

EXCURSUS I

Edward J. Baker on Paik Nakchung Has Been Arrested

In December, 1977, I telephoned a friend while passing through Japan on my way to Seoul, Korea. His first words were: "Paik Nakchung has been arrested." Since Paik has been in trouble with the government of President Park Chung Hee ever since I have known him, this news did not come as a surprise, but I felt stunned nevertheless. Paik is a good friend.

Because I was on an investigative trip for the congressional inquiry into Korean-U.S. relations, I had decided before leaving Washington that it would be best for my Korean friends if I did not contact them while I was in Seoul. The Korean press was vigorously attacking our trip and Representative Donald Fraser, chairman of our subcommittee. When I heard the news of Paik's arrest, however, I immediately decided to make an exception.

That evening, assuming that the telephone in my hotel room was bugged, I went to a pay phone and called Paik's house. To my surprise and delight he answered the phone himself. After a short exchange we agreed to meet the following day in a tearoom.

I found Paik serene, as always. He explained the case: On November 24, 1977, Lee Yōng-hŭi was taken in for questioning regarding two of his books. One of the books, *Idolatry and Reason*, is a collection of Lee's essays, many of which had already been published individually in periodicals. The other book, *A Dialogue With 800,000,000 People*, is a collection of Lee's translations of first-hand accounts of trips to the People's Republic of China by about twenty Western and Japanese scholars and journalists. The authors include John Kenneth Galbraith, Harrison Salisbury, Edgar Snow, and Alain Peyrefitte, the French minister of justice. Many of these had also been published in periodicals.

Within a day or two of Lee's arrest Ms. Pak Kwan-sun, president of the company that published *Idolatry and Reason*, and Paik, president of the company that published *A Dialogue With 800,000,000 People*, were also taken in for questioning. Paik was interrogated about the contents of the book continuously for two days without being given a chance to sleep or even rest. At the end of these two days he and Ms. Pak were released pending a decision on whether to indict them for violating South Korea's Anti-Communist Law. Lee remained in detention.

As I listened to my friend explain the case I was struck by the fact that not only did he seem calm, he also seemed pleased to have the issue clearly joined. When I saw his wife, Han Chihyun, she also appeared to be in good spirits. There had been times in the past when she had shown the strain of living with uncertainty: Would this be the day her husband would not come home? On previous occasions he had been interrogated by the KCIA for as long as five

days, but this was the first time he faced an actual indictment. They both seemed to be looking forward to Paik having a "day in court," even though it would certainly lead to his conviction.

Paik Nakchung is about forty years old. After graduating from high school in Seoul, he went to Brown University, graduating in 1959 as class valedictorian. He served for three years in the South Korean army, then joined the English department at Seoul University, the best university in Korea. In 1966, while teaching there, he founded a quarterly called *Creation and Criticism*, which has become the most prestigious intellectual journal in Korea. In 1973 he received his Ph.D. from Harvard University for a dissertation on the works of D.H. Lawrence. In late 1974 Paik and about seventy other intellectual, political, social, and religious leaders signed a petition calling for the restoration of democracy in the Republic of Korea. Under Korean law, civil servants are prohibited from engaging in political activities and, since Paik was a professor at a national university, he was a civil servant.

The Ministry of Education told Paik to resign or be fired. If he resigned, he still would have been eligible to work at another university. If he were fired, he would not. Nakchung refused to resign. He argued that stating a basic belief in democracy and calling on the government to restore a democratic system was not the kind of political activity referred to by a law intended to prevent civil servants from running for office or working in campaigns. He also noted that none of the many of his university colleagues who had made public statements *in support of the Yushin System* had lost their jobs as a result. Paik was fired and sued for reinstatement. The administrative board responsible for hearing such cases upheld his firing, and his appeal to the Appellate Court was denied. His case is still pending before the Supreme Court.

Several issues of the quarterly and several books published by his company were banned in 1975 and 1976. This did not harm his business because one issue was banned after most copies had been sold and because after an issue is banned the next one sells very well, for public curiosity is aroused.

My wife and I were introduced to the Paiks in Seoul in the fall of 1974. I was drawn to Paik by our interest in politics and our concern for the establishment of democracy in Korea. Our families spent a great deal of time together until we left Korea in the summer of 1976.

Lee Yōng-hŭi was born in 1929. For many years he was a reporter for the *Chosun Ilbo*, one of Korea's oldest and best-known newspapers, where he became head of the foreign news section. He was also a professor of journalism at Hanyang University. On February 28, 1976, Lee was one of about four hundred professors from various universities who were dismissed as a result of a new academic tenure law. Although the government claimed that

these decisions were based on determinations of incompetence or violation of university regulations, I believe that in many cases the motive was political.

Pak Kwan-sun is the president of Hangil Sa, the company that published *Idolatry and Reason*. Her husband, Kim On-ho, is also involved in this company, although he does not have an official position in it. He was a reporter for the *Donga Ilbo*, Seoul's most prestigious daily newspaper, until he was fired for his activities in the movement to establish freedom of expression.



Paik Nakchung, his wife and daughter during a visit in the States in the early 1970's.

The trial of Lee and Paik began on January 27 in the Seoul District Criminal Court. Ms. Pak was not indicted. The first session was attended by more than a hundred people, including many prominent in the movement to restore democracy in Korea.

After their almost inevitable conviction, Lee and Paik will appeal the case to the Appellate Court, then the Supreme Court. This process will probably take until fall. Their sentences could range from a suspended sentence to a substantial term of years.

I believe that these two men are being prosecuted, as many others have been, because of their opposition to the dictatorial *Yushin* System established by President Park Chung Hee. The *Yushin* Constitution and Emergency Decree No. 9 aim at preventing public dialogue critical of Park government policies. People like Paik, Lee, and Ms. Pak are dangerous to the Park government because they have the courage to discuss publicly topics the government has declared taboo and to oppose positions taken by the government. If they go unpunished, others will follow.

I also believe that Paik, Lee, and Ms. Pak have a right to freedom of expression. The Korean people, north and south, have a right to hear and participate in the free debate that is essential to democracy. I feel that as a fellow human being I, too, have a right to speak out against their persecution. As a citizen of the United States, which has given so much economic, military, and political support to the Republic of Korea, I have an obligation to do so. I hope that readers of this article who agree with me will express their concern to either or both of the following:

Ms. Patricia M. Derian, Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Department of State, Room 7802, Washington, D.C. 20520
The Hon. Yong Shik Kim, Embassy of the Republic of Korea, 2370 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008

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EXCURSUS II

Yudha Lelana on

From Prison to Prison in Indonesia

My friend! Do you know the dream of every prisoner? Of course you do! Get out...be free, mix with friends, brothers, sisters, with everyone. Perhaps with you the words "get out" don't make an impression. But for the prisoner and ex-prisoner, oh, how those sweet words stir the soul! They are just as sacred as the national anthem [Pramudya Ananta Toer, Biora, 1952].

The Government of Indonesia released 10,000 political prisoners on December 20, 1977. Ninety per cent of them had been in jails and prison camps on Indonesia's outer islands of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku, the Lesser Sunda Islands, and Irian Jaya. Only a small portion of those held in the prisons in Java were released, but twenty-four residents of that county were returned from imprisonment in other parts of Indonesia. The government claims that it continues to hold only about 20,000 political prisoners, but there is considerable doubt about the accuracy of that figure. In the late Sixties perhaps more than a million Indonesians were arrested and held in overflowing prisons and prison camps for political reasons. Some 500,000 of those prisoners were released in 1971-72. Probably the difference between the 20,000 political prisoners the government claims it is holding and the 45-90,000 estimated by groups like Amnesty International can be partially accounted for by differences in terminology and classification of prisoners. The use of terms seems to be quite flexible, depending on the occasion. Some months ago President Suharto made a public statement that Indonesia had no political prisoners; what it has are criminals.

What have these prisoners been released from? British Ambassador Sir John Ford visited the infamous Buru Island (where 11,000 prisoners are held in twenty-one work camp units) and reported that Indonesia's prison camps cannot be compared to the Gulag Archipelago described by Solzhenitsyn. There is no barbed wire, and the prisoners, including