appeared on television in August 2001, announcing that, after meeting with the Pope, he wished to be reconciled with his church. At a meeting with Maria, he reportedly told her that he continued to "love her as a sister" but that it was necessary for him to obey the Church and Pope.

Yet Milingo's continued absence since that meeting has caused continued concern. There have been rumors that the Archbishop's health is not good. The Catholic Church refuses to reveal Milingo's whereabouts. No public communication from him has been forthcoming. Some have



Archbishop Milingo and wife Maria Sung at their wedding reception last year.

alleged that Milingo's human rights may be being violated.

The Catholic Church's response is that the archbishop is in good health fulfilling a year-long private retreat. They have stated that Milingo will return to his ministry in September and that a residence and a church in Italy have been reserved for this purpose.

The Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo Human Rights Campaign Committee in Zambia collected 20,000 signatures demanding that an independent body to be sent to the Vatican to meet Archbishop Milingo and verify his well-being. They are also asking Milingo address an international press conference attended by medical doctors and his family.

Dennis De Jong, Bishop of the Ndola Catholic Diocese, responded that the Church will not be "blackmailed" by this campaign.

The Zambian government

has sought to reassure the public. Chief government spokesman Newstead Zimba said he has been assured by the representative from the Vatican that Milingo is all right.

The Lusaka *Post* cautioned Chief Mpezeni that it would violate the Zambian constitution to ban the Catholic Church. Counseling Zambians to accept Catholic assurances, the *Post* stated, "Bishop Dennis De Jong is a highly respected clergyman and there is no justification to doubt his word. No one has any record of him having lied or having crooked anyone."





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Meeting Jefferson

from page 2

There was the underground passage-way built to facilitate the bringing of dishes from the kitchen to the revolving serving area adjoining the dining room, where slaves prepared the meal's next course out of sight, and out of mind, or so Jefferson hoped. And in yet another room was Jefferson's library, where, the guides informed us, Jefferson's reputed mistress and servant, Sally Hemming, may have studied the classics despite

a law prohibiting the teaching of slaves to read.

For me, however, the most intriguing detail at Monticello was the epitaph on his grave marker in the family gravesite a few hundred yards down the hill from the main house. The man who had served two terms as president of the United States and presided over the Louisiana Purchase dictated the following epitaph for himself:

HERE WAS BURIED
THOMAS JEFFERSON
AUTHOR OF THE
DECLARATION
OF AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE
OF THE STATUTE
OF VIRGINIA FOR
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
AND FATHER OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF VIRGINIA.