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Joan Baez Mistranslated in Tokyo; Pressed to Do It, Radio Man Says

TOKYO, Feb. 21 (UPI)—A Tokyo radio producer said today he deliberately mistranslated remarks on political issues by American folk singer Joan Baez during her performances here last month because he was under pressure from an alleged American intelligence agent.

Ichiro Takasaki said an American indentifying himself as Harold Cooper asked him to tone down Miss Baez's pacifist statements that accompanied her renditions of anti-war songs.

He said Cooper claimed he was "active in (American) intelligence activities" but did not say he was a member of the CIA.

An American Embassy official in Tokyo said, "we categorically deny any insinuation

that a representatives of the U.S. Government ever attempted to hinder Miss Baez's performances in Japan."

Takasaki said he could not reject "Cooper's pressure because he told me if I turned it down I would run into difficulty in my job." Takasaki said he visits the United States on jobs at least twice a year and he feared he would have visa problems if he refused to cooperate.

[Reuters quoted Takasaki as saying that with or without Cooper's advice "I, a music lover who does not know anything about politics, would have avoided word-by-word translation of any controversial remarks."]

Takasaki admitted he baffled Japanese audiences Jan.

27 when one of Miss Baez's performances was broadcast by a Tokyo television station.

Miss Baez talked about Hiroshima and Nagasaki and said the proceeds from the concert would go to victims of the atomic bombings of the two Japanese cities. Takasaki however, did not even mention the names Hiroshima and Nagasaki in his translation. He told the Japanese audience only that Miss Baez's performance "was being telecast."

[Miss Baez, who has been prominent in American civil rights marches and demonstrations against U.S. Vietnam policy, recently protested that an Al Capp cartoon character, Joanie Phoanie was a "stupid and vulgar" caricature of herself and the anti-war movement.]