

GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGNS IN SOUTH-KOREA:
EXORCISM AND PURIFICATION
OF NATURE AND PEOPLE

Hans U. Luther⁺

"To All Tenants!

From Management Office

Subject, Anti-communist (Actual training a black out the light).

Dear Sir,

Please join us for the actual training a black out the lamp p. m. 8 to 10. Our president, Mr. Park is going to observation with telescope at mountain Nam San on the top tonight, so if you leak out the light, you should be taken punished by law. Therefore appreciate your kind cooperation."

Sincerely yours SOL

Source: Letter to all foreign tenants in English language concerning an air-raid training in Seoul, South-Korea, October 1978¹.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the days the Park Chung-Hee régime came to power by a military coup d'etat in May 1961, the people of South-Korea have become used to all kinds of governmental campaigns. There were e. g. the nation-wide "Rural Saemaul Undong"-campaign (which had disastrous results for the majority of the South-Korean peasantry)², the "Factory Saemaul Movement" (an attempt to extend the Saemaul Undong-ideas from the countryside to the cities), and several 'minor' campaigns like the "National Saving Campaign" and the campaigns for "Frugal Living", all being started by the government. Seen from a critical perspective of political economy, the es-

sential political feature of these campaigns was the mobilisation of the people and the implementation of 'social discipline'. The economic goal was to increase labour productivity and thus to increase the surplus-value for the benefit of foreign and local employers, a prerequisite for the country's export-oriented development program. The underlying ideological theme of these campaigns was 'nation-building' and anti-communist indoctrination in order to make South-Korea a solid bulwark of capitalism in the Third World.

The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze some more recent campaigns in South-Korea, namely the campaigns for "Frugal Living", "Factory Saemaul", "National Saving", "Saemaum", and the "Nature Cleaning Campaign" which was accompanied by the "Remove-Illegal-Religious-Sites"-campaign. Secondly, I will try to fit these campaigns into a wider framework of 'campagning' within the sphere of dependent peripheral capitalism³. Furthermore, some additional material is provided for the ongoing discussion on the interdependence of political, economic and ideological factors in so-called "new societies"⁴ whose main features are a high degree of foreign dependence, enormous social costs due to rapid but uneven economic growth and export-oriented industrialisation. South-Korea is, of course, not the only example for such kind of studies, though it provides a somewhat extreme case due to fast rising social disparities and growing resistance of the people. Similar patterns of development in the field of social engineering can also be found in several other Asian countries.

II. FRUGAL LIVING, NATIONAL SAVING AND SAEMAUM-CAMPAIGNS

South-Korea is a country in which - according to independent sources - in 1977 more than 76 % of all the workers received wages which were below the minimum taxable income⁵; and a country where no minimum wage exists. In 1975, the average monthly wage for all workers was 42,062 won, and the average monthly expenditure of all households stood at 65,310 won. The Economic Planning Board (EPB) estimated the minimum living costs for an urban family of five to be 85,380 won per month. This means, that a large number of households did not have the means to afford the "minimum" living standard recommended by the government agencies⁶.

In this situation of poverty the admonishment to save more money seems to be like 'adding insult to injury'. Nevertheless, in a "Savings Drive Message", the former President, Park Chung-Hee⁷, "called on the people to lead a frugal and austere life while continuously striving to keep high-growth economic development". Furthermore, President Park "urged the people

to demonstrate a spirit of 'frugality and saving' to enable their country to continue development with stability until it attains the goal of realizing a wealthy and strong welfare society"⁸.

Soon after, the "First Lady" of South-Korea, Miss Park Keun-hae, the eldest daughter of the President and President of the Korean Save-the Nation Women's Service Corps, said at a public meeting: "The attitude we should all maintain from now on is to sustain diligent and frugal life in society, which is becoming more affluent than ever before (sic) and to build an advanced state with savings . . . We should make all-out efforts to eliminate the bad roots of luxury, waste, and selfishness liable to emerge as a result of material affluence from penetrating our minds." In order to spread these new values evenly among the population and "to make efforts to lead the social climate to a right view of value" the SAEMAUM ("New Heart" or "New Spirit")-Movement was founded by the presidential daughter.

SAEMAUM has been designed "as a step to establish new ethics in society" and a Student Saemaum Association was organized in order to disseminate the SAEMAUM-ideas⁹. Originally, the Saemaum Movement was an offshoot of the Saemaum (New Village)-Movement. According to Park Jin-Hwan, the former Special Assistant to the President for Economic Affairs, who is also one of the leading Saemaum Undong experts of the country, the Saemaum Movement has "no clear definition" yet: "Not two persons could provide a definition for it that they would agree. To the young female clerk at the post office, Saemaum is a term she could not begin to define. But if she is asked what she did for Saemaum, she can tell about the flowers she helped to plant around the post office a month or two ago. To the taxi driver the Saemaum program might mean not spitting out of the window of his vehicle. Saemaum is a great many things in Seoul, and that is as it should be. It should be as many things as there are Seoul citizens¹⁰. (Seoul has currently about 7.5 million citizens!)

It is the diffuse and unspecified character of these ideological campaigns which makes compliance in general and personal participation in particular a civic virtue. Also it gives the state and the local bureaucracy a number of possibilities to scale "good citizens" and "bad citizens" in a ranking order, thus dealing with individuals in an arbitrary manner. For example, workers "who save a lot" in the government bank are "good citizens" whereas those who save little are labeled "bad citizens" who do not join the massive drive to support the 'national economy'¹¹.

Moreover, it is doubtful if the constant admonishments for a "frugal life" are really directed to the local middle- and upper classes who seem unwilling to abandon traditional patterns of "conspicuous consumption" so easily. But these declarations aim at the working masses who have to

tighten their belt in order to make higher profits possible due to forced underconsumption. Consequently, foreign investments and loans are attracted and still form the motor of the South-Korean economy.

III. FACTORY SAEMAUL MOVEMENT - THE LONG ARM OF THE GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH-KOREA

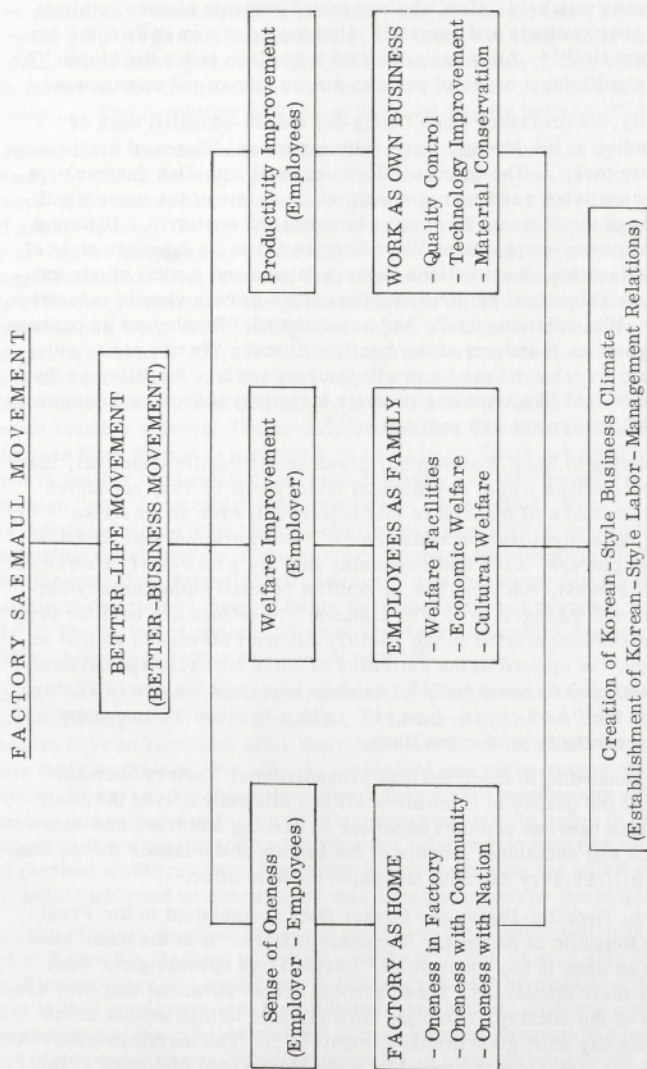
1. Saemaul Factories - an 'Extension of Home' ?

Closely connected to the "National Savings Drive" and the "Frugal Living Campaign" is another campaign: the "Factory Saemaul" (New Factory)-Movement which has been earmarked by the South-Korean government since 1973 to become the cornerstone of industrial mobilisation and the base of ideological indoctrination of the entire labour force. The Saemaul Movement at the factory level took its first roots during the early stages of the 'oil crisis', a time when the world economy ran into a period of recession which badly jeopardized South-Korean outlets for exports. Hence, in order to increase productivity and simultaneously to reduce costs, and also to be more competitive on the world market, Factory Saemaul was started upon the initiative of the government.

Clearly, the main goals of the campaign were the improvement of labour-productivity, of labour-management relations and the promotion of 'welfare' for the workers. Kang Won-Myung, president of Pacific Chemical Industrial Co., later explained the prospects of Factory Saemaul in an interview: "This movement is now being carried out by 3,500 factories throughout the country, but I think that it will be introduced to all factories of the nation in the near future considering its benefits both to employers and employees"¹².

One most impressive feature of Factory Saemaul is the allegedly close 'solidarity' between management and workers. Pyun Ho-Sung, president of Samyoung Electronics Co. in Songnam said: "Oneness between labour and workers can be obtained on the initiative of the management which is requested to be a model to workers". And he added: "Although foreigners may think it a little strange that there is no labour union in our company, employees do not see the need to have a labour union. Even without a labour union, we are highly concerned about the welfare of employees and of returning our profits to them"¹³.

The president of Samyoung Electronics Co. claimed that he became not only a "father of staff" but even a popular 'matchmaker' for his female employees. The Korean Herald also reported that at the Sihung plant of the Taihan Electric Wire Company in May 1977, for instance, a mass-wedding of 38 employees



Source: The Korean Herald, September 27, 1978

of the company was held. Also, the company "conducts picnics, athletic meetings, song contests and mountain climbing to strengthen the common spiritual ties"¹⁴. All these activities took place under the slogan "We are one!" signifying a sense of oneness among labour and management.

Consequently, as professor Rhee Chong-Ik, the US-educated dean of General Studies at the Myongji University explained, "Saemaul has become a key factory tool . . . The Saemaul Movement will establish desirable relations between labour and management, which is one of the most significant results of the Saemaul Movement in industrial society . . . Different from the efficiency emphasizing West European type or Japanese style of collective allocation, the relations between labour and capital of our industries are characterized by stressing the unique Korean view of industries, i. e. family-like relationships". And he continued: "Employers as parents and employees as members of the family will make 'factories an expansion of the home' and will improve welfare facilities so that the employees feel like attending (in their factories) schools and community halls for skill programs and recreation"¹⁵.

Again according to Kang Won-Myung, president of Pacific Chemical, the family-like relations within the Saemaul factory will be very conducive to productivity and will make sure that nobody will ever go on strike against the benevolent body of management. "Workers feel that they are no longer employees. They feel something like the sense of masters (sic.). In this mood, confrontation or conflict is totally unnecessary between labour and management". For instance, "meetings are held for presentation of success stories in the Factory Saemaul Movement so that experiences may be applied to the activities of other factories and outstanding presentations are rewarded"¹⁶. Another important feature of Factory Saemaul are the "heart-to-heart" talks between top managers and employees working in production lines.

Seemingly (according to these various presentations) Factory Saemaul has acquired the quality of a 'miracle': it has allegedly solved the basic contradictions between capital and labour by turning factories into community halls and vocational schools to the benefit of the labour force. But this is not all, Factory Saemaul has much more to offer.

According to Park Jin-Hwan, the former Special Assistant to the President of the Republic of Korea for Economic Affairs: "It is the same kind of miracle as seen in the countryside. Large firms operate girls' high schools for their employees. These schools are so advanced that they are the models of the country. The night shift girls go to high school in the day (sic); the day shift girls attend at night"¹⁷. . . . The marriage prospects (of these girls) are improved by their high school diplomas". The ultimate aim of these free teaching facilities becomes very obvious as

Park continues: "The managers know that they can avoid labor problems from the girls while they are in school, but there are long range benefits as well. When these girls are married and have children, they will look with favour on the companies even when future labour troubles develop ... The revolution of Factory Saemaul is only beginning"¹⁸.

Further, there are the continuing saving campaigns promoted by Factory Saemaul by which the employees have to prove their close 'loyalty' to the owners of the enterprise. Between different branches of the same factory and among Saemaul Factories altogether, there is an ardent competition for saving the largest part of the wage. Pyun Ho-Sung, president of Samsung Electronics Co., explains that this is one of the major characteristics of Factory Saemaul: "The present savings of the employees amount to 430 million Won, a record high per capita savings in the nation, and one girl has saved 3,500,000 Won during her work at the factory for four years and six months ... The girl hurries to the bank branch in the factory to save more than 70 % of her salary upon receiving" (about 160 US-Dollars as monthly salary). The president explained that "the savings campaign was first started largely on a mandatory basis but employees came to realize the benefit of savings gradually and they responded to the campaign "very favourably" and "positively". In addition, Pyun Ho-Sung was decorated with a Presidential citation early in 1978 in recognition of outstanding developments of the Factory Saemaul Movement in his factory¹⁹. What the president 'forgot' to tell, however, was that many female workers who due to the rising prices of basic food-stuffs did not respond 'positively' to the saving campaign, were sacked from their work because they "did not help the company in times of need"²⁰.

Finally, another characteristic aspect of Factory Saemaul is the so-called "housecleaning drill" (Sojong soesin). It means nothing less than that the workers have to stay back after their daily work has finished and have to clean their workplace, the offices, machines and store-rooms of the factory. However, for this extra-labour they do not receive any payment because this is supposed to be a 'voluntary campaign' in order to show respect to the company and to improve the relationship between manual and clerical workers. Very important in this context is the spirit of 'mutual help' and 'good neighbourship' relations exercised by the employees.

Clearly, Factory Saemaul is also a political campaign which is designed to foster the ideology of "all-in-one-boat". Kim Cheung-Kun of Taihan Electric Wire Co. explains: "Another prominent byproduct of the movement is that employees feel love for their colleagues, company and their community and their fatherland"²¹. Thus, Factory Saemaul has become part of a broader nation-building campaign in order to secure the implementation of the Park regime's dictatorial policy and to assure a network of control down to the grassroots of society.

2. The "Other Reality" of Factory Saemaul

Seen from the majority of the South-Korean people's point of view, the Factory Saemaul campaign turns out to be a completely different thing altogether. Rather than being an instrument of modernization and national integration, it has acquired during the course of its implementation a number of oppressive and exploitative features. Factory Saemaul serves as a political strategy of community control, of forced saving from meagre wages and most important - as a system to extract additional labour from the people by means of 'voluntary cleaning' campaigns and unpaid overtime work.

Officially, Factory Saemaul was designed to permit 'peaceful' management-labour relations and to accelerate productivity. In reality, it has worsened industrial relations by introducing a number of oppressive measures. Thus the growth of industrial out-put was based on more intensive and extensive exploitation of the labour force. Especially the members of the "Urban Industrial Missions", an institution supported by the churches, are in the front line to criticize Factory Saemaul. They claim that the "Compulsory Saving Campaigns" mean an additional exploitation of the workers taking into account the high degree of inflation which has plagued South-Korea since many years. For instance, the prices for basic food rose during 1978 up to 70 % and hence, the workers lost the larger part of their savings which the companies had used for re-investment to keep the pace of export-growth steady. Furthermore, 'cleaning-campaigns' have meant nothing else but reducing the costs of production in the industrial sector without any material benefit for the workers. Attending night-schools after work had only helped to improve the quality of production but had little impact as an educational program for early school leavers and drop-outs.

Moreover, the disciplinarian campaigns combined with the "fatherly" attitude of the management have turned workers into serfs of the company and had worse effects than former feudal relations of production because 'loyalty' has become nowadays a one-sided affair and is absolutely partial. In the event of retrenchment, for instance, workers suddenly lose their old-age pensions and the traditional yearly bonus. As a result, factories have got used to 'fire' part of their employees at the end of the year in order to save the money which they would have to pay during the legal holidays. Later they may re-employ the same workers but to disadvantageous conditions, i. e. offering smaller wages to them than previously paid.

Thus, the main goal of Factory Saemaul was not achieved, but on the contrary, seen from the workers' point of view - capital-labour relations have constantly worsened owing to decreasing real wages in the lower income strata since 1973. For instance, working hours in South-Korea are on the average too long and (according to ILO figures) amounted to almost

60 hours per week during the year of 1977. Also, during the first half of 1978 when the Factory Saemaul campaign was in full swing, industrial accidents increased by 23,4 %, reaching 6,440 cases. Since 1970, the accident increase-rate went up by 9,8 % per year. In 1978, one person per 2000 workers died as a result of accidents at work²². In addition, 37 % of all industries which employ more than 16 persons have broken the Labour Standards Law. A total of 78,9 % of the violations are related to the question of wages²³.

Moreover, the right of labour to organize has been systematically and gradually restricted due to the complicated procedure of registration with the government. For instance, if the government does not issue the registration certificate - a case which happens often - the union is considered to be illegal²⁴. A case in point was the attempt of the female textile workers of Dong-Il Textile Co. to form their own union in February 1978. A gang of hired thugs who were dispatched by the state-controlled union's head-office, invaded their meeting and put human excrements into their faces and mouth to silence their voices. They were brutally beaten, 70 females were injured, and the ballot boxes prepared for that day's elections were destroyed by the thugs²⁵.

The suppression of the Korean Urban Industrial Missions (UIM) is widespread. Rev. Cho Hwa-Soon, the Incheon UIM minister is now in prison. The UIM-offices were raided due to the organizations alleged involvement in the "Dong-Il-incident". Workers who are in contact with UIM are systematically intimidated through their companies. Urban mission groups suffer from similar persecutions and Rev. Park Hyung-Ku, the chairman of the Committee for urban poor people is in prison, too. Its general secretary is in hiding²⁶.

Seen on the background of these events, it can be said safely that "Factory Saemaul" as well as "Village Saemaul" are part and parcel of a 'social technology' which has been designed in order to smoke-screen the social costs of one-sided and export-oriented growth policies, i. e. a development strategy which is relatively 'insulated' from the people and has contributed a great deal to worsen the living conditions of rural and urban poor in South-Korea over the last years. Moreover, data collected by independent organizations in South-Korea have meanwhile offered sufficient evidence to support the conclusion that this kind of mobilization campaigns have rather intensified socio-economic deformations and disparities instead of bringing relief to the urban and rural poor as it had been declared by the government agencies.

Thus, we have additional proof that export- and growth-oriented economies like South-Korea's are caught in a vicious circle resembling the buddhist wheel of karma: in order to accelerate growth more foreign capital is

needed which results in growing foreign debts. The repayment of debts is only feasible on the base of more exports which, in fact, means increasing exploitation of local labour and simultaneously the deterioration of the national economy. But in order to 'bridge' this rising gap again more foreign investments and loans are needed, etc. A member of the Korean Ministry of Economics told us frankly: "We are sitting on a kind of bicycle and if we do not pedal faster and faster, the whole thing will fall!"

In South-Korea, we have heard always two versions of the same matter but in fact there is only one social reality and that one is very bitter for the majority of the people to bear. Factory Saemaul is an integral part of it.

IV. THE NATURE CLEANING CAMPAIGNS

According to The Korean Herald of October 15, 1978, President Park Chung-Hee himself took part in various voluntary campaigns' to clean the mountains': "With his sleeves rolled up, the President picked up waste materials from between rocks and at the bottom of streams and put them into bags. He picked up wastes and broken bricks which were scattered around the sites where illegal establishments were built but removed. Cautioning the students (which accompanied him) that they should be careful with their hands, the President advised them to clean their places thoroughly and not to miss even a small amount . . ."27.

That this campaigns meant more than just a pre-electoral popularity test of the President, was illustrated by the President's words, that "the drive should be thoroughly carried out, apart from a mere formality (we have to) purify and clean our hearts and minds"²⁸. Moreover, the nation-wide drive to clean mountain resorts became also a test for the implementation ability of local party cadres. Thus, President Park remarked that the campaign "has been well executed as a whole but some activities have been conducted perfunctorily and insincerely". He said that the drive has been pushed ahead by governmental and private organizations, but its outcome has not been outstanding²⁹. He continued: "When such problems are solved (like the 'purification' of resorts and sightseeing areas and mountain paths) we can tackle, in earnest, such big issues as pollution and contamination of nature".

Generally, there is little to object to the preservation of nature and the cleaning of mountain resorts. However, these campaigns stand in a very obvious contrast to the uncontrolled pollution which factories and chemical plants spread all over South-Korea. Whereas a lot of public funds are

spent to clean remote touristic spots, people in Seoul work and live in absolutely miserable conditions. At Seoul's "Peace Market", the center of the local textile production, women work in unventilated "sweat shops" and in the garment factories of the "Free Trade Zones" there is hardly any air to breath, Around the capital city an "ugly belt" of dilapidated slums can be seen where people lack water and electricity and live in very cramped conditions despite of extreme summer and winter seasons³⁰.

The reason for these seemingly contradicting attitudes of the government is that with the Preserve-The-Nature-Campaigns the country is taking preparations to improve its image as a target for international tourism which is supposed to become an important foreign currency earner in the near future. Also, the general ideological strategy is to smoke-screen major contradictions (like the situation in the sphere of industrial and rural production) by stressing minor nuisances and social behaviour issues (like throwing empty beer bottles away, waste paper or cigarette butts)³¹. Finally, the aim of alike campaigns is to foster close and 'family-like' cooperation between the government (represented by its "Chief Executive") and the common people and thus to create the impression that everybody works for a final goal: a clean and beautiful fatherland!

Later, President Park Chung-Hee pointed out that the nature protection 'drive' had so far been pursued in the absence of planning, but only concentrated on mobilization of large numbers of people. He urged local governments to adjust zones for the drive and teach citizens how to carry it out ... Once the people participate in the campaign, they should be prepared to clean the environment with a sincere attitude. When the drive is pursued in this way, it will serve as a spiritual training of the people and bear fruits in the education of students³². Thus, it becomes evident that the government had more than just "preserving nature" in mind: the ultimate goal of this 'drive' is teaching 'loyalty' towards the political system and discipline to the citizens by urging them to participate 'sincerely'.

V. THE "REMOVE-ILLEGAL-RELIGIOUS-SITES" CAMPAIGN

Within the scope of nature-preservation campaigns, the 'drive' to remove illegal hermit cells etc. is of special interest owing to its particular political function. According to the South-Korean government there are "approximately 4,800 illegal structures built by pseudoreligious groups on scenic mountains"³³.

On October 5, 1978, the President instructed provincial governors and city mayors to remove all "hermits" cells and other facilities of analogous religious organizations illegally built on noted mountains throughout the country, pointing out that these facilities were detrimental to nature protection³⁴. Furthermore, he said: "Governors and mayors should first grasp correctly the actual picture of such facilities which are used for exorcism and remove them within this year in advance of the original removal project by April next year. If removal work takes times, it must be fulfilled completely by the end of next March at the latest!" And he added: "I myself will check the removal of the illegal establishments next April!"³⁵

The diligence and speediness with which this campaign was conducted by the President himself has surprised Koreans and foreigners alike. Subject to the 'crackdown' were about 2,000 'illegal' hermitages and buddhist prayer houses as well as a great number of hermit caves, buddhist altars, statues of holy monks and religious symbols painted on conspicuous rocks and mountains. In fact, scenic places like the famous grotto of Sokkuram which is situated near the Pulgoksa temple in the province of Kyongju are the main tourist attractions of the country and it is hard to conceive any other similar places to which local people undertake yearly pilgrimages should suddenly be 'detrimental to nature'. Also, it is the hermits' declared aim of life "to become one with nature" and therefore it is hard to conceive why suddenly these places should be 'purified' by governmental decree after having existed most peacefully for many a century³⁶.

However, the Park-government claimed (according to its Minister of Home Affairs, Kim Chi-Yol), that "such buildings in remote areas on mountains and in valleys had often been used as hideouts by criminals and only spread superstitious faiths among some people"³⁷. And here seems to lie the essential motivation for the campaign: The government is afraid that these places can also be used as rallying points for semi-religious opposition groups in remote areas which are very difficult to control. Moreover, according to a new regulation which came in accordance with the campaign "massive gatherings in the mountain areas are banned by law"³⁸.

Interestingly, it is a historical fact that the first revolutionary movement in Korea, the Tonghak Peasant Rebellion (1894-95) gathered its members for quasi-religious meetings in these mountain areas where they were able to organize and muster their supporters. Moreover the Tonghak Peasant Movement erupted in protest against severe feudal exploitation and against the penetration of Japanese imperialism into Korea. Thus the Tonghak-Movement was anti-feudal and anti-foreign trying to preserve Korean tradition and the peasants' subsistence economy. Though the movement failed to liberate the whole country because of direct Japanese military

intervention, it had (and still has) a significant influence on subsequent people's movements which still follow the Tonghak-Thought but have been persecuted as 'social bandits' by later governments.

Also, it should be noted that in the actual political situation churches and religious circles are the only organized opposition groups to the ruling Park-régime and his followers, and hence, are singled out as a major enemy of state. Secret places which are beyond permanent government control constitute - according to the government - potential foci for organisations of "oppositional elements" and consequently, have to be "weeded out" the sooner the better. The final aim of these campaigns is to extend political control to the remotest corner of the country and to extinguish the traditional roots of any potential "counter culture".

VI. CONCLUSIONS

It seems that in developing countries the occurrence of government-controlled mass campaigns and the process of rapid industrialisation are closely linked together³⁹. A number of reasons can be put forward to explain this phenomenon which, however, differ according to the specific nature of the campaigns. But while there may be various conspicuously dominating features like cleanliness, social discipline, improvement of cooperative spirit, nature-preservation or good neighbourliness etc., the determining factor behind these campaigns seems to be the extension of political control down to the factory- and rice-root level. Secondly, the most significant 'byproduct' of such campaigns is the extraction of extra and unpaid labour from the people in the course of various work- and voluntary labour campaigns. Thirdly, the ideological value of these campaigns, whatever their specific goal may be, is to 'bridge the gap' between the government and the people by organizing a number of 'useful' communal activities demanding participation (or at least compliance). Thus "anti-social elements" can be distinguished, and if necessary, also be eliminated by repressive measures. Finally, all these campaigns have also a definite function in regard to foreign investors and in connection with the 'image' the government wants to project to outsiders ('window-dressing').

For instance, a government which holds its people under firm control, which is able to organize nation-wide 'cleaning campaigns' and which proves its activities and capability of policy-implementation permanently by 'campaigning' is obviously a good bet to be entrusted with foreign investments too. Also, general campaigns have the important function to 'keep the people busy' and channel political discussions on certain 'vital issues'

into less harmful arenas which the policy-makers have chosen in advance. Another important aspect of government-controlled campaigns is that they are often geared to show soonest some conspicuous results which everybody can see. Thus, cleaning of a mountain path or planting flowers next to the post-office became integral symbols of 'nation-building' and government-sponsored 'modernization'.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the real problems of society are not tackled by this kind of campaigns. On the contrary, perhaps it is the main purpose of such mass-campaigns not to cope with the basic problems of the masses and to divert activities and thoughts into a direction which the government has chosen as 'safe' and politically uncontroversial - like e.g. the monthly exercises of fake air-raids in Seoul or the "black-out-the-light" training which are both based on manipulated fear of possible communist attacks from North-Korea, a spirit kept up by a never-ending array of government propaganda.

An interesting question may be whether these regimes do require such kind of campaigns in order to survive politically and economically. This question, of course, is hard to answer. An educated guess is that for the time being they would still 'work' without permanent campaigning but not very well, and that the general costs of repression would probably be much higher. However, this kind of campaigns seems to be indispensable due to the necessity of constant reproduction of the dominating ideology. In that sense, mass-campaigns at the order of the government are functional 'transmission belts' whose main task is to keep the people in line and in addition they are designed to provide an early-warning-system in order to detect any anti-governmental tendencies or growing political unrest. So-called 'trouble-makers' can thus easily be spotted and then publicly attacked and 'exorcised', since allegedly they do not fit into a 'disciplined society of loyal patriots'.

Unfortunately, we have no available empirical data or any reliable research about the deeper effects of these campaigns on the 'political culture' of the Korean people⁴⁰. Therefore, it could well be that foreigners like me overestimate (or underestimate?) the final results of such campaigns, especially if they are immaterial and could be measured only according to the perceptions of the people. As far as the rising debts of 'saemaulized' smaller peasants are concerned, some data are available even from official sources, but it is hard to find out how many people e.g. resent or rejoice cleaning the mountain resorts.

Also, we do not know - or at least have no qualitative data - whether under the rumbling surface of "mutual help" campaigns people have already formed new allegiances and a closer solidarity which might one day erupt into a nation-wide movement against the government⁴¹. In that case, the

various teaching- and training campaigns may become fertile breeding grounds for a cross-country opposition and a cover for anti-government activities of those who normally would not find any channels of dissent.

Notes:

- +) The author has been in South-Korea for research purposes in 1973 and 1978. This paper is part of a larger project on development patterns in South-Korea and its main purpose is to present some material about government campaigns which is relatively unknown outside the country.
- 1) This message was found in the letter-box of a German family in Seoul. For documentary purposes the original English version is not corrected.
- 2) See Hans U. Luther: Saemaul Undong. The 'Modernization' of Rural Poverty in South-Korea, Internationales Asienforum, Vol.10 (1979), No. 3/4, p. 329-358.
- 3) For regional comparison see my works on campaigns in Singapore: Grass Root Control and Compliance Patterns in Singapore (ed. Bruce McFarlane: A Political Economy of South-East Asia in the 1980's, Adelaide, Australia, 1979, pp.1-19), and "Zum Beispiel Singapur - Bürgerinitiativen als Ordnungsgagenten", Kursbuch, No. 50, Berlin, December 1977, pp.167-177.
- 4) For the paradigm of "new societies" see Hans U. Luther: Economy, Class and State in Singapore, Institut für Internationale Angelegenheiten, Hamburg, Metzner-Verlag, Frankfurt/M., 1980.
- 5) Dong A Daily (South-Korean newspapers), August 26, 1978.
- 6) Dong A Daily, October 21, 1976, (1 US-Dollar = 480 Won, 1 DM = 260 Won.
- 7) This paper was written before the death of the South-Korean president Park Chung-Hee on October 26, 1979. Now, three months later, it is still too early to come to a conclusion about the impact of the recent political events in South-Korea on the various government campaigns like Saemaul Undong, Factory Saemaul, etc.
- 8) The Korean Herald (English language daily, Seoul), September 1, 1978, p.1.
- 9) The Korean Times (English language daily, Seoul), September 22, 1978.

- 10) Park Jin-Hwan, *Saemaul Movement in Korea*, Seoul 1978, p.25.
- 11) For a comparison with Singapore see Hans U. Luther: *Grass Root Control . . .*, op.cit., p. 6.
- 12) *The Korean Herald*: "Samyoung Head Father of Staff", October 14, 1978.
- 13) *Ibid.*
- 14) *The Korean Herald*: "We are One Firm's Slogan", October 6, 1978.
- 15) *The Korean Herald*: "Saemaul Key Factory Tool", September 29, 1978.
- 16) *Ibid.*: "Sense of Oneness Hikes Productivity".
- 17) Park Jin-Hwan, op. cit. One only wonders when these girls will find time to sleep at all.
- 18) *Ibid.* and p.25.
- 19) *The Korean Herald*, October 14, 1978.
- 20) The author's interview with female workers.
- 21) *The Korean Herald*, October 6, 1978.
- 22) *Dong A Daily*, January 8, 1979.
- 23) *Dong A Daily*, August 17, 1978.
- 24) Cf. Hans U. Luther: *Strikes and Institutionalization of Labour Protest: The Case of Singapore*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 8, No.2, 1978, pp.219-230.
- 25) See also: *Human Rights in the Republic of Korea, 1979/1*, Commission of Churches on International Affairs, Geneva, p.14.
- 26) *Ibid.*, p.23.
- 27) It has often been said that Kim Il-Sung, the president of North-Korea, favours a kind of 'personal cult'. However, Park Chung-Hee was not very far from this point either, and reports on his various 'public activities' come close to old-fashioned hagiography.
- 28) *The Korean Herald*, September 24, 1978.
- 29) *The Korean Herald*, October 14, 1978.
- 30) See for instance Kim Chang Soo: *Marginalisation, Development and the Korean Workers' Movement*, AMPO (Pacific-Asia Research Center), Vol. 9, No.3, 1977, pp.20.

- 31) Cf. Hans U. Luther: *Zum Beispiel Singapur ...*, op. cit., p. 175.
- 32) *The Korean Times*, October 14, 1978 (my emphasis).
- 33) *The Korean Times*, October 3, 1978.
- 34) *The Korean Times*, October 14, 1978.
- 35) *The Korean Herald*, October 17, 1978.
- 36) This is my own observation. I stayed with a hermit in the mountains near Mount Naejang for about a week and could not witness any pollution caused by this religious man. On the contrary, the hermit lived only on herbs, walnuts and pure mountain water.
- 37) *The Korean Times*, October 3, 1978.
- 38) *The Korean Times*, October 14, 1978. This stipulation coincides with a martial law decree ordering that not more than four people are allowed to gather in public. Even wedding parties and funerals had to be duly registered with the local police authorities.
- 39) This is at least the picture we find in a number of Asian countries while in Latin-America a similar phenomenon called 'populismo' seems to play an important role and often replaces government-controlled mass-campaigns. The main difference is that government campaigns are mostly responded with compliance (passively), while 'populismo' requires a charismatic leader and is based on more active support.
- 40) An interesting indicator may be that during the days of Park Chung-Hee's funeral, the previously omni-present green Saemaul flags had disappeared from the streets. Thus it will be interesting to follow whether the governments after Park Chung-Hee will continue to use Saemaul campaigns as a ready tool for political control and urban-rural 'modernisation' or if they will have to design a new instrument of mass-mobilisation in order to achieve their future goals.
- 41) The incidents at Pusan and other cities, shortly before president Park was killed, provide some indications in this direction. See: *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 2, 1979, p. 24.