"privileged élites," the World Bank is into "political considerations" up to its neck.

The question is the degree to which governments committing "first-level violations" of the human rights of its citizens are entitled to the political and economic support that trade and multilateral aid give them. We need a concrete manifestation of an expanded international consensus on what these violations are. The Carter administration should not reject out of hand the congressional search for concrete, immutable, and simple human rights guidelines. After all, it was an administration official, Patricia Darian, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, who first said: "There ought to be some things we can nail down."

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EXCURSUS III

Norman Thorpe on Another Korean Defects

The "defection" last November of a former South Korean diplomat to the ranks of Koreans calling for President Park Chung Hee's resignation marked what has become a growing problem for the Seoul government. An increasing number of South Koreans abroad are publicly denouncing the South Korean leadership on a variety of charges, most related to authoritarian rule and the activities of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA).

While the movement seems to represent little actual threat to the stability of the Park government, it does further detract from President Park's reputation abroad and adds weight to the notion that his rule is growing less popular. To add to the problem, many of those who have spoken out have disclosed new information about the less savory activities of the Korean Government and its representatives. And each new dissenter seems to make it easier for others to follow.

To be sure, some of the critics are simply vengeful opportunists using the dissident's platform to settle some score or other with the South Korean leadership. The most prominent example is former KCIA chief Kim Hyung-wook, who testified before U.S. congressional committees about Park's excesses. The activities attributed to the KCIA under Kim's leadership challenge anything the organ has been accused of since. They, along with Kim's growing independence and power, finally forced the president to remove him. When it became clear to Kim that he no long had a future with the president, he quietly fled to the United States, where he is now one of President Park's most damaging critics. His recent accusations must make Park wish he had found another job for him.

Others who have turned against President Park have less colorful pasts. Many worked loyally for the Park government and then quietly left when they could no longer meet its demands. Apparently few knew the complete extent of Korean activities abroad, and the disclosures of Koreagate have embarrassed and outraged them. The example and encouragement of friends who have already spoken out have led them to do likewise. This seems to be how Dr. Choi Duk-shin, who left Korea two years ago, came recently to announce his opposition to Park. Although there are a number of former ambassadors and generals abroad who have come out against the president, Choi, as Park's onetime foreign minister, is the highest ranking official besides KCIA chief Kim to have done so.

Choi, who is sixty-three, was raised in China during the Japanese occupation of Korea. Like his father, he joined the Korean independence movement and fought the Japanese as an officer in the Chinese Nationalist Army. He was a senior officer in the Korean War and in 1956 retired a lieutenant general. During the next eleven years he was posted as ambassador to South Vietnam, Thailand, and West Germany, and served a term as foreign minister. Thereafter he spent several years as chief of Chondo-kyo, or Church of the Heavenly Way, a popular native Korean religion with nearly a million adherents.

In 1975 a factional dispute forced Choi to resign from the position. Although his detractors accused him of embezzlement, he was never convicted of anything in court. Choi says the dispute was orchestrated by the government to split church leadership and force his removal when he became less than wholehearted in his support of Park's continued rule. A few months later he used the occasion of a religious seminar abroad as an opportunity to leave Korea. He fled to the U.S., where he has lived quietly for nearly two years.

At a press conference in Tokyo late last year Choi said that when he left Korea he had regarded his public life finished. Since then, however, he has come to feel it necessary to assume a public role again to support the movement for restoration of democracy in Korea. He said there were several reasons why he believed President Park should step down. First, he said he believed that the president had himself ordered the activities of Korean businessman Tongsun Park, and that the president is therefore "personally responsible for the fact that Korea's formerly warm and friendly relations with the U.S., its most important ally, are now on the verge of total collapse." He maintained that close bilateral relations and, more important, Koreans' "moral pride," could be restored only through a complete disclosure about "this shameful operation."

The former general also accused the Korean
found out about it. He felt the only saving grace cleared in the German investigation. diplomatic staff participation, and that they were complete secrecy and I had no advance knowledge. was only during the final stage of the operation, he about the whole affair was that he refused to allow of what he learned, he said, was from information verified for the press: that the abductions were connected with the event has apparently ever (Kim Hyung-wook headed the KCIA at that time.)

Asked whether he had prior knowledge of the affair, Choi said: "The conspiracy was executed in complete secrecy and I had no advance knowledge. No one informed me it was going to happen." Most of what he learned, he said, was from information provided afterward by the German Government. It was only during the final stage of the operation, he said, when the KCIA came to him to request the assistance of some of the diplomatic staff, that he found out about it. He felt the only saving grace about the whole affair was that he refused to allow diplomatic staff participation, and that they were cleared in the German investigation.

Choi said that since 1967 he has had suspicions about possible Japanese Government complicity in the kidnappings. German-Korean cooperation had just been strengthened by an exchange of state visits, and he had hoped this new deepening of friendship would lead to bilateral economic cooperation and "forestall a Japanese economic invasion of Korea." But that was not to be. The kidnappings left a great gulf where the fragile new bonds of friendship had been, thus giving Japan "enormous economic and political profit." Choi pointed to the role of Japan Air Lines in transporting the abducted students to Korea as one thing that left his suspicions unresolved.

In conclusion Choi urged that the U.S. complete its withdrawal of troops from Korea as soon as possible. He said this would not affect the military balance on the peninsula. He further urged an end to all U.S. and Japanese military and economic aid to the Park government.

It is not easy for a South Korean to decide to take a public position against the Park government. Criticism of the government, whether within Korea or abroad, is illegal and carries severe penalties. This means that the Korean who speaks out is choosing the life of an exile. In addition there are fears of retribution. Korean testimony before Congress has shown a consistent pattern of KCIA threats—both against dissidents and against their family members in Korea and outside. Choi said his mother and one of his sons still live in South Korea.

The dissident can also expect to be publicly excoriated, because the government teaches that criticizing the leadership is the same as attacking the nation, culture, and everything else Korean. Within hours of Choi's press conference the headquarters of the Chondo-kyo sect in Seoul issued a statement accusing him of "betraying the nation and the religion." The next morning newspaper editorials even implicated him in a supposed 1967 murder. It is difficult to imagine how Choi could have been chosen the head of a major religious sect the following year if the claim had any substance.

Choi, who has been living near Detroit, said he came to Tokyo to announce his opposition to the Park government because of Japan's close proximity to Korea. He said he hoped it would encourage those still in Korea. Shortly after the press conference he boarded a plane to return to the United States. Associates said beforehand they felt it would be dangerous for him to remain in Tokyo even another day. Their fears seemed justified when Choi and those accompanying him were attacked at the airport by thirty members of a pro-Park organization. Choi escaped unharmed.

An official at the Korean embassy in Tokyo expressed regret over Choi's actions and "game of playing with political asylum." Mr. Lew Chi-ho, cultural and information attaché, said it was questionable that Choi could claim he was becoming an exile when he had left Korea nearly two years before. In addition, he said, because Choi left Korea in disgrace over involvement in a church property dispute few Koreans would take his comments seriously. "Those who are familiar with the circumstances under which he had to leave Korea, his act here in Tokyo cannot but be a butt of ridicule and deep contempt," said Lew.

However, other Koreans say Choi is still widely respected, and, despite criticism from official and semiofficial quarters, the fact that another former member of the Park government has turned against it will not go unnoticed in Korea.

Norman Thorpe, based in Tokyo, writes for the Asian Wall Street Journal.

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**Quote/Unquote**

"Although J. Edgar Hoover was always prepared to take a calculated risk in his position as chief of the FBI, it is said that he never ate any of the many delicacies sent to him by unknown admirers for fear that someone might thereby try to poison him. He gave such food to orphanages and similar institutions."

—From a company magazine quoted by the Financial Times (National Catholic Reporter, March 24)