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URBANIZATION OF SEOUL:

REPORT ON TRIP TO SOUTH KOREA
FOR THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

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Introduction

I arrived in Seoul, South Korea, June 2 and left June 19, a total of 18 days; only 12 of these could be termed actual working days (i.e. not weekends or days of arrival and departure).

In that rather brief time I had meetings with some 39 Korean and American or European specialists and officials (an average of about 3.3 working days), located and investigated the operation and interests of half a dozen research centers or institutes, visited the satellite city of Kwang Ju, roamed through a squatter settlement in Seoul, spent one day at the provincial city of Taegu, briefed senior officials of AID concerning my findings, and was myself briefed by the planning staff of the City of Seoul. I typed out myself about 50 pages of single-spaced notes and returned home with a small library of books, reports, monographs, and pamphlets, in addition to a well-used English-Korean dictionary and phrase book.

Throughout the trip I made a determined effort to meet and mix with Koreans at various social levels; to explore on foot different sections of Seoul, Kwang Ju, and Taegu; to learn as much as possible about urban living patterns and of Korean cultural patterns generally;

and to eat Korean food whenever possible where Koreans themselves were eating. Thus, what I was told about Korea and Seoul by others I could match with my own subjective impressions and personal experiences. Never before have I learned so much from so many in such a short space of time.

Although the visit was brief, my contacts and experiences were wide-ranging. I never quite lost the sense of "cultural shock" which is an essential requirement for knowledge acquisition in a new environment. But inasmuch as my sources were varied, and data were acquired on the run, some details of this report may be inaccurate. However, I believe the general conclusions are sound. I trust it will be useful for the Smithsonian Institution and for the Government of South Korea eventually. It is my understanding that this report in its present form will not be released to anyone other than Dr. Wallen and other involved officials at the Smithsonian Institution.

This report will not be complete without a personal note about the unusual difficulties encountered. My assignment, as outlined by Dr. Wallen, was to look at the City of Seoul's plans to build satellite cities as a means of relieving population pressure on the capital itself. I was not to evaluate those plans but only to consider them from a sociological perspective, and hopefully, come up with questions, insights, suggestions stemming from my own special qualifications as both a sociologist and student of Asian urbanization. So, I had to find out (1) what those plans actually were, (2) how the

plans had been implemented in the first satellite city known as Kwang Ju, (3) how much study sociologists and research institutes in the Seoul area had done already, and what their own conclusions were.

The scholars and research centers presented no problem. But the assignment turned out to be a "Mission Impossible," thanks to the initially cool official climate in Seoul. Remember that I came to Korea as a kind of representative of the Smithsonian--and as a sociologist. Both connections were anathema, something I learned almost at once in my first and unusually tense meeting with the Vice Mayor of Seoul. It took me a full week to put all the pieces of the puzzle together and find an explanation for the hostile environment:

First, my connection with the Smithsonian. Previously visitors from the Smithsonian who had been taken to see the Kwang Ju project had described it publicly as an outright "horror." There had been already, I discovered, some scorching criticisms of the Kwang Ju scheme. Officials were jumpy, inclined to overreact to even an informal criticism of a project they were responsible for. This frank but inadvertently colorful criticism about Kwang Ju helped put the Smithsonian on some kind of subversive list so far as these officials were concerned. As the very next representative from the Smithsonian coming with the stated intention of taking a long, hard look at Kwang Ju, naturally my reception was less than warm.

Secondly, my status as a sociologist. It happened that the UN

Advisory Group in Seoul had brought in a French sociologist earlier in the year, before the elections, to make a study of rural-urban migration. He had paid particular attention to the original squatter settlers in the Kwang Ju project when that place was little more than a squalid mud hole. Their outrage and misery he described with professional exactitude. His report was submitted to the UN Group in Seoul, duplicated, and then distributed as a preliminary report to interested persons and to the President's office. When the latter saw the report and realized its explosive political potential on the eve of national elections, that office slapped a "top secret" label on the report and asked the UN urgently to recall all copies already handed out. No one will even discuss the report now, so sensitive has it become. As the very next sociologist from abroad coming with the stated intention to study Kwang Ju, naturally the reception was less than warm.

Moreover, I learned eventually (actually on my very last working day) that the present Mayor of Seoul was brought into office in part to clean up the mess of Kwang Ju. He moved with dispatch and ingenuity, and within a matter of six months had turned the situation around. Both he and his Vice Mayor take pride in their accomplishments (as I believe they should). But once able to finally see a light at the end of the famous tunnel, the Mayor and his assistant were not about to welcome with open arms a potential subversive who might suddenly raise a storm all over again.

It should be noted that the Mayor and indeed all local government

officials in South Korea are appointed by the President. They answer to him. Their jobs are demanding, in large part perhaps because the President is demanding of his officials. They want to do well, naturally, but they also seek to avoid unflattering publicity reflecting on their own abilities and the image of their nation. At times they feel the heat and learn next time to be more careful. People in Seoul remember with unusual vividness a statement made by a recent American visitor of some stature that Seoul was the most polluted city in the world. That unflattering statement was printed first in an influential American newspaper and then reprinted in the international edition of Time magazine for all the world to read. Koreans are inordinately sensitive to the public appearance and reputation of their country. Any criticism publicly broadcast is resented, whether about the air of Seoul or the quality of squatter life in Kwang Ju.

The fact that I completed the assignment and even wrote this report should be proof that the finest tradition of a "Mission Impossible" has been satisfied. Actually, I left the Mayor of Seoul smiling, and the handshake from the Vice Mayor on leaving was noticeably more friendly than when I first met him one day after my arrival in Seoul.

PART I: Urbanization and Planning

A. THE PROBLEM.

The central environmental problem of South Korea concerns population, more specifically its growth and distribution. The 1970 census showed a total population of 31.5 million, an increase of 2.3 million since 1966 and an average annual growth rate of approximately 2 percent. If this rate is maintained, then South Korea's population will double in 35 years, a grim prospect for a developing nation already having the world's third highest population density. An active and successful family planning program may effect a further decline in the still-high birth rate (32 in 1966) but in any event the respite will be temporary. In 7 years South Korea will face another demographic crisis when the proportion of women aged 19-24 will begin a sharp increase, precipitating possibly another surge in the birth rate. (Major Policies and Programmes of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 1971; Korea/Taiwan 1970: Report on National Family Planning Programs).

As the postwar population grew, its base has shifted from villages to cities at an accelerating pace. In 1960 fully two thirds of South Korea's population lived in rural areas but only 10 years later half the population was deemed to be urban.

More than any other city, Seoul has felt the full impact of this rural-urban migration, virtually doubling its population every decade since 1950, as the following tabulation indicates:

1949	1,418,000
1960	2,445,000
1963	3,254,000
1965	3,470,000
1970	5,509,000

(Source: Outline of Seoul City Plan, Bureau of City Planning, Seoul Metropolitan Government.)

Seoul now (1971) is one of the world's largest cities with a population of 6 million. It already contains by itself 50 percent of the total urban population and fully 13 percent of the nation's population. The capital is growing at a rate of 10 percent yearly, five times higher than the rate at which the nation's population itself is growing. If this present growth rate prevails, then by 1980 Seoul can expect a population of 12 million. Thus population planning in South Korea must be concerned with not simply slowing the nation's overall population growth rate but even more urgently braking the pace of urbanization so far as Seoul is concerned and dispersing the capital's population.

B. THE PLAN.

As the figures above show, Seoul has added almost 3 million persons to its population since 1963, yet the area of the city has remained unchanged (613.04 sq km.). The consequence has been intensified crowding--as one observer noted, Seoul is now wall to wall with people. When existing housing proved insufficient, shanty town squatter settlements erupted in and around the city. Although Seoul was faced with a host of urban problems as a result of this unprecedented growth, by all accounts that I heard it was the proliferation of these highly visible and embarrassing ugly settlements not far from the center of the capital that drove the government in the later 1960's to devise a crash program of urban planning for Seoul.

The Seoul City Plan described to me by the planning staff of the Seoul City Government is a comprehensive planning guide spanning a ten-year period, 1970-80, and is concerned with land utilization, population distribution, urban renewal and development, road and subway construction, housing, water supply, sewage and sanitation, air and water pollution control, tourism, health, medical, and social welfare services.

The Plan contains these main features that concern population and urbanization:

1. The anticipated slowing of Seoul's expansion so that by 1981 the capital will have a population of 7,500,000, only 2 million more than the 1970 population and representing an annual average growth rate of only 2.6 percent. Moreover, as the figures below indicate, this total will change but very little in the decade 1981-91. Indeed, the capital's population is expected to decline slightly after 1986:

1976	6,700,000
1981	7,500,000
1986	7,650,000
1991	7,600,000

(Source: Outline of Seoul City Plan, Bureau of City Planning, Seoul Metropolitan Government; The Metropolis of Seoul in 1980, Seoul Metropolitan Government, 1971)

2. Redistribution of the population within the present area of Seoul, specifically, (a) reducing the population density of the downtown area by making this even more than now an almost exclusively Central Business District of high-rise buildings; (b) stimulating the development of intermediate self-sufficient subcenters, some 10 km. from the downtown zone, containing apartment houses, businesses, open-air markets, clean industries, and schools designed to relieve demands on the downtown area and thus

reduce the pressure on transportation facilities; and
(c) developing suburban residential communities of single-family houses about 15 km. from the city center. The net anticipated effect will be to put the bulk of Seoul's population from 10 to 15 km. from the city center, whereas now it is settled from 5 to 10 km. from the center.

3. Construction and settlement of a series of "satellite cities" approximately 25 km. from Seoul center, 5 to 10 in all and each to have an anticipated population by 1980 of about 350,000. These new cities, to be built from scratch in areas that are now entirely rural, are meant to bear the brunt of the anticipated urban population increase that otherwise will be directed at Seoul itself. The first of these satellite cities, Kwang Ju, is already being settled. It will be treated in detail below.

The Plan is impressive in its scope. Obviously, it goes well beyond the squatter problem and, as any really good plan should, treats the city as a unit, involving all social levels and neighborhoods. Yet in my opinion the Plan may be terribly flawed. It seems modeled on Western, mostly American, notions of "what the city of the future will be like," and I am afraid that the metropolis the planners have in mind, in terms now of land use,

street layout, high-rise architecture, will lack any distinctive Korean or even humanizing character (like the high-rise buildings themselves). Because of this I frankly find the visual representation of the future Seoul appallingly sterile (see the Metropolis of Seoul in 1980), and I suspect its citizens of the future will also. This subject I shall return to later.

C. EVALUATION.

South Korea's urbanization situation is almost identical to that being experienced in other developing nations of Asia and indeed of the world (see Breese, 1966 and 1969). Basically, in Seoul an industrial urban complex is being grafted onto a traditional, at times incompatible, preindustrial base (see Sjoberg, 1960). Moreover, Seoul can be termed the primate city of South Korea, and like such cities elsewhere in Asia (see Ginsberg, 1955) exerts a pull on rural migrants far out of proportion to its present ability to absorb population. Just as any ambitious Thai wants to go to Bangkok, so Koreans flow into Seoul because it is the center of everything. One Korean friend quoted to me a Korean saying, "If you have a son, send him to Seoul, and if you have a horse, send it to Cheju Island" (each to the place where he will prosper). At the present time about 70 percent of all university students are in Seoul, and these schools are the best. One's life chances in South Korea depend heavily on schooling, and, as in Japan (see Vogel, 1968) the

particular school one attends will pretty much determine one's career subsequently. For the well-born, therefore, as for the ambitious or simply the footloose and economically marginal peasant or laborer, there is no place in South Korea like Seoul. Consequently, population and urbanization processes and problems all converge in Seoul.

In its basic problem: of uncontrolled urban growth of the primate city South Korea is like many other nations of Asia (notably Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Pakistan), but it seems to me that this nation is uniquely favored in having: (1) an ethnically homogenous population, so that Korean cities like Seoul do not become segmented and fractured by culturally dissimilar communities (the Americans concentrated now at South Post are the only distinct minority and they exceed even the Chinese of Southeast Asia in their determined exclusiveness, but so far this situation is not defined by the South Koreans as a problem); (2) a long-range plan unusually comprehensive in scope to deal with this problem; (3) the intention, already manifested in the very imaginative construction of Kwang Ju as a satellite city, to implement this plan; and (4) town planning and social science talent in the government and at its universities of a very high order. I found young Korean scholars and administrators truly impressive in terms of their training (usually advanced degrees were from the best American schools and departments) and their empirical research

competence and activities--all in all, they struck me as probably among the best in Asia, if not the very best. But--and this is the danger that I see--they are almost to a man strongly Western-oriented and modernist in outlook and given the chance would probably produce an American-style city. I believe there are more desirable alternatives.

PART II: The Satellite City as Planned Community

A. KOREAN CONCEPTIONS OF TOWN PLANNING.

There is no universally accepted definition of "town planning," and the Korean conception, which differs markedly from the American, must be understood in order to appreciate the development of the satellite cities around Seoul.

To begin with, the model for planning procedures seems to be Japan rather than the United States. Simply put, Koreans plan their towns differently from the way we do. As exemplified by procedures being followed in Kwang Ju, the first satellite city now under construction, town planning means engineering: an almost exclusive concern with a few basic technical and physical needs of the new community, such as roads, water supply, and sewage disposal. It does not seem concerned, at least at this stage of planning in Korea, with aesthetic and social considerations. Thus, with regard to Kwang Ju, once the land had been acquired and surveyed and a basic land use plan devised, the government paved only the main entry road,

brought in water, and made minimum provisions for sewage disposal. With this done the area was opened to settlement. After the first wave of settlers had begun to build permanent houses, but only then, the government paved other roads, laid out some sidewalks, and made final improvements in the sewage system. In other words, the government as planner sketched in the rough outlines of the community and the settlers filled in the details.

This is probably a cheap and efficient way to proceed. The settlers do much of the work and on the other hand construction jobs are generated as the community becomes settled. But the new community remains in a rough stage of building for some time, and during this year or two has a decidedly raw look: dusty dirt roads, temporary construction (some families living in tents) open drainage ditches, and the like. As the Mayor of Seoul jokingly said, "Kwang Ju looks like Texas" -- or the movie version of the American frontier cowtown.

While such a community is "planned," it is by no stretch of the imagination a "model" community in the sense that Reston or Columbia are. Because this fact has not been understood some Korean and American visitors to Kwang Ju have been openly critical of the government's efforts, but I think they have expected more out of town planning than the government ever intended.

Finally, because for the most part people build their own houses on plots of land no larger than normally available in existing cities, the new planned community is architecturally and

otherwise pretty much a copy of existing Korean cities like Seoul or Taegu. Like Seoul, for example, Kwang Ju has some narrow lanes (a few too narrow for fire equipment, just like some lanes in Seoul), high density of population (congested to the American eye), few playgrounds or green areas, an absence of sidewalks, and so on. This also comes as a shock for visitors who have been led to expect a "model" city along Western lines. But even they will admit that a community like Kwang Ju is better planned than the older cities; for one thing, noxious industries are isolated from residential areas.

I believe that the town planning procedures outlined above and their end product in a community like Kwang Ju are defensible. As noted above, putting some responsibility on the settlers involves them in a developing community which in turn probably produces among them a sense of community and neighborhood cohesion. A community built gradually in this way generates construction jobs for settlers; for the first few years, therefore, there is no absolute dependence for work on the new industries being located in Kwang Ju. I was told that the construction jobs now available in Kwang Ju were stimulating settlement by new families to a far greater extent than the factories being built there.

But most important of all the advantages of the town planning procedures exemplified in Kwang Ju is the fact that they result in a Korean community, built by and for rank-and-file Koreans in a

style they appreciate and desire. For them, by every indication, it is a good place in which to live because it conforms to their ideas of what a community should be like. I would contrast Kwang Ju (somewhat unfairly perhaps) with a planned city like Chandigarh in India almost completely designed by the famous French architect and planner Corbusier. Chandigarh excited the architectural world, but it has proven to be a very uncomfortable place for Indians to live simply because its design is incompatible with Indian cultural and social patterns. This is not the case in Kwang Ju.

B. KWANG JU.

The foregoing comments might imply that Kwang Ju has been entirely a success. Actually, it can be described as both a failure and a success. But before evaluating the project it would be useful to summarize its salient features and history.

Kwang Ju Estates (popularly known, however, as Kwang Ju but not to be confused with the old provincial city of the same name in the southern part of Korea) is located about 28 km. by road southeast of Seoul in a rural area of rolling hills, low mountains, and a few farm villages. The road to Kwang Ju from Seoul leads across the Han River by a narrow older bridge (said to be the only one left standing during the Korean War) and then through a very congested commercial and industrial subcenter of Seoul. Once beyond this the road becomes two-laned and suddenly bordered on each

side by rice paddies. When I made the trip in early June farmers with oxen were plowing flooded fields. Now and then the road led past a cluster of grass-roofed farm houses. Even by private car it is not an easy drive. The road is narrow, often rough, and heavily used by busses and large trucks. It took us by car about 1 hour from Seoul, but by bus I was told it takes about 2 hours.

The total area covers 11,550,000 square meters. Of this total, 9,900,000 (85.7 percent) is to be developed and the rest left as natural green area. The land was bought by the government and the first settlers moved out there in 1969. By the end of 1972 the community will be completed so far as planned government construction is concerned. There are now said to be upwards of 100,000 persons permanently settled in Kwang Ju but the area is so extensive that one does not have the impression of a crowded place. When development is completed at the end of 1973 Kwang Ju is expected to have a population of 350,000 persons.

Kwang Ju is generally flat, or at best gently sloping, but there are some high points that give a view of the entire community. Mountains of no great height are all around and their green, brush-covered slopes contrast with the brown, barren appearance of the project. The entire Kwang Ju area destined for development has been bulldozed clean of all vegetation; the only exception is a rural village of some half a dozen grass-roofed

houses, still occupied by villagers, left standing amid hedges and trees, but almost surrounded by the new brick city houses.

The community has distinct sections each in a different stage of development. Where streets are laid out they follow a grid pattern but there does not seem to be any unified street pattern nor evidently provision for road rings or beltways. When I saw Kwang Ju in June 1971 I noted particularly its low profile of single-family houses covering all available land in those sections already developed. In appearance and compactness these sections of Kwang Ju reminded me strongly of older residential areas of Seoul and Taegu. One sees church steeples but so far no buildings over 3 stories.

Development of Kwang Ju.

Although the project itself is officially dated from 1968, the actual developmental history of Kwang Ju covers only the last two years and might be separated into the following phases:

First phase: Kwang Ju was originally designed as the settlement location of thousands of squatter families whose presence in Seoul itself had by late 1968 or 1969 become an acute embarrassment to the President of a nation priding itself on the pace and modernity of its postwar development. Accordingly, inhabitants of entire shantytown settlements in the capital were trucked out to Kwang Ju, not so much pushed out as lured by the promise of low cost land on which to settle. In Kwang Ju each family was allotted 20 pyong of

land (720 sq. feet). This land was not a gift from the government but payments were to be spread over a 10-year period.

That seems to have been the extent of planning, and the consequence was a near catastrophe. Most settlers had little or no money for building their houses on the land they now had, and the government offered no subsidies for construction materials. There were as yet no industries in Kwang Ju and little work of any kind. Few provisions had been made for water or sewage services for the tens of thousands literally dumped into Kwang Ju. During the first winter (Seoul winters are severe) most families lived in tents or shacks and survived as best they could.

Eventually many families (estimates run to as high as 80 percent of the original settlers) sold their land to whomever would buy it and with the money moved back to squatter settlements in Seoul. (this time doubling up with friends or relatives and compounding the congestion in the squatter settlements still standing). Thus, as a means of solving the squatter problem in Seoul Kwang Ju must be rated as a decided failure, and to this extent it has not lived up to the rather unrealistic hopes of its sponsors.

Second phase: In April 1970 the present Mayor Yang of Seoul was appointed (succeeding Mayor Kim--popularly known as Bulldozer Kim--who was dismissed after some newly built municipal apartment houses collapsed with considerable loss of life). Mayor Yang

painted for me a grim picture of conditions in Kwang Ju at that time. The several thousand families still there were destitute and desperate. The congressman from that district pleaded for the central government to do something. When the Mayor visited Kwang Ju he was nearly mobbed by angry settlers and he took to making his visits under cover of darkness.

But improvements were made, some immediately and others part of a long-range plan at last developed. Water was supplied and roads improved. At the Mayor's insistence the government used manual labor rather than earth-moving machinery for physical improvements, thus creating jobs for settlers. Bus service to Seoul was greatly augmented (within a year the number of daily busses rose from 4 to 140). The Mayor declares that now when he visits Kwang Ju he does so during the daytime and hears no complaints. The community is booming and he takes obvious pride in having turned Kwang Ju around. Understandably, the Mayor is sensitive to criticisms of the community by outsiders.

The explanation for the apparent success of Kwang Ju lies not simply in physical improvements of the kind mentioned above. What seems to have happened is that once the government at Mayor Yang's insistence began to offer businesses and industries substantial tax incentives to locate in Kwang Ju, land speculators became active, buying up settlers' plots and also land along the main roads and in the market plazas allocated to business use in the government's master

plan. Presumably these speculators served to accelerate the out-migration of the original squatters also. The combination of land speculation and commercial development seems to have generated a boom in a very short time. Middle class families in Seoul (defined broadly as white collar, entrepreneurial, and professional. See Lee: Urban Life in Korea) now began to buy land in Kwang Ju and to build houses there. This stimulated further migration from Seoul. Quite suddenly Kwang Ju became a good place to live for shopkeepers, artisans, would-be entrepreneurs, and professional families. According to some reports, even the squatters are returning now, some commuting from squatter settlements in Seoul to daily construction jobs in Kwang Ju. Also, there is now (June 1971) a burgeoning squatter settlement of several hundred shanties at one end of Kwang Ju itself.

One might wonder why the government has permitted land speculation at Kwang Ju, but the reasons are not difficult to find. The City of Seoul government originally bought up all land there. It sold land plots to the early squatter settler and later to commercial interests, planning to receive payments over a ten-year period. But if such land is resold by the original purchaser, then the new owner must pay up at once the full amount due to the government. The ten-year payment provision does not apply to subsequent purchasers. Thus, when land is resold, the government can count on an immediate recovery of its initial investment. Moreover, inasmuch as all land values have appreciated, commercial land still held by the city has skyrocketed in value, and

this when sold by the government means a considerable profit on its original investment (said to be in the neighborhood of 1 billion won). For example, it was mentioned in talks with the Mayor that land bought by the City for 400 won per pyong only 2 years ago can now be sold by the City for from 40,000 to 200,000 won depending on its location.

Some critics of Kwang Ju dismiss the project as simply a money making scheme on the part of the City government, which is precisely what it is intended to be. But the money is made not at the expense of the original settlers, but mainly commercial interests seeking to locate in Kwang Ju. In this sense the small businessman (and to a certain extent the middle class settler) have paid for Kwang Ju. Moreover, the money generated from land sales in Kwang Ju, according to Mayor Yang, will constitute a revolving fund to be used to finance the next satellite city planned for development within a year.

Kwang Ju is still in the second phase of growth. Only about one-third of the total area seems as yet settled. Land is still being cleared and streets plotted in anticipation of continued growth. One sees families moving in daily, their household goods piled high in trucks. Elementary and high schools are built and operating. Some electronic industries housed in modern factories are already in production and scores of other industries are said to be about to build in Kwang Ju. A clinic has already been opened, and some small Korean style inns can accommodate travelers.

Final phase: The City expects to complete all planned construction in Kwang Ju by the end of fiscal year 1972. Specifically, this means that the present open drainage ditch will be converted into a mammoth sewer, with a four-lane entry road constructed over its top. Water and electricity will be supplied to all sections and all major roads within Kwang Ju will be paved. A new express highway will be opened within a matter of months, making it possible to get into downtown Seoul in only 30 minutes. Bus service with Seoul will be further augmented.

In addition to these physical improvements, Mayor Yang informed us that later this year (1971) some 2,000 squatter families (presumably about 10,000 persons in all) now living in the East Gate section of Seoul will be moved to Kwang Ju. The official statistics on annual resettlement of squatters to the Kwang Ju project is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>No. of Households</u>	3,500	11,500	20,000	15,000	5,650	55,650
<u>Persons</u>	20,000	55,000	100,000	75,000	28,000	278,000

I have no hard information as to whether these goals have been achieved insofar as squatter resettlement is concerned. Few if any qualified observers in Seoul, however, would believe that by the end of this year (1971) as many as 175,000 squatters will have been resettled in Kwang Ju; although by the end of this year the population

of the community might well reach and even exceed that figure. The bulk of the residents in Kwang Ju are likely not to be squatters from Seoul.

As noted, by the end of 1973 Kwang Ju anticipates a population of 3,500,000, but I would be surprised if it did not run up to 350,000 in a very short time.

C. EVALUATION.

When considering Kwang Ju as an example of Korean town planning, some simple facts should be kept in mind which by themselves provide a pragmatic test of this project and of Korean town planning. A reasonably complete city housing at least 350,000 persons will be built from scratch in just 4 years. I do not believe any modern nation can equal this astonishing accomplishment. Neither in Korean nor American terms is this to be a model city, but certain aspects of the plan might serve as a model for other developing nations.

First, it seems to me that the City of Seoul has, quite by accident, discovered what might well be a very feasible procedure for developing such satellite cities. This formula as described above involves:

- (1) government buys up land where the future city will be located and develops a basic town plan;
- (2) land plots for houses are sold at low cost to poor families and substantial tax incentives are offered commercial and industrial entrepreneurs to locate businesses there;
- (3) land speculation is encouraged and indeed poor settlers are enabled to sell out if they wish and use the money received as a cash stake for

a better life; (4) as permanent settlers and businesses arrive, the resulting construction boom generates jobs for lower income workers and additional entrepreneurial opportunities for small scale businessmen, which in turn stimulates increased migration from the nearby urban center; (5) the government profit realized from the sale of land at highly appreciated prices is used for subsequent communities, or for the improvement of existing ones.

This formula seems to have worked at Kwang Ju. It has a number of unknown aspects which might make it less than desirable even at Kwang Ju. Were there unwarranted profits made by the original land owner (said to be a corporation led by a former Army colonel) when the government first bought up the tract? Has land speculation gotten out of hand now in Kwang Ju, so that the cost of land/housing may be too high for even middle income settlers? I do not have the answers to such questions. All I can say is that families are moving in daily and the city is obviously booming.

Whether the formula described above will work again in South Korea remains to be seen, however. Another satellite city is now on the planning table, but it will be almost impossible to keep secret its location so as to avoid land speculation before the government buys the land. Unless this premature speculation is avoided, the government will lose the major economic advantage it had in Kwang Ju.

The Kwang Ju experience indicates that while rural and working class families willingly migrate to established cities, they do not

successfully migrate to new satellite cities. Thus the progression of permanent migrants to these new communities seems to be first, middle class families, then working class (including squatter) families. Kwang Ju has caught the middle class overflow from Seoul and in doing this has eased pressure to some extent on middle class housing in the capital, but it has been at best a doubtful success for squatter resettlement.

Kwang Ju demonstrates also that it is not so much new factory type industries that attract and hold migrants (possibly because these are only slowly constructed piecemeal) but the job and entrepreneurial opportunities generated by the community itself as thousands move in and as houses, schools, roads, sewers and the like are built. Thus the Koreans seem again to have hit on a workable formula for building these new communities: provide at the start only the minimum facilities and plan to have physical improvements made as the community grows, thus generating construction and other jobs that can keep pace with the tide of incoming migrants. At the moment Kwang Ju has little if any unemployment, yet only a very few industries are actually in operation there.

Finally Kwang Ju demonstrates the utility of having a minimum of planning and of zoning. The government need control only the basic outline of the new community, specifically, locate streets, water and sewage lines, market areas and industrial parks, but permit the settlers as they arrive to fill in the details in terms of actual

structures like houses, shops, offices, inns, churches, and the desired mix of all these. In Kwang Ju the result is a community that seems compatible with basic cultural and social norms of the residents, in short, a Korean city which seems to be the kind of city Koreans want to live in.

Despite these hopeful aspects of the plan, I am conscious of several soft points in the conception of Kwang Ju with possibly undesirable future consequences. I called attention to the most obvious ones in my final conversation with the Mayor and Vice Mayor on June 17, 1971. It seems apparent that completion of the express highway between Kwang Ju and Seoul, making possible a trip to the center of Seoul in only 30 minutes, will have two results. First, it will encourage daily commuting by wage earners so that increasingly Kwang Ju will become simply a dormitory appendage of Seoul. This in turn will place quite a burden on transportation to, from, and within the capital, something the present Seoul City Plan is designed specifically to avoid. Secondly, the population of Kwang Ju is likely to balloon well beyond the 350,000 estimate of planners, conceivably to as many as half a million persons in a short time. Lacking any feasible way to control such growth, logic should suggest that authorities plan for it now in terms of housing, water, sewage, etc. I am under the impression that facilities and services as currently planned will be adequate for only some 350,000 persons. I might briefly consider an assumption that appears to underlie the government's

Seoul City Plan. That is, once the Plan is developed the pace of urbanization will slacken considerably, or put differently, once a satellite city like Kwang Ju has reached its planned population, then it will stop expanding. Built into the population of all these cities is a very high population growth potential. Cities may not grow as fast from in-migration, but they will continue to grow by the natural increase of persons already living there (see Davis, "The Urbanization of the Human Population"). Thus, rather than attempting measures to stem the tide of growth, Asian governments like that of South Korea might well accept the fact of a coming urbanized society for the nation and plan for this condition. It may be unfair to assume this is not the case, but I cannot be sure.

Some non-technical aspects of town planning in general and of Kwang Ju in particular may be much more difficult to treat simply because they are less obvious and therefore less likely to be defined as problems at all. In this connection it seems to me that some basic non-technical assumptions require re-examination. Let me suggest some questions that might be raised.

One concerns the role and function of squatter settlements themselves in large cities like Seoul. Research conducted by Korean scholars at universities in Seoul indicates that these shantytowns act as a "conditioning" milieu for rural migrants so newcomers can become acculturated to the values, demands, and life style of the city. As a consequence migrants are enabled to participate more effectively in urban institutions and experience the

least amount of disorganization and disruption. These settlements, outwardly squalid, give migrants a low-cost place to live initially while seeking employment, a chance to learn an urban skill (not the least being how to survive in that alien environment), contact with helpful kin and villagers already in the city knowledgeable about job and other opportunities, the opportunity to become part of a cohesive, protective community, the chance to save money (thank to the very low cost of housing), and so on. In such shantytowns these migrants take the first step toward the steady improvement of their life chances. Some migrants progress from squatter settlements to better housing. Many squatter settlements if left alone become stabilized and improved by the residents and become what Korean researchers call "middle class" living areas. Something of the same thing is reported for a squatter settlement in Kuala Lumpur (see McGee: 160-165) and even for Communist China (see Snow: 515-516). Seoul's squatter settlements have not been centers of vice and social disorganization, although residents may earn a living at shady occupations elsewhere in the city (as bar girls, for instance). The squatter settlements seem well organized, albeit informally so; they are protective of social cohesion, not destructive of the traditional cement binding together the family and community. Seen from this perspective it does not make sense to raze these shantytowns indiscriminately and expose migrants to unbearable and highly disorganizing pressures of urban life. The Seoul City Government seems to have recognized this fact at times because a few squatter

settlements have gained official permission to exist (at least for a time) but not to expand. In these communities houses are numbered and even mail is delivered regularly. Given all this, I would argue that at this stage of urbanization, South Korean cities actually need squatter settlements, and the government could justifiably deliberately create them under controlled conditions that would reduce so far as possible their most undesirable features. At this stage of urbanization the city has nothing to take the place of the squatter settlement.

The corollary of this is that satellite cities such as Kwang Ju should be seen primarily as places for the resettlement of middle class urban families, not squatters. As noted, such families seem actually to have filled up Kwang Ju. I might note that a study of a newly planned community called "Petaling Jaya" just outside of Malaysia's capital of Kuala Lumpur came to the conclusion that this new town also seemed to attract middle and upper-level occupational groups rather than working class or squatter populations. (See McGee and McTaggart, page 22.) This being the case, planners need to know much more about the middle class family and its intracity migration patterns. How much unfilled middle class demand is there in Seoul for better housing? Who has moved into Kwang Ju, and for what reasons? How are moving decisions made in the middle class Korean family and what are the compelling incentives to move? Who has moved into the houses and apartments vacated by the present settlers of Kwang Ju?

Based on the experience of other Asian cities with squatter problems (Hong Kong notably), we might hypothesize a patterned progression of families from one type of housing to another. Rural migrants coming to Seoul live initially in squatter settlements. Once established (and it would be useful to know how long this takes) and with some savings, these families seek better housing in established neighborhoods. As satellite cities attract middle class residents from Seoul, housing is made available to upwardly mobile squatters. Thus if a rough numerical balance is found between incoming migrant families to Seoul and outgoing middle class families to the satellite city, then existing squatter settlements (assuming no government action to raze them) would remain stabilized in size and number. If so, the satellite city would have little actual effect on squatter settlements.

Such an hypothesis is thrown in here for two reasons: to emphasize that we need more data on intracity migration if planning is to achieve its stated goals; and to indicate that a very real question can be raised about the stated goal of Kwang Ju, that is, to eliminate any reason for squatter settlements in Seoul. Kwang Ju has had many very useful consequences so far as Seoul is concerned but in my opinion it has not in any significant way touched the squatter problem.

So far I have called attention to but two non-technical areas deserving systematic study: (1) aspects of life in Seoul itself that affect the success or failure of Kwang Ju, especially the function

of squatter settlements; and (2) the nature of intra-city migration (Kwang Ju is administratively part of Seoul and increasingly seems destined to be linked physically with the capital).

Two other aspects of Kwang Ju demand attention. One is the nature of "community" that is developing in the new satellite city: the formal and informal social groups that arise spontaneously and otherwise in response to the demands of urban life, such as voluntary associations of neighbors, merchants, workers, co-religionists; the mutual aid concepts and arrangements at different stages of growth; the informal social control institutions and mechanisms and their effectiveness--all this in comparison with patterns found in the old neighborhood of Seoul. Inasmuch as Kwang Ju has a decidedly frontier ambience, I would expect a reinterpretation at least of traditional grouping and social control patterns with consequences for community stability and cohesion and the incipient development of personal and social disorganization as evidenced by family dissolution, juvenile delinquency, and crime generally.

In connection with this the role of industries being established in Kwang Ju needs to be understood. For the most part these are so-called clean industries. But such industries are likely to employ women rather than men (those already operating seem to be doing this now). If so, then male wage earners must seek employment elsewhere, or may go unemployed, with obvious consequences for accepted role patterns within the family. Already there are reports of restless and unsupervised juveniles in Kwang Ju, petty crime, and the like

which, if true, could be the outward manifestation of basic changes in institutional life.

The second additional area deserving study concerns the effect of Kwang Ju on rural life. The Kwang Ju project took over land formerly occupied by one or two villages; these were (or are about to be) eliminated entirely. It seems destined to affect life in other villages nearby also. The sudden creation of a city of 350,000 persons is bound to be seriously disruptive of formerly isolated grass-roofed villages, but this aspect of the Kwang Ju project has not as yet caught the attention of planners. Among the more disturbing prospects is that by its very presence in the midst of a rural area Kwang Ju will serve to stimulate enormously rural-urban migration. Such migration lies at the core of South Korea's urbanization difficulties, but unfortunately at times government measures have inadvertently contributed to the problem. New roads such as the one about to be opened between Kwang Ju and Seoul do serve to funnel rural migrants into the city, whatever their other functions. And Kwang Ju, although it is designed to relieve population pressure on Seoul, may intensify the capital's urbanization problem by subtly encouraging rural migration. Already Kwang Ju itself has several thousand squatters, presumably recent migrants from nearby rural villages.

Here then are four conditions badly in need of systematic research. The results of such studies could be cranked into plans for Kwang Ju and other satellite cities. What are the prospects for such research? At the moment, not at all good. For one thing, only

the government has the resources and the authority to initiate and sustain the comprehensive research projects needed here. Individual scholars and research centers at the several Seoul universities have neither the time nor the money to do more than piecemeal studies. They are even more limited than their American counterparts. Occasionally the Seoul City Government has offered to sponsor research but not often and not consistently, and not at all if the research seems likely to be critical of any existing program. The government's role is crucial for the success of any project. In my short stay in South Korea I came across several instances of this. One professor studying rural villages in the Kwang Ju vicinity needed aerial photos. Only the government can authorize such mapping, and he was unable to secure that authorization. Another academic researcher in Kwang Ju found himself and his assistant being closely followed and in fact at times accompanied by CIA agents, a condition which seriously inhibited any Korean they tried to interview. As noted, a foreign sociologist who studied reactions of early settlers in Kwang Ju had his report when submitted suppressed by the government. On the other hand, when the government backs a research study, then official data are readily furnished and officials at all levels willingly cooperate.

But the government's attitude is only part of the problem. Another part is the pervasive sense of competition among the various scholars, departments, and research centers at the different universities. Professors within any university generally work well together, but

individual academicians complained to me about a lack of full cooperation from colleagues at their university, presumably because the value of competition outweighs cooperation at this stage. Cross-university research is virtually nonexistent (how much is there of this among American universities?). I found professors and directors of research centers eager to discuss their own projects (perhaps because they defined me as a source of funding) but lacking knowledge of, and apparently interest in, work being done by scholars at other Seoul universities. Research data tend to be treated the way business might treat trade secrets: something to be kept from competitors. Korean scholars communicate at international conferences, but less so within their own country. Consequently, there has been a plethora of social science "research institutions" established in the Seoul area. Every major university has one, each competing for funds from the government and outside foundations. I found in Seoul that USIA and AID had a more comprehensive grasp of research in Korea than did individual universities and research centers. This is so because these agencies have been a major source of funding for research. The Americans at these agencies seeking to encourage development have become centers of communication and information about what is happening at the different universities. Men like Mr. Dallas Hunter and Dr. Carl Bartz, although not academicians themselves, have served to coordinate scholarly talent and resources but inadvertently they seem also to have contributed to the proliferation of research centers.

Needed, therefore, if town planning is to realize its potential in South Korea is a resolution of this problem. Kwang Ju offers a marvelous real-life and on-going laboratory for research of all kinds, and the government might be encouraged to set up a central data collecting office there to be put in charge of one of the more promising existing university research institutes. It might be feasible to do this with each of the satellite cities as they are established, so that each of the major universities would be involved at a different site, thus utilizing the basic value of competition now so evident. I seriously doubt, however, that the South Korean government is ready for unfettered social science research at this time in its history.

PART IV: Concluding Thoughts: Land Use and City Planning

Despite my familiarity with Asian cities, in Korea I was once more forcibly impressed by the striking contrasts between American cities and those of Asia, especially, of course, Seoul itself.

Cities in both areas are expanding rapidly, but differently. American cities for the past two decades have been exploding into suburbs. Asian cities are experiencing an implosion of population. While the white American urbanite flees the central city for the suburbs, Asians in a rising tide migrate from rural areas to the large cities of their countries.

Thus American cities are commonly marked by sprawling

"developments" and "shopping centers" and above all by "ticky-tacky" single-family houses on the outskirts, and downtown by urban decay. Asian cities are distinguished by high-rise "resettlement blocks" (as in Hong Kong, with one room per family) and modern high-rise apartment housing as in Seoul. American cities spread out; Asian cities build up and tuck ever more families into the city. Seoul for example now houses 6 million where 3 million lived only a decade ago, and many believe the same area will soon have to house as many as 10 million or more.

American cities are faced by a complex of social problems defying any quick solution, or any solution at all: integration and segregation; minority rights; family disorganization; juvenile delinquency and crime; political mismanagement and corruption. South Korean cities have problems that are technical in nature: water supply, sewage disposal, traffic congestion, inadequate housing, all susceptible to relatively easy solution (when compared to the social problems of American cities) by the application of money and technology.

While American cities seem to repel their residents, Asian cities lure people in. By all accounts, American cities are dying; as the New York Times of July 19, 1971 noted, the weather-beaten boarded-up store front is replacing the gleaming steel and glass skyscraper as a symbol of the American city. Asian cities, and Seoul in particular, are living, dynamic, eternally stimulating, and despite

unsafe water and polluted air a joy to live in.

No single factor will account for these differences but a good part of the explanation lies in the land use pattern accepted as desirable in American cities as contrasted with those of Asian cities like Seoul. Or put more bluntly, if anything has killed the American city it is the overuse of zoning and of planning.

The Asian city (excluding, of course, colonial cities like Saigon and Singapore built by European powers) is characterized by a low incidence of functional differentiation in land use patterns. This is a feature also of the preindustrial city (see Sojerg, 95-103) from which the modern Asian cities like Seoul have sprung. In these cities one plot of land may be used for more than one function, also the typical neighborhood shows multiple uses of the land. The shophouse is a typical feature of the Asian city; generally a row-house structure, the shophouse combines a small family-run shop or business or even industry on the ground floor and living quarters for the proprietor's family on the second and third floors. Neighborhoods thus show a mixed business, small industry, and residential use. In the same neighborhood, moreover, one will find single-family houses, rented rooms and apartments, small restaurants, perhaps a modern hotel or Asian-style inn, a school, church, or temple, and an open-air curbside market. In such neighborhoods some structures will be quite new and very modern, but others will have a dilapidated, even run-down look. There seems to be a place for everyone and anything, within reason, of course, in these Asian city neighborhoods.

Because of the mixture of functions and the varied timetables followed by residents, the Asian neighborhood is never devoid of people,

but strangers mix with residents and maintain a delicate boundary between public and private affairs; the round-the-clock surveillance all this makes possible assures safety in the streets and in the stores and buildings.

A telling contrast is provided by almost every American city, especially as these cities become zoned, or planned, or redesigned by so-called urban renewal and slum clearance projects. Jane Jacobs presents the case against current planning assumptions in her book entitled The Death and Life of Great American Cities, an eloquent discussion of current American urban problems and proposals for solving them. Jacobs argues for the superiority of sidewalks over playgrounds for children's play, the need for small blocks delimited by numerous small streets and lanes, the advisability of discouraging the flow of private automobiles to and from the city center and at the same time a renewed attention to pedestrian desires, the advantages of mixed residential and commercial occupancy, and the value of dilapidated buildings that provide niches for marginal enterprises. She is opposed to massive slum clearance because the operation inevitably destroys the social fabric of an existing neighborhood. The creation of huge apartment houses whose residents are surrounded by unusable open spaces but deprived of the small daily interchanges she sees as a form of blight more serious than the structural deterioration of slum dwellings.

Such criticisms of American planning are very relevant to a discussion of urban problems in South Korea. Although South Korean planners used imaginative and successful procedures in developing the

satellite city of Kwang Ju, these Western-trained specialists and officials appear sold ultimately on the American model of the city as a validation of their nation's modernity. The Seoul City Plan reflects this model. An enormous increase in private automobiles is accepted. So are elevated highways and arterial roads cutting through the city. Seoul plans to devote as high a percentage of its land area to roads as does New York City--and put as many people in apartments. The City has already constructed impressive complexes of high-rise apartment houses and more are planned. The Central Business District of Seoul when rebuilt will resemble the commercial heart of Manhattan, but gone will be the present very vibrant Myongdong District of small shops, narrow lanes, and a fascinating mix of nondescript and modern buildings. The Central Business District will likely be the first section of Seoul to die.

Americans are having second thoughts about modernity and progress that denudes the environment and dehumanizes the city, but Koreans do not seem to know this. High officials in New York City talk seriously about keeping private automobiles out and turning streets and parks back to pedestrians, but Seoul city planners are going the other way. Critics like Jacobs declare that standard American planning and zoning are killing our cities and they call for a change if this environmental sickness is to be reversed, but little of this seems to have reached Korean officials.

It is ironic that some Korean officials objected to my proposed study of urbanization problems in Seoul because they feared I would

apply unfairly Western concepts of city life to this Asian setting. The very real danger that I see is that these Western-trained and Western-oriented specialists will themselves apply those Western assumptions to their cities, with the same denuding and dehumanizing results that we see in the large American city. So far Kwang Ju has been spared, but the visual representation of the future Kwang Ju and of Seoul makes it abundantly clear that the goal is the application of outmoded American land use and zoning standards.

I might relate an incident that occurred when I visited the Kwang Ju area with a mixed group of Korean and American planning specialists. One Korean in the group, with advanced degrees in architecture and city planning from a major Western university, was bitterly critical of Kwang Ju because this so-called planned community lacks playgrounds and parks, has narrow lanes much like Seoul itself, along with small plots of land for each house which results in high density of population. But in the group was an American student of urban planning who argued that whatever else one might say about Kwang Ju, it seemed to be a place Koreans wanted to live, and that if it resembled older parts of Seoul in its housing and narrow lanes and lack of centralized play areas, this might well be the way Koreans want to use their land. It seemed to me that the Korean specialist was applying a Western yardstick to Kwang Ju, and the community did not measure up. The American used a Korean standard, which I believe is much more appropriate.

Korean cities are now alive and well. If South Koreans can avoid the slavish application of Western standards, these cities will remain vital. The greatest feature of Kwang Ju is that it is a Korean community, and if permitted to remain so it will be healthy for a very long time--perhaps forever. American planners and city officials have a good deal to learn from Korean cities, but oddly enough it is Koreans themselves who must be first convinced of this if Korea is to avoid the blight that has struck American cities in this century.

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