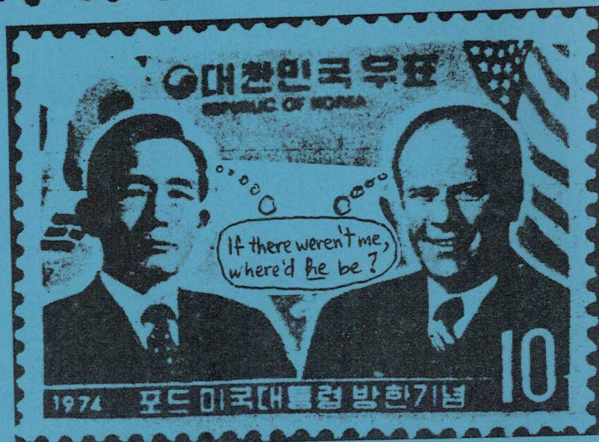


# A KOREA SPECTACULAR!

RECOMMENDED  
BY TWO OF THE  
WORLD'S MOST  
UPSTANDING  
UNELECTED  
"PRESIDENTS"



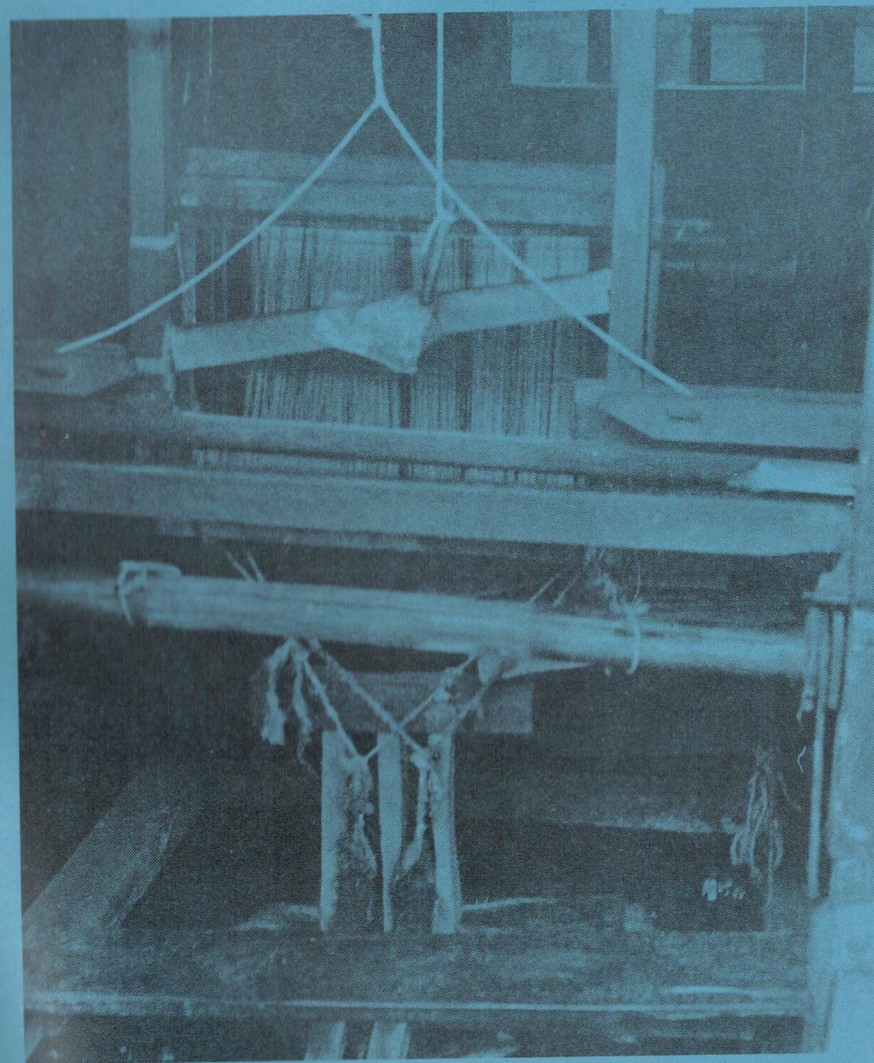
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# libero<sup>int'l</sup> no. 4



# CREATINGS

We hope this issue will give an idea of the bum trip being laid upon the people of south Korea. South Korea has become the whore of the pimp Park Chung Hee, a psychopathic dictator who once earned a living as an officer in the Japanese Imperial Army, putting down his own countrymen. Like the Korean women shanghaied into prostitution in the name of "export tourism," the Park govt has leased the country out to Japan and the U.S. for protection.

South Korea provides an ideal setting for state repression. Park Chung Hee even has a choice of "foreign threats." According to time and whim, he can raise the specter of a new invasion from the north, or fan the embers of anti-Japanese hatred engendered by 35 years' colonialism. The reason is the key role the country plays in the strategies of the US and Japan. For the former, south Korea represents the next rotting plank of the tottering "bulwark against communism." As for Japan, the Korean Resistance has summed it up: "What south Korea is to Japan is what a narcotic addict is to a pusher." Japanese "economic aid," the narcotic, exerts profit-making control while offering nothing but hunger and misery in return.

America's 42,000 troops, stationed right up to the Demilitarized Zone as the "tripwire" assuring the immediate entry of the US into any fighting, are intended primarily to protect foreign economic interests. As of December '74, the Japanese share of such investment in south Korea was 65.4%, that of the US 27.6%. As in any colonial situation, the personal rake-off stakes are also high. 4% of Japanese investment funds goes directly to the cabinet.

Kim Chi Ha wrote his "Statement of Conscience" with prison floor dirt on toilet paper, using a filed-down toothbrush. The fact that voices like his still ring out in south Korea today is living proof of the strength of the human spirit under the most savage repression..

\* \* \*

We were talking about the bread side of things the last few weeks. We really don't like the idea of "sub rates"—makes it sound like we charge a fee for the dubious pleasure of reading our outpourings. So what we propose to do from now on is continue sending to anyone who has an exchange with us, has sent us bread, is corresponding with us, and so on. We'll also send to prisoners or anyone who's broke, so if you can introduce some friends or if you can distribute extra copies for us, please let us know. Since Japanese postal rates went up 100% in January, it now costs us about £1.50 or \$3.00 to send out a 4-issue sea-mail sub. Send what you can. Incidentally, we're now sending only to people who have contacted us up to the time of publication.

Just space to throw in a few quickies... Chinese, Korean and Japanese names are always given in their natural order—family name first. Kim Chi Ha's surname is Kim, given name Chi Ha... The use of "south" and "north" (uncapitalized) before "Korea" does not necessarily make one a libertarian: being divided only temporarily, Korea is only "one country," in the eyes of Koreans we've talked to... The third part of "The Federation Issue in Japan" series will appear next time; no space this time, sorry... To all those who write asking for a copy of LI No.1, it's now out of print. Maybe we'll reprint someday... See you next time 'round!

## CHRONOLOGY OF DESPOTISM IN SOUTH KOREA

- 1960.4.19 Student demonstrations force government of Syngman Rhee to resign.
- 1961.5 Coup d'etat led by Major General Park Chung Hee; declares martial law, bans political parties, dissolves National Assembly, introduces press censorship, opens court martials to try dissidents, creates KCIA.
- 1963.10 Park elected President.
- 1969.10 Constitution revised to allow Park a third term.
- 1972.10.17 Park declares Martial Law, announces 'October Revitalization' plan: dissolves National Assembly, closes colleges and universities, enforces total media censorship.
- 1972.11 Yushin (Revitalizing) Constitution makes Park president for life.
- 1973.10 Student demos denounce Park, attack Japanese economic invasion; demand dissolution of KCIA; hundreds arrested.
- 1974.1.8 State of Emergency declared: Emergency Measure 1 makes it illegal to "deny, oppose, misrepresent, or defame the Constitution" or to "assert, introduce, propose or petition for revision or repeal of the Constitution"; EM 2 sets up military tribunals to process violators of EM 1; arrest and detention without warrant or time limit.
- 1974.1.14 EM 3: centralized economic planning, controlled by President.
- 1974.4.3 The harshest EM, No. 4: death penalty for students cutting classes or taking part in demos, discussions, rallies and "all other individual or collective activities in or outside campus except for normal classes." Arrest and detention without warrant—800 arrested. Repealed 1974.8.22.
- 1974.4.26 Kim Chi Ha arrested, sentenced to death, later commuted to life.
- 1974.8 Under pressure, Park repeals Emergency Measures 1 and 4.
- 1974.12 Government gets businesses to cancel ads in *Dong-a Ilbo*
- 1975.1.22 Referendum announced for 2.12; discussion of issues (Park's policies), except by Park, prohibited.
- 1975.3.18 EM 6: up to 7 years in prison for airing anti-govt gripes to foreigners. Aim: to get foreign press pieces on ROK to read like domestic media.
- 1975.4.8 EM 7: Bans campus rallies against government—10 years' jail. Eight alleged "People's Revolutionary Party" members hanged.
- 1975.5.13 EM 9: bans all criticism of Yushin Constitution or even medial reporting of same. Penalty unlimited. "Rumor-spreading" banned; arrest and detention without warrant.
- 1975.6.21 US Defense Secretary Schlesinger: "We've deployed nuclear weapons in ROK... we can't foreclose any option on their use."
- 1975.6.29 Entire population mobilized on war footing.
- 1975.7.8 Four new laws: New Civil Defense Corps to cover all males 17-50; \$400 million defense tax; severe restrictions and constant surveillance of former "anti-state criminals" (totalling 10,000 people); all university profs to resign by end of school year (1976.2)—reappointments to be made by Defense Ministry.



Yeah, I took a page out of the anarchists' book and did away with elections. Who needs 'em anyway? The people love me, everybody knows it - and besides, they're too stupid to vote.

# THE POST-WAR KOREAN ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

On December 25, 1945, the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, attended by the U.S., Great Britain, the USSR and China, passed two key resolutions on Korea. The first prescribed a four-power "Trusteeship" for up to five years (though Roosevelt had originally demanded 40!). The second created a U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission which, "in order to assist in the formation of a provisional democratic Korean government," would "consult with democratic political parties and social organizations" north and south. To the people of Korea, the (U.S.-engineered) Moscow provisions were a supreme "national insult." Resistance to the accords, released on December 27, sprang up overnight as people of all political views joined forces in a movement to oppose Trust Rule. Serious riots which broke out all over the south were suppressed by the Americans. Yet the very next day, on orders from the north, the communists suddenly announced their support for the Moscow decisions.

Behind these events lay the machinations of the U.S. military command in Seoul, which, seeing the strength of anti-Trust Rule feeling and seeking to steal a march on the communists, had already begun negotiating a deal with the Korean Right. Trusteeship could be bypassed and the Right installed in power if they would support American policy plans for the south. Right-wing politicians were thus able to flourish their "patriotism" by appearing to oppose Trust Rule, while its only supporters, the Soviet Union and its allies in the north, were branded traitors. Left publications which tried to expose Trusteeship as primarily an American creation designed to lay the basis for a U.S. empire in Asia were suppressed.

The communists' about-face was partly an attempt to avoid a U.S.-sponsored Right-wing takeover. Only in the north did it entirely succeed, yet in the south too, racked by famine and unemployment, the holocaust unleashed by American-supported death squads brought the communists considerable popular support. Only the anarchists remained firm in their rejection of dictatorship of any hue, and they paid in lost support.

The implications of the communist endorsement were plain. First, the Korean people's inability to govern themselves effectively; second, despite so-called "liberation," continuation of Korea's long colonial history; third, and most important of all, it led to the ultimate tragedy, the still-continuing division into north and south Koreas. For the north, Trust Rule meant Soviet manipulation through the structure of the People's Committees (LI-3, pp. 24-5). For the south, it meant American Military Government through the still-intact Japanese bureaucracy, using landlords, ultra-rightists, former collaborators and military officers. North or south, the new masters were equally hated by the people.

The indelible stain of the 38th parallel on the hearts and minds of the Korean people began here. The fundamental insistence upon class revolution rather than national independence and liberation led the communists to support Trust Rule. By thus crushing the passionate desire of all Koreans for a united independence, the CP turn-around was a clear stab in the back. For all the above reasons, the anti-Trust movement from that point on inevitably became fiercely nationalistic and anti-communist.

The communists now resorted to violence to stifle anti-Trusteeship voices, particularly north of the 38th parallel where Soviet troops were in occupation.

Drastic measures were enforced to ensure public support for the party line. On January 5, 1946, for instance, Red Army commissars approached Cho Man Sik, a leader of the moderate Korean Democratic Party's Pyongyang branch and representative of the "Five Provinces" Provisional People's Committee, to seek his support: "Adherence to the decision of the Moscow Conference is the correct line for the establishment of a democratic and independent Korea." Cho stood firm, demanding immediate, unconditional independence for all Korea: "I would rather suffer death itself than the humiliation of Trust Rule." He disappeared the next day. The subsequent purge swept away all opponents of Trust Rule, including some communists, and left Kim Il Song in Cho's former position.

The bloody trail of Kim Il Song's career begins here, with the Soviet Red Army backing the policy of the U.S. State Department. Kim later set out to eliminate all his rivals, beginning with the south Korean Workers' Party, led by Pak Hun Yong. Pak advocated unification rather than "socialism in one country." After a long struggle he finally disappeared after the Civil War and was executed in 1955. The next target was the "Yenan Faction," led by Kim Tu Bong and Mu Chong, which had fought with the Chinese People's Liberation Army against the Japanese during the war. The other two principal factions were also purged. With a ferocity and single-mindedness hardly rivalled even by Stalin, Kim flourished his autocratic powers in an orgy of blood.

If the communists flouted the popular will by endorsing the Moscow Accords and resorted to violence to suppress dissent, the Americans in the south had long been doing likewise by mobilizing the Right to suppress what people on the spot admitted was a "revolution involving perhaps millions of people." A vicious purge was instituted against the Left, though it was rightist violence which predominated. The Americans, like the British, French and Dutch in Indonesia, the Philippines and elsewhere in south-east Asia, actually ordered the Japanese imperial authorities to remain in their positions, and used them to put down the popular movement which they had once encouraged. As Halliday says in his pamphlet (p. 7), to conceive of a parallel would be like imagining the Allies landing in Yugoslavia in 1945, refusing to deal with Tito, reinstating the Nazis and their puppets, and releasing the SS to put down demonstrations.

By 1947 there were more political prisoners in occupation jails than at the end of Japanese rule. Local organizations were crushed by American troops helped by Japanese collaborators recalled (to even their own astonishment!) from hiding in the hills. Labor unions, even reformist ones, were smashed. Rightist-gangster mobs sent to break strikes and beat up workers (castration was their specialty) later formed the basis for the official union after 1948. Concentration camps were built to house strikers. Many starved to death. While events in the north are still shrouded in secrecy so that we must surmise much of what took place as Kim Il Song consolidated his power, the facts of the American and rightist repression in the south are stark, and document one of the little-known but bloody episodes in the suppression of popular aspirations in Asia.

The following March the U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission was finally convened. Naturally enough, there was little room for compromise, for each side had already marked out its sphere of influence in south and north Korea respectively. Moreover, the two superpowers had every right to feel satisfied with the results of their post-war interventions in Korea—at least as long as they confined their economic, political and territorial designs to their own halves. The Americans had seen Korea as a chance to replace the European colonial powers and establish a "bulwark against communism"—i.e., an American Pacific empire. The Russians were primar-

ily concerned with preventing an attack on Russia itself, and were therefore content with the north as a buffer.

With neither side willing to alter the status quo, therefore, it was no wonder that the Commission's "efforts" amounted to a series of stalemates or walk-outs. As early as May 1946 the talks had broken down, and finally, in October 1947, the Commission adjourned without setting a date for its next meeting. Against Russian opposition, the entire issue was handed over by the Americans to their creature, the UN, which proceeded to scrap the Trust proposal altogether and fulfil the promise made to the Right two years before. All but the furthest right of the Korean nationalists opposed the American move, obviously destined to create separate governments for north and south, but were powerless. In May 1948, after a rigged election, an American puppet government under Syngman Rhee was established in the south. That same September the north followed suit, inaugurating the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" with Kim Il Song as premier. The Trusteeship issue thus became irrelevant.

### THE ALL--KOREAN ANARCHIST CONGRESS, APRIL 23, 1946

In the fierce propaganda war between proponents and opponents of Trust Rule, the overwhelmingly anarchist League of Free Social Constructors (LI-3, pp. 26-7) had stood consistently in the front line of the latter, keeping in line with its insistence on national liberation before social revolution. Huge demonstrations supported by the League had filled the streets of Seoul almost daily.

Amid the buffets of the Trust Rule storm, the anarchists decided to hold an All-Korea Congress in the spring of 1946. The site was Anwi in Kyong-sang Namdo province, the heartland of the Korean anarchist movement. Comrades returned from China, from Manchuria, from Japan, and those just released from Japanese jails and young post-Liberation recruits all got together in this great meeting of the libertarian left. Many of them renewing long-sundered friendships, nearly 100 delegates attended. They included Yu Lim (Yu Hwa Yong), Shin Pi Mo, Lee Eul Kyu and Lee Jung Kyu, Pak Sok Hong, Bang Han Sang, Ha Chong Chu, Lee Shi Yan, Han Ha Yan, Kim Hyan U, Yang Il Dong, U Han Ryong, and Choi Yong Chun. The Anwi Congress was the greatest demonstration of strength ever achieved by the Korean comrades throughout the history of their movement, before or since. That alone should be testimony to the hardships endured by the Korean anarchist movement, for whose members it is to this day all but impossible to create horizontal relationships between different areas.

The Anwi Congress saw excited debates concerning the future of the anarchist movement in Korea, how best to promote the anti-Trust Rule movement, and so on. As the most pressing issues of the day, these were bound to demand attention. But boiling point was only reached in the fierce arguments centering on the Yu Lim group's advocacy of an anarchist political party: should anarchists form, or even take part in, political activities? And what position should the Congress take?

Before Liberation, Yu Lim had been in charge of the China branch of the General League of Korean Anarchists. At the same time he had been a cabinet member of the Korean Provisional Government (KPG) organized by various radical and moderate independence movement groups in Shanghai in 1919 (later moved to Chungking). In December 1945 he had returned to Korea with the rest of the KPG, still retaining his cabinet membership. The participation of anarchists in government, like Yu Lim in Korea or Federica Montseny and company in Spain, has confronted the international anarchist movement everywhere. The Yu Lim group's case was as follows:

"The situation in Korea is a very special one.... In other words, the Korean people today have neither a free country nor even a free government. Therefore, without the ability to govern themselves, the very right to do so has been torn away from them, and they are about to fall under the rule of a foreign Trusteeship. Under such conditions, even anarchists are bound to respond to the urgent desire of the Korean people to build their own country and to set up their own government. Therefore, the anarchists must create their own political party, and play a positive part in building a new Korea. Should the anarchists stand by with folded arms doing nothing, Korea will surely fall into the hands of either the Stalinists to the north or the imperialistic compradore-capitalists to the south...."

Yu Lim and his supporters, fretting for the future, felt a deep sense of impending crisis. "Only we anarchists can ensure for Korea a future of freedom, liberation, unity and independence. That is precisely the reason why we must play a positive part in politics. And in order to do so, we anarchists must create a political party of our own to wage that struggle."

In the end the Congress voted to accept the Yu Lim proposal. Still, product of unique Korean conditions or not, this decision's effect on the Korean anarchist movement would be felt right up to the present day. For as a result, the movement split into two tendencies, those who joined Yu Lim in organizing the Independent Labor-Farmer Party, and those who took the side of the brothers Lee Eul Kyu and Lee Jung Kyu, established the Autonomous Village League and the Autonomous Workers' League, and followed the line of slow but steady socialist revolution.



April 1946 All-Korean Anarchist Congress Group Portrait

## THE DONG-A WORKERS' STRUGGLE

# Confronting **KCIA**

Thanks to the brave struggle of less than 200 hundred workers at south Korea's largest daily, the human rights movement broke free of the regime's tight grip on the media to reach a nationwide audience for the first time in years.

What were the workers after? Was this a case of "workers' control" or simply another free speech movement? How and why were they defeated? The first of two parts.

With the declaration of martial law in 1972, the Korean press, hardly free in the first place, began slipping further into submissive helplessness, by degrees becoming dictator Park Chung Hee's main propaganda instrument. Step by step the regime encroached on "free press prerogatives" until the occasional cartoon barb or subtly ironic headline remained the only weapons left. By the end of 1973 KCIA agents sat in as "assistant editors," checking the galleys for the slightest deviation from state-ordained orthodoxy, the slightest lapse from "responsible journalism." Hagging between editor and "assistant" over a story's appearance or its precise wording would often hold up an edition for hours. As the repressive machinery went into high gear in late 1973 to become full-fledged fascist repression by March 1974, as Park picked off segments of the student, church and parliamentary opposition, and as the prisons filled up with political cases to where ordinary institutions of "justice" could no longer handle them all, the press was too preoccupied with the "threat from the north" to give these events its attention. Or, at most, it simply printed the government hand-outs nearly verbatim. To the hundreds of people in Park's prisons could now be added each of the major dailies, not least among them the *Dong-a Ilbo*.<sup>1</sup>

So long as the press stood between the opposition and the people, no movement had any hope of breaking out into the open. Such movements, if reported at all, were treated as something akin to a communist fifth column. And this in a climate where the fear—rational or not—of invasion or subversion by Kim Il

Sung's stalinist minions to the north is the paramount political factor. By playing on these fears, Park held the upper hand, but only so long as the press went along, so long as many of the "facts" handed out by the government went unchallenged. But an important fissure in the iron edifice of state-press collusion appeared on October 24, 1974, when some 180 *Dong-a* reporters and deputy editors issued their "Manifesto for the Realization of Freedom of Speech." As much a quarrel with management as it was a struggle with the regime (for the reporters viewed the two as very nearly inseparable), it called for the reinstatement of several fired fellow-reporters, better working conditions, greater job security, removal of the KCIA from the editorial rooms, the right of reporters and editors to freely report political news unhampered by government restraints, and for management to print the Manifesto in that day's *Dong-a*. As management continued to negotiate, especially on the last demand, the reporters shut down the presses. Finally, at 10:50 that night, management capitulated entirely, the presses rolled again, and the last two of the four regular editions appeared a half-day late (an evening paper, the *Dong-a* usually hits the street shortly after noon.) From that day on it was a different paper. No longer did it belong to Park and his management proxies, but to the people. The workers were in command!

### CONTROLLING THE WORKSITE, DETHRONING THE EMPEROR

But to view the *Dong-a* struggle as simply one of workers' control is to not only gloss over some of their original demands, but is also to miss its wider political implications. For the reporters themselves saw their struggle as inseparably linked to the larger movement to dethrone the emperor.

*Dong-a*'s role in the larger movement, and its free-speech origins can best be understood if we retrace the development of the human rights struggle from October 1973. Another outburst of student organizing, campus petition campaigns and street demos led to a rash of clubbings, gassings, arrests and tortures at the underground interrogation cells at the KCIA's notorious Namsan headquarters. Among student demands was the end to Park's pet Yushin Constitution, which banned most forms of dissent right down to informal gatherings of three or more people. By the last week of November, hardly a day passed that didn't see a demo.<sup>2</sup> To stem the tide, Park closed the schools in December, two months early, pleading a heating fuel shortage (the oil shock was then two months old).

With the students out of the way until the beginning of the next term in April, the scene of action then shifted to the elders. With public opinion unpacified by Park's December 3rd replacement of 10 of his 20 ministers and the ouster of the hated KCIA chief, Lee Hu Rak, a group of prominent opposition party, church, academic and intellectual leaders joined in calling for an end to the Yushin Constitution. On December 24, they began a petition drive to that end, and succeeded by the end of the year in getting half their stated goal of 1 million signatures.

Park did not wait to find out whether they would succeed in getting the other half-million. On January 8, 1974, he decreed the first of four Emergency Measures. EM-1 made criticism of the Yushin Constitution or calls for its abrogation a crime punishable by 15 years' imprisonment. Civil disobedience cases would be disposed of without warrant and tried in a special "High Military Tribunal" closed to all but the defendant, his/her lawyer, one family member and press members accredited by the Defense Ministry. Even criticism of the EM itself could get one 15 years. The EM was met with defiance and the petition movement continued into the new year.

Jailing of several dozen of the petition's initiators swiftly followed, along with outspoken church and intellectual leaders, until, within a few short weeks, several dozen of the country's most prominent civil libertarians were behind bars. The trials were swift, "justice" peremptory and sentences severe. With most of its leaders in prison, the petition movement quickly fizzled out.

The next crisis came in March with the students' return to the campuses. As early as January, one observer had written: "The start of the long winter recess and a cold spell saved South Korea from mass student demonstrations.... Given the lack of genuine reforms, the crucial test facing the G[sic]overnment will be what to do when the students return to the campuses next spring and threaten to take to the streets again. Without a new wave of [K]CIA counterattacks, it seems unlikely that sporadic rallies by student and other groups for more freedom and reforms will subside."<sup>3</sup> By March rumors were rampant that the students had been putting their long vacation to good use and that flash-in-the-pan rampages were a thing of the past. This time they were organizing—and nationwide.

#### THE NDYSF — SUBVERSION FROM THE NORTH?

The rumors were born out. On April 1, universities in four big cities including Seoul attempted to hold large demonstrations, but within minutes were frustrated by government infiltrators who had turned up both the detailed plans and fliers signed "the National Democratic Youth and Student Federation." With the police ready and waiting, most of the "demos" never left campus, and between 40 and 50 students were arrested as part of the NDYSF plot. (Opinion is divided as to whether the NDYSF actually existed or not. While student planning for something "big" with inter-university coordination in April was no secret, the fliers enjoyed such limited circulation that many believe they were govt fabrications.) Deprived of central leadership, the "student spring" nevertheless continued on April 2nd and 3rd, with sporadic outbursts on campuses throughout the country, still holding forth the promise of igniting general mass revolt. Park, mindful of history's lessons (his predecessor was toppled by just such a student-led uprising in 1961), didn't waste any time in clamping down, with the decree of yet another Emergency Measure, No. 4. Adopted on April 3rd, it banned the NDYSF and made participation in, affiliation with, encouragement of, or sympathy with this student organization a crime punishable by "death, life imprisonment or imprisonment for not less than five years."<sup>4</sup> Even reporting NDYSF activities could cost a reporter his/her life. Habeas corpus, warrants and all such human rights guarantees — which had become nothing but legalistic windowdressing anyway — were blatantly discarded. The fascist regime decided to drop its mask, for this was a real emergency.

The round-up commenced. By the end of May a total of 1024 people, according to government reports, were "being detained for investigation." 54 NDYSF members were formally indicted for violating EM-4, and on May 27th began an all-out propaganda campaign. The indictment's details filled page after page of the domestic press, complete with elaborate KCIA-concocted NDYSF organizational charts. "The NDYSF attempted to set up a provisional coalition government with the purpose of communizing the whole political structure after toppling down the present political system by means of a bloody and violent revolution...."<sup>5</sup> Masterminded in north Korea, the "student uprising" was orchestrated by an underground network of communist cells, called the "People's Revolutionary Party." 28 of the 54 were claimed to be PRP partisans acting on instructions from

Kim Il Sung, thus providing the student-north link so desperately needed by Park to thoroughly discredit the student movement and to justify such draconian decrees as his latest EM. By mid-October, a total of 203 people, including 114 students, were tried and convicted under the Emergency Measures, with 8 getting death (all of them alleged PRP members).

Through all of this, the press simply acted as govt typesetter, issuing page after page of "facts" on the North-PRP-student connection and "analysis" showing the perils of playing into Pyongyang's hands. One example: "The postwar generation, lacking the bitter experience of Communist atrocities and oppression, has apparently caught the delusion of communism and become the prey to the tricks of impure elements."<sup>6</sup>

#### PARK'S 'PRP' PLOT EXPOSED

But reports of atrocities and oppression closer to home began to make the rounds after the cases had already been "legally" disposed of. On October 1st an American missionary, George Ogle, became the first to issue a non-government opinion on the case by openly praying for the families of the PRP. As he was to tell it later,<sup>7</sup> he was not originally interested in their alleged communism nor the question of their guilt/innocence; his position was simply that, communists or not, their souls demanded Christian prayers. But once called in for an overnight grilling by the KCIA, and warned that communist souls, hell-bound anyway, were not the province of Christian concern, Ogle grew more suspicious. From his interrogator, chief of the KCIA's 6th Bureau, he learned that the only hard evidence that the PRP were communists, "the only thing he had, was one man's 'crime' of listening to the North Korean radio and copying a speech of Kim Il Sung." He met some of the PRP families, checked back newspapers, researched further. His findings were issued in November: the PRP defendants hadn't even known each other, they were uniformly from middle-class families, and they had been tortured into false confessions. "The so-called communist conspiracy announced by the CIA in April of 1974 is basically a fabrication of the CIA itself."

That the main contentions of Ogle's report should find their way into the New York Times (November 26) was bad enough. But Park probably felt himself safe so long as the domestic press was under his thumb. By sitting on the churches, he could contain the scandal domestically — and Ogle could always be deported (he was in December). Again, the domestic press held the key. Until the Dong-a workers' Manifesto of October 24, Park could head off each crisis without serious challenge.



Korea University Students, November 1973

## TOWARDS WORKERS' CONTROL — THE DONG-A ORGANIZES

The Manifesto did not happen as suddenly as appeared to management, the regime or to other outsiders. While all the above events had been taking place, the Dong-a reporters hadn't been sitting idle, but had been struggling on their own. Here, in the words of one of the organizers, is how that struggle developed:<sup>8</sup>

"The so-called Dong-a struggle actually dates from 1971.4.15 with our 'Declaration of Freedom of the Press.' It came out just before the last election, which, like all election campaign periods, presented an atmosphere of relative freedom. I stress the word 'relative' of course. After the election, the 'Declaration' became just a piece of paper. In October '71, Park decreed his 'Declaration of State of Emergency,' and the reporter who led the movement, named Shim Jae Taek, and the popular editorial writer, Chun Kwan Woo, and the managing editor, Lee Tong Wuk, were fired. After that, every time someone tried to push for freedom of the press, he failed because there was no organization. But from late '73 to early '74 we began movements to organize a union. We concluded by that time that if you wanted to struggle for a free press, from the very beginning your status as journalists had to be guaranteed. The labor union was the only way to achieve this, both legally and organizationally.

"On March 6, 1974 we formally filed for registration of our union with the Seoul City government. Under the law, a trade union is recognized as having been established commencing from the date of its application filing. But in our case, there were some sophisticated maneuvers, various stipulations were attached. Registration would not be enough, and govt permission would be needed. On March 8, the Dong-a fired the whole union leadership core, all of them reporters (the union was made up of reporters, producers, engineers and announcers). The non-fired reporters countered with a support committee whose demands were modest enough: reinstate our fellow-workers. We did not threaten to strike. 8 more were fired on March 11, and 17 reprimanded with indefinite suspension. A total of 36 were out by that time. By then it was obvious to us that the govt and the Dong-a management were working hand-in-glove. Seoul City govt sent its letter of permission to form a union in mid-March, but management replied that there was no longer anyone there to accept the registration. Clear collusion. This was an important lesson for us.

"After we returned to the paper, we took Seoul City to court. We had come to the paper with the understanding that mass firing was illegal, so we regarded ourselves, just as we do now, as not having been fired. Seoul City's view, which only

accounts for the management side, is invalid. We filed suit on July 12 and it has now reached the High District Court.

"But anyway, the union has existed since March 6, 1974. The Dong-a union is a branch of the 'National Publishers' Union,' the first newspaper employees' union to belong. Officially it still does not exist, but even so we have strong support among the reporters, announcers, producers, technicians and engineers. All told, there're 230 people in the newsroom and radio station.



October 24 Manifesto

"October 24th was a holiday, United Nations Day. Ha! Many reporters did not have to go out for news-gathering, and stayed around the office. About 30 people were in on the planning of the Manifesto, and we kept it a secret among us. No leaks. So at 9:00 a.m. we congregated in the newsroom. Management was totally unprepared. There were three points, and management gave in to the last one at 10:50 that night. The Manifesto appeared in the 3rd and 4th editions that night, and the 1st and 2nd editions the next day.

"Even though it agree to all of our demands, management was still dragging its feet, fearing govt wrath. It regularly tried to cut stories about the opposition. The next big confrontation came after the November 11th Myongdong Incident.<sup>9</sup> On the morning of the 12th we held a general assembly in the newsroom and demanded detailed coverage of the mass, with photos. This was a very important event, for it was the first time that the Catholics had raised the issue of the PRP. Also the truth behind Professor Tche's 'suicide'.<sup>10</sup> But management stonewalled, insisting on an absolute black-out. We struck. The presses didn't move and all four editions didn't appear that day. The next morning management surrendered.

## FROM "SUBTLETY" TO "ALL-OUT WAR"

"The government didn't get into gear for some time. It was easy enough to get management to go along with agents in the newsroom, and reporting everything with a government slant, because management was of course more interested in getting out a paper than it was in printing the truth. But short of firing several hundred of us reporters, there was no way for the govt or its proxy, management, to agree to their priorities. It was either let us print what we wanted or don't print at all. I don't mean that the govt and management were one and the same thing. Of course the govt is interested in printing lies, while management's ambition is to print anything, just so long as it sells. It just wants to make money for the owners. And if—speaking from management's standpoint—the govt, with all its agents, police, army, etc., is intent on seeing you print lies, then print lies you will or it's the end of your business. Profits come before the truth or any other motive. But—the bosses also knew that recourse to state power could prove very meaningless in a situation like this. All the king's army and all the king's men could not put out their paper again. Only we could, so the bosses had to play along with us for awhile, buying time, while at the same time hoping that the govt would not blow its cool and completely destroy their paper. In the meantime, though, the Dong-a was printing more and more of the kind of stories guaranteed to send Park into a rage—the PRP, KCIA spies at church meetings, prayers for prisoners, etc. We knew that the govt couldn't sit by while we printed these very damaging allegations day after day, and while circulation continued to climb. Something would have to be done...

"On December 16 the govt's strategy became clear. Cancellation of ad space began trickling in. Sure, the govt was behind it and everybody knew it, but how could you prove it? Ask the advertiser, and he'd simply say: 'We regret that due to forces beyond our control...' or something like that. Hardly anyone dared to come out and say what everybody already knew: fiscal strangulation instead of an overt police invasion was Park's 'subtle' tactic. This continued until, on the 25th,<sup>11</sup> we got this big 'Christmas present'—all our major advertisers called in cancellations. Every last ad right down to the size of your little finger—all in one day. Park had thrown subtlety to the winds, this was all-out war!"

The reporters decided to slug it out. Sooner or later the paper would go bankrupt, but the issue of freedom of the press came before the life of the paper or even

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their own livelihood. In the last few days of '74, huge blank spaces appeared in place of ads, but in January the reporters introduced a new tactic. They began selling space to all comers at the price of a "contribution." First isolated one-liners, like "Hang in there, Dong-a!" and "Away with all tyrants!", then quotes, from Jesus to Thomas Paine, poems, biblical passages, etc., began filling the "Freedom of Speech Support Column" so quickly that within a month the column came to cover several pages. More than the liberated front page, it was probably this column that was responsible for the Dong-a's sudden circulation jump from 600,000 to 800,000.

The attempt to strangle the paper had backfired. Insubordination from a few uppity reporters was bad enough, but getting the public into the act was more than any respectable dictator worthy of the name would put up with. Not only could the opposition in Seoul reach the countryside, the countryside could now reach the opposition. Plain for everyone to see, both at home and abroad, ridicule and vilification of the dictator had become public spectacle.

The battle escalated further at the end of January when "Relatives of the Accused in the So-called NYDSF Case" took out a large ad protesting the innocence of their sons and brothers, proclaiming, in part: "Even those who break the law have a right not to be tortured, not to be detained for unduly long periods, not to be punished... but nonetheless those accused in connection with the NDYSF were forced to confess under cruel tortures and were detained without warrants."<sup>12</sup> On February 15th, 168 of the 203 people imprisoned under the Emergency Measures were suddenly released.<sup>13</sup> Their revelations made the Dong-a within days. Lurid tales of the torture of Na Byong Shik struck the public consciousness with his interview in the February 17th issue.

Public demand for the release of the PRP also mounted. Only a day after the Minister of Justice held a special news conference to announce that the govt's evidence of the PRP's part in a north-directed plot was not to be disputed, that they were proven communists, etc., on February 25th the Dong-a began a long serialization of Kim Chi Ha's prison memoirs, called "Penance." In it, Kim told of a prison yard conversation with Ha Chae Wan, one of the alleged PRP conspirators awaiting execution. Ha told Kim that the whole PRP business was a fabrication: "The govt dreamed it all up." "Then on what basis are they holding you?" "The interrogation. They kept at me until I confessed." "Was the torture bad?" "Terrible, brutal. They ruptured my intestines... I couldn't stand it. They admitted they were trumping up the whole case..." Poet Kim was packed off to prison, this time on charges of violating the Anti-Communist Law. But that still left the struggling reporters of the Dong-a for Park to deal with.

**NOTES** (Most of the sources cited below can be found reprinted in *The PRP—State Conspiracy*—see reading list this issue, pp.42-43.)

1. Korea's oldest newspaper, the Dong-a has proud tradition of stubborn struggle against the Japanese colonial tyranny. Within five months of its founding in 1920, the Japanese governor-general served it an "indefinite suspension order" for reporting anti-Japanese Korean Independence Army exploits in Manchuria. Three more such incidents punctuated its turbulent history

until it was closed down for good in August 1940. In its short 20-year life it established a record that even Park's heavy-fisted regime may find hard to match: indefinite suspensions (4 times), banning of distribution (63), confiscation of printed editions (489) and censoring of galley copy (2423). Immediately following liberation from Japanese rule, "anarchy" prevailed and the left-wing movement, which had either been underground or abroad for so many years, abruptly emerged from its decades-long hibernation. Dozens, if not hundreds, of party papers, propaganda tabloids, labor organizing newsletters, etc., appeared overnight. The newly resurrected Dong-a then became the only remaining hope of the American-backed propertied oligarchy and forces of reaction. So absolutely did it abandon whatever liberal pretenses it had to "objectivity" and "freedom of the press" that, through family alliances, it became the unofficial mouthpiece of the Korean Democratic Party preceding the outbreak of Civil War in 1950. Ever since, resting on its laurels, it has waged war on communism while extolling the virtues of private capital. (Dong-a Ilbo Ryak-sa [Short History of the Dong-a Ilbo], Seoul, n.d., pp. 12-27, 29-31, 38-44.)

2. See Korea Bulletin, Vol.1 No.3 (April '74), for a detailed chronology of the October-November demos. On Oct 5th some 5000-10,000 students at Korea and Yonsei Universities clashed with police, and the govt placed a ban on media coverage. (Frank Gould, "The Student Spring," Far Eastern Economic Review, Dec 24, 1973.) Gould further reported: "Newsmen are also growing restless under the control of the KCIA censors. On November 30, the government called a meeting of newspaper publishers for 10 a.m., intending to order them to cease printing articles about demonstrations (after the first few demonstrations, which were 'reported' only in the form of blank columns in the Dong-a Ilbo on Oct 4 and Oct 5, brief reports were permitted.)"

3. Kim Sam-o, "An Ominous Thaw," FEER, Jan 7, 1974.

4. William J. Butler, "Political Repression in South Korea," p.6.

5. "Defendants Maneuvered to Set Up Red Regime Under Common Front Tactics: Court Martial," Korea Herald, May 28, 1974, p.1.

6. "League Activists Vanguard in Fulfilling P'yang Goals," Korea Herald, May 28, 1974, p. 2.

7. This and the following are a brief summary of Ogle's mimeographed report, "They're Under Sentence of Death," circulated in Seoul, November 1974. The full text is reprinted as Appendix 16 to Human Rights in South Korea: Implications for U.S. Policy, C'tee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, 1974. (Quite a humdinger, as govt documents go.)

8. Interview with Dong-a reporter, late March 1975, about a week after the occupying strikers had been forcibly evicted from the head office. (Obviously his/her identity must remain a secret a few days later Park's 6th Emergency Measure made passing "rumors" like these to foreigners punishable by years in jail.)

9. In "the first nationwide mass held by Catholics on the issue of human rights," "about 2000 Catholics gathered at Myongdong Cathedral [the largest Roman Catholic church in south Korea] in a downtown [Seoul] area praying for 'those who suffer in cold prison cells for their acts aimed at justice and peace.'" Mainichi Daily News, Osaka, Nov 13, 1974.

10. "One issue [of the November student demos] not mentioned publicly is the strange case of Professor Tche... of the Law Faculty at Seoul National University, a supporter of the student movement. In late October it was announced that Prof. Tche had committed suicide at the KCIA prison after confessing to being a North Korean agent. ... Tche's wife was not allowed to see the body." (Gould, "The Student Spring") Gould also reported the students' belief that Tche had been tortured to death in a KCIA attempt "to put a damper on the demonstrations by uncovering another 'spy ring.'"

11. Or on the 26th, as most accounts have it.

12. Dong-a Ilbo, January 28, 1974. Full translation in PRP, pp.50-51.

13. The PRP defendants, as well as those NDYSF students said to be closely connected with them, were not included in the "general commutation" (not an amnesty, it was stressed). This "commutation," seen as a major capitulation by Park, could only have been prompted by intense and sustained pressure from someone, presumably in Washington—who else has so much "leverage" (troops, aid, grants, loans, trade deals, etc.)? While Ford, Kissinger et al publicly stonewalled on the issue of human rights vs "defense of a free ally" (emphasis added), it is conceivable that another Vietnam-in-the-making is beginning to penetrate the consciousness of the global big-game strategists. This seems even more plausible in that only Park's most powerful patrons might be expected to overcome what could only have been the strongest reluctance to free the prisoners precisely when a free Dong-a was ready and waiting to make their torture stories front-page reading.



# Kimchi ha

The fire and the agony of Kim Chi Ha's verses are rooted in Korea's long and tragic history. Kim, one of Park Chung Hee's most dangerous critics, was born on February 4, 1941, in Mokpo, Cholla province, for centuries the scene of resistance to overbearing govts. While a student he spent two years "wandering" in the countryside to avoid the clampdown of 1961. Later he was tortured and imprisoned for joining the student movement against normalization of Japan-south Korea relations in 1964-65.

After acute tuberculosis had put him in a sanatorium for two years from 1967, his first long poem, "Five Bandits," was published in 1970. Kim, the editor and publishers of the paper that printed it, and other people were arrested under the Anti-Communist Law and the paper confiscated by the KCIA. After a long imprisonment, the charges were suspended and the defendants freed on bail. Three months later the anthology, "Yellow Earth," was published, and Kim took to the countryside to avoid arrest.

After the 1972 publication of his next anti-establishment poem, "Groundless Rumor," the govt re-committed him to Masan sanatorium for penning material "likely to benefit north Korea," and threatened recriminations against his family if he kept it up. Still he continued to write clandestinely. After a Japanese writ-

ers' delegation, part of a global campaign for his release, visited him at the sanatorium, Kim was released in July 1972. By April 1974 he was once again in jail, this time for writing "Cry of the People," a biting attack on Park's ultra-oppressive Emergency Measures. In July he was convicted of helping plot a nation-wide student rebellion (the "NDYSF—see pp.8-15, this issue). In a hasty, closed trial he was sentenced to death, and only a new international outcry forced the govt to commute his sentence to life. He did not reappear until February 1975, when he and almost all of the NDYSF students were released. This breath of freedom lasted him but three weeks. After Kim revealed the truth of KCIA tortures in the Dong-a Ilbo, the gates clanged shut behind him once again.

Kim's poems attack govt and official corruption, erosion of human rights in south Korea, and the suffering and poverty of his fellow Koreans. They make you cry and laugh at once, such is their satirical power. As government oppression of Kim got ever more violent, so the tone of his poetry has hardened and sharpened, until it seems the pages must explode with the power of the images. As long as Kim Chi Ha remains alive and writing, the govt and Park Chung Hee will squirm in its iron-shod shoes. The "Statement of Conscience" below was smuggled out of prison in mid-1975, soon after 8 of the PRP "spies" were hung. In it, Kim exposes the govt's plan to frame him on similar charges. Since its appearance, he has been refused all visits, and is still awaiting trial.

# STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE

TO ALL WHO CHERISH JUSTICE AND TRUTH:

The Park regime is tying me up in a conspiratorial net of incredible lies. They say I am a communist who infiltrated the Catholic Church and pretended to be an advocate of democracy and human rights. I have been arrested and imprisoned on these charges.

The authorities will soon begin a courtroom charade to "legally" brand me forever as a treacherous Marxist-Leninist agent. I will be impressed into the ranks of that legion of government-designated "communists."

I am not the only target of this conspiracy. It is directed at the whole movement to restore democracy and at the Christian Church which has been fighting for social justice. The authorities are particularly determined to label as pro-communist the Association of Catholic Priests for the Realization of Justice, the National Council for the Restoration of Democracy, and all youth and student movements. This is the forerunner of a broad crackdown on dissent.

The government has been making these vile charges against me for more than a decade; they are nothing new. I should prefer not to waste words with a personal defense here. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) agents say, "If you have a statement to make about these charges, do it in court." For once I agreed with them. I intended to do just that: to bring out some of the truth about this

travesty during the trial by challenging the prosecutor.

However, the current political situation compels me to speak out now. It is not just my convictions and my credibility that are endangered. The net has been thrown widely to encompass all democratic forces, my church and the student movement. I owe it to history and the Korean people to state my beliefs and the facts about my arrest as I know them.

## AM I A COMMUNIST?

I have never in the past thought of myself as a communist, and I still do not. I am not a communist. The KCIA charges against me should be patently absurd. My lawyer has told me they have taken the "confession" I was forced to write and have made it public to prove that I am a communist.<sup>1</sup> The "confession" in the pamphlet is called "Statement No. 2" but actually it was the third one. The KCIA discarded the second statement but still numbered the third version as No. 2. These details aside, it is true that the document was written by my hand.

But not by my mind and soul. It was not a voluntary statement. I was a powerless individual in an underground interrogation room of the KCIA's Fifth Bureau.<sup>2</sup> They were the almighty agency of state terror, beyond any law or decency. How much truth do you think there is in those sheets of paper, my "confession?" From the time of my arrest I was pressured to say that I was a "communist who had infiltrated the Catholic Church." The government had decided to destroy me politically and religiously. They were going to crush me until I was flattened out like a piece of dried cuttlefish. I resisted my interrogators and refused to "confess." The grilling continued for five or six days, I think. Finally

they wore me down. I had not been in good health before my arrest; I had fainted several times due to anemia, and I was suffering from chronic insomnia. The constant questioning left me physically exhausted and delirious. I knew the Park regime would use any means necessary to convict me as a communist. It did me no good to keep telling the interrogators that I was innocent. They had strict orders from their master to "Get Kim Chi Ha" regardless of the facts. The KCIA agents were cogs in the machine; they could not refuse that order. They were ashamed of what they were doing but they hammered away at me day and night. I saw no point in continuing the nerve-wracking war of attrition against such pitiful men!

Finally, on the sixth day, I wrote out a statement which they dictated. I scribbled it down like graffiti on a toilet wall and threw it at them. That is how my "confession" was written.

As one might expect, the statement is full of lies and inconsistencies. There is the banal wording so dear to the KCIA hacks: "I became a communist out of a sense of inferiority and frustration due to poverty and illness."<sup>3</sup> This is the vilest part of the document. They used the same phrasing over and over again when I was indicted in 1970 for writing "Five Bandits," for "Groundless Rumors" in 1972, and in the National Democratic Youth and Student Federation (NDYSF) case of 1974. There is a materialistic determinism in the phraseology, as if all the poor and afflicted are "potential communist criminals." Would any self-respecting person write such craven drivel of her/his own free will?

According to the "confession," all my activities, including writing "Five Bandits" and "Groundless Rumors," were due to my communist ideas. I wonder if foreign readers of these poems were deceived by my communist propaganda? There must be many red faces among those foreign literary critics who praised my work and did not even realize that it was "communist propaganda." If "Five Bandits" is communist literature, why have the charges against me been pending for more than four years! And why was I not even indicted for "Groundless Rumors?"

The "confession" says that I am a communist and a Catholic. That is an antimony like being a "democratic fascist." Every school child knows that communism regards religion, especially Christianity, as the "opiate of the masses."

I understand that the KCIA pamphlet cites a few books I had in my possession as "proof" that I am a communist. They are so stupid! Their petty, frightened police state minds! No matter how severely intellectual freedom is restricted in south Korea, does reading a few marxist classics make a person a communist? The most avid readers of leftist books are the censors who check every piece of literature that comes into this country. If they can read these materials, why is it a crime for me? I have read hundreds of books; the authorities seized fewer than ten. Every one of those, without exception, is a classic that any foreign intellectual has read.

The KCIA pamphlet reproduces some of the notes I jotted down in prison from April 1974 until this February. Again those memoranda and notes are supposed to be "proof" that I am a communist. These notes contain all kinds of thoughts and emotions. Ideas that winged into my mind like birds flitting past my cell window. There are ruminations on this or that, outlines of projects I hope to write about in the future. Bits and pieces, unconnected fragments. They do not show that I am a

person ideologically committed to communism. If the government will make public all my notes, the charges against me will fall of their own weight. Anyone who examines the material will see my values: my hatred of oppression and exploitation, my groping in the political wilderness for a way out of these iniquities. How I have driven myself in the quest for the answers! This search has nothing to do with communism.

How should I define my ideological position? Before I attempt that, two points require clarification. First, I regard myself as a free thinker not bound by any ideological system. I hope my ideas are neither shaped by personal ambition nor yield to intimidation and that they are also unfettered by any dogma or creed. Thus I have never defined myself as an adherent of any "ism." I belong in the creative tension formed by the chaos of freedom. A natural pool swirls with cross-currents of ideas, values, systems, experiences. By diving into that pool again and again I hope to come up with a few grains of truth. I stand beside that pool poised for the next dive.

Secondly, I am ideologically unfinished. That's a crude way of saying that I have never accepted one ideology as my operative value system. So far I have never found one system of thought that was logically convincing. I am still looking. In a sense, this is a shameful admission, but there are extenuating circumstances, I think. An individual's beliefs and conscience must be free, and the process that shapes them must also be open, competitive, eclectic. A person has a natural right to find her/his own values. Even the Yushin Constitution, promulgated by Park Chung Hee in December 1972, guarantees this right to south Korean society. Nevertheless, intellectual life and value-formulation are totally controlled in our country. A single ideology with its priorities, preferences, taboos and sanctions is dominant.

Consider the spiritual ethos of south Korea. The flow of information is controlled. Once can only read a limited number of authorized books. Anti-intellectualism and pervasive secrecy are the rule. I have tried, though often with doubts and remorse, to find the truth in this darkness. I am not the only one. Every south Korean who sought to understand what is going on in this country and in the world has trod the same uncertain, dangerous path. My ideological education is incomplete.

Under such conditions there's surely no chance of autogenous communism sprouting here. Our conditioned reflex to "communists" was to imagine red-faced devils with horns growing out of their heads and long claws dripping with blood. Every south Korean below the age of thirty has been educated and in-



In happier days, reading poetry

doctrinated this way. Furthermore, we have never been taught anything about communism except emotional diatribes against it. Even if a few curious people secretly read some leftist books, how could they turn into full-fledged communists with a firm grasp of dialectics, party history and doctrine? No "autogenous communist" could emerge from the younger generation. That includes me. Far from being a committed communist, as the KCIA charges, I have no reliable information about the nature of communism or what life is like in a socialist country. The charge that I am a communist is utterly groundless.

## 2. DEMOCRACY, REVOLUTION, VIOLENCE

I want to identify with the oppressed, the exploited, the troubled and the despired. I want that love to be dedicated, passionate, and manifested in practical ways. This is the totality of my self-imposed task for humanity, the alpha and omega of my intellectual search. I hope that my odyssey will be understood as a love for humanity.

My desire to love the human family makes me hate the oppression and exploitation that dehumanizes. One who exploits others corrupts oneself. Thus I fight against oppression and exploitation—the struggle is my existence.

I became a Catholic because Catholicism conveyed a universal message. Not only that spiritual and material burdens could be lifted from humanity but also that oppression itself could be ended by the salvation of both the oppressor and the oppressed. Catholicism is capable of assimilating and synthesizing these contradictory and conflicting ideologies, theories and value standards into a universal truth.

My beliefs spring from a confident love for the common people. I have opposed the Park regime and ridiculed the "Five Bandits" because they are the criminal gangleaders looting the country. I have grown up as one of the oppressed masses. That perspective enabled me to see that a pernicious elitist bias permeates our society. The oppressors say the masses are base, ugly, morally depraved, inately lazy, untrustworthy, ignorant and a spiritless, inferior race. But the common people I have known were not like that. They were honest and industrious. They may have looked stupid to a Seoul bureaucrat but they were endowed with a rich native intelligence. Although they seemed listless, they possessed enormous inner strength and determination. They may have been rough, not very sophisticated, but they had genuine affection for their friends and neighbors. The common people I knew were proud and full of an unassuming vitality.

I have total confidence in the people. Given the opportunity they will find correct solutions to their problems. And their time is coming. The people cannot be denied their rights and justice much longer. My confidence in the people has led me to trust their ability to determine their own fate. Those who fear the people, who find the masses despicable, are ipso facto not democrats. When the going gets rough they will stand with the oppressors.

What is democracy? It is an ideology opposed to silence, a system that respects a free Logos and freedom of speech. It encourages the cacophony of dissent. A political system where everything is not revealed to the public is not a democracy. I believe that the truth, only the truth, will liberate humanity. A public consciousness dulled by soporific incantations and smothered in darkness can be liberated by

the truth. Only when the people struggle out of the darkness, driven along by the very chaos of their opposition to authority, will they reach the sun-drenched fields. Then they can head toward Canaan, the land of justice and freedom promised by the Creator. This is my dream, my faith.

I cannot describe Canaan in detail. No one person can do that. I think it will be created by the collective effort of all the people. My task is to fight on until the people hold the power in their own hands to shape their destiny. I want a victory for real democracy, complete freedom of speech. Nothing more, nothing less. In this sense, I am a radical democrat and libertarian. I am also a Catholic, one of the oppressed citizens of the Republic of Korea, and a young man who loathes privilege and corruption and dictatorial power. This defines my political beliefs. I have nothing more to add.

Democracy does not require a "benevolent ruler who loves the people." A ruler who fears the people's wrath and weapons is preferable. Democracy entails an uncompromising rejection of oppression. There is no democracy as long as the people cannot depose an undesirable ruler. Thus democracy does not deny the people the right of revolution; on the contrary, that fundamental right is the last guarantee of popular sovereignty. This obvious truth must never be forgotten.

The right of revolution, the constant and eternal possibility of overthrowing illegitimate authority, is the ultimate sanction against misrule that enables the people to defend themselves from oppression and exploitation. Rulers, of course, make revolution illegal, even discussion of it is banned as subversive. Thus they can continue their political and economic domination. But that is why I must support resistance and revolution.

I feel enormous pride in our Korean traditions. The people have often protested against injustice and misgovernment. Unfortunately, the rulers, irredeemably callous and arrogant, often crushed the protests with force. Under these circumstances have the people any choice but revolution?

Catholic political thought since Thomas Aquinas has explicitly recognized the people's right and duty, based on natural law, to overthrow a tyrant who threatens their existence and the common good. Resistance abruptly changes the course of human affairs. The people themselves recover their humanity. The masses undergo a sudden and profound awakening; history makes up for lost time by encouraging the people to miraculous feats.

Sooner or later resistance and revolution lead to the phenomenon of violence. When the violence of authority sustains oppression, the people's will is crushed, their best leaders are killed, and the rest are cowed into submission. The "silence of law and order" settles grimly across the land. Then an antithetical situation exists where violence must shatter this macabre order. To a degree, I approve of this kind of violence—no, that is not strong enough. I must approve of it! I reject the violence of oppression and accept the violence of resistance. I reject dehumanizing violence and accept the violence that restores human dignity. It could justly be called a "violence of love."

Jesus used his whip on the merchants defiling the temple. That was the "violence of love." It was force suffused with love. Jesus wanted the afflicted and their oppressive rulers to be reborn again as true children of God.

Violence and destructiveness obviously bring suffering and hardship. But we must sometimes cause and endure suffering. Never is this more true than when the people are dozing in silent submission, when they cannot be awakened from their torpor. To preach "non-violence" at such a time leaves them defenseless before their enemies. When the people must be awakened and sent resolutely off to battle, violence is unavoidable. Gandhi and Franz Fanon agonized over this dilemma. Father Camillo Torres took a rifle and joined the people. He died with them, the weapon never fired. The fallen priest with his rifle epitomized godliness. I do not know if his beliefs and methods were correct or not, but the purity of his love always moves me to tears. He staggered along his road to Golgotha with uncertain tread. He was prepared to commit a sin out of his love for others. He was not afraid to burn in the depths of eternal hell.

True non-violence requires total non-compliance and non-cooperation. It concedes nothing to the oppressors. The superficial kind of non-violence which makes limited gestures of opposition is just another form of craven cooperation with the authorities. Cowardly non-violence is the moral equivalent to cruel violence because with both the people get crushed. On the other hand, the "violence of love" is essentially the same as a "courageous non-violence" in that it arms the people against their foes. I approve of the "violence of love" but I am also a proponent of true non-violence. The revolution I support will be a synthesis of true non-violence and an agonized violence of love. (I am now working on a long ballad, "Chang Il Tam," set against this background.)

To reach that golden mean—a non-violence that does not drift to cowardly compromise and a violence that does not break the bonds of love and lapse into carnage—humankind must undergo an unceasing spiritual revival and the masses must experience a universal self-awakening. While I grant that the violence of Blanquism can light the psychological fuse to revolution, I do not anticipate nor support a "lucky revolution" achieved by a small number of armed groups committing terrorist acts of violence. That is why I have eschewed the formation of or membership in secret organizations and have participated in activities consistent with the democratic process: writing and petitions, rallies and prayer meetings.

My vision of a revolution is one to create a unified Korea based on freedom, democracy, self-reliance and peace. More fundamentally, however, it must enable the Korean people to decide on their own fate. I can confidently support such a revolution. That revolution will not follow foreign models or patterns, but will flow from our unique revolutionary tradition. The Tong Hak rebellion, the March First independence movement,<sup>4</sup> and the 1960 April Student Revolution adumbrate the next revolution.

### 3. REVOLUTIONARY RELIGION: THE WORLD OF "CHANG IL TAM"

The more I search for answers, the more contradictory ideas I find and the more confused I am. J. B Metz confessed to the same experience. Yet the antagonistic diversity of these systems of thought makes me strive even more for faith in the one absolute being. I believe such faith is attainable. Must revolution reject religion and religion be the foe of revolution? I think that the answer is "no." Perhaps by this reply I could not be a Marxist-Leninist. But the Marxist dictum

that religion is the opiate of the masses is only a partial truth applicable to one aspect of religion.

When a people have been brutally misruled and exploited for a long time, they lose their passion for justice and their affection for their fellows. Committed only to self-survival, they lapse into an individualistic materialism. Their near-crazed resentment and rage at social and economic conditions, diverted into frustration and self-hatred, is repeatedly dissipated in fragmented, anomic actions. Our prisons are full of lower-class criminals, thrown there by the ruling elite that spits on the poor and flourishes on social injustice. The prisoners' roster of crimes is diverse: armed robbery, theft, murder, desertion from military service, kidnapping, etc. Yet their wretched tragedy has a common origin in frustration and isolation.

The chief priests and Pharisees defuse the people's bitter resentment and moral indignation with sentimental charity. The people are emasculated by mercy. The god of philanthropy serves the oppressor by turning the people into a mob of beggars. That is why I cannot admire Albert Schweitzer.

In similar situations of bondage and deprivation, prophetic religions of love arise in the wilderness and shake the emotions of the oppressed and mistreated people. The slumbering masses awaken like a thunderclap! Their human and divine qualities suddenly shine forth. The mystery of resurrection—revolution! That resurrection fashions people in God's image, opens their eyes to their own nobility and turns their frustration and self-hatred into eschatological hope. This kind of resurrection changes a selfish, individualistic, escapist anomie into a fraternal, united, realistic commitment to the common good. It becomes a struggle for a humane life and dignity for all the people. This resurrection prevents the people's bitter resentment and moral indignation from evaporating in self-hatred and converts it into a fierce demand for God's universal justice. If necessary, the people's enormous energy may also be directed to a decisive, organized explosion. This is a revolutionary religion. This miraculous conversion which conceived the mystery of revival may also bring a decisive spiritual revival. This conversion is the philosophy of *tan*—the determination to choose the circumstances of one's death—that my hero, Chang Il Tam, sings about.

Since my college years when I suffered from tuberculosis, I have passionately wanted to understand both my personal situation and my country's. How could I overcome my terror of death and how could south Korea find its way out of ubiquitous spiritual dehumanization and material poverty? I heard something then about the Tonghak teaching<sup>5</sup> that "the human is Heaven." At first it was a pianissimo idea that made only a slight impression. Later, I learned more about the Tonghak rebellion, and an image took shape in my mind. I could see that awesome band of starving peasants, their proud banners proclaiming "An end to violence, save the people," as they marched off to fight. Suddenly that Tonghak teaching became fortissimo, as thunderous as the battle cries of those marching peasants.

I have been grappling with that image for ten years. At some point I gave it a name—"The unity of God and revolution." I also changed the phrase of "the human is Heaven" into "Rice is Heaven" and used it in my poetry. That vague idea of "the unity of God and revolution" stayed with me as I continued my long, arduous search for personal and political answers, and as I became very interested in

I feel like writing a rude straightforward poem such as  
no one has ever written before. It has been a long time  
since I was beaten to hell for writing unsavory articles.  
My body is itching for a beating, my mouth is eager  
to speak and my hands are dying to write.  
Since this impulse to write is beyond my control,  
I have made up my mind to set down a story concerning  
some strange thieves.....

I do this knowing full well that I am asking for  
severe punishment including physical pain. But it's the best  
story that you ever saw with your belly-button or heard  
with your asshole since this country was formed under the  
Paektu mountain on the third of October a long time ago.

contemporary Christian thought and activism. European social reformism, including Ernst Troeltsch, Frederic Ozanam, Karl Marx and others, had been absorbed into the grand edifice of Christian thought. Their ideas were now being questioned anew, developed in new directions. I was intrigued by efforts to combine Marxist social reform and Christian beliefs as evinced in the 1972 Santiago Declaration of Christian Socialism.

The synthesis draws from diverse sources. One example is the adaptation of the teachings of Marx and Jesus. Marx's contribution is his structural epistemology which maintains that social oppression blocks human salvation. From Jesus's teachings we take his humanism, which advocates love for all people, the sanctity of the person, his emphasis on rebirth as the means to salvation, the idea of the God of hope who brings salvation, equality and liberation on earth, and the activities of Jesus of Nazareth during his lifetime. The synthesis tries to unify and integrate these concepts. In my view, this is not a mechanical process, a rote grafting of bits of Marxism onto Christianity. The union produces something entirely new. (The new synthesis is not finished. Its gestalt cannot be defined; it is still amorphous. Therefore I must decline to use the existing terminology. The Korean people are suffering from the tragic reality of a divided peninsula. This division has become the excuse for brutal repression; everything is done in the name of "national security," the threat from the North. Under this praetorian system, south Korean society has become rigid, intolerant, frightened; our intellectual life is as airless and barren as the valleys of the moon. The authorities, hyper-sensitive and always suspicious of new and possibly "dangerous thoughts," may attempt to label my ideas as a certain ideology. I reject this false labelling of an unfinished "product." I stand on my human right to be creative. Humankind's original ideas are not turned out on an assembly line.)

My image of the unity of God and revolution was clarified by Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Mater et Magistra*. "The mystery of Jesus and the loaves of bread is a temporal miracle which shows the future heaven." I also benefitted from writings of the liberation theologians: Frederick Herzog, James Cone, Richard Shaull, Paul Lehmann, Jurgen Moltmann, J.B. Metz, Todt Hugo, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dietrick Bonhoffer, and others. The statements of the pope after Vatican II and encyclicals such as *Rerum Novarum* provided insights. The greatest single influence on my thinking, however, has been my participation since 1971 in the Korean Christian movement for human rights. This experience convinced me that the Korean tradition of resistance and revolution, with its unique vitality under the incredibly negative circumstances prevailing here, are precious materials for a new form of human liberation. This rich lode will be of special value to the Third World. Shaped and polished by the tools of liberation theology, our experience may inspire miraculous new forms of *Missio Dei* in the gritty struggle of the south Korean people.

My ballad, *Chang Il Tam*, attempts to express these ideas through the teachings and intellectual pilgrimage of one holy man who speaks in the form of gospels. However, the Park regime has seized my notes as proof of a "conspiracy to publish subversive materials."

Chang Il Tam is a thief, the son of a prostitute and a *paekchong*.<sup>6</sup> A failure in life and despondent, Chang suddenly attains enlightenment and becomes a preacher of liberation. Chang emulates Im Kok Chong<sup>7</sup> in believing that the poor should "re-liberate" what the rich have stolen from them and divide it equally among the needy. He begins by stealing from the rich and giving to the poor, is arrested and thrown into jail, whereupon he teaches the other prisoners about revolution. One day Chang is unfairly disciplined. Angrily throwing caution to the winds, he shouts, "We must be liberated! Down with the hated bourgeoisie!" (My working notes cover only a portion of his proselytizing in prison; these are his early radical ideas. The government claims they are identical with my ideas and therefore constitute irrefutable proof that I am a communist!)

Chang escapes from prison, is hunted by the police, and finally hides in a filthy back alley where some prostitutes are plying their trade. He calls to the prostitutes: "Oh, you are all my Mother!" He kisses their feet, and declares: "The soles of your feet are heaven!" "God is in your putrid wombs!" And "God's place is with the lowest of the low."

Chang later goes to live on Mt. Kyeryong and preaches about a paradise in the land of the Eastern Sea.<sup>8</sup> He teaches a systematic religious discipline in three stages: *Sich'onju*, acceptance of God and service to Him; *Yangch'onju*, cultivation of God in your heart and subordination of everything to God's will; and *Saengch'onju*.<sup>9</sup> Chang preaches "community ownership of property," teaches about revolution, stresses the unity of prayer and action, and advocates "resistance against the tide." His major ideas include, "the transformation of the lowest into heaven," that the traveller's path from this world to heaven is revolution, the need to purge wild beasts that lurk within human hearts—symbolic of the *paekchong's* occupation—and that this world is corrupt but in the next world they will visit the paradise in the Eastern Sea.

Chang Il Tam preaches to the workers and farmers. He builds an altar in the wilderness, starts a huge bonfire, and casts everything old into the flames. He teaches the people that although violence is unavoidable, tan is desirable. He leads the multitude toward the evil palace in the capital, Seoul. The throng all carry beggar's cans. At this point Chang proclaims that paradise is "to share food with others" and that "food is heaven." They reach the capital where food is abundant and continue through the city on the eternal journey toward paradise where food is shared by all. (This journey implies an endless transmigratory discipline: to the destination and then a return to a place where there is no food.)

During the march to Seoul, Chang is defeated in a battle. The government offers a reward, and the traitor Judas turns Chang in. Chang remains silent, saying nothing in his own defense. He is convicted of violating the Anti-Communist Law, the National Security Law and inciting rebellion. Chang is taken out to be executed and just before he is beheaded, breaks his silence to sing a song, "Food is Heaven."

Food is heaven

You can't make it on your own

Food should be shared

Food is heaven

We all see

The same stars in heaven

How natural that we

All share the same food.

Food is heaven

As we eat

God enters us

Food is heaven

Oh! Food

Should be shared by all.

Chang is resurrected three days later. His severed head seeks out the traitor Judas, decapitates him and places itself on his trunk. The traitor's body is joined with the saint's destiny. This weird union of holiness, goodness and truth, accomplished through Judas' wicked intelligence, is both Chang's revenge and salvation for the sinner. It expresses the manifold paradoxes of Chang's thought.

My tentative denouement for the ballad is "The song, 'Food Should be Shared' has become a raging storm sweeping into every corner of south Korea."

That is the general outline of the ballad. I repeat that Chang Il Tam's world is in flux. Religious asceticism and revolutionary action, the works of Jesus, the struggle of Ch'oe Che U (founder of the Tonghak) and Chon Pong Jun (commander of the Tonghak peasant army), a yearning for the communal life of early Christianity, and a deep affection for the long, valiant resistance of the Korean people are all part of Chang's kaleidoscopic world. So are Paulo Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Franz Fanon's ideas on violence, the direct action of Blanquism, the Christian view of the human being flawed by original sin, the Catholic doctrine of the omnipresence of God and the Buddhist concept of the transmigration of the soul, the populist redistributive egalitarianism of Im Kok Chong and Hong Kil Tong,<sup>10</sup> and the Tonghak teachings of Sich'onju and Yangch'onju. Some of these movements and doctrines combine and coalesce; others clash in mighty confrontations.

I have no intention of trying to provide a consistent theoretical elucidation of Chang Il Tam while I am still writing it. That is impossible. When the work is finished, I may be able to do so.

#### 4. DID I VIOLATE THE ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW?

The charge that I am a communist rests on three allegations. First, that my notebooks for Chang Il Tam and other works contain statements favorable to north Korea. Second, that my statements about the so-called People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) "praise, encourage and support" a subversive organization. Third, that my possession of several books was beneficial to north Korea because they "praise, encourage and support" subversive ideas.

National security laws have been misused in south Korea for many years. The constant, expedient, indiscriminate and conspiratorial application of the dreaded Article Four of the Anti-Communist Law has been the most malevolent restriction on the intellectual and spiritual growth of the republic.<sup>11</sup> It has been used to deprive us of freedom of speech and to impose a suffocating culture of silence that has killed democracy and sustained a corrupt dictatorship. I oppose the misuse of Article Four with every ounce of strength in my body. It is repugnant to everything I believe in and stand for. I call on others to oppose the regime's attempt to gag me with this filthy rag of a "law". We must have freedom of thought and expression. Individuality—conscience and creativity—must be protected.

I shall discuss the state's allegations one by one. I was threatened by the KCIA interrogators to admit that some of my notes for Chang Il Tam were based on Mao Tse-tung's thought. As I stated above, the work draws on the seminal ideas, theories and accomplishments of world civilization. Mao's "On Contradictions" is an important contribution to politics. But the KCIA people were so proud of themselves! At last they had found a real "communist connection." They said I was a Maoist who joined the Catholic Church because I followed Mao's teaching on the transformation and unity of antagonisms. My notes included the words, "God and revolution, bread and freedom, the unity of earth and heaven"—all phrases that correspond to the resolution of contradictions. To my astonishment, the KCIA even attributed my use of the word "resurrection" to Mao! They said the "resolution" of death into resurrection was the resolution of a contradiction! Even perverse sophistry has its limits, one would think! Perhaps under the circumstances I can be excused for not admiring the vivid imagination and creativity of the prosecutor.

The police of the Republic of Korea are not much for subtle distinctions. They regard materialism as identical with metaphysics. At the faintest whiff of dialectics, they stick the communist label on you. In south Korea, Lao Tzu, Confucius, Jesus, the Buddha—anybody and everybody concerned with fundamental truth or essential reality would be a communist.

I said above that it would be premature to categorize Chang Il Tam. But I can say that it is not socialist realism, a vehicle for Marxist ideas. The work is apocalyptic, prophetic, full of allegory, mystery, and symbolism. I use supernatural occurrences and the fanciful events conjured up by the sensitivity and imagination of peasants and workers. I dab in a touch of the abstract with bizarre illusions. I use death, chaos, insecurity, terror, revolution, despair, melancholy, atrocities, executions and decadence to create the overall tone. I attempt to describe a ghastly, blood-soaked, transitional period by the use of furious language and violent incidents. My work bears no resemblance to the pallid tone, naturalistic descrip-

# THE YELLOW ROAD



Kim Chi Ha on trial for his

life, May 19, 1975

Along the vivid blood, blood on the yellow road  
 I am going, Papa, where you died.  
 Now it's pitch dark only the sun scorches.  
 Two hands are barbed-wired  
 The hot sun burns sweat and tears and rice-paddies  
 Under the bayonets through the summer heat.  
 I am going, Papa, where you died  
 Where you died wrapped in a rice-sack  
 When the trouts were jumping along the Bujoo brookside.  
 When the blaze rose from Opo Hill every night  
 On that day when the sun brightly shone on the yellow land  
 The muddy land resilient as the gorses that grow intrepidly green  
 Shall we cry out the hurrah of that day?  
 Shall we sing the song of that day?

In the small Whadang village embraced among sparse bamboo bushes  
 Blood wells up in every well, every ten years  
 Ah, born in this barren colony  
 Slain under the bayonets, my Papa.  
 How could the dews that spring in the bamboo buds  
 Forget, ever forget the crystal brightness of May?  
 It was a long and cruel summer  
 Even kids were starving to death  
 The sultry summer of blatant tyranny  
 That even didn't know of the Heavens  
 At last, all the time of the motherland, the yellow road,  
 And our hope.

Along the muddy beach where the sun burns old wooden boats to dust  
 Again through the rice paddies  
 And over the bleached, whitish furrows  
 It's been ten years since the hurrah of that day  
 That thundered the ever blue and high firmament  
 In the flesh, in the breath, the barbed wires keep tightening  
 Hearing, and sobbing, in your voice  
 I am going now, Papa, where you died.  
 When the trouts were jumping along the Bujoo brookside  
 Wrapped in the rice-sack  
 Where you died.

This poem commemorates a village rising in Cholla Province against the govt of Syngman Rhee before the Korean War.

tions and realistic plots of conventional socialist writings. There are no romances between steel workers and their blast furnaces in *Chang Il Tam*.

This is what I am working on. It is far from finished. Nevertheless, the government says it was written "to aid the Northern puppet regime." What can I say? There has been much publicity recently about the government's "Five-Year Plan to Encourage Literature." But what they are doing to me is really how they go about "encouraging" literature.

Let's look at the second charge. I had made notes for a play called "Maltuk," in which a day-laborer by the same name fights against the bourgeoisie. The police and the KCIA insist that this is Marxist writing which calls for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie by workers and peasants. They are so eager to find communists that they react like Pavlovian dogs to the word "bourgeoisie" and neurotically grab the Anti-Communist Law. Just because Marx called a flower a flower, am I supposed to call it something else? The word "bourgeoisie" is an internationally accepted historical term. If the mere use of the word, or the expression of contempt for something "bourgeois" proves a person is a communist, where does that leave France's George Bernanos, who said, "I hate the bourgeoisie?" One hardly need cite foreign examples. Don't we hear the word everyday as a half-humorous term for the rich? That is how I used it. To be more exact, my use of the word "bourgeoisie" has the limited meaning of the "corrupt ruling elite" which dominates south Korea. It is synonymous with the "Five Bandits."

"Maltuk" is based on the rebellious servant character in traditional mask dramas. The plot evolves from a popular protest against corruption and privilege. The protagonist is a laborer but he is not trying to start a revolution to impose a dictatorship of the proletariat. I am trying to portray a rebel from the lowest stratum of society — far lower than organized industrial workers, in fact. My idea was to make my hero a "debased ch'onmin," a stratum shunned by society as sub-human. He is a typical dehumanized south Korean, spiritually and physically robbed of his manhood. I want to describe his despair and the divine inspiration that rescues him. I will show the "reciprocal effect of action and prayer" which leads him to resist and regain his human dignity. I place this interaction in Maltuk, a "rebellious, sweaty, dirty south Korean peasant," and stressed hope. I tried to describe a certain world of "community" which appears in the resultant eschatological illusion. This is also an illusory manifestation of an oppression-free society, the eternal theme of true art. The drama is sustained by an imagination rooted in Christian eschatology; it is not derived from any political ideology. The allegation that it "was written to aid the Northern puppets" could not be more preposterous.

I want to explain why I wrote "Five Bandits," "Groundless Rumors," "Chang Il Tam," "Maltuk" and other works. So they could be used by someone? No! Because I wanted to write them. I had no choice. They were deep inside me, stirring and swirling. I had to let them burst out. I wrote them because I had to. That was the only reason.

Next, the "People's Revolutionary Party" case. I wrote about the torture of Ha Chae Wan and I held a press conference to ask for the release of the PRP prisoners. The government terms these actions "support for the propaganda activities of the northern puppets" that "benefitted the People's Revolutionary Party, a sub-

versive organization." For the sake of argument, let's say that my statement about the torture of the PRP prisoners was identical with the north Korean "propaganda" on the case. The question really is, Did I "support" their version or did they "support" mine? They did not meet Ha Chae Wan. I met him and I heard his story directly from him. I just told the world what I heard. I did not say Ha Chae Wan was tortured on the basis of a north Korean broadcast. Does similarity of content mean "support?" If it does, thousands of ordinary citizens, intellectuals, religious leaders, students and politicians who demanded the "release of the democratic leaders" arrested in 1974 must be fellow-travellers since the North certainly must have advocated the same thing. Don't they all have to be charged under the Anti-Communist Law? Hasn't this nonsense gone too far?

Did I speak out to help the "People's Revolutionary Party, a subversive organization?" How could that possibly have been my reason? I knew certain facts which every person in this country needed to know. I made those horrible facts public in the interests of civil rights and democracy in south Korea. Consider my position. I had no connection with the "PRP" and I did not even know the prisoners. I was aware, of course, that the Park regime would retaliate against me. Why should I go so far just to help a subversive organization? Didn't I have anything better to do? The government, as usual, has a ready explanation. They say I called the PRP case a "fabrication" to conceal my own "communist sympathies!" Unless my memory is wrong, even the Prime Minister is supposed to have said in the National Assembly that "Kim Chi Ha is not a communist." The KCIA assertion that I was trying to hide my "pro-communist sympathies" is absurdly illogical. Claiming the government had trumped up charges against the "PRP" men would obviously bring me under suspicion.

I know the "PRP" men were tortured. What is the KCIA anyway? We all know that they have tortured students and opposition party National Assembly members. Recently the National Assembly floor leader of the ruling Democratic Republican party revealed that he also had been tortured by the KCIA. That is how they function; brutality and terror are their standard operating procedure. Anyone who thinks the "PRP" prisoners — people being set up as communists for execution were not tortured ought to have his/her head examined. I spoke only about facts I heard with my own ears and saw with my own eyes — facts I am absolutely certain of.

Was the "PRP" a subversive organization? Was there really a "PRP"? My suspicions have not been resolved by the Park regime's pronouncements. If the government wants me to accept its version and to convince the public that I was wrong, they should bring back to life the eight men executed on April 9 [1975]. Or perhaps they can call the ghosts of Ha Chae Wan and Yi Byong Su to testify on the state's behalf. I want to challenge the legality of these "PRP"-related charges.

Finally, we come to the most absurd items in the indictment, that some of the books in my storage shed were a threat to the state. The magazines, *Hanyang* and *Chongmaek* I read in 1964. Mao's "On Practice" and "On Contradictions" I read about 1969. I read these books and put them away years ago. How did these volumes gathering dust in my shed help north Korea?

I believe that all who oppose repression and dictatorship and defend freedom,



Kim Chi Ha, February 1975 prison release



justice and the rights of conscience still remain committed to the struggle against the corrupt Park regime. When I was released from prison on February 15th, I reconfirmed my vow to resist this dictatorship as long as I live. I have explained in this statement the spurious charges against me. All those who know me will disregard any kind of slander against me which is at variance with this statement. Your understanding comforts me.

My prison notebooks contain ample proof that this statement is true. And more. Prison was not easy for me. But I gained precious experiences and inspiration through my fellowship with the other prisoners, supposedly the dregs of our society. The notebooks are not just about me: the truth about this period of our history is also there. I hope you can prevent their destruction.

Why have we been fighting against the Park regime? For human liberation.

To recover the humanity God gave us, to be free people. Nothing is more important. We must press ahead. We will not be stopped. We shall overcome.

The government constantly asserts that the threat from north Korea is so serious as to make civil rights an impermissible luxury. But a corrupt, immoral dictatorship is the greatest spur to communism. What better argument do the communists have than the Park regime? Dictatorial rule will never make south Korea secure. A country is strong and viable only when its people are defending their freedom. If we have no basic rights or representative government, then what is there left for us to defend? Our hopeless privation and disease, our endless despair and humiliation? Are we to risk our lives for these? In every neighborhood and village we must shout our opposition to this sterile dilemma.

We are not alone in this struggle. Men and women all over the world concerned with freedom will generously support our struggle. Our age demands truth and the passion to endure the suffering necessary to learn the truth.

We want to be free. To taste, feel and transmit to our children the freedom so long promised in south Korea. To this noble cause we must commit everything we are and hope to be. My prayers are with all of you in this courageous struggle.

Kim Chi Ha  
May 1975

#### POSTSCRIPT

Just before I was arrested in March the authorities searched my country house and the home where my child is staying. They seized four or five of my private notebooks. At first I wasn't sure what they were after, but the interrogators' ques-

tions provided a clue. They asked: "Weren't you asked to write a poem about the Kim Dae Jung kidnapping?" and "Where is that manuscript?"<sup>12</sup>

I am not allowed to receive visitors or mail, to write anything, or even to read the Bible. I cannot move around very much. This gloomy, cramped cell is a bit less than seven feet by seven.

I sit here in the dark angrily thinking about the uncertain future. But prison has not dimmed my spirits. These miserable conditions and the endless waiting have made me more determined than ever. I feel a quiet composure, almost serenity. But I am terribly worried about what may happen to the individuals involved in making this statement public. My friends, please help these good people.

Do not grieve for me. We will surely see each other again soon.

Kim Chi Ha, May 1975

#### NOTES (All notes are by the translator and editors.)

1. The KCIA, shortly after Kim Chi Ha's arrest, put out a pamphlet entitled "The Case Against Kim Chi Ha: The True Identity of the Poet." Containing Kim's "confession," excerpts from his prison notes, and a list of books ostensibly seized from his home, it attempts to "prove" that he is a communist.
2. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency, modeled after its American namesake, is so ubiquitous in daily Korean affairs, that, rather than saying someone was picked up by the KCIA, people always specify the Bureau. For torturing students, imprisoning priests and pastors and manufacturing domestic cases of "subversion" and "communist rebellion," the Fifth Bureau is responsible. For keeping up with the sinister schemes of the north Koreans abroad and other international affairs, the Sixth Bureau is in charge (most of the appointments to foreign embassies and legations are now filled by Sixth Bureau men, whose job it is to keep an eye on dissident south Korean activities). Within Korea itself, the two Bureaus compete, to the point where they now operate as nearly separate agencies (indeed, two years ago it was rumored that the Fifth Bureau was hauling in Sixth Bureau people for a working over.)
3. Kim's forced "confession" states: "After advancing to college, I suffered from frustration and an inferiority complex. I could not enjoy normal campus life because of sickness and family hardship, compared with other students, and these feelings developed into a sense of resistance against our social system... Through my readings on communism, I have come to the conclusion that all irregularities and contradictions in our society derive from the capitalist system, and that the means to rooting out such irregularities is to overthrow the existing system via a proletarian revolution in accordance with the teachings of Marx. ("The Case Against Kim Chi Ha," p.11)
4. The three rebellions that changed modern Korean history. The Tonghak Rebellion was the name for a wide-spread peasant rebellion that swept the lower Korean peninsula in 1893-94. Though it had Tonghak ("Eastern Learning"—see following note) religious origins, by the 1890s it had developed strong anti-government and anti-foreign overtones. Like the Boxer Rebellion in China, it marked the end of dynastic rule and the collapse of the old order. And also like the Boxer Rebellion, it provided the pretext for foreign intervention—this time not by the Western powers, but by the "would-be Western power," Japan. The Rebellion was put down with the Japanese occupation of Seoul in June 1894, which led to 35 years of outright annexation and brutal suppression which did not end until Liberation Day, August 15, 1945.

March First refers to the date on which, in 1919, religious and cultural leaders throughout Korea simultaneously read in public a secretly-prepared "Proclamation of Independence." "We herewith proclaim the independence of Korea... in witness of the equality of all nations, and we pass it on to our prosperity as their inherent right.... Victims of an older

age, when brute force and the spirit of plunder ruled, we have come after these long thousands of years to experience the agony of ten years of foreign oppression, with...every restriction of the freedom of thought, every damage done to the dignity of life... The result of annexation, brought about against the will of the Korean people, is that the Japanese are concerned only for their own gain...digging a trench of everlasting resentment deeper and deeper...." Japanese revenge was merciless as they set to applying their trench-digging talents to burying corpses. Thousands were killed outright; sometimes whole villages (in one village the people were locked in a church and it was set afire). In 1919-20 alone, some 7000 Koreans were killed.

The April 1960 Revolution refers to one of modern Korea's few successful rebellions. In protest against government corruption and widespread voting fraud, students took to the streets in April 1960. It led to the fall only days later of the American-supported strongman, Syngman Rhee (only to have a two-bit general that hardly anyone had heard of, Park Chung Hee, come to power a year later).

5. Partly in opposition to and partly as an imitation of Jesuit teachings (Sohak, or "Western Learning") into Korea, in the 1860s a religious cult, called Tonghak ("Eastern Learning"), was established by a young man of lowly Kyongsang province origins. Ch'oe Che-u (1824-1864) claimed to have received a direct divine mandate, on May 25, 1860, in which he was personally directed to lead a movement that would make the East as strong as the West. A syncretic thought "system" combining elements of Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, native shamanism and even Jesuit cosmology, it spread the word of a "world of re-creation," a new turn of the historical wheel that would see the poor and lowly come into their own. The Beatitudes bit. The movement spread like a prairiefire, especially among the impoverished peasantry in the southernmost provinces remote from Seoul. It was put down after a long and brutal campaign in 1863-64, and fell largely dormant after the capture and beheading of Ch'oe in 1864. The movement revived again in the '80s and early '90s, finally breaking out in full force with the Tonghak Rebellion of 1893-94 (see preceding note.)
6. **Paekchong:** a member of the lowliest caste, considered to be defiled and dirty. Paekchong could not marry outside of their caste or carry on other normal social discourse, nor were they permitted residence outside slum-like ghettos, where their labors were confined to trades considered beneath the dignity of "humans"—animal slaughter and butchery, tanning, garbage and manure disposal, cremation or burial of the dead, etc. Such discrimination still exists today.
7. Im Kok Chong: Hero of an early 17th century popular novel, the leader of a bandit band that set out to redistribute unjustly gained wealth to the poor. Sort of Korea's Robin Hood, he and his band came to inspire a number of peasant uprisings later.
8. The Eastern Sea is China's (the "Central Kingdom's") name for Korea; in ancient times travel to Korea was usually by boat from the Shantung Peninsula.
9. Author's term, meaning obscure.
10. Hong Kil Tong: a leader of Im Kok Chong's band (see note 7).
11. Article Four of the Anti-Communist Law reads in part: "(1) Any person who has benefitted the anti-State organization by praising, encouraging or siding with or through other means the activities of an anti-State organization or their components or the communist organizations outside the Republic of Korea shall be imprisoned at hard labor for not more than seven years; (2) the same penalty shall apply to any person who has, for the purpose of committing the acts as provided for in the foregoing paragraph, produced, imported, duplicated, kept in custody, transported, disseminated, sold, or acquired documents, drawings and/or any other similar means of expression." ("The Case Against Kim Chi Ha," pp. 44-45.)
12. Kidnapped from a Tokyo hotel in August '73 by KCIA goons and spirited back to Seoul to stand trial for "election law violations" in the presidential "race" of '71, Kim Dae Jung is the most prominent "opposition politician" in Seoul, America's hope for a Korean Kerensky to replace the Tsar in the south and the Bolsheviks in the north.

## "COMBATting COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM"

# Reviving Village Autonomy

This is a report on a visit of one of our collective members to Seoul and the surrounding countryside over New Year 1976.

It reveals both the dark and the light sides of the current situation in south Korea, showing the effect of government policy on the farms, but also the way in which a gathering number of villages (though still a tiny minority) are taking steps to protect themselves and create some degree of autonomy.

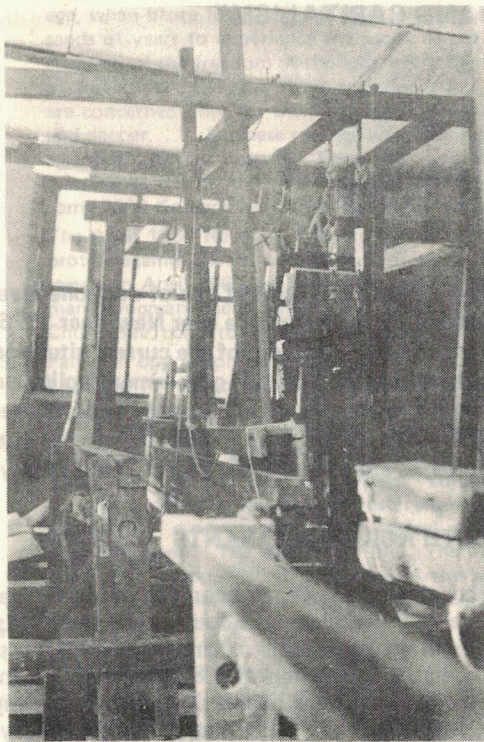
### THE PLIGHT OF SOUTH KOREAN PEASANTS

The people of south Korea have become pawns in the economic and political strategy of Kissinger's global chess-game. Nevertheless, as I found on a recent trip there, these down-trodden people are still struggling for control over their lives.

Seoul, the capital of south Korea, has a population of 6.8 million, which includes 2.5 million slum-dwellers squashed into narrow strips of shacks, each housing five or six families. Over 80% of these people have recently come from the countryside looking for work. Such work is increasingly scarce. The government manages to contrive a national jobless rate of 3 to 4% by counting even one hour-per-week as "employment." The Soyang University's Institute for Labor and Management, however, estimates it at over 20%. Separate slum figures are not available, but are acknowledged to be high. While the government pursues its "slum clearance" policy of bulldozing the people from one slum to another, the lower middle and middle classes are buying up the "low-income citizen apartments" originally intended for, but beyond the purchasing ability of the slum-dwellers.

According to various reports, the migrants are starting to trickle back to the farms, but the basic hardships that first drove them to the cities remain. In the two northern provinces the land is mountainous, sustaining only subsistence farming. On the other hand, the rich rice-land of the south draws heavy taxes. And the farmers must sell, at less than cost price, a percentage (20-30% according to one estimate) of each rice harvest to one of the government-run National Agri-





cultural Co-operative Federation. A group close to farmers<sup>2</sup> states that 80 kiloliters (100 kiloliters equals 2.8 bushels) of rice fetch only W 23,292 (W 480 = US\$ 1), W 3792 less than it costs to produce it, while another source estimates that it is as much as W 10,000 below cost. No wonder, then, that the amount of paddy land under cultivation has declined 17% in the last seven years.<sup>3</sup>

Although Korea used to be a rice-exporting country, now 30% of its rice comes from abroad, mainly from Japan and the U.S. Title I of Public Law 480 ("Food for Peace"), for example, provides Korea with long-term credits at 2-3% interest for the purchase of rice and other grains, to be repaid in 30-40 years. U.S. farmers sell their surplus to the Commodity Credit Company, a private agency which obtains government money to collect the grain. The big profits, however, go to the big grain firms, such as Cargill, Cook Industries and Continental, the people who

own the elevators where the grain is stored and receive government financing for their grain exports and subsidiaries abroad.<sup>4</sup> Between January and June 1975 alone, the U.S. sent 208,020,000 metric tons of rice to south Korea through PL480. Far from philanthropic, this "aid" has promoted American agribusiness interests in other countries while undermining their domestic production. Indeed, PL480 has already made south Korea "the fastest-growing market for U.S. farm goods in the Far East,"<sup>5</sup> often creating markets where none had existed and undercutting domestic prices. Thus PL480 shipments to south Korea allow President Park Chung Hee to satisfy the hunger of the poor urban workers who otherwise would find it difficult to eat<sup>6</sup> at the expense of the farmers, who are thus forced to move into the cities. As long as rural labor migrates to the cities, increasing the already large pool of cheap labor, farms will deteriorate and wages remain low. Hence the plight of urban and rural workers is intimately linked.

#### WORKSHOPS AND CO-OPS

Since 1971 the government-imposed Saemaul ("New Countryside") Movement<sup>7</sup> has pursued irrigation, road-building and various superficial projects. Some Koreans have voiced approval. However, all decisions come from the top and the villagers have no choice or voice in development plans, nor even in whether or not they are to take part. In 1971, therefore, the farmers organized a nationwide assoc-

iation (hereafter referred to as the XXXA), with two basic goals: (1) to develop village autonomy and (2) to build up producers' and consumers' co-ops.

The Autonomous Village Movement, directed from the XXX Institute in Seoul, is seeking to revive the traditional Korean village and attract back those who have fled to the cities. The Institute also trains students to go to the countryside and, by encouraging farmers in the revival of traditional ways, persuades them to stay on their farms. Its workshops teach native Korean crafts—woodcarving, enamel work, straw wall-hangings, embroidery, toys, artificial flowers, shellwork, etc. An ever-hopeful director, Mr. Y, views these as potential future exports, to replace south Korea's current dependence on foreign investment.

As Mr. Y sees it, re-introduction of home industries and the building of new factories in the villages will make the rural economy stable and self-reliant again. He emphasizes that such factories must be village-owned and run. With this in mind, the Institute supported a sweater-knitting workshop built by young people of a village 20 km. outside of Seoul. In the communal workshop, which now employs over 100 people, every shop and home in the village has its own machine. Although such home industries have increased in the last ten years, the government has stopped the communal program and replaced it with a workshop system of its own, in which each workshop is controlled by a single "big owner."

The government-run co-ops not only supply produce to the city, but also factory goods and fertilizer to the farmers of each county, in return for more of their rice. Most factories producing urea, the primary ingredient of fertilizer, are under government ownership. As of January 1976 fertilizer is available only at the government co-op. The Federation structure is fundamentally different from that of the Producers' Co-ops. Government co-ops are organized from top to bottom, starting with the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation in Seoul. At the bottom are the 2000-odd government-run stores, one in each county (myon), the lowest administrative sub-unit. The Producers' Co-ops, however, run from bottom to top, using the villages (ri) as the basic sub-unit. One county comprises 10 to 20 villages, each of which contains 2 to 5 sub-villages of 20 to 30 families each. The XXXA believes that, by organizing on the village or sub-village level, they will not interfere with the country-level government structure, and that the farmers will have at least some local autonomy.

The XXXA's Producers' Co-ops, modeled on Robert Owen's "Rochdale Principle," have a current membership of more than 800 farmers in fourteen provinces. The XXXA has also organized a Consumers' Co-op among college graduates and teachers in Seoul. Through person-to-person contacts, this Co-op is slowly growing (it now has about 70 members). The underlying principle is that consumers must run their own "shops" and not go through a middleperson. Under a "5-day market system" the farmers rotate their sales within a five-town circuit, selling produce in a different town each day. Union dues cover Producer Co-op members' transportation costs to Seoul. At present, they supply eleven or twelve products, including peppers, garlic, cucumbers, potatoes, and oil, but not rice. They hope to start selling rice this year, but must sell cheaply in order to match the government's prices. Should private channels sell at a price the government feels threatens its cheap rice/low wages policy, it can immediately flood the market with its own stocks (supplied by imported shipments and by forcing peasants to pay loans and land taxes in grain).<sup>8</sup> This year the s. Korean government expects to have 800,000 metric tons of rice in reserve storage (an increase of 100,000 tons over last year).

Through organizing to reduce prices, the city consumers also increase the num-

ber of their social contacts. In this way, the Consumers' and Producers' Co-ops can unite Seoul consumer with village producer. As Mr. Y put it: "By direct contact with the farmer-producer, the urban consumer may see why we consume—for others, for people." Thus, both consumer and producer may understand their mutual dependence.

### IN A VILLAGE

Mr. Y invited me to visit NX, regarded as a model village. After learning so much about the "plight of the peasant," I was expecting to find some concrete documentation. However, my efforts were fruitless. Although the standard of living may be considered "low" (but then, what "standards" does one use?) I was surprised to see and hear of so much "prosperity." Further, the village was very stable; except for students studying in Seoul, no one has migrated to the cities, due basically to reforms initiated by the village leaders, the Kim brothers.

Keep in mind that certain factors hampered objectivity. For one thing, as a "model" village NX is richer and stronger than the "average," even by the residents' own admission. I visited them in the midst of winter, shortly after New Year's, when activity was nil. What limited time I had was reduced by a snowstorm. I had the opportunity to visit only one home and to talk to only a few people. Finally, Mr. Y himself exudes a contagious optimism. Even so, assuming that whatever problems a rich community has are multiplied in a poorer one, this glimpse may still provide some perspective on rural south Korea.

NX is several hours' arduous travel from Seoul. It consists of 63 families, about 500 people, in two sub-villages. As in most traditional Korean villages, one surname predominates. Here it is Kim. Many Korean villages have a history of a thousand years or more, and the descendants of the original founder usually continue to dominate village life. I stayed in the home of the younger village leader.

As a foreigner, the first to ever visit them, I was treated as a man. That is, Mr. Y, the Kim brothers, another villager and I talked into the night in the *sarang-dang*, a living room reserved for the use of male visitors in a separate building in front of the house's main quarters. Women visitors go to the kitchen in back. I saw Mrs. Kim when I came and left and only briefly in between—when bringing in and taking out the low tables of food. Although the two-year old son stayed with us for a while, I caught only a glimpse of Kim's four daughters.

The men told me that though most villages have tap water, they still use the well. The government will be installing electricity this March; until then they will continue to use the traditional oil lamps. Although the government will absorb part of the cost of electrification (₩5 million), each family must still pay ₩50,000. Mr. Kim regarded it as a necessary investment and not unreasonable—but then, Mr. Kim was "upper-class" even in this rather rich village. He estimated his yearly income at ₩2 million, and guessed that the average family earned about half that.<sup>9</sup> Yet all the villagers were planning to pay for the electrification.

All the villagers send their children to school. At present, about 60 children attend primary school, 30 middle school, 10 high school (about 7 km. away), and college. Primary school tuition is ₩300 per month per child. Kim sends two sons to a private middle and high school in Seoul where tuition costs ₩11,000 per child for three months. Kim saves money for his children's education, and for the cost of electrification. All the rest he ploughs back into the land. Most of the food the family eats is home-grown; they also raise chickens and keep a cow.

The growing season for rice lasts from June to October. The Kims have 1.3

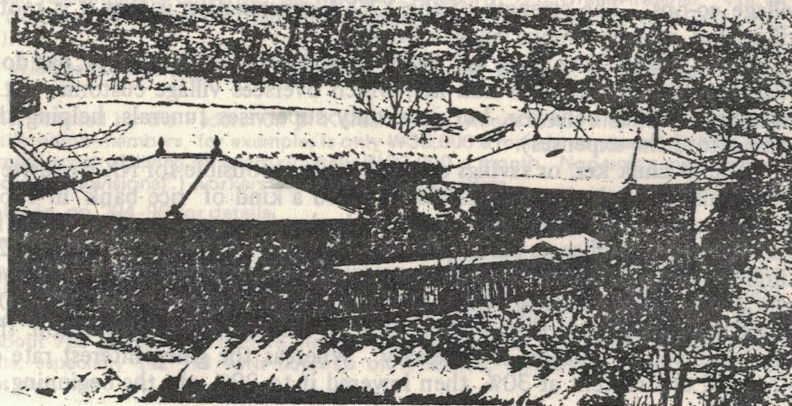
hectares of rice, 0.7 hectares of barley, beans, and garlic, and two hectares of nut trees. They supply half of their fertilizer needs themselves, using compost made from grass, rice straw and manure, purchasing the remainder from the co-op. Last year Kim bought sixty 25-kg. bags of locally-made fertilizer at ₩18,000 per bag. This year he will have to pay ₩30,000 per bag, because, although the local fertilizer is cheaper and the company delivers it free, the government has forbidden farmers to buy from any other place than the government co-op. Since Korean farms are being run down, there seems little sense in allowing them cheap fertilizer, and in any case the government prefers to channel as many resources as possible into exports.

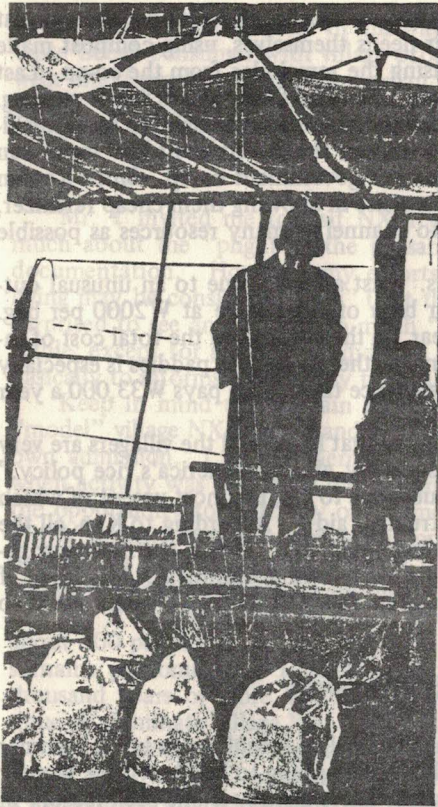
Another major expense is insecticides. Last autumn, due to an unusual outbreak of rice blight, Kim had to buy ten bags of insecticide at ₩2000 per bag. Since he must spread five or six times a year, he thus estimated the total cost of insecticides alone at ₩100,000 per year. Finally, the tax on rice paddies is especially high. Of the ₩40,000 total for land and residence taxes, Kim pays ₩33,000 a year for his rice fields alone.

As if this weren't enough, Kim also told me that he and all the villagers are very agitated about the low rice prices, and especially about "America's rice policy." Kim asked whether he could pose a few questions to me, the most urgent of which was, "Why does America give us such destructive aid?" According to Kim, all the farmers in the whole area were very disturbed about this. To me, the most surprising thing was that they blamed the U.S., not their own government. Moreover, if such a relatively prosperous community suffers from PL480, how much more so must the poorer ones!

### LOCAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The villagers in the area produce a light linen called *moshi*, worn in the summer because it absorbs sweat. The farmers of NX are planning to build a village factory to make *moshi*, at present a cottage industry. There already is one such factory in another village about 3 km. away, and the Kims took me to see it. The "factory" consisted of two long rooms, each housing three looms, built on one side of the open courtyard of one of the village houses. Stalls—for sheep, pigs, chickens, and a cow—and the family's living quarters comprised the other three sides. Whenever the village women had time, they would come and weave some cloth, for the village





owned the looms collectively. Farther away, in an open field, they had built a greenhouse in which they spun and dried the moshi fibers into long threads for weaving. Mr. Y says Gandhi's example of spinning and weaving as a village industry inspired them. They hope to rebuild such cottage industries as village industries.

The farmers were very proud of their self-reliance. The government now has to support most villages financially, but not NX. According to Mr. Y and the Kims, villagers' incomes were relatively equal — "no one is very rich and no one very poor." The three or four poorest farmers who have only 500 pyong (3000 pyong = 1 hectare; ½ hectare supports a family) and some grassland each, support themselves by working on their neighbors' fields. Although this seems to indicate a sizeable gap between the Kims and the poorest villagers, as far as I could see the size of the houses all seemed to be much the same, and evidence of social differentiation wasn't visible. The Kims seemed to lead a very simple life, judging from the inside of their home. On a purely comparative basis, though, unless the figures got twisted in the translation process, 10 equality in the village was by no means absolute. The village is about 70% self-

sufficient, against an estimated national average of less than 40%.

#### VILLAGE CO-OPS AND MUTUAL AID

The richer villagers also help the poorer ones through the traditional Korean village co-ops. The strength of the XXXA organization is that it is rooted in the village *kei*, or autonomous village co-ops.

Most villages have three *kei*: the *jo chuk kei*, or savings co-ops; *dae dong kei*, or village commons; and *cho kun kei*, which oversees village customs (It formerly punished unfilial behavior, but now only supervises funerals, helping those who can't afford the expenses).

The *jo chuk kei*, or savings co-op, is most responsible for NX's relative equality. The Kims, through this organization, started a kind of 'rice bank' in 1962. Every year it collects ten liters each of rice and barley from each family. In the first year, only 70% of the villagers participated, but now all do. They've collected 210 eight-liter bags of rice so far. Sixty go to the government co-op, the money from which (₩ 10,000 per bag) they deposit there as stock. The other 150 bags are stored in the village. Part will be used to finance the electrification, the rest to assist the poorer villagers if necessary. Whereas the going interest rate on rice is 50%, NX at first lent at 30%, then lowered it to 20%. In the beginning, everyone

wanted to borrow, but for three years now no-one has asked, indicating NX's overall well-being. The three or four neighbouring villages, comprising about 90 don't save much rice, Kim said.

Each of NX's two sub-villages' *dae dong kei*, or village commons, has land that it uses for public benefit. One has 800 pyong of land and over ₩500,000 in savings, the other has 800 pyong and ₩200,000. Villagers who die leaving behind no sons bequeath their money to these funds, which are used for the upkeep of graves and for village and national celebrations. In addition, unique to NX, a "miscellaneous tax fund" pays out the various government taxes and fees levied on each family.

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I found on my trip that mutual aid and a long tradition of local autonomy form the backbone of the south Korean villages. In Mr Y's opinion, a strong village organization is enough to offset any north Korean threat. He is confident that the farmers can re-assert themselves and make rural Korea prosper, thereby saving both the countryside and the cities. In his words, the Autonomous Village Movement is "the peaceful way to combat both Communism and Capitalism."

#### NOTES

1. The government gives the slum dwellers "tickets" entitling them to one of the apartments, provided they pay the equivalent of US \$800 in key money. Unable to do so, most sell their tickets to members of the lower-middle class, who live in them, or to the middle class, who rent them out.
2. Henceforth, all Korean sources and names will be omitted for their protection. Emergency Measure No. 9, implemented in May 1975, enables the government to imprison Koreans for up to seven years for conveying any "disparaging" information to foreigners.
3. *Agricultural Yearbook*, 1975.
4. Cargill, for example, received US \$151,363,000 in PL 480 funds for the period 1972-74 alone. For further information on how PL 480 enriches the grain companies and furthers American foreign policy objectives, see the NACLA report, "U.S. Grain Arsenal," Vol. IX No. 7, October 1975 (Box 57, Cathedral Station, NY 10025, or Box 226, Berkeley, Cal. 94701).
5. Bernie Wideman, "The plight of the Peasant," in Frank Baldwin, ed., *Without Parallel*, p. 282.
6. Statistics released by the Federation of Korean Trade Unions reveal that the average wage of textile union members, for example, is only ₩35,000 a month, compared with an average family's cost of living of approximately ₩90,000 a month. Non-union members and temporary ("provisional") workers make even less, of course.
7. See Baldwin, pp. 294-96 for details.
8. Also see Baldwin, p. 279.
9. One agricultural economist estimates farm villagers' annual income at ₩75,000, while one govt official interviewed in a remote village in the northwest estimated it at ₩600,000.
10. Figures extrapolated from Wideman, for example, indicate that a family of five would need about 750 pyong, or ¼ hectare, just to feed themselves. Says Wideman: "But many peasants, especially the 1/3 with holdings of ½ hectare, come very close to financial disaster each year." (p. 277)

## Some readings

### POLITICAL PRISONERS/HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Kim Chi Ha: **Cry of the People and Other Poems** (From Autumn Press, 2113 Isshiki, Hayama, Kanagawa-ken, Japan, 1974). All Kim's best poems, plus some 1972 conversations with a Japanese writers' delegation which visited him in a sanatorium. Kim's poems are just incredible.
2. —: "Groundless Rumour" and other poems (**Index on Censorship** II/1 [Spring 1973], pp. 39-52).
3. Matsui Yayori: **Why I Oppose Kisaeng Tours: Exposing Economic and Sexual Aggression Against South Korean Women** (Femintern Press, 1975, translated Lorna Sharnoff). ROK gov't's hand in white slave trade ("Kisaeng").
4. **Japanese Women Speak Out** (Tokyo, 1975; parts 3 and 4). Contains articles on Korean women in Japan, south Korean women exploited by Japanese capitalism, and a denunciation of 'kisaeng.' From PARC, PO Box 5250, Tokyo Int'l, Japan.
5. David Valence: "Opposition in South Korea" (**New Left Review** No. 77, [Jan/Feb. 1973] pp. 77 - 89). Explains the process by which Park Chung Hee and the KCIA consolidated control after 1971. Describes student and labor movements at that time, resulting in the 'National State of Emergency' declared in December 1971.
6. **The PRP State Conspiracy** (Ashiya, Japan, May 1975). Analysis plus collection of press cuttings documenting the arrest of the 'People's Revolutionary Party' in 1974, and the false spy charges laid against them. Eight have since been executed. Cry of the People C'ee, PO Box 37, Ashiya, Hyogo, Japan.
7. William J. Butler: **Report of the Commission to South Korea for Amnesty International** (London, A.I., 1974). Butler was sent to Korea in 1974 to investigate charges of torture used against political prisoners. He interviewed several anti-government politicians, and produced a total condemnation of the Park regime's policies. From A.I., 55 Theobalds Road, London WC 1., England.
8. **Save the Soh Brothers** (Tokyo, Sept. 1972). The Soh brothers, Koreans resident in Japan, were arrested by the KCIA in 1971 on spy charges. Soh Sung was tortured beyond recognition. Both still in jail. A few copies left, will send for postage.
9. **Korea Newsletter** Published by the Korean resistance. Very valuable source of first-hand information on oppression under Park Chung Hee and the KCIA. From 3-3-6-8 Kanda Ogawacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. Monthly, ask for subscription rates.
10. **Korea Link** C'tee for the Support of Human Rights in South Korea. Bi-monthly, put out by activists in the US 944 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94102. \$5/yr.
11. **Cry of the People Newsletter**. Occasional, from Cry of the People C'ee, c/o Naniwa Kyokai, 3-20 Koraibashi, Higashi-ku, Osaka.
12. **AMPO** A mine of information on current conditions in south Korea, well-researched and well-written. See especially Vol. 7, No. 2. From PO Box 5250, Tokyo Int'l, Japan.
13. **Ronin** Also vital reading, though it ceased publication last year and merged with **AMPO**. More cultural material than **AMPO**. Back copies from us.

## on Korea

14. **Asian Eye** Photographic quarterly which often contains pictures from south Korea. Text is Japanese, but the pictures speak for themselves. Write us, and we'll pass it on.
15. **Korean Bulletin** Monthly quick with the news on repression in the south, only glowing reports of the north. Good chronologies. PO Box 1952, SF, CA 94101 \$2 per year.
16. **Matchbox** Latest issue has information on Korean political prisoners. Put out by Amnesty International—USA, Room 309, 2112 Broadway, N.Y., N.Y., 10023.

### OTHER IMPORTANT READING MATERIAL

1. Frank Baldwin ed.: **Without Parallel, The American-Korean Relationship Since 1945** (Pantheon, 1974, \$3.95). Well-researched, radical essays on American policy since 1945, the Korean Civil War, capitalism in South Korea, the plight of the south Korean countryside, and the destruction of democracy since 1948. Must reading.
2. Jon Halliday: **Three Articles on the Korean Revolution, 1945-53** (from AREAS, 22 Chepston Crescent, London W.11) Korea's role in US military effort to counter Russian expansion; the resistance to American rule in the south and American repression of the revolutionary movement. Halliday goes overboard for Kim Il Song, ignoring the devastation and horror unleashed by the north in 1950.
3. Jon Halliday and Gavan McCormack: **Japanese Imperialism Today** (Penguin, 1973, 60p) Really freaked out the liberal establishment when it appeared. A Penetrating study of the new 'Co-Prosperty Sphere' and Japan-US designs in Asia. Chapter 5: "The Tokyo-Seoul-Taipei Nexus."
4. D. Gordon White: "Report from Korea: The DPRK Through the Eyes of a Visiting Sinologist" (**China Quarterly** No. 63 [Sept. '75] pp. 515-22). "A more fully mobilized society I have yet to see, one which makes China seem casual by contrast."
5. Han Sung joo: **The Failure of Democracy in South Korea** (Univ. of Cal. Press, 1974). Not seen, but good on events which created Park Chung Hee fascism.
6. Gregory Henderson: **Korea, The Politics of the Vortex** (Harvard Univ. Press, 1968). A study of Korea's political culture, examines authoritarian tendencies which created regimes like Park Chung Hee's.
7. Vincent S.R. Brandt: **A Korean Village** (Harvard Univ. Press, 1971). Not seen. Probably good agrarian background. Fieldwork studies of rural Korea are rare.
8. Cornelius Osgood: **The Koreans and Their Culture** (Tuttle, 1951, \$1.95). Anthropological study with an interesting chapter on village society; also some history.
9. Mark H. Scher: "U.S. Policy in Korea 1945-1948: A Neo-Colonial Model Takes Shape" (**Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars**, Vol. 5 No. 4, pp. 17-27) Academic research into US's 1945 invasion and installation of puppet regime. Important background reading. From CCAS, 604 Mission Street, Room 1001, SF, CA 94105.

# Nohara Shiro Anarchism and the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement

This completes our four-part serialization of Nohara Shiro's essay on the part played by anarchism in China's social revolution. In it, he talks about the libertarian influence of Li Ta-chao, regarded as one of the founders of the Chinese communist movement.

## ABOUT LI TA-CHAO<sup>1</sup>

The Anarchist-Bolshevik controversy in China reached its peak between the establishment of the various communist groups in May 1920 (LI-3, 13) and the inauguration of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in July 1921. The principal arguments unfolded in the pages of the magazines *New Youth* (Hsin Ch'ing-nien) and *The Communist* (Kung-ch'an Tang), the latter a monthly put out by the Shanghai communist group.

These so-called "Bolsheviks," however, at the beginning at least, cannot be said to have consciously differentiated themselves so much from the anarchists. Some, on the contrary, even interpreted Bolshevism in terms of anarchist ideas. Li Ta-chao, as I shall show later, was one of these. Li, who traversed the entire process [of the Chinese revolution] from the late Ch'ing dynasty, through the 1911 Revolution and the May 4 Movement, down to the amalgamation of the Nationalist Party (KMT) and the CCP [in 1924], was a typical Chinese intellectual who worked tirelessly and singlemindedly for the cause.

At this stage of the ideological debate between the "Anarchists" and the "Bolsheviks", neither side's arguments carried much weight with the people of China, who had learned since the events of 1911 and after<sup>2</sup> not to place their trust in politics. In their criticisms of the Bolsheviks, the Anarchists focused on the demand for absolute liberty, rejection of political methods, opposition to proletarian dictatorship and centralized authority, and advocacy of an ideal society based on mutual aid, liberty and labor. The Bolsheviks, as anywhere in a dispute

of this kind, replied in equally abstract, though Marxist, formulations. Only when a tentative plan for changing China was laid down at the CCP's 2nd National Congress in July 1922, and following the sacrifices of Huang Ai [and P'ing Jen-ch'uan]<sup>3</sup> (LI-3, 14), and the struggle at the [1st] All-China Labor Congress [on May 1, 1922], did the two adversaries begin to extricate themselves from this quagmire:

"The proletariat's support of the democratic revolution [by allying with the KMT] is not equivalent to its surrender to the capitalists. Not to prolong the life of the feudal system is absolutely necessary in order to foster the power of the proletariat. This is in the proletariat's own class interest. It would be no total liberation for the proletariat, for a successful democratic revolution would bring it only some minor liberties and rights. The successful democratic revolution develops the capitalist class, at present in its infancy, and capitalist opposition to the proletariat is left to the future.<sup>4</sup> [But] when that stage is reached, the proletariat must launch the second-phase struggle: for the dictatorship of the proletariat allied to the poor peasants against the bourgeoisie. If the organization and fighting power of the proletariat has been [sufficiently] strengthened, this second-phase struggle will carry the victory of the democratic revolution to its completion.

"The CCP is the party of the proletariat. Its aims are to organize the proletariat and, via the class struggle, to establish dictatorship of the workers and peasants, abolition of private property, and gradual attainment of a communist society. At present the CCP must, in the immediate interests of the workers and the poor peasants, lead the workers to support the democratic revolution and forge a democratic united front of workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie."

The publication of this manifesto marked the first attempt to cure the people's post-1911 apathy and to dissociate the party from anarchism.

As has been said many times already, an examination of the early stages [of the controversy] reveals that the thinking of these first "communists" was heavily laced with anarchism. This tendency can be found, for instance, in Li Ta-chao's "Victory of Bolshevism" — regarded as one of the first Chinese Marxist writings. According to the "Bolshevik" proposals as expressed here, all men and women must take part in labor and organize themselves into a single federation; each federation must have a central supreme council which will organize governments for the whole world. Instead of secret committees, parliaments, presidents, premiers, cabinets, legislatures and rulers, there will be only the labor federation councils, with whom all decisions rest. All industrial concerns will become the sole property of those who work in them, beyond which there will be no property rights at all. The Bolsheviks, in alliance with the masses of the whole world, will use the latter's powerful resistance to build a free home for everyone.<sup>5</sup> The first stage will be a Federation of European Democracies, a base on which to seek to build the World Federation. This is the Bolshevik platform.

There is a common thread running through this and that



Li Ta-chao

of the Peking University Students' Weekly (LI-3, 9), mentioned earlier. The latter had announced that:

"Workers of the whole world will organize themselves, irrespective of national boundaries, into 'labor boards' at strategic points, which will take over the planning responsibilities historically assumed by governments." "Victory of Bolshevism," meanwhile, states just before the passage already cited that:

"The revolutionary socialist parties, with socialism as their standard, will strive to smash the national boundaries which today restrict the growth of socialism."

In similar vein, part of Li's January 1919 piece, "New Era," ran:

"In the future, an immense change will affect the system of production. The working class, with all its brothers working in concert all over the world, will set up a single rational association of producers, break down national boundaries, and overthrow the capitalist class everywhere. Their weapon will be the general strike."

To put it bluntly, Li's interpretation of Bolshevism was no different in essence from the program which [the anarchist] Huang Ling-shuang (LI-2, 14) attempted to expound in his "New Tide in the World Today, the Great Anarchist Revolution" (in *Progress* [Chin-hua], No. 2, February 20, 1919). Consequently, certain bodies of opinion attempted to explain the May 4 Movement [purely] in terms of the effect on the students of anarchism and other theories.

This cosmopolitan tendency of Li Ta-chao occurs in all his proposals:

"Our demand right now is for a world of mutual love among a free, liberated people. The 'mother countries,' social classes and racial distinctions which now stand between us and the world are obstacles to progress and interference in our daily lives. We must do away with them one by one." ("We and the World," in *Weekly Critic* [Mei-chou P'ing-lun] 29, July 6, 1919)<sup>6</sup>

The result of this preoccupation was the following:

"May 4 is a movement to defeat the aggressive policy [of Japan] known as 'Pan-Asianism,' and does not harbor any deep animosity towards the Japanese people themselves. We will defeat any party, Japanese or otherwise, which uses its power to trample on the people's rights. I believe it inappropriate to view this movement as simply a patriotic one. Rather, it is but one part of a movement to liberate all humankind. Friends, if we continue to see it this way, think what happiness we can create for the world of the future!" ("Talk at the Anniversary Celebration of *Citizens' Magazine*," in *Citizens' Magazine* [Kuo-min Tsa-chih] Vol. 2 No. 1, November 1919).

This theme, that a movement for the liberation of humanity implied a movement for liberation from world imperialism, is made more explicit in the following passage from Li's article, "Secret Diplomacy and the World of Robbers" (*Weekly Critic* 22, May 18, 1919):

"The reason why Japan can brandish her aggressive policies at the world is simply that the world today is a world of robbers!"

However, was Li's cosmopolitanism the same as that of, say, the anarchist Wu Chih-hui? Far from it. At the root of Li's version, which at first sight resembled

that of the anarchists, lays a theory of national liberation [stress added]. It comes through clearly in his "Pan-Asianism and New Asianism" (*Citizens' Magazine*, Vol. 1 No. 2, January 1, 1919):

"Looking at today's great powers, [we can predict that] the US will construct a federation of the Americas, and the Europeans a federation of Europe. Asia, too, must build just such an organization. Together, these will provide the basis for a world federation. Asians will join together in espousing a 'New Asianism,' which will take over from the 'Pan-Asianism' advocated by some Japanese. This 'New Asianism' is quite different from Ukita Kazuomi's 'Pan-Asianism,' which is based on a Sino-Japanese alliance and which supports the status quo. Our idea, based on national liberation, proposes fundamental social change. The peoples of Asia, now in the thrall of foreign annexation, will be liberated and allowed to practice national self-determination. From here, they must build one big federation, the third corner of the triangle started by Europe and America; then all three will cooperate in forming the world federation, and advance the happiness of all humankind."

At the time of the '21 Demands' controversy (LI-1,16) in 1915, Li Ta-chao was a student in Japan. Towards the end of that year, on behalf of the Association of Chinese Students in Japan (Liu-Jih Hsueh-sheng Tsung-hui), he wrote "A Letter of Admonition to the Elders of the Nation," in which he began by describing in detail the foreign powers' invasion of China. After that, he explained the disastrous crisis now facing the country, exposed the real nature of the '21 Demands,' and urged

"all elders, brothers and sisters! Lose no time! Come together now to protect the beautiful mountains and rivers and the glorious historical tradition of our land!"

Furthermore, in a passage in which he unashamedly revealed his nationalistic yearnings, he recalled his departure for Japan:

"Not long ago, I left my homeland and came east across the sea. The sun set into the wind-lashed waves, a jade-colored expanse of blue. Beyond the Yellow Sea, the land of Korea came into view. I looked to glimpse some trace



The Awakening Society, 1919



of the 1894 defeat (i.e., in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95), but all was swallowed in the vastness. I could only listen, the sound of the waves a doleful roll of drums as the waters flowed eastwards. As if the spirits of those who had died for China had since returned as ghosts to bury the hatred."

When he backed the National Salvation Corps of Chinese Students in Japan (LI-2, 16) in Shanghai, wrote constantly for the *Citizens' Magazine*, and became the only intellectual to consistently support the student movement from the students' own standpoint, Li's activities during 1918-1919 clearly left their mark on [one student of the time] Hsu Teh-heng (LI, 2, 27), as described in Hsu's "Recollections of May 4." As for May 4 itself, because Li had posed the relationship between the Chinese people and the rest of the world in terms of the theory of anti-imperialism,<sup>8</sup> he never adopted over-cosmopolitan or chauvinistic attitudes. [For example] while the May 4 New Culture Movement (LI-1, 18) is generally said to have been destructive of China's native cultural traditions, Li displayed a somewhat different attitude. With regard to its criticism of Confucius, for instance, Li would overthrow not Confucius himself, but the power bestowed upon him by the idolatry of generations of rulers ("The Ethical View of Nature and Confucius").<sup>9</sup>

These points presented problems for the anarchists. They too had joined the cry against the foreign powers' invasion [of China], but in their case the critique stemmed from their abstract principle of opposition to all authority, not from straightforward nationalism. From their standpoint, such things as race and tradition naturally did not merit consideration. The Reality Society's *Notes on Liberty* (LI-2, 14), for example, declared that it would expel such ideas as "patriotism" and "national quintessence"<sup>10</sup> (issue No. 2, "Revolution and Conservatism"). And in the Liu Shih-fu commemoration issue of *Progress* we find:

"Happily, not only did Mr. Liu Shih-fu not manifest the outstanding characteristics of Chinese civilization; on the contrary, he fervently hated that civilization, and by overpowering it [within himself] managed to reserve the spirit and the dignity of anarchism." ("The Reason for Publishing a Liu Shih-fu Commemoration Issue")

Although many other factors entered into it, this was a major reason why anarchism, unable to continue as it was, went into a sudden decline just as China entered upon a period of revolutionary ferment.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, as even a mainland scholar has confirmed, anarchism left behind it one remarkable contribution to Chinese thought.<sup>12</sup> At that time, as Germany's armies went from victory to victory, the following idea was popular in China: "At the root of the world lies the will to live, and the struggle for existence forms the core of evolution. Nations grew out of the will to live, while militarism was the extreme manifestation of the struggle for existence. Long ago, the powerful nations were constrained by mountains and seas, and contacts between them were rare. Each tended to its own territory and people, and since their territories did not touch, conflicts between them were not violent. However, with the modern age, which brought considerable easing of communication and increasingly frequent contact between the powers, coupled with the expansion of their economic systems, the struggle for existence grew accordingly more fierce. The end result was militarism, which has sprung up to

meet the needs of the present. The only way for nations in this age to protect their territory and their people is militarism. To avoid enslavement, they must take the road of militarism. The world today is a world under the heel of militarism!" (New Youth, Vol. 2 No. 3 [November 1916])

The theories of natural evolution imported into China in the late Ch'ing dynasty inspired Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's<sup>13</sup> "Theory of National Imperialism," and had been very encouraging for the nationalists at that time. Under present conditions, however, where the people were crushed under warlord rule, not only had the evolution theories the adverse effect of producing feelings of inferiority and defeatism; the militarism which thus emerged created an atmosphere which helped the warlords impede the democratic government. Containing elements of both determinism and fatalism, the brand of Social Darwinism which grew up in China in the end was one of the obstacles to the emergence of a new revolutionary theory.<sup>14</sup>

Li Ta-chao's "New Era" constituted a criticism of evolutionism:

"Up to now the natural evolutionists have been telling us about the 'survival of the fittest': that the weak are the prey of the strong; that the weak forfeit the right to life and happiness for the benefit of the strong; that the strong must eat their fellow humans, and the weak be eaten by them — but today the fallacies of this theory have become abundantly clear. Biological progress depends not on struggle, but on mutual aid. If humanity desires life and happiness, it must have mutual friendship, not mutual extermination."

Furthermore, as Germany's initial run of victories was followed by defeat, and as revolution spread from Russia to Germany and then to Austria, Li saw the cast-iron proof of his contention in the obvious disintegration of the "survival of the fittest" situation which had been the original cause of the war.

The starting point for this new explanation of evolution had been Kropotkin's "theory of mutual aid." This is clear from Li's article "Class Struggle and Mutual Aid" (*Weekly Critic* 29, July 6, 1919), which also raises a new and quite different problem. Li, as a Marxist, felt compelled to bring together the laws of mutual aid and class struggle. [In other words] he did not follow Kropotkin all the way. Starting with Marx's dictum that "all history up to now is the reflection of class struggles," Li accepted its truth in the history of class struggles to date. However, he said that the impending class struggle, humanity's last, would usher in the world of mutual aid of the proletariat, in whom its spirit was at its best. Moreover, Li considered evolution, even in the pre-historical period, to have been the result of the simultaneous operation of both class struggle, the primary instrument of social





May 4th students led off to jail

change, and the by-and-large moralistic laws of mutual aid. Hence, Li maintained, through the final class struggle and the triumph of the spirit of mutual aid — that is, through the re-structuring of both matter and mind — the ideal society would be attained.

Present-day researchers in China describe this as Li's "dualism," saying that his thinking had yet to be fully permeated with Marxism. However, [even six months later] in another article, "From Vertical Organization to Horizontal Organization" (in *Emancipation and Reconstruction* [Chieh-fang yu Kai-tsoa] Vol. 2 No. 2, Jan. 15, 1920), we read that "vertical organization," i.e. all organization based on exploiters and exploited, rulers and ruled, is formed by the sword; while "horizontal organization," such as (in China's case) the various unions formed by students, teachers, merchants, workers, peasants, women and so on as a result of the May 4 Movement, is based on love. Horizontal organization, armed with the spirit of mutual aid, resists vertical organization. That which will overthrow vertical organization is emancipation; that which will establish the horizontal organization is reconstruction.

In saying, as noted just now, that the individual dignity [stress added] of every oppressed person will also be restored through the liberation struggle of horizontal versus vertical organization, Li was already having difficulty in separating the problem of the individual from that of the organization, from that of the whole. He therefore advocated the re-structuring of ideas to create a spirit of mutual love of a class nature, in which individuality would be conceived of as [embodying the principle of] "all for one and one for all." In short, the idea that the reconstruction movement would create the horizontal organization also implied ideological reconstruction. And so Li Ta-chao's theory of "material change and ethical change," though still at a rudimentary stage of development, was an early hint of the thought reform movement later to become one of the most remarkable features of the Chinese revolution. With such a conception of individuality, needless to say, thought reform did not stop at the innermost recesses of the mind.

As a thinker, Li Ta-chao was quite out of the ordinary. Spencer, Tolstoy, Kropotkin, perhaps even Dewey, all found a temporary lodging side by side with Marx within his mind. There was even a time when none of them could be easily isolated. This is what made Li Ta-chao stand out even among May 4 intellectuals. Neither — and this too was remarkable — could Li be labelled as a haphazard, opportunistic syncretist. Through [his involvement in] the May 4 Movement, Li became aware that the more and more obvious national task of striving for both national independence and democracy for the laboring poor was closely connected to the fate of humankind and of the world.

At the risk of repetition, we can put this another way. After absorbing the impact of the October Revolution, Li Ta-chao then turned out, not a paean to still-born Marxism, but the idea of a "toilers' democracy" (see his article "Victory of the Masses"). One might even say that this formed the very core of his thinking. [At any rate], it provides the starting-point for any consideration of his post-May 4 development. And so, from this new standpoint, Li became convinced that the age-old problem facing the Chinese people — national independence and prosperity — would be solved only in conjunction with a movement to liberate all of humankind.

On the basis of this conviction, Li freely adapted and put to use any and all theories. For instance, in criticizing the failure of the Work and Learning Mutual Aid Corps (LI-3, 10), he did not reject its whole program, but merely pointed out the number of obstacles posed for such an experiment by the urban environment, and advised instead that it be tried out in the countryside. ("The Weaknesses of the Work and Learning Corps in the Cities," in *New Youth* Vol. 7 No. 5, April 1, 1920).<sup>15</sup> Unlike Hu Shih (LI-1, 27), Li took the Corps experiment as a serious attempt to build the new society. While one of the very first to initiate the study of Marxism [in China], Li Ta-chao did not blindly assume its correctness from the start. Rather, while taking part — sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly — in the practical movement concerned with the national problems, during which time he also investigated other political doctrines, Li gradually began to lean towards Marxism.<sup>16</sup>

#### NOTES

1. Li never considered himself an anarchist. In fact, in his early writings he condemned anarchism (which he seems to have equated with terrorism). At that time, however, Li was a patriot and a constitutionalist, and was most concerned with the successful outcome of the Republic formed in 1911. Also, the main trend of anarchism in north China was then terrorism, which Li now considered obsolete. Where terrorism had been appropriate before 1911 for resisting the despotism of the Manchu emperors, now the main problem was not to sustain the revolutionary movement, but to solve the political chaos and create social stability. While his ideas were inherently libertarian, he never considered anarchism as a social theory until he came across Kropotkin's theory of mutual aid much later (after his conversion to Bolshevism!)
2. In 1911 the Manchu dynasty was overthrown and a feeble "Republic" proclaimed. This was immediately turned into the personal dictatorship of the first President, Yuan Shih-kai. Many erstwhile "revolutionaries" joined the government; others either wasted time and lives on futile, uncoordinated insurrections; and still others, when their more practical strategies showed signs of becoming a serious threat to the established order, were murdered by presidential assassins. Following Yuan's abortive attempt to make himself emperor in 1916 and his death soon after, the country fell into the hands of local militarists

("warlords") in much the same way as today's "Third World" has been taken over by local army elites, the only coherent organized force available.

3. Li wrote an article commemorating the two anarchist militants, saying: "Huang and Pang were pioneers of the working class." Chou En-lai also wrote a long poem to mourn their death. He and Huang had worked together during May 4 as student organizers.
4. Thanks to this opportunistic gobbledygook, during the "Great Revolution" of Shanghai in March 1927, when working-class organizations had taken over almost the entire city, the organizers were so bewildered by theory that they were unable to see the potential of the strike. Thus they refused help from military units opposed to the KMT leader Chiang Kai-shek, and ordered workers to lay down their arms and surrender to the armies of the "bourgeois-democratic revolution." The result was a horrific orgy of blood and cruelty which filled the streets with the rotting corpses of thousands of workers who had trusted the judgment of their theoretical masters. The CCP never regitered complete worker support after this blow to its ideological prestige, and Mao's "peasant line" was as much a ruse forced upon him by the party's obvious betrayal of the urban workers, as it was an "original contribution to Marxism."

The anarchist workers remained aloof from the Shanghai strike, on grounds that it was premature and bound to fail. They were proved only too correct, and many underlined their judgment with their own blood.

5. This idea had already been put forward in the anarcho-syndicalist magazine, *Labor* (LI-2, 14). It's important to understand that Li's conception of "Bolsheviks" was closer to Bakunin's concept of a core of professional intellectuals and agitators moving among the people than to Lenin's vanguard mapping out the path from above.

Li had little concern for organization and the role of the party. Instead, he stressed the spontaneous forces of revolution in Chinese society. This anti-Leninist aspect (though he thought of himself as a Leninist), so different from the thinking of Mao, should really have been stressed more than Nohara does here. Like Bakunin, Li saw the role of the intellectual as little more than a catalytic agent which would release the spontaneous energies of the masses. He attributed no role to the vanguard party.

6. Begun by Ch'en Tu-hsiu (LI-2, 27) in December 1918 as an endeavor to inform Chinese of the events in Russia (Nohara's note). 37 issues appeared before its suppression by the Peking government in September 1919. It was one of the first radical magazines to present a political (rather than cultural) critique of the Chinese situation.
7. Many of Li's ideas on internationalism had already been expressed by the anarchist Liu Shih-p'ei (LI-1, 16-17) in 1907. Liu felt that the world revolution would be triggered off by an uprising of the oppressed colonial peoples against the imperialists. To cope with it, the latter would have to increase their exactions against the proletariat at home, who would have no choice but to rise up against their oppressors, thus completing the world socialist revolution. This theory later became a hallmark of Li Ta-chao's thought. Unlike Li, however, Liu insisted that such a result would come about only if links were created with the socialist parties in the developed nations, who would then coordinate the struggle at home. Here, Liu showed his true internationalism, as opposed to Li, who never really succeeded in eradicating his chauvinistic tendencies.

8. Li developed the curious and highly non-Marxist (or anarchist!) notion of a "proletarian nation." The theory was that economic changes in China resulted from the intrusion of outside forces, while those in the western nations arose from internal developments. Hence the suffering of the Chinese people under world capitalism was worse than that of the western proletariats, who were repressed only by their indigenous capitalists. Thus "the whole country has gradually been transformed into part of the world proletariat." China as a nation had been transformed into the revolutionary class, embodying revolutionary ideas, and therefore qualified to participate in world proletarian revolution even though its own proletariat was practically non-existent.

This is how Li incorporated his nationalism into his super-flexible conception of Marxism. (There is a trotskyist ring to all this, effectively suppressed since 1949 because at the same time Li was also anticipating many aspects of Maoism!) Yet, unlike later right-wing, ex-Marxist ideologists, Li did not include bureaucrats, "evil gentry," and Chinese compradores representing foreign imperialism among Chinese "proletarians," and insisted that the internal class struggle be intensified. He condemned Chinese capitalists as fiercely as he did foreign ones, and consistently attacked militarists and landlords though they were theoretically part of the "Chinese proletarian nation." Li never sorted out this contradic-

## NOHARA: A NOTE ON SOURCES

Most of the passages quoted in Nohara's article are taken from the collection *Wu-szu Shih-ch'i Ch'i-k'an Shao-chieh* (Introduction to Periodicals of the May 4 Period), Peking, 1959, 3 volumes. People who can read Chinese can also consult Li Ta-chao in the original in his *Li Ta-chao Hsuan-chi* (Li Ta-chao's Selected Works), Peking, 1959.

In English, the best source on Li is Maurice Meisner's *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Harvard University Press, 1967). Meisner's main concern is Li's role as a communist so he skirts many of the issues Nohara Shiro raised, such as horizontal vs. vertical organization. He thereby ignores much of the libertarian content of Li's ideas.

tion. One result was the massacre of Peking-Hankow railway workers in February 1923 by the warlord Wu P'ei-fu, with whom Li, in charge of organizing labor in north China on behalf of the CCP, had reached an "arrangement."

9. The anarchists insisted that the whole structure of authoritarian conditioning in the Confucian canon be torn down and a new society built in its place. They perceived that not to do so would merely create the pre-conditions for a new and more sophisticated despotism. For details, see Scalapino and Yu: *The Chinese Anarchist Movement*, p. 8.
10. Anarchists, of course, distinguish between "patriotism" — love of the nation-state — and "nationalism" — which can be a valid expression of cultural and regional traditions. Nohara does not seem to understand this distinction. "National quintessence" (*kuo-ts'ui*) was a term used by Chinese conservatives to defend the most reactionary aspects of the Chinese cultural tradition.
11. The anarchists lost influence because they saw that China was not ready for a working class revolution, and therefore counselled consolidation of the revolutionary forces instead of expending them on useless putsches. The communists, on the other hand, by their slogans of "high tide of the working class movement" and so on, succeeded in convincing many Chinese workers that the revolution was "just over the crest of the next wave." See note 4 above.
12. This point is raised in a Chinese piece, Li Lung-mu: "Comrade Li Ta-chao and the Propagation of Marxism During the May 4 Period," in *Historical Research* (Li-shih Yen-chiu 5 (1957), p. 12.
13. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (1873-1929): historian, philosopher, journalist and politician; led a reformist party after 1911.
14. Mutual aid and federalism were also key planks in the anarchist platform by 1907. Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* was first published in 1902, and soon translated into Chinese for serialization in *New Century*, the magazine put out by Chinese anarchists in Paris (LI-1,11).
15. Li had been strongly influenced by the Japanese "New Village" Movement (LI-1), which was popular when he was a student in Japan. It was a combination of Kropotkin's mutual aid theory and Tolstoy's rural orientation.

Another article, "Youth and the Villages" (*New Tide*, February 1919) represented a breakthrough in the revolutionary movement in China, and a milestone in the communist movement. Pre-dating Mao by almost a decade, Li predicted that the Chinese revolution would be a peasant revolution, recommending that young intellectuals go to the countryside to help liberate the peasants. While it owed a lot to the Russian Populists, the article also reflected the appeals which many anarchist intellectuals had been making since 1911 (though, admittedly, none of them actually attempted it before the May 4 Movement). Although Chinese historians have tried to assert that, as in Russia, the communist revolution in China was preceded by a populist phase, the intellectuals who turned to Populism were more interested in the terroristic activities of the Social-Revolutionaries and had little in common with the Chinese peasants (see also LI-3, pp. 10 & 20). The first effect of Li's call to "unite with the toiling masses" was the formation of the Mass Education Speech Corps (LI-2, 19) in March 1919. In general, the article prepared the ground for acceptance of Mao's "peasant line."

16. Epilogue: Early in 1927, the reactionary warlord of Peking, Chang Tso-lin, began a purge of radicals. Li and others took refuge in the Soviet Embassy, from where Li continued to issue radical polemics on the Chinese situation. In April, Chang's soldiers raided the Embassy, and Li was arrested. He was executed by strangulation soon after.

## asian anarchism in western languages (3)

### Korea

1. Chong-sik Lee: **The Politics of Korean Nationalism** (Univ of California Press, 1963). Detailed account of the anti-Japan struggle from the late 19th century to 1945, suggesting that nationalism permeated the thinking of communists and anarchists, creating a very negative kind of movement. Three chapters (9-11) on practical activities in China between 1919 and 1945 mention the anarchists briefly, but the main focus is on the right-wing and "pure" nationalists who occupied the center of the stage.
2. Nym Wales and Kim San: **Song of Ariran, A Korean Communist in the Chinese Revolution** (Ramparts Press, 1972), \$2.95. Exciting first-hand account of one Korean revolutionary's passage from pure nationalism, through terroristic "anarchism," into putschism at the command of the Chinese Communist Party, and finally, disillusioned with all the bloodshed, to a more fundamental understanding: "To be in advance of your time does not qualify you for leadership but only for propaganda work and criticism."
3. Robert A. Scalapino and Chong-sik Lee: "The Origins of the Korean Communist Movement," (*Journal of Asian Studies* XX/1 (Nov. 1960), pp.9-31, XX/2 (Feb. 1961), pp. 149-67. Mainly useful as background material, showing the birth of the radical movement amid the nationalistic reaction to Japanese annexation in 1910.
4. ———: **Communism in Korea** (Univ of California Press, 1972, 2 vols.) Tersely-documented, unbelievably detailed, almost readable study. A careful sifting-through will reveal important information on the anarchists, but mainly useful, like the article, for background. Volume 1 is on the pre-1948 movement, volume 2 on north Korea. Highly unsympathetic to anything "un-American."
5. Dae-sook Suh: **The Korean Communist Movement, 1918-1948** (Princeton University Press 1967). Not seen. Vaguely sympathetic academic study. Lots of good background again.
6. ———: **Documents on Korean Communism, 1918-1948** (Princeton University Press, 1970). Companion to above item, not seen.
7. "The Pre-War Korean Communist Movement" (*Libero International* No.1, pp.28-30, No.2, pp.32-33). A chronology.
8. "The Present Korean Movement Under Martial Law" (*Libero International* No.1, pp.32-40, No.2, pp.38-45). On the organizations set up by the anarchists to cope with the repression of Park Chung Hee's regime. Part 2 describes current publications.
9. "The Post-War Korean Anarchist Movement" (*Libero Int'l* No.3, pp.24-28, and cont. in this issue.)
10. "Shin Chae-ho" (*Libero Int'l*, No.2, pp.34-37). Biography of a well-known anarchist historian.
11. Pearl Buck: **The Living Reed** (London, Pan, 1963). Well-written and moving historical novel following the fortunes of a liberal Korean aristocrat and his revolutionary son from the late 19th century to the American invasion in 1945. Hero is based on Kim San. Great until the last 100 pages or so, when the all-American anti-communism gets a bit too strong. Climax sees the revolutionary committing suicide in protest at American illiberalism and his brother becoming keeper of UN cemetery after the civil war. Still, it's a good book with thoroughly researched background.

As can be seen, there is (to our knowledge, anyway) simply nothing dealing specifically with the anarchist movement itself except the pieces in LI. While the Korean movement has had its historian, in the person of Lee Jung Kyu (LI 1, 2), the problem of translation has kept him almost completely unknown outside Korea. However, much of the information in LI is taken either from conversations with Lee or from his memoirs, published in Seoul, in 1974.

## CIRA-Nippon

CIRA-Nippon, founded in 1973, is a federation of autonomous libertarian groups, including the Section for International Correspondence (SIC), a small group of comrades living in the Osaka-Kobe area. The SIC works as the communication link between domestic anarchist groups associated with CIRA-Nippon, and various groups outside Japan. To achieve its aim of improved solidarity through international communication and understanding, the SIC has three main functions:

- to handle day-to-day correspondence between groups outside Japan and CIRA-Nippon;
- to publish news and materials concerning libertarian movements in Japan and East Asia; and
- to translate or summarize published material received from outside Japan and make them more readily available to our comrades in the movement here.

Publication of *Libero International* is meant to achieve the second aim. We are hoping that libertarian publications outside Japan will agree to an exchange of literature, to help us in achieving the third. Materials new or largely unknown in Japan will be summarized, translated, etc., by the SIC, some sent to Fujinomiya to become part of the CIRA-Nippon collection, and some housed in the SIC collection in Osaka. We hope that our friends overseas will be interested in not only receiving *Libero International* and what other pamphlets and materials we produce, but will also help us communicate their own theory, practice and experience as widely as possible in Japan.

At present we plan to publish quarterly (bi-monthly proved over-optimistic). Sole editorial responsibility for the contents lies with the publisher, the SIC Editorial Collective. Correspondence relating to the contents, requests for further information, subscription inquiries, or letters dealing with other matters relating to the anarchist movement in Japan and Asia should be addressed to the SIC, at:

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