

# **THE MAKING OF MODERN WOMEN IN POST-WAR KOREA:**

**WOMEN'S MOBILIZATION IN THE GENDERED NATION-BUILDING, 1961-1979**

by

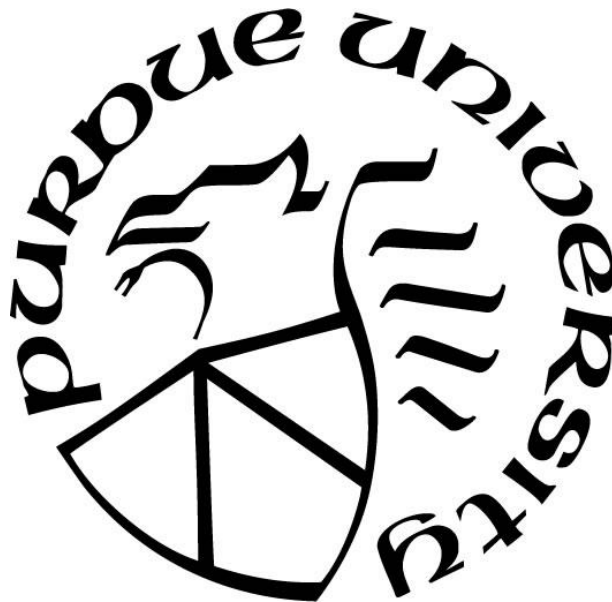
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**A Dissertation**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University*

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of*

**Doctor of Philosophy**



Department of History

West Lafayette, Indiana

December 2021

**THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
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*This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Tae-soon Lee, and Dr. Sally A. Hastings whose sacrifice, wisdom, and love guide me to womanhood. And to all the other East Asian women, who are still looking for the social and legal improvement to ensure our wellbeing and advancement.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank my amazing dissertation committee who shared their experiences, knowledge, and valuable insights, committing their invaluable time and efforts to this dissertation:

Dr. Sally A Hastings for her indispensable mentorship and kind support from the starting point of this dissertation project in helping me develop a rational approach and complete my dissertation.

Dr. Whitney Walton for pushing me to move forward with her helpful feedback and comments for the further development of the project.

Dr. Rebekah A Klein-Pejsova for her excellent recommendations encouraging me to have a deeper understanding about human rights and to identify research problems in a broader perspective.

Dr. Patricia A Boling for her wonderful comments and suggestions to strengthen my work.

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## **ABBREVIATION**

CKWO	Council of Korean Women's Organizations
CCSP	Central Committee for Savings Promotion
CPA	Consumer Protection Association
CPC	Consumer Protection Committee
CPCO	Cabinet Planning and Coordination Office
EPB	Economic Planning Board
FPRI	Family Planning Research Institute
IOCU	International Organization of Consumers Unions
JHF	Japanese Housewives Federation
KCCC	Korean Christian Church Council
KCU	Korean Consumers Union
KHA	Korean Housewives' Association
KNA	Korean Nurses Association
NFWPP	National Federation of Women's Protection Projects
NFWSL	National Federation of Women's Savings and Livelihood
RIWI	Research Institute for Women's Issues
SCNR	Supreme Council for National Reconstruction
WGA	Women's Green Association
WAK	Women's Association of Korea
WASL	Women's Association of Savings and Lifestyle P
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation explores how the authoritarian regime of Park Chung-Hee (1963-1979) mobilized women as individuals and groups in transforming the agricultural state to an industrialized and modernized one. Although much has been written about the significance of Korean male elites in economic and democratic achievements, we can only find limited scholarship on women's mobilization by the state as well as the roles of ordinary women and female elites in the national development process. My work is different in that I highlight the Park Chung-Hee regime's colonial legacy and its broader application to women's social and public mobilization for the national economic growth. I argue that Korean women were mobilized by the Park Chung-Hee regime as individuals and groups considered a great source to consolidate diplomatic relations with allies as well as "voluntary" social workers and as cheaper laborers.



## INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Korea, henceforth South Korea, has achieved a dramatic economic success and democracy in a very short period of time. After 1945, when Korea was liberated from a Japanese empire that had pursued and failed in its military ambition to expand its territories in Asia and further into the Pacific islands, its national sovereignty was fragile enough to subject it to a new set of foreign powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union. Koreans in the south and the north were arbitrarily forced to have separate states divided by the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. After the two Koreas experienced the devastating Korean War for three years, South Koreans and North Koreans became each other's greatest national enemies. Like other decolonizing states in Asia and Africa after the World War II, the Koreas confronted social and political instability and economic hardship. Park Chung-Hee promised that South Korea would achieve national self-reliance and economic growth when he seized power through a military coup in 1961. His master plan for the national achievement was based on the wartime mobilization experiences under the Japanese colonial occupation. Moreover, the resource poor state had to learn and utilize western values to not only attain economic aid and loans but also join the international community during the Cold War. The Korean military regime considered Korean women to be a great labor resource as well as good representatives who advocated and supported the state in the international circle.

Groups and individuals South Korean women joined the government's project to modernize and enrich the state and people in the Park Chung-Hee era, 1961-1979. The military government's plan for self-reliance and rapid economic growth and was a reckless challenge for South Korea, yet Park Chung-Hee and his subordinates succeeded in bringing about South Korea's industrial and social transformation. Several scholars have identified multiple factors

contributing to South Korea's economic success.<sup>1</sup> Some point to the efficient economic policies that Park Chung-Hee and his bureaucrats implemented. Others focus on the formation of South Korea's *chaebol*, or large industrial conglomerates. Yet, few scholars of the Park Chung-Hee era have been interested in understanding how the authoritarian regime mobilized women as individuals and groups in transforming the agricultural state to an industrialized and modernized one.

Even though recognition of women's issues had gradually grown internationally and domestically, we can only find limited scholarship on the Park Chung-Hee regime's dealing with ordinary women, who made up half of the population and enormously contributed to the national economic and political achievements. Most feminist scholars wish to investigate feminist movements, activities, or any resistance against the suppressing patriarchy or the authoritarian regime. They, however, could rarely find reliable primary sources due to the strict publication censorship under the oppressive regime. Thus, more and more researchers have conducted oral interviews of marginalized women such as previous sex workers and female labor activists. A few political scientists have investigated sexually victimized Korean women during the Park Chung-Hee period within a complex diplomatic context in which South Korea was

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<sup>1</sup> Uk Heo and Terrence Roehig, *South Korea's Rise: Economic Development, Power, and Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Byung-Kook Kim, Ezra Vogel, and Jorge I. Domínguez, eds., *The Park Chung Hee Era: The Transformation of South Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Choong Soon Kim, *The Culture of Korean Industry: An Ethnography of Poongsan Corporation* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992); Eun Mee Kim, *Big Business, Strong State: Collusion and Conflict in South Korean Development, 1960–1990* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Hagen Koo, *Korean Workers: The Culture and Pattern of Class Formation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Denise P Lett, *In Pursuit of Status: The Making of South Korea's "New" Urban Middle Class* (Cambridge, MA: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University Press, 1998); Seok-Choon Lew, *The Korean Economic Development Path* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Ingyu Oh, *Maafioso, Big Business, and the Financial Crisis: The State-Business Relations in South Korea and Japan* (Surrey, U.K.: Ashgate, 1999); Jung-en Woo, *Race to the Swift: State and Finance in the Industrialization of Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

militarily and financially dependent on its principal ally, the United States.<sup>2</sup> Utilizing oral interviews of female labor movement organizers, Ching and Yoon have collected evidence of the *minjung* feminist movement's origins. They argue that the 1970s was the starting time of the *minjung* feminism as part of political *minjung* movement which became a nationwide democracy movement consisting of workers, students, church activists, intellectuals, and farmers fighting for the "true national identity of Korea." According to Ching and Yoon, *minjung* feminism includes Korean female labor activism, organizing democratic labor unions fighting against exploitative private companies and the authoritarian state maintaining the exploitative system.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, Kim has focused on the female labor movement and interaction among labor activists. He argues that 1970s female labor activism hardly achieved any of its goals such as the improvement of workers' rights, mainly because of internal factional conflicts.<sup>4</sup> Some other scholars have shown an interest in how the cultural and social structure of Korea suppressed and restricted women's rights. Davis argues that the "Confucian patriarchal authority" excluded women as a group in national level decision-making when the authoritarian regime mobilized Korean women in prioritizing the national economic development. In particular, she emphasizes how the population reduction policy of the Park Chung-Hee regime strictly regulated women's bodies to reduce the population as part of the national economic

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<sup>2</sup> Katharine H.S. Moon, "Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States in U.S.-Korea Relations," in *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, eds. Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi (New York: Routledge Press, 1988); Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Na Young Lee, "The Construction of U.S. Camptown Prostitution in South Korea: Trans/Formation and Resistance," (PhD Diss., University of Maryland, 2006), 1-274.

<sup>3</sup> Miriam Ching and Yoon Louie, "Minjung Feminism: Korean women's Movement for Gender and Class Liberation," *Women's Studies International Forum* 18, no.4 (1995): 417-420.

<sup>4</sup> Kim Won, *Yeogong 1970: geunyeodeul-ui ban-yeogsa* [*Female Factory Girl 1970: Half of History*], (Seoul: Imagin, 2006); Kim Won, "1970nyeondae yeogonggwa minjunjojundong: minju dae eoyong gyunyeol gudoui bipanjeog geomto [Factory Girls and the Democratic Union Movement in the 1970s: Democratic Labor Group versus Government Patronized Labor Group], *Journal of Korean Political Science* 28, no.5 (December 2004): 125-128.

development project.<sup>5</sup> Palley also has paid attention to Korean women's vulnerable position in a "Confucian patriarchal authority structure." She points out that Korean women were largely excluded from the national level decision-making process while Confucian traditions still strongly influenced women's roles in society.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Japanese Colonial Legacy in the Park Chung-Hee Period**

Women's mobilization in the Park Chung-Hee period (1961-1979), the main theme of this dissertation, is part of the large national economic modernization project conducted with old strategies Koreans had experienced and learned during the Japanese occupation period; the wartime period of the 1930s and 1940s is particularly significant in this regard. Colonial Korea experienced rapid industrial development with the Japanese colonial encouragement during this period. Korean elites who had experienced the Japanese wartime social and economic mobilization learned these mechanisms. The National Mobilization Law passed by the Japanese Diet in 1938 allowed the central government in Japan to tightly control activities. Two years later in 1940, Japan established the Korean League for National Mobilization (*Kokumin sōryoku Chōsen Renmei*), which was a Korean version of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association. Korean society was for the first time integrated with the colonial state administration as the Korean version of neighborhood units. The members of the small units were forced to monitor each other and join "voluntarily" to contribute labor and materials as well as join public campaigns for the war effort.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lisa Kim Davis, "Korean Women's Groups Organize for Change," in *Women of Japan and Korea: Continuity and Change*, ed. Joyce Gelb (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 223-239.

<sup>6</sup> Marian Lief Palley, "Feminism in a Confucian Society: The Women's Movement in Korea," in *Women of Japan and Korea: Continuity and Change*, ed. Joyce Gelb (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 223.

<sup>7</sup> Hideo Kobayashi, "The Postwar Economic Legacy of Japan's Wartime Empire," in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, eds. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Eattie (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 326-327.

Korean women's groups also closely cooperated with the colonial government in the Korean mobilization project, just as Japanese women's groups collaborated with the Japanese government.<sup>8</sup> When the Japanese colonial government appointed Korean women's leaders for the wartime mobilization, Kim Hwal-ran and Lee Sook-jong were included on the list. They had experienced how ordinary people under war situations could prepare and survive through both Japan's Pacific War preparation and the Korean War. In the past, both had been active participants, cooperating with the Japanese authorities for the victory in the Pacific War during the Japanese colonial period in Korea. The two Korean women, Kim Hwal-ran, Lee Sook-jong, acted as promoters of multiple pro-Japanese women's organizations, including the Society for the Studies of Joseon Women's Issues (*Joseonbuin Munjeyeonguhoe*) and the Patriots' Association (*Aegug Geumchahoe*) during the Japanese colonial period. They participated in campaigns to promote savings for Japan's Pacific War and encouraged young Korean women to cooperate in supporting the Japanese war effort as supporters at the back and encouraging young Korean men to fight against Japan's enemies. Lee Sook-jong, who was the first vice president and later became the second president of the Council of Korean Women's Organization (CKWO), an umbrella women's group founded in 1959, emphasized women's sacrifice for the Japanese empire through practicing the scientific management of lifestyle and frugality in her publications.<sup>9</sup> She claimed that "we, wives, are able to make extraordinary efforts to protect our

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<sup>8</sup> Sheldon Garon, "Integrating Women into Public Life: Women's Groups and the State," in *Molding Japanese Minds* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 142.

<sup>9</sup> Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism [Taetongnyong Sosok Chinil Panminjok Haengwi Chinsang Kyumyong Wiwonhoe], *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism VI-13* [Chinil panminjok haengwi chinsang kyumyong pogoso], (Seoul: Taetongnyong Sosok Chinil Panminjok Haengwi Chinsang Kyumyong Wiwonhoe, 2009), 365-366; *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism VI-4*, 788-789. The South Korean government promulgated the Special Act on the Establishment of Anti-National Behavior on March 22, 2004. Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism (PCIC) was launched on May 31, 2005, according to the enforcement decree of this act. The PCIC conducted investigations and published *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism (Report for Pro-Japanese Collaborators)* in 2009. The committee divided pro-Japanese

home and take part in patriotic activities with all our hearts. ... We [Korean women] should make our lives “scientificized” during this war.”<sup>10</sup>

Kim and Lee later became the first and second chairwomen of the CKWO, a major focus of the first chapter of this dissertation. The CKWO became the umbrella women’s organization sponsored by the Park Chung-Hee regime in the early 1960s. The Park regime expected women’s groups and individuals to repeat what Korean women had done during the Japanese wartime mobilization: activities such as savings promotion, social work, and moral reform. Park Chung-Hee and Korean elites, who experienced Japanese wartime social mobilization, brought back the colonial legacy to achieve rapid industrialization and national economic growth. Park Chung-Hee worked as an officer in the Japanese/Manchukuo Army after graduating Japanese military Academy. Even if the extreme social, political, and economic control of the colonial legacy might have been a good strategy from an economic perspective, it turned out to be a disaster in silencing women’s individual women’s voices. The messages of the Park regime urged Korean women to think in terms of the good of the country rather than to think and behave as individuals who could speak with their own voice and make their own decisions.<sup>11</sup>

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collaborators into three periods to investigate their pro-Japanese activities. The first and second presidents of the CKWO, Kim Hwal-ran, and Lee Sook-jong, were included in the list of pro-Japanese collaborators who worked with the Japanese Government-General of Korea in the third period, 1937-1945. The 2009 *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism* included their writings, pro-Japanese activities during the Japanese colonial period.

<sup>10</sup> Lee Sook-jong, “Family Life during the War,” *Cho Kwang* 9, no. 1 (January 1943), 110-113. This article is part of the collection of the *Report for Pro-Japanese Collaborators VI-13*: 352-354.

The whole third chapter of this dissertation deals with the “scientific management of life” for Korean women.

<sup>11</sup> “Show off our Pride in the World, Adopted Resolution at National Women’s Rally [uligeungji segye gwasi jeongug-yeoseongdaehoeseo gyeol-uimun chaetaeg],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 2, 1968.

## **American Influence in South Korea**

The Park Chung-Hee regime co-opted the women's movement to repair their damaged reputation after the 1961 military coup as well as to address the national material deprivation. The military regime promised the people that they could resuscitate the moribund economy and force corrupt politicians out of office. South Korea did not have natural resources to trade with other countries except for the cheap labor force. For the regime, women as individuals and groups were considered a great source to consolidate diplomatic relations with allies as well as "voluntary" social workers and as cheaper laborers than their male counterparts.

Not surprisingly, the United States was a principal ally of South Korea. The American military government stationed in the capital and governed the country for three years (1945-1948) soon after the Korean peninsula was liberated from Japan. In 1946, the US military government established the Women's Bureau as the "first official women's welfare policy" under the Department of Public Health and Welfare. Na Young Lee saw the Women's Bureau as a symbol of "the U.S. liberal democratic mandate to pursue gender equality."<sup>12</sup> However, the main policy direction of the American military leadership in South Korea was to maintain most Japan's colonial legacies. They preserved the Japanese colonial government with former Korean bureaucrats and staff under a Japanese military governor.<sup>13</sup> The Women's Bureau, a new government agency, was added to the old Japanese colonial government structure. The bureau was divided into four sections dealing with children, general welfare, women's labor, and administration. In reality, the new agency functioned as a showcase of U.S. assistance to

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<sup>12</sup> Na Young Lee, "The Construction of U.S. Camptown Prostitution in South Korea: Trans/Formation and Resistance," 78-80.

<sup>13</sup> Norman Jacobs, *The Korean Road to Modernization and Development* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 74; Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: Norton, 1997), 192.

modernize South Korea. The bureau ran general education programs for women, such as English, cooking, and etiquette classes.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in 1948 when South Korea established the first republic of Korea, they had a new government that peculiarly mixed Japanese colonial and American liberal legacies.

American political influence affected not only the government structure but also the cultural, religious, and social landscape in South Korea. During the American military occupation period, Christians who had studied or stayed in the United States had more opportunities to assist American military leaders who were not knowledgeable about the country, the language or culture. Therefore, they had to rely on English speakers. Syngman Rhee, the first South Korean president, also took the advantage of being a Christian who had an outstanding higher education background in the United States, having studied at Harvard and Princeton. When he studied in America, he made connections with powerful Americans, such as Woodrow Wilson. Rhee was Wilson's student at Princeton and was even invited to the White House wedding of Wilson's daughter.<sup>15</sup> His religious and American education backgrounds greatly helped him to be elected as the first South Korean president. When he returned to South Korea, Christian organizations helped him become one of the strongest candidates in the first presidential election.

Syngman Rhee paid attention to women's voters in the 1948 presidential election because the Korean national constitution, influenced by German Weimar Constitution and promulgated

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<sup>14</sup> Na Young Lee, 80.

<sup>15</sup> David P. Fields, "The Influence of Korean Lobbying on U.S.-Korean Relations, 1905-1945," (PhD Diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2017), 79. The first chapter, "The American Mission Comes to Korea" in his dissertation describes how Syngman Rhee's life was dramatically changed after he met an American missionary during the Japanese colonial era. Fields publishes his dissertation as a book with a new title, *Foreign Friends: Syngman Rhee, American Exceptionalism, and the Division of Korea* in 2019. Unfortunately, I was only able to access his dissertation due to the lack of time. David P. Fields, *Foreign Friends: Syngman Rhee, American Exceptionalism, and the Division of Korea* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2019).



on July 17, 1948, included not only women's voting rights but also anti-gender discrimination laws prohibiting all "discrimination in political, economic, social, or cultural life on account of sex, religion or social status."<sup>16</sup> South Korean elites recognized what kinds of democratic values they should follow during the American military occupation period. The male elites at least feigned interest in the expansion of citizenship or human rights, including specific protections for women and outlawing gender discrimination—important issues for their western allies.<sup>17</sup> Christian organizations and the female leaders who had already built international networks were invited in taking a role representing the country in unofficial international conferences. Female members of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in South Korea often participated in various international women's conferences as Korean representatives. Kim Hwal-ran was one of the female leaders who often participated in those international conferences. As one of the founders of the Korea YWCA, Kim enthusiastically joined several international communities since she had participated in the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) meeting hosted in Beijing, China in 1922.<sup>18</sup> She later founded the Council of Korean Women's Organization (CKWO, *Hanguk Yeoseongdanche Hyeobuihoe*), the first women's umbrella group in 1959 and became its first chairwoman.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Park Kyung-Soon, "Yeoseongeul Wihan Jeoggeugjeog Udaejochie Gwanhan yeongu [The Study of Affirmative Action for Women]," *Seogang Law Journal* 10, no.1 (June 2008), 117-20.

<sup>17</sup> South Korea was not the only state using the rhetoric of human rights to resonate with the United States and its western European allies. Ned Richardson-Little argues that the East German government in the 1970s also adopted the term of human rights as propaganda as well as a means of achieving legitimacy in the international community. Ned Richardson-Little, "Dictatorship and Dissent: Human Rights in East Germany in the 1970s," *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s*, edited by Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 49-51.

<sup>18</sup> "Buggyeong Gihaeng [Beijing Travel Diary]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 21, 1922.

<sup>19</sup> Marian Lief Palley, "Women's Status in South Korea: Tradition and Chang," *Asian Survey* 30, no.12 (December 1990), 1145-1147.

## Consumer Movement in the Park Chung-Hee regime

The Park Chung-Hee regime recognized how much women's issues mattered to the western community, even though their main concern was how they could take advantage of the consolidated international community financially. One of the Park regime's projects was the consumer movement. South Korea's consumer movement in the 1960s and 1970s was different from consumer movements that arose in European countries and America in that Korean consumer activists were largely controlled by the authoritarian government. Under the banner of a consumer movement, the military government directed women's groups to practice what the nation needed. The government tried to prevent Korean consumers from purchasing luxury and expensive goods when South Koreans gained economic benefits after normalizing diplomatic and economic ties between South Korea and Japan and dispatching Korean soldiers to the Vietnam War.<sup>20</sup> The consumer movement focused on consumers' obligations for the nation suffering from widespread poverty and unemployment. Korean housewives as responsible consumers were asked to consume wheat flour and minor grains instead of eating rice, South Korea's staple food. The government encouraged housewives to feed their family members with the wheat flour they received as food aid from the United States. Moreover, South Korea's early consumer movement encouraged housewives to avoid purchasing or eating beef. The consumer movement encouraged consumers to eat foods made from tofu or soy for protein instead of eating expensive beef.<sup>21</sup>

Scholarly studies of consumer movements in the 1960s and 1970s in Asian and western countries where the consumer movements were prevalent, have increasingly covered the

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<sup>20</sup> Kim Young-Chan and Kim Jong-hee, "1960nyeondae huban yeoseongjileul tonghae bon geundaejeog paesyeongwa sobimunhwa-e gwanhan yeongu [Understanding of Modern Fashion and Consumer Culture Through Women's Magazines of the 1960s]," *Communication Theories* 8, no.2 (August 2012), 156.

<sup>21</sup> "Heoyeongsime jongjibu [The End of Vainglory]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 19, 1965.

collaboration between the Asian governments and social organizations. In Matthew Hilton's study of two consumer organizations, Consumers' Association of Penang and the Federation of Malaysian Consumer Associations, he argues that the Malaysian government brought the consumer movement into their 1970s New Economic Policy for improving their social and economic conditions.<sup>22</sup> Consumers have varied identities, ranging from a new type of citizen in civil society to a gendered consumer or even a radical social activist with a unique role in politics. Maurine A. Kirkpatrick emphasizes Japanese consumers' discontent with the desperate economic situation and the government's inability to handle the crisis brought about by the citizens' movement asking for long-term structural changes in the Japanese political system.<sup>23</sup> In the 1970s, leading Japanese consumer activists believed average consumers were pushing "public opinion and the public interest into the structure of economic and political decisions as well as offering new hope for obtaining justice for consumers in the marketplace."<sup>24</sup>

In his other research on Britain's consumer movement, Matthew Hilton argues that representation of consumers transitioned into two layers of gender and class following changes of the political and economic climate. Working-class housewives represented consumers in the first half of the twentieth century. They were replaced by middle-class housewives by mid-century. Eventually, in the 1950s, male elites in the government and business secured the role of the average consumers.<sup>25</sup> Considering the identity of Korean consumers, I will show in chapter two how the dual consumer identities, frugal and activist consumers, gradually developed under

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<sup>22</sup> Matthew Hilton, "The Consumer Movement and Civil Society in Malaysia," *International Review of Social History* 52, no.3 (December 2007), 373-376.

<sup>23</sup> Maurine A. Kirkpatrick, "Consumerism and Japan's New Citizen Politics," *Asian Survey* 15, no. 3 (March 1975), 234-236.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew Hilton, "The Female Consumer and the Politics of Consumption in Twentieth-Century Britain," *The Historical Journal* 45, no.1 (March 2002), 103-104.

the influence of the Korean authoritarian government and other foreign consumer movements in the 1960s and 1970s.

### **Main Sources of the Study**

The main sources utilized in this research are major Korean language newspapers, periodicals of women's groups, popular magazines, and government documents published in the 1960s and 1970s. Principal primary sources for this study are mainstream newspapers: the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, the *Chosun Ilbo*, and the *Maeil Kyungje*. I also drew extensively on two periodicals of the Council of Korean Women's Organizations (CKWO) and the Korea YWCA.<sup>26</sup> The newspaper articles are accessible through Naver News Library, a database with full-text Korean newspaper articles, that provided access to a wide range of news reports and columns in major newspapers.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the Korean Parliamentary Library offered me 1960s and 1970s periodicals, and several other publications. These materials allowed me to examine the activities of women's organizations, the consumer movement, and the involvement of women in the government movement for the scientific management of life.

Because the Park Chung-Hee government censored newspapers and most publications, we can assume that anything that constantly appeared in the newspapers represented the government. The newspapers were a good source to show how the government mobilized women for the government's policies. After the late-1960s, the military government disposed resident government agencies in all major newspapers to directly intervene in newspaper coverage and censor reporting. After that, we can find that newspapers' contents, tone, and even

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<sup>26</sup> *Yeo-seong* began to be published since 1964. In investigating the CKWO through the *Yeo-seong*, I collected and researched the monthly magazine published from 1972 to 1978.

<sup>27</sup> <https://newslibrary.naver.com/>

photos turn out to be. They had lost a variety of news coverage, reports, and columns.<sup>28</sup> Instead, we can find several national projects and activities conducted by the pro-government women's organizations. The mainstream newspapers continually reported them.

Due to the nature of my sources, the focus of this dissertation is not about what Korean women were asking for or what they were trying to do. The newspapers and other publications, including women's magazines I collected, do not permit me to show how women resisted the Park Chung-Hee regime or patriarchy more generally.

### **Organization of the Study**

The main focus of this dissertation concerns the tactics and agendas of South Korea's military government to make Korean women contribute to national economic development. Throughout this project, attention will be shown to what Korean women who were mobilized by Park Chung-Hee's government gained and lost through the state-led activities. Chapter 1 examines pro-government women's organizations under Park Chung-Hee's rule, mainly the Council of Korean Women's Organizations (CKWO) and its affiliated women's groups. It estimates the main activities of the CKWO, analyzing the themes and agendas of its annual National Women's Convention. Particularly, the tension between the CKWO and the Korean Nurses Association (KNA) shows that women's social status and lack of power did not improve even under an umbrella women's organization that prioritized the national interest over the improvement of women's rights.

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<sup>28</sup> Basek Chae, "Bagjeonghui sidae sinmun dogjaui sahoemunhwasa [A Sociocultural History of Newspaper Audience in the Era of Park Chung-Hee Regime]," *Eonlonjeongboyeongu* 51 [*Journal of Communication Research* 51], no. 2 (August 2014), 8-9.

Chapter 2 examines South Korea's consumer movement in the 1960s and 1970s. This chapter describes the characteristics of the consumer movement and the relationship between the state and consumer groups. It shows how the military government controlled and overlooked women activists and their activities. The military elites rarely lent a helping hand to women consumer activists except when activists conducted activities that the male elites considered antithetical to the goals of the state. In addition, the government used women's consumer groups and their members as a showcase to appeal to prominent and influential foreign visitors in the international consumer movement. For the most part though, the government requested that women's groups pay attention to campaigns favoring domestic products over imports and promoting consumers' frugality. This chapter shows how South Korea's consumer activism was distorted by the manipulative military government.

Chapter 3 grasps how South Korea's military elites endeavored to encourage women "do science" in their daily lives. The military government attempted to portray ideal modern women as thinking scientifically and acting to serve the nation. The state conducted a campaign for scientific management of life for women. Government bureaucrats encouraged women to do science and prove their scientific capacities in national contests. In the scientific management campaign, women were promoted to become scientific thinkers and creative inventors for the benefit of the nation and the family.

Chapter 4 focuses on how Korean women were mobilized intensive developmental projects during the 1970s *Saemaul* movement period. The military government recognized the era as a precarious time when the country was beset by internal and external enemies. During this period, the government explicitly mobilized women on a large scale. It investigates three

main fields in the landscaping, the nationwide savings, and the population reduction at the local level.

## **CHAPTER 1. WOMEN'S GROUPS: WHO DO THEY STAND FOR? THE STATE OR FELLOW WOMEN**

A female Korean columnist of the 1965 *Kyunghyang Shinmun* proclaimed that South Korean society had achieved gender equality because the 1948 Korean Constitution not only secured women's suffrage, but also officially prohibited gender discrimination. According to her, Korean women's lives and their social status had been improved enough for them to exercise the legal rights to vote for their leaders and run for election as well as to hold positions in the government. The female columnist indicated that Korean women were already past the time when they had fought for women's rights and their emancipation. She claimed that women should contribute to the national growth and development, not pursuing the value of equality for women.<sup>29</sup> Not surprisingly, public opinion was less supportive of gender equality. Sex discrimination issues in public were rarely prioritized. Only a few feminist activists such as Lee Tae-young spoke up in a firm voice to amend laws with gender discriminatory provisions in the 1958 Civil Code.<sup>30</sup> South Korea's repressive and regulatory social pressure toward women constrained the development of the independent women's movement.

In the late 1950s, Korean female activists recognized the importance of an umbrella women's organization to make women's voice heard in society. Kim Hwal-ran, known by her English name, Helen Kim established the Council of Korean Women's Organizations (CKWO, *Hangug yeoseongdanche hyeobuihoe*) with the aim to reflect Korean women's voices toward the

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<sup>29</sup> Seo Je-sook, "Cultural Mountains, 20 Years of Liberation – Seeing the Growth of Women's Status," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 30, 1965.

<sup>30</sup> Lee You-Na, "Haebanghu Lee Taey-oungui yeoseong ingwonlongwa ingwon, minjuhwaundong [Lee Tae-young's Women's Human Rights, Human Rights, Democratization Movement after Liberation]," *Christianity and History in Korea* 46 (March 2017), 99. Lee Tae-young was a prominent legal feminist activist who had led the family law revision movement since the 1950s. Andrew H. Malcolm, "Pioneer Woman Runs Seoul Legal Aid Unit," *New York Times*, September 4, 1977.



state and society. Eight women's organizations agreed to affiliate with the CKWO on December 16, 1959.<sup>31</sup> Kim had built up her national reputation as an influential educator who received her Doctor of Philosophy degree from Columbia University in colonial Korea. She had been engaged in founding several other women's organizations such as the Korean YWCA and The Korean Association of University Women (BPW, *Hangug Yeohagsa Hyeobhoe*) in colonial Korea. She also became the first president of the prestigious Ewha Women's University in Seoul when the women's university received the first accreditation from the new ministry of education as the first four-year university in 1946 just after the liberation from Japan. As a Korean delegate, she also served to the United Nations on several occasions.<sup>32</sup> Her recognizable domestic and international reputations helped her establish the umbrella women's group. She believed that a united voice of women's organizations and individual women could enhance women's rights and amplify women's voice in society. Kim claimed that women could have a more significant impact on Korean society by collaborating with existing women's groups. A small number of women's groups agreed with the necessity of a women's coalition.<sup>33</sup>

Unlike the original expectation of the CKWO founder and its members, the CKWO was co-opted by the military government and was not allowed to work for equality for women and improve women's social status. Rather, they were asked to support the state's policies and contribute to the networking of international women's organizations. The two decades between 1960 and 1980 had witnessed women's mobilization for collective state interests. Women's

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<sup>31</sup> Brief History of the CKWO in the official homepage of Council of Korean Women's Organizations <http://www.CKWO.or.kr/01/03.php>. The eight women's groups are the Korea YWCA, the Research Institute for Women's Issues (RIWI), the Organization for Women's Protection Project, the Student Affairs Counseling Group, the Korean Mothers' Association, the General Headquarters of Korean Women's Association, and the Hanyang Women's Club.

<sup>32</sup> "Dr. Helen Kim, 71 Korean Feminist Ewha University Head and Pioneer in Education Dies," *New York Times*, February 12, 1970.

<sup>33</sup> "Women and Group Activities," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 09, 1960.

groups and individuals were mobilized in saving national resources, controlling population, and modernizing Korean household management. Marian Lief Palley in her article defines the CKWO and its affiliated women's groups as reformist groups—which women activists refer to traditional or mainstream organizations—appear, in contrast to the radical groups, to be moderate to conservative in bent—although many would be viewed as liberal in the American context.”<sup>34</sup>

The 1961 Korean military coup led by army general Park Chung-Hee changed the direction and activities that the CKWO pursued. Once General Park and his associates seized power, their first action was to disband all social and political organizations, including the CKWO in 1961. In September 1962, the Park Chung-Hee's provisional government announced that all Korean organizations were allowed to resume their activities and regular projects. Any of them, however, were not allowed to raise any political issues or debate political agendas. The state legitimized the CKWO as the sole official umbrella group, representing all individual women and women's organizations. The CKWO formed again and had to change the nature and goals of the organization, focusing on the state, not gender equality or women's rights. The principal value of the military government was put on the nation in unstable domestic and international situations. As the political pressure got more intense, the CKWO decided to collaborate with the military government rather than to stand for women's rights and to protect women workers.

This chapter examines the nature of women's movement under the military regime, focusing on activities of the CKWO and its tension with affiliated women's groups. Particularly, the tension between the CKWO and the Korean Nurses Association (KNA) shows that the CKWO isolated the value of equality and women's rights as the CKWO collaborated with the

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<sup>34</sup>Marian Lief Palley, “Women's Status in South Korea: Tradition and Change,” *Asian Survey* 30, no. 12 (December 1990), 1142.

military government to serve the country and contribute to national collective interests. Their silent struggles and invisible frustration give their future female generation a lesson that women's low social status would not be improved by male elites who neglected women and prioritized the national interest over women's rights.

### **Women's Rights and Human Rights**

Park Chung-hee's regime officially promoted women's rights and human rights. They comprehended the importance of civil activities of women's groups and human rights events in the international relations. The military regime showcased by encouraging women's organizations to participate in social activities and by promoting civil rights events. They played the role of showcases in improving South Korea's international image deteriorated with the 1961 military coup. Even though the military regime dismantled all social organizations just after their May coup, the authorities soon acknowledged that the CKWO could help disguise the unstable political situation with human rights by running women's events. That is why even after ordering the dissolution of all women's organizations, the government organized the first annual National Women's Convention in the same year when the military coup was conducted. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs was engaged in the event. They planned to hold the social events together. The ministry organized a national women's convention during Human Rights Week in December, at almost the same time as the National Women's Convention of the CKWO, which was held in the last two days of Human Rights Week. During Human Rights week, secondary school teachers educated their students about the significance of human rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Existing surveillance and protection programs for women were also mentioned in lessons about human rights. Moreover, the military government enthusiastically announced the existence of channels for reporting human rights violations in the

Information Division of the Attorney General's Office of the Ministry of Justice and at the prosecutor's office.<sup>35</sup>

The main activity of the women's convention was a discussion session on the topic of how the participants could help prostitutes and war widows through the Women's Surveillance and Protection program. The convention meeting divided into three parts, including lectures, discussions, and research presentations. A key theme in the lectures was that Korean women's organizations should not only participate in solving prostitution issues, but also educate ordinary housewives in order for them to work as volunteers for the country and their community.<sup>36</sup> Park Chung-Hee also attended the 1961 first National Women's Convention as the chairman of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR). Approximately 900 male and female national leaders attended, including high-ranking officials in the government and executives in social organizations: 450 female participants were leaders of women's organizations from all over the country, and 450 male participants came from cities, towns, and counties. Park Chung-Hee, the chairman of the SCNR, emphasized that women's united effort could be a great force in accomplishing a "revolutionary task" for the establishment of a new modern state.<sup>37</sup>

From the early stage when Park Chung-Hee seized power, the military regime planned how to control and mobilize women. The military elites decided that the National Women's Convention was a good starting point to gather and educate local female leaders of women's organizations. In late 1962, the military regime allowed all women's organizations to resume their projects and activities. On September 16, 1962, the Ministry of Education approved the CKWO to be a registered women's organization. However, it seems that the military elites did

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<sup>35</sup> "Various Events related to the fundamental Human Rights [gibongwon sijange gajgaji haengsa]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 19, 1961.

<sup>36</sup> "A Mother Educating the Nation," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 12, 1961.

<sup>37</sup> "National Women's Rally is held for Human Rights Week," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 13, 1961.

not have clear guidance for women.<sup>38</sup> Women's group leaders about which organization hold and host the annual National Women's Convention. Also, the military government might have thought that the government should be the host to organize and control the women's convention. In 1962, the Korean mass media reported that the government would host the second women's convention. However, at the end of October 1962, the *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that the host of the 2nd National Women's convention changed to the CKWO from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. But another newspaper delivered the different news that the women's organization and the government bureau will co-host the national women's convention. On October 22, 1962, the newspaper *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> national women's convention would be co-hosted by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the National Reconstruction Movement Headquarters where Park Chung-Hee presided, excluding the CKWO.<sup>39</sup> The national women's convention was introduced to be aimed to establish strong family ties and to encourage women to join volunteer work.<sup>40</sup> A week later, another newspaper article of the *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that the CKWO would host the 2nd National Women's Convention.<sup>41</sup> Less than a week later, the *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that the convention would be co-hosted by the CKWO and the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction, where Park Chung-Hee served as the chairman.<sup>42</sup> When the 2nd National Women's Convention was held in December 1962, the main goal was to establish the first Domestic Court and the Women's

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<sup>38</sup> Brief History of the CKWO in the official homepage of the Council of Korean Women's Organizations <http://www.CKWO.or.kr/01/03.php>

<sup>39</sup> "[What changed in 1961?]" (5) The National Reconstruction Movement Headquarters],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 26, 1961. The organization of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction was a temporary central administrative body formed mainly by seven officers who participated in the coup in the civil service training center ten days after the May 16 military coup. It was announced that the leaders of the military coup established an organization to manage the whole country and officially fulfilled the fundamental goals of pursuing communism, frugal living, hardworking, and the promotion of constructive consciousness.

<sup>40</sup> “National Women's Convention,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 22, 1962

<sup>41</sup> “Notification,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 29, 1962

<sup>42</sup> “Implementing Women's Social Participation, Domestic Court System,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 3, 1962.

Center for women to help women in need and provide legal services. The Women's Convention the CKWO hosted provided women an outlet to discuss Korean women's current situations and their hardships under the unequal social system.<sup>43</sup>

In 1963 the Ministry of Education and Culture approved the CKWO to be registered as an official umbrella women's organization, along with eleven affiliated women's organizations. The CKWO petitioned the government to build the Women's Hall, which was constructed by the government in 1963.<sup>44</sup> In 1963, the National Women's convention was held on the first and second days of November with the theme of how women can make the nation thrive. Lee Tae-young, the director of the Family Law Counseling Center, gave the main lecture and led a discussion session on the theme of improving the status of women.<sup>45</sup> In May of that year, 116 members of the Korean Christian Association demanded to amend the Korean civil law that legalized gender discrimination toward women. They also strongly appealed to the Supreme Assembly, the Supreme Court, and the Ministry of Justice to remove the contradictory legislation that ignored underprivileged women's rights.<sup>46</sup>

Direct requests for improving women's social status from the CKWO's affiliated groups seemed to disturb the military elites because Park Chung-Hee's military regime did not allow

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<sup>43</sup> "The Harvest of Women's Community in 1962 [yeoseong-gye 62nyeon-ui suhwag]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 29, 1962.

<sup>44</sup> Brief History of the CKWO in the official homepage of the Council of Korean Women's Organizations <http://www.CKWO.or.kr/01/03.php>

<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Health and Social Affairs [Pogon Sahoebu], *40-Year History of Women Administration [bunyeohaengjeong 40nyeonsa]* (Kyonggi-do Kwach'on-si: Ministry of Health and Social Affairs [Pogon Sahoebu], 1987), 101.

<sup>46</sup> "Korean Christian Association for the Promotion of Women's Status," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 9, 1963; They demanded the following: the abolition of the ban on the marriage between a man and a woman with the same surname and the same family origin, the abolition of the family head system, the establishment of a confirmation system of divorced parties for divorce. Some of the civil laws violate gender equality: inequality between men and women practices in determining the scope of kinship, (Article 777 of the Civil Code), in entering children of a husband's concubines without the spousal consent (article 782), in distributing the imprecise property of divorce spouses at the time of marital dissolution (paragraph 830 (2) of the Civil Code), in exercising parental rights when divorced (Article 909), in giving priority to an older child of concubines as legal heirs of family head. In the family inheritance, (Article 983), etc.

any organizations to engage in any political disputes. Mass media criticized the female activists, describing the event as “A large number of women gathered to give speeches about abstract issues, arguing with theories and exploding their anger.”<sup>47</sup> The *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, one of the mainstream newspapers in South Korea, reported that the Korean women’s movement had already gone through the struggles for women’s rights. It suggested that enlightened women should contribute to the development of the county, the society, and the family, not for their own benefit. Gradually, the CKWO complied with the government's demands.<sup>48</sup>

Two influential women’s organizations affiliated to the CKWO were the Korean YWCA and the RIWI. Firstly, the Korean YWCA was the largest women’s group in South Korea, with more than 3,000 members nationwide. The Korean YWCA and the Seoul YWCA had held various free and paid classes, including a class teaching how to simplify complicated ancestral rites. In order to solve current women’s issues, the Korean YWCA worked with its members across the country in promoting marriage registration and the use of a family court. The marriage registration helped wives keep their legal rights as a lawfully wedded wife when their husbands decided to leave the home and to live with their girlfriends. In addition, they conducted a fundraising project for the maintenance of domestic coastal defense ships.<sup>49</sup> The RIWI was established in 1952 during the Korean War with the aim of improving women’s legal status in the short term and enhancing women’s rights, which were suppressed under the Korean patriarchal system in the long term. Lee Hee-ho, Lee Tae-young, Hwang Shin-deok, and Park Soon-cheon, were the founding members. As a founding member and former executive secretary of the Korean YWCA, Lee Ho-ho became chairwoman, playing a leading role in the RIWI in the

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<sup>47</sup> “The Axis of 1963 (1) Activities of Women's Organizations,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 3, 1963.

<sup>48</sup> “Women’s Organizations Have a Year of Achievements,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 1964.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

1960s.<sup>50</sup> However, it was not easy for the RIWI to focus on conducting independent projects for women under the strict control of the military regime.<sup>51</sup>

### **The CKWO's Early National Women's Conventions**

The year 1963 officially became the first year of the annual National Women's Convention that the CKWO hosted. At this event, the CKWO took the position of a sole organization representing all women and women's organizations. That year, Park Chung-Hee attained the official position of the head of state and government after winning in the 1963 presidential election. With that political change, the government's mechanism to control the CKWO became indirect and deft. The theme of the 1963 National Women's Convention was the role of women in developing the country. The event was held in the building of the National Reconstruction Movement Headquarters, which had been used as the National Assembly since the 1970s. Notable attendees included the Minister of Health and Social Affairs, the Minister of Culture and Education, Go Hwang-kyung who was a founder of Seoul Women's University and professor at the university, and the wife of the US Ambassador, Samuel D. Berger, who also delivered congratulatory remarks.<sup>52</sup> In 1964, the mass media underlined the first lady's attendance as the honorary chairwoman of the CKWO in the second national women's

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"Lee Hee-ho Founded Institute of Women's Issues (RIWI) for Women Repressed by the (Korean) War," *Hankyoreh*, May 17, 2015.

<sup>51</sup> "Women's Organizations Have a Year of Achievements," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 1964.

The RIWI's first considerable project was a consumer movement. The third chapter about the Korean consumer movement includes the time when the RIWI hosted a public hearing about the Korean consumers' roles by inviting pro-government figures, including a bureaucrat, a businessman, and educators. The scene shows that the RIWI's activities in the 1960s were hindered by the state; but the narratives of the mass media nicely disguised the scene as a democratic scene where knowledgeable expert panelists shared their knowledge and discussed their current social issues.

<sup>52</sup> "Yeogdae jeongug-yeoseongdaehoe illampyo, 1963nyeonbuteo 1971nyeonkkaji [A List of Past National Women's Conventions from 1963 to 1971]," *Yeoseong* (October 1972), 42-43.



convention. She presented a Yongsin Service Award, praising the winner who made sacrifices for the country and community.<sup>53</sup>

Lee Han-ok was the first winner of the Yongsin award, who served for the poor in the rural areas almost for 30 years in rural areas. She even donated her own house to build a rural welfare facility. For Korean women, the traditional women's role as being a wise mother and a good wife expanded into the role of being a social volunteer in the public sphere. This was well demonstrated in the awarding of the Yongsin Award of Voluntary Service. The name of the "Yongsin" award derived from a woman with a name of Choi Yong-sin who was dedicated to the education of women and farmers during the Japanese colonial period in Korea. The Yongsin award shows what traits and actions would be considered ideal for a nationally recognized woman. The award reminded Korean women that they must sacrifice themselves to save the country from national hardship.<sup>54</sup>

In 1965, the 3rd National Women's Convention was held for two days at the Women's Center, a five-story building in Namsan that the government provided to the CKWO and its affiliated women's groups. The government constructed the women's center, using 28.81 million won donated by an anonymous donor at the end of 1963. At the opening of the women's center, the Minister of Health and Social Affairs delivered the center key to Kim Hwal-ran, who was the first president of the CKWO who served in the position until her death in 1970.<sup>55</sup> In this meeting, female leaders discussed their obligations with the theme of "Housewives' Efforts to Build National Resources." In 1965, the CKWO had ten affiliated women's organizations. A

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<sup>53</sup> "National Women's Rally," the *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 24, 1964

<sup>54</sup> "The first Yongsin service award, 30 years of Volunteering Work for Development of an Agricultural Community, Mrs. Han-ok Lee," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 22, 1964; "Mrs. Lee Han-ok, 1st Yongsin Service Award," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 23, 1964; "The 1st Yongsin Service Award-Awarded to Mrs. Lee Han Ok," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 25, 1964.

<sup>55</sup> "Newly opened Women's Center," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 17, 1963.

total of 400 people participated in the 1965 gathering, including leaders and members coming from these ten organizations as well as students at colleges.<sup>56</sup> That year's theme emphasized the role of frugal consumers. Lectures encouraged participants to become another "Choi Yong-sin" and serve the nation.<sup>57</sup>

After moving out of the Women's Center in Namsan, the CKWO held the fourth National Women's Convention in 1966 in the Gyeonggi Girls' High School Auditorium with approximately 500 female leaders from across the country. Attendees also included senior officials, including the Prime Minister.<sup>58</sup> The theme of the convention was "women's responsibility to participate in the national modernization."<sup>59</sup> The CKWO awarded the Yongsin Prize to a 58-year-old social worker who was a founder of the Mokpo YWCA.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> "Frugal housewives Save National Resources, the 3rd National Women's Rally [altteulhan jubusallim nalajawon neullinda je3hoe jeongug yeoseongdaehoe]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 28, 1965.

<sup>57</sup> "We save 20 won every month and made a household account book [maewol 20wonssig jeochughago bandeusi gagyebuleul jagseong, gwanhonsangje]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 5, 1965.

<sup>58</sup> "National Women's Rally and Yongsin Award of Voluntary Service in the Gyeonggi Girls' High School Auditorium [jeongug-yeoseongdaehoe yongsinsangdo jugo gyeong-giyeogo gangdangseo]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 16, 1966.

<sup>59</sup> "The 4<sup>th</sup> National Women's Rally," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 14, 1966.

<sup>60</sup> "Yongsin Prize is granted to Choi Chan-yeol and Choi Gap-jin [yongsinsang-e choechan-yeol, choegabjin du yeosagyeoljeong]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 10, 1966; "National Women's Rally 28 and 29 for two days," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 23, 1967; "Yongsin Prize of Voluntary Service: Lady Yang Han-ra at the Opening of the National Women's Rally," *Mail-Kyungje*, September 28, 1967; "Yongsin Prize for Voluntary Service providers," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 28, 1967. The recipient was a Christian who had cared for over 80 war orphans since the Korean War. She set up a "House of Happiness" and a hospital to accommodate homeless women aged 13-60 with mental illness; "Lady Yoo Byung-eun, Winner," *Mail Kyungje*, September 16, 1969. Winner of the 6th Yongsin Award of Voluntary Service was Yoo Byung-eun, 54-year-old principal of Pusan School for the Blind. She was devoted to educating blind children for 18 years. Yoo educated people about the necessity of education for the disabled as a pioneer social activist. She made an ensemble of blind and deaf children to inform Koreans about their existence and the need for education.; "Yongsin Voluntary Service Prize to Ok Su-bok devoted her life to the rehabilitation of helpless patients," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 27, 1974. The winner of the Yongsin Service Award in 1974 was awarded for his high recognition that Mrs. Ok Su-bok served the poor for 40 years. In 1933, Mrs. Ok left the nursing midwifery training camp at *Hamheung Jehye* Hospital and worked for the underprivileged for 40 years at Jehe Hospital, 64 Field Hospital, and the Pulmonary Tuberculosis ward of Christian World Service. She worked at Geoje Field Hospital as a deputy supervisor of the Korean War and took care of about 3,000 wounded soldiers and worked in the pulmonary tuberculosis ward to treat patients. Amid the hard work, she gathered 30 patients having no one to rely on and rehabilitated them up in the church district of Yeokchon-dong.

## **Women's Center for the CKWO**

The government did not provide much support to this organization because they also lacked financial resources. Therefore, the new administration was tight with the financial support to women's organizations. In 1963, the CKWO just earned a right to use the five-story building. They did not permanently use the building rented from the government without charge. Two years later, the CKWO was told to return to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the five-story building. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs announced that the CKWO and the affiliated women's organizations would not use the building after 1965. The ministry indicated that the government would use the spaces for fostering women's organizations and giving "chances to more women." The umbrella women's organization complained that men occupied the building spaces after they moved out although the government had stated that the five-story building would be open to more women and women's groups. The CKWO criticized the government that the building should be called a men's center, instead of a women's center.<sup>61</sup> Women's organizations expressed dissatisfaction with the government's decision, but their complaints were not accepted with the government's excuse, expanding chances to use the building space to more women and women's groups. Yet, it turned out that the spaces of the building facilitated men's meetings and events.<sup>62</sup>

The CKWO did not find any buildings for their regular meetings. Therefore, the CKWO and its eleven affiliated women's organizations had to be scattered, and the CKWO only found a short-term rent at the corner of Methodist Theological Seminary School. Until 1970, the CKWO could not find a place for a long-term lease. They adopted a plan of selling 20,000 vinyl records

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<sup>61</sup> "Bullying the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the CKWO left the Women Center," *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 15, 1966.

<sup>62</sup> "National Women's Rally will be held in the middle of next month," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 18, 1966.

to their members to fundraise the purchase of a seven-story building.<sup>63</sup> It took another five years to fund a permanent building. In 1975, through donations and bazaars without the government's support, the CKWO and the affiliated women's organizations finally had a building to facilitate several group meetings and programs.<sup>64</sup>

### **The CKWO and Women's Social Activities**

The CKWO became an active advocate of women's social activities in the public sphere. They claimed that Korean women were given a new role in social participation by helping people in need. The new role of women was well demonstrated in the 1967 National Women's Convention. The main speakers of the National Women's Convention were Kim Hwal-ran and Won Sun-hee. In her lecture entitled "Women's Responsibilities and their Participation in Modernization," Kim Hwal-ran simply defined modernization as being better off. She stated that the role of individuals in joining the modernization process was like pursuing a balanced life between mind and body. However, behind her emphasis was the government's intention to use women in government policies through their active social activities. Korean women were introduced to the consumer movement and frugal campaigns that the government actively promoted. Won Sun-hee, in her lecture "Confront Korea's Current Situation," stressed the need for Korean women to recognize new roles outside of the traditional wife and mother roles. She argued that Korean women should contribute to society by turning women's energy toward volunteer activities.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> "Hearty women's gathering," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 5, 1970.

<sup>64</sup> "The Hall opening Ceremony of the CKWO," *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 3, 1975.

<sup>65</sup> "Two Responsibilities Women Should Take," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 17, 1966.

At the 4th annual National Women's Convention, the CKWO set up the theme of Korean women's modern lifestyle. The CKWO members agreed on the following resolutions:

Firstly, Korean women will confront the current reality and set up a proper attitude towards women's rights and the responsibilities. We should resist any extravagant lifestyle and develop self-reliance. As homemakers, we must spend our free time on volunteer social work and for our modernization. Secondly, we must pursue the modern lifestyle based on renovation. The homemakers should practice simplified family lifestyles as the host of the home.<sup>66</sup>

The CKWO encouraged women to be successful in the role of housewives while working. They pointed out that women's efforts and patience were required not only at home, but also in society and for the sake of the country. In collaboration with government agencies, they promoted women dedicating themselves to society as well as family. The organization had created a variety of awards to encourage dedicated women to join volunteer works for the state and the community. At the national Parents' Day event on May 8, 1967, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs as well as women's organizations selected seven "honorable mothers" to commend and award for their contributions to. With the exception of one housewife, the six mothers were all working, with positions as a gynecologist, a director of a daycare center, a principal in a high school, a businesswoman with fashion sewing private school, a civil servant in a county office, and a branch manager of a women's association.

They were praised for not only educating their children well but for contributing to the modernization of the country through social participation. Other women's associations also created the same type of award honoring mothers contributing to society and family. Sometimes women won multiple awards at award ceremonies hosted by more than a women's group. One of the seven winners of the CKWO award, the 69-year-old gynecologist, was also selected as the

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<sup>66</sup> "Resolution Adopted in the National Women's Rally," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 22, 1966.

“great mother” of the year by another women’s group, the Korean Women’s Association. She had founded the *Insung* Foundation in 1949 where she helped over 100 underprivileged students graduate from college. Additionally, news sources reported that she had been supporting seven college students with her income when she received the award.<sup>67</sup>

### **The Relationship with the KNA**

In late 1966, Kim Hwal-ran, the CKWO president, agreed to assist the Korean Nurses Association (KNA), one of the CKWO’s affiliated groups, when the KNA raised concerns about the poor working conditions and low wages of nurses. Korean nurses suffered from unfair treatment and low wages. As the largest professional women’s organization, the KNA had submitted a petition to the government. According to the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the CKWO was supportive of the KNA’s demands. The CKWO claimed that the KNA’s requests were fighting for their rights as working women. They were not limited to merely protecting individual nurses themselves. The CKWO pointed out that the KNA was claiming their rights as workers.<sup>68</sup> The CKWO’s support for the KNA’s resistance reflected the belief of the CKWO’s president, Kim Hwal-ran, for the significance and the recognition of working women’s career.<sup>69</sup>

The KNA became an affiliated group to the CKWO in 1963. Second in size only to the Korean YWCA, the KNA had 8000 members. Supportive of the KNA, the military regime empowered the nurses’ association to prepare for a national security situation in danger of war at any time. In cooperation with the military regime, the KNA also assisted the government to conduct a family planning policy, using their local branches since 1963.<sup>70</sup> From early in 1965,

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<sup>67</sup> “Today is Mother’s Day,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 8, 1967.

<sup>68</sup> “Mojalaneun ganhowon [The Lack of Nurses],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 17, 1966.

<sup>69</sup> Kim Hwal-ran, *Apeulo oneun 50nyeongwa yeoseongui yeoghal* [*The Next 50 Years and the Role of Women*], (Seoul: Ewha Women’s University Publisher, 1968), 8-10.

<sup>70</sup> “The Axis of 1963 (1) Activities of Women’s Organizations,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 3, 1963.

the KNA took collective actions to help nurses who suffered from unfair treatment and terrible working conditions. In July 1965, the Railroad Administration compelled 80 female nurses working at four railroad hospitals to sign petitions to resign. The KNA immediately convened a meeting to consider actions with head nurses of 28 general hospitals in Seoul. Then, they published a statement in a newspaper, criticizing the four railroad hospitals' decision. The KNA showed their hardline attitude toward the hospitals. They claimed that the administrators of the railroad hospitals treated their employees mercilessly without any regard for labor rights. They also pointed out that it would be a strong possibility to spread their cause to other national hospitals.<sup>71</sup> They insisted that the hospital executives illegally deprived the nurses' public official status and forced married nurses to quit their jobs.<sup>72</sup>

Those who held leadership positions in the KNA were nursing professors or head nurses, while most members of the KNA were low-wage nurses with humble family backgrounds. In the 1960s, most of the nurses earned wages similar to the earnings of female factory workers. In those days, poor young women could easily work as nurses without a nursing degree. After graduating from middle school, they were required to complete a short-term nurse training program and pass an examination. Statistics from 1962 in the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* show that majority of nurses became a nurse without a higher education background; many did not keep doing their nursing jobs after their thirties. 77.5% out of the total 5,813 nurses had graduated from middle school as their highest education level. High school graduates accounted for 15.2% or 880 nurses. Only 214 nurses (3.7%) and 77 nurses (1.3%) held a four-year bachelor's degree or a two-year college degree, respectively. Looking at the age of nurses, among the total of 5,813 nurses, nurses between 21 and 30 years-old accounted for the highest

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<sup>71</sup> "A Right of Nurses Working in Railroad Hospital," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 7, 1965.

<sup>72</sup> "Troubles with a measure to enforce resignation" *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, July 7, 1965.

proportion at the 64 %. The nurses aged between 31 and 40 years-old accounted for 16%. The youngest, nurses under the age of 20, comprised 15% of the total nurses. The oldest category, 41 years and older, were only 5% of all nurses.<sup>73</sup>

### **Military Tensions in 1968 and Mobilization of Women**

In 1968, the South Korean military regime urged Korean women to reconsider their consciousness of national security, mainly due to the tension between the two Koreas that could lead to a second Korean War. That year, South Korea went through several military encounters and espionage threats from North Korea. In January 1968, 31 armed North Korean spies, called the 124th Army, came to South Korea with a plan to attack the Blue House, the official residence of the South Korean president. That same month, the US reconnaissance submarine *Pueblo* was captured by North Korea. At that time, the USS *Pueblo* was departing from Kyushu, Japan, and headed for Vladivostok in the Soviet Union. Their purpose was to reconnoiter the Soviet base of the Far East and collect information from the east coast of North Korea. When the US Navy did not leave North Korean waters, North Korea regarded it as a US armed penetration and captured the submarine. The United States issued an emergency mobilization order to prepare for 372 aircraft, including navy and fighter planes. At the same time, the US entered secret negotiations with the North Korean authorities, despite the opposition from the South Korean government. Concerns that the Korean Peninsula could lead to war once again caused Park Chung-Hee to realign the spirit of the Korean people, including women. These situations affected the CKWO in their decision of the theme for the 1968 Women's National Convention.

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<sup>73</sup> "The Survey of the Korean Nurses Association," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 4, 1962.



The 1968 annual Women's National Convention adopted the theme "Let's all work together for the homeland defense." Attendees coming from the affiliated women's groups discussed what women's roles would be if a war broke out soon. Kim Hwal-ran, the chairwoman of the CKWO, insisted that the women's support behind the scenes would be as significant as much as fighting with a weapon in the frontline. Therefore, Kim pointed out that Korean women should be prepared to take care of wounded soldiers with their soft hands that had been washing and sewing in the home. She also encouraged the participants to be willing to join the war as potential combatants in an emergency situation.<sup>74</sup>

For the national defense, women's obligation was to help the state achieve national self-sufficiency to prepare for war with North Korea, along with participating in a pre-war savings campaign. Messages promoting thrift and frugality were sent to leaders of women's organizations. The annual convention concluded that Korean women must become frugal consumers and achieve the "scientific management of life."<sup>75</sup> The scientific management of life became a main theme as modernization of Korean households and women's life throughout the Park Chung-Hee regime.<sup>76</sup>

The direction of Park Chung-Hee regime for women was to strengthen their national security awareness on domestic and international situations. Government messages urged Korean women to be aware of the significance of the country rather than to think and behave as

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<sup>74</sup> "Let's all work together for homeland defense [gugdo bang-wi neodonado]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 27, 1968.

<sup>75</sup> "Great Power of Science," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 21, 1926.

The mentioning of the "scientific management" and scientific spirit started from the 1920s Japanese colonial period. Korean intellectuals praised the "scientific" spirit as not only necessary for scientist but also the whole people in the peninsula. One of them defined the main features of "scientific management" as avoiding waste and making things rational and economical. They believed that scientific spirit would help people be more productive and rational, based on certified knowledge.

<sup>76</sup> The third chapter in this dissertation deals with the scientific management of life and households.

individuals who could speak their own voice and make their own decisions.<sup>77</sup> The two key figures of the CKWO, Kim Hwal-ran and Lee Sook-jong are particularly important in terms of the national security obligation for women, as they were the first and second CKWO chairwomen. They had experienced how ordinary people under war situations could prepare and survive through Japan's Pacific War preparation and the Korean War.<sup>78</sup>

In the past, both of them had been active participants, cooperating with the Japanese authorities for the victory of the Pacific War in the Japanese colonial period in Korea. The two Korean women acted as promoters of multiple pro-Japanese women's organizations, including the Korean Society for the Studies of Joseon's Issues and the Patriots' Association. They participated in campaigns to promote savings for Japan's Pacific War; they encouraged young Korean women to cooperate in carrying out the Japanese war as supporters at the back and encouraged young Korean men to fight against Japan's enemies. Lee Sook-jong, who was the first vice president and later became the second president of the CKWO, emphasized women's sacrifice for the Japanese empire through practicing the scientific management of a lifestyle and a frugal lifestyle in her publications.<sup>79</sup> She claimed that "we, wives, are able to make

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<sup>77</sup> "Show off our Pride in the World, Adopted Resolution at National Womens Rally [uligeungji segye gwasi jeongug-yeoseongdaehoeseo gyeol-uimun chaetaeg]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 2, 1968.

<sup>78</sup> Lee Sook-jong, "Family Life during the War," *Cho Kwang* 9, no. 1 (January 1943), 110-113. This article is part of the collection of the *Report for Pro-Japanese Collaborators VI-13*: 352-354.

The whole third chapter of this dissertation deals with the "scientific management of life" for Korean women.

<sup>79</sup> Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism [Taetongnyong Sosok Chinil Panminjok Haengwi Chinsang Kyumyong Wiwonhoe], *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism VI-13* [Chinil panminjok haengwi chinsang kyumyong pogoso], (Seoul: Taetongnyong Sosok Chinil Panminjok Haengwi Chinsang Kyumyong Wiwonhoe, 2009), 365-366; *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism VI-4*, 788-789. The South Korean government promulgated the Special Act on the Establishment of Anti-National Behavior on March 22, 2004. Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism (PCIC) was launched on May 31, 2005, according to the enforcement decree of this act. The PCIC conducted investigations and published *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism* (*Report for Pro-Japanese Collaborators*) in 2009. The committee divided pro-Japanese collaborators into three periods to investigate their pro-Japanese activities. The first and second presidents of the CKWO, Kim Hwal-ran, and Lee Sook-jong, were included in the list of pro-Japanese collaborators who worked with the Japanese Government-General of Korea in the third period, 1937-1945. The 2009 *Report for the Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism* included their writings, pro-Japanese activities during the Japanese colonial period.

extraordinary efforts to protect our home and take part in patriotic activities with all our hearts. ... We [Korean women] should make our lives “scientificized” during this war.”<sup>80</sup>

### **Tension between the CKWO and the KNA**

In 1969, over 1,500 Korean nurses departed for overseas employment under the permission of the government’s labor agency. At that time, approximately 2,000 nurses graduated from several nursing schools every year.<sup>81</sup> Young women who became nurses soon became frustrated by their poor working conditions and low wages. They did not hide their dissatisfaction when facing unfair situations. Nurses’ resistance and disobedience made the government force the KNA to control the complaining and rebellious groups of nurses. In June 1969, the Ministry of Labor accused the KNA’s chairwoman, Hong Shin-young, of violating the Occupational Security Act by recruiting nurses wanting to work in West Germany without the government’s permission. The ministry claimed that the KNA had recruited more than 40 nurses from local areas across the country without obtaining the government’s permission, an act which required prior authorization from the Labor Administration. The *Maeil Kyungje* reported that the trial court would impose a three-year jail sentence or a fine of 300,000 won or less, based on the Articles 15 and 30 of the Occupational Security Act if the allegation of the violation would be confirmed.<sup>82</sup>

By the end of the 1960s, the CKWO’s influence on women’s organizations across the country was growing. The number of women’s groups affiliated with the CKWO in 1969 increased to 39 groups, a threefold increase compared to that of the affiliated women’s groups in

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> “Dark Side of Working Women (1) Nurses,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 10, 1969.

<sup>82</sup> “Accusation of the KNA,” *Maeil Kyungje*, June 6, 1969.

1963. The theme of the annual National Women's Convention in 1969 was the "Development of Women's Abilities and their Effective Contribution to society." Prominent lectures of the convention encouraged the participants to be real leaders waking up 15 million Korean women who did not recognize their hidden gifts.<sup>83</sup> The CKWO refrained from actively speaking on political issues sensitive to the government, and gradually avoided the difficulties of the KNA and its nurses.

In 1970, the strike of hundreds of nurses in Seoul made a strong impression on Korean citizens. At the end of February of the same year, the KNA informed the government that nurses with the KNA membership would refuse to inject patients in their hospitals to get a legal protection. In September 1970, one day before the 1970 National Women's Convention started, 164 nurses working in the Seoul National University hospital carried out a strike, demanding a pay raise and the improvement of their working conditions.<sup>84</sup> In early 1970, thousands of nurses refused to give patients shots in their hospitals. A law declared that a Korean nurse needed a doctor's supervision when providing injections, so nurses were to be punished if the injection to a patient without a doctor's presence caused a problem to the patient. At the time, it was common for nurses to give injections to patients alone, but there was always a fear for them to face a problematic situation. When a nurse was arrested by the police due to an injection she gave, nurses took collective action. As a result, hospitals across the country were in great turmoil because many doctors had to provide injections instead of nurses.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> "National Women's Rally 18<sup>th</sup> at Duksung Women's University [Jeongug yeoseongdaehoe 18il deogseong-yeodae]," *Mail-Kyungje*, September 17, 1969.

<sup>84</sup> "When nurses expressed their intention to refuse to inject patients, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs asks for the withdrawal," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 28, 1970.

<sup>85</sup> "Nurses across the country, Demonstrate Together," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 3, 1970.

In the fall of 1970, another strike of nurses at a prestigious hospital shocked the public because the Seoul National University Hospital (SNUH) was one of South Korea's most prestigious national university hospitals. Prior to the strike of the SNUH nurses, male interns of the SNUH attempted to strike, demanding improvement of labor conditions and salary increase from the government. The strike ended up with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs promising to improve the treatment of male intern doctors. Then, the nurses went on strike, expecting an improvement in their working conditions as the male interns did. The nurses informed the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs that nurses would stop working if the government would not take adequate steps to help them. Their demands were to increase their income one rank higher and raise the subsistence allowance from 2,000 won to 15,000 won and to raise monthly subsidy from 700 won to 1,500 won. Additionally, they requested a holiday allowance and a menstruation leave. Most of all, they requested that more nurses be hired. According to the Medical Standards Act, one nurse had to care for 30 outpatients and five inpatients. However, the reality of their hospital was that one nurse had to take care of at least 42 outpatients or 20 inpatients every day. They claimed that they were overworked and took charge of too many patients.<sup>86</sup>

In the *Dong-A Ilbo* interview with Professor Hong Shin-young the president of the KNA, she spoke out about the agonies and pains of nurses. According to her, Korean nurses were significantly discriminated against in terms of salary increases and benefits compared to male doctors and interns. The president of the KNA pointed out that the government drove them to carry out their work with extreme means. She supported the nurses, stating that Korean nurses worked with the motto of sacrifice. She tried to change the miserable situations of many nurses,

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<sup>86</sup> "Seoul National University Hospital Nurses' Strike for a Wage Increase [seouldaebusogbyeong-won jibdansatong-gong-ganhowon geublyo tujaeng]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 22, 1970.

deeply sympathizing with the nurses trying to save their minimum wages and transportation costs. Since nurses worked across three shifts spanning all times of day and night, sometimes they needed to use taxis in the early morning or at late night. However, their wage was not able to cover those expenses. Even though nurses came out at dawn for the three shifts, they did not receive minimum transportation expenses. A considerable number of nurses struggled to keep the job because their monthly wage was too small to cover the expense for a maid or a babysitter to care of their children and do household chores. Moreover, she pointed out the gender wage gap in wage increases. In her newspaper interview, she criticized the government promising to raise doctors' salaries to between 80,000 and 100,000 won while promising nurses only a 2,000 won increase regardless of their positions.<sup>87</sup>

Contrary to the request of the chairwoman of the KNA, the government expressed its intention to put down their demands. Furthermore, when the nurses refused to come back to the hospital to work, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs responded offensively to the strike of the nurses, in contrast to accepting the requests from the male intern strike. The ministry stated that the government would accuse the nurses of dereliction of their duties. The Minister of Health and Social Affairs, Hong Jong-kwan, proclaimed that the ministry would report their action of occupational irresponsibility as collective offenses in accordance with the Civil Service Act and report it to the judicial authorities. He stated that the government would not accept strikes because nurses and doctors deal with human being's lives unlike workers in manufacturing factories. Then, he warned that nurses would be punished for their irresponsible behavior.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Kwon Geun-sul, "Interview with the President of the Korean Nursing Association, Mrs. Hong Shin-Young, Adequate Treatment to hardworking," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 26, 1970.

<sup>88</sup> "The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Warning to the decision of the nurse's collective resignation," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 24, 1970.

Despite the government's warning, nurses did not stop their collective action. After a day, however, the ministry abruptly changed its attitude. The government announced that the ministry would consider the wage increase, depending on what types of nursing degree or qualification each nurse had obtained, ranging from graduation from a nursing high school to a two-year nursing college degree or a bachelor's degree of a four-year nursing university. The government also announced that there would be a proposal for increased salaries and food benefit. The government's proposal seemed to have met the nurses' demands on the surface, but it ended up with a very low wage increase, as most nurses graduated from secondary school and became nurses through a few months' nursing training program.<sup>89</sup>

In the 1970s, the CKWO avoided commenting on any struggles of the nurses as well as other collective protests or demonstrations led by women workers in the 1970s against the government or companies. Nurse strikes were reported in the mass media, but the CKWO did not mention a word about it. The death of Kim Hwal-ran, one of the most influential female educators and the first chairwoman of the CKWO, may have been another reason the CKWO was not involved in any nurses' strikes. Kim was always a strong advocate for working women and groups of female professionals. She also publicly revealed her opinions that the CKWO must help women become empowered at workplace when she was the chairwoman of the CKWO.<sup>90</sup> On the day of the 1970 National Women's Convention, the public and mass media expressed disappointment in the low wages. The CKWO, however, avoided making any direct statement about issues of women's low social status or the gender wage gap. They showed quite a different

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<sup>89</sup> "The Minister of Education Reviews position adjustments due to the collective nurse resignation," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 25, 1970.

<sup>90</sup> Suh Myung-Sun, "The State and Women's Organizations during Yu-Shin Period: Focusing on the Activities of the Council of Korean Women's Organizations," *Women's Studies* 6 (Seoul: Korean Institute for Women, Ehwa Women's University Press, 1989), 91.

attitude from how the CKWO responded to the KNA's petition in 1966, emphasizing improvement of working environments and sufficient benefits for working women. Instead, in 1970, they focused on women's social duties and responsibilities regarding demographic, military, and consumption issues. The main lecture of the 1970 National Women's Convention was conducted by Yonsei University medical school male professor Yang Jae-mo on the theme of "[19]70s and the Population Issue." The first day of the event began to pay a tribute to Kim Hwal-ran's death.<sup>91</sup>

Professor Yang Jae-mo at Yonsei University Medical School presented on the details of the National Family Plan, which was essentially a government-led population reduction policy. Firstly, Yang Jae-mo justified the need for conducting the population decrease policy in terms of the increased financial burden not only on government but also on society and family. Dr. Yang explained that people on Earth were suffering from overpopulation. He urged the participants that South Korea was not the only country facing this problem but that the whole world was affected. He stated that the overcrowded and polluted environment had a dreadful impact on the health of mothers as well as that of children. Also, he stated that multiple countries had managed the situation, using various methods such as marriage at later ages in life, abstinence, contraception, infertility, and abortion. He stressed the need for the voluntary participation of women in the government family plan. According to him, women themselves should play an essential role in controlling fertility, based on the mission of the government, in order to prevent the world population from self-destructive population growth. Another lecturer, Roh Jung-Hyun, was a professor in public administration. She emphasized another population issue, the rapid

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<sup>91</sup> "Opening of the National Women's Convention," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 25, 1970.



migration from rural to urban areas.<sup>92</sup> In response to these lectures, the CKWO members in the 1970 convention drew up resolutions to the government on population issues.

Firstly, the resolution for the government is as follows. (1) To implement urgent training for family planning assistants (2) To involve women's organizations in the government family plan (3) To make maternal and child health legislation (4) To abolish any gender discrimination in the family law (5) To revise fuel policies to reduce toxic gas that coal briquettes emit.<sup>93</sup>

The CKWO adopted a resolution on the topic of the national meeting following panel discussions and small group discussions.

(1) Each organization should make the family planning program a top priority. (2) The CKWO shall establish a Family Planning Committee in which they would train leaders to carry out a basic survey inquiring about family planning and take care of public relations activities.<sup>94</sup>

The *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper article, however, expressed doubt about the utility of the Family Planning Committee. The liberal press pointed out that Korean women should pay more attention to the extent to which government-supported contraceptive methods were harmful to their bodies. The newspaper criticized the members of the CKWO for being indifferent to the problems facing women. Few members of the CKWO underlined the side effects from contraceptive devices, medication, and other medical operation on women's health. At the time, women had suffered from side effects of the contraceptive practices. Therefore, the *Dong-A Ilbo* reporter claimed that the CKWO and women's organizations had to look at the government's family planning in terms of whether the government's aggressive population reduction policy was potentially against women's physical safety.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> "Opening of the National Women's Convention," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 25, 1970.

<sup>93</sup> "Not Purchasing any defective products," <sup>93</sup> *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 1, 1970.

<sup>94</sup> "Kajok gyehogwi seolchian-eun banghyangchag-o [Misunderstanding of the direction of the Plan of the Family Planning Committee]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 29, 1970.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

The CKWO turned its attention away from the situations of suffering working women and focused on small and “safe” issues that were encouraged by the government. In the 1970 national convention, the focus for the discussion was the resolution to boycott defective products. The *Dong-A Ilbo* reported housewives discussing problems of defective products and solutions to stop companies making them. In September 1970 in Seoul, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Women’s affairs division exhibited 1,539 defective products. Hundreds of thousands of citizens, mainly housewives, were invited to visit the exhibition and to join the movement against purchasing any defective products.<sup>96</sup> The CKWO declared that they would boycott manufacturers producing defective goods until the producers showed improved efforts to protect consumers’ rights.<sup>97</sup>

Nonetheless, the liberal media, the *Dong-A Ilbo*, criticized the CKWO’s statement as a failed plan. The CKWO members were not able to boycott even a single company producing any defective products because the government provided financial funds to foster several industries and domestic companies. The newspaper criticized the CKWO’s top-down mindset of “What can we do to help the authorities” shown in their collective activities. The media pointed out that Korean women were reluctant to put their effort toward more significant, unsolved women’s issues. More importantly, the *Dong-A Ilbo* pointed out that nurses’ protests should have been a more urgent and significant issue to women than the consumer protection issue dealt with in the 1970 National Women’s Convention.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Shin Dong-Ho, “The Economic Focus on the 70-Year Savings (6) Bad Products and Consumer Awakening,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 29, 1970.

<sup>97</sup> “Kajok gyehogwi seolchian-eun banghyangchag-o [Misunderstanding of the direction of the Plan of the Family Planning Committee],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 29, 1970.

<sup>98</sup> “Poor Performances of Group Activities of Women’s Organizations-Year’s Settlement [Pyongnyonjak iha danch’ehwaldong yosonggye-ilnyon gyolsan],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 15, 1970.

Despite the media's criticism, the CKWO did not change their direction, but continued to promote social policies to women. In December 1970, the CKWO held a round-table meeting with the title of the "Harmful effects of private employment agencies, marriage agencies, and job advertisements on society" on the 10th day of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At that time, human trafficking of young women and girls had become a social concern. Many poor young women who ran away from their rural families frequently became targets of traffickers for sexual exploitation. Most human traffickers pretended to run private employment agencies, marriage agencies, and agencies for job advertisements in newspapers. Those criminal agencies sold young women who visited their offices to bars or brothels.<sup>99</sup>

In the CKWO discussion meeting, government officials such as the head of the Women's Affairs Division in the City Hall of Seoul and the Secretary-General of the Labor Department joined the meeting. Women representatives in attendance pointed to women's vulnerable situation in society and called for the government to make a realistic and immediate decision to address the solution. At the meeting, Lee Moon-heung, the director of job security at the Labor Relations Office, suggested a few long- and short-term measures to prevent human trafficking by job brokers. For the main long-term measure, the government could increase the number of lodging camps for female workers. For a short-term measure, the authorities should reduce the number of exploitive private employment agencies scattered across the country, which totalled 269 at that time. He insisted on the implementation of the policies that would allow women access to free and non-exploitive agencies.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> "Inkwon sonon kinyom jwadam han'guk yosong danch'ehyop [A talk to commemorate the Declaration of Human Rights, the Council of Korean Women's Organizations]," *Maeil Kyongje*, December 11, 1970; "Jikop sogesolobuto ui yokwon boho nodongchong, han'guk yosong danch'ehyop [Protecting women's rights from employment agencies, the Labor Office and the Council of Korean Women's Organizations]," *Kyonghyang Shinmun*, December 12, 1970.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

However, the *Dong-A Ilbo* kept criticizing the CKWO for its complacency with the repeated pro-government practice of issuing resolutions. The *Dong-A Ilbo* indicated that the CKWO touched only minor problems without digging into the core of women's issues, such as the neglected and abused working women who were treated unfairly with low wages in the manufacturing and service industries. They claimed that urgent women's problems would never be solved with a few meetings and a few simple suggestions made to the government. The newspaper urged the CKWO not to shout only superficial "slogans," but to carry out sufficient investigations of women's social, economic, and legal conditions and the solutions.<sup>101</sup>

### **The CKWO: Non-political Women's Issues**

In 1971 the CKWO focused on campaigns to expel provocative comic books, defective goods, and social corruption. In June 1971, they held a campaign to eradicate inappropriate comic books, participating in seven women's groups with 300 members. They blamed immoral comic book publishers, cartoonists, and an irresponsible government agency. The members of the CKWO pointed out issues about book contents and formats. They claimed that inappropriate comic books exaggerated dark sides of society as well as had lots of errors in spelling and letter spacing. Comic books showed low quality of color mixing and printing. The women participants burned three scarecrows and 500 comic books in order to arouse people's attention to the harmfulness of low-quality cartoons. They claimed that responsible adults should protect children and eradicate the root of evil because low-quality comic books, which published 14.6 million copies, annually, were contaminating the innocence of childhood.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> "Pyongnyonjak iha danch'ehwaldong yosonggye-ilnyon gyolsan [Poor Performances of Group Activities of Women's Organizations-Year's Settlement]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 15, 1970.

<sup>102</sup> "Campaign Expelling Bad Cartoons [Bullyang manhwa chubang kempein]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 29, 1971; "[olin-i aksoch'ubang dehoi] Rally to Expel Immortal Children Books," *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 29, 1971.

In July of the same year, the CKWO held a symposium at a hotel in Seoul with the theme of “the Role of Women of Creating a New Climate to Minimize Corruption,” gathering 50 women leaders at the event. The symposium insisted that the CKWO should take the role of an unbiased pressure group between the state and women. In other words, women’s social obligations were to monitor their husbands and families, to control social and political fraud, to reach out to neighbors, to expel defective products, and to normalize children’s education. In the symposium the CKWO hosted, academic leaders lectured on women’s active social roles. The lecturers included a sociology professor at Seoul National University, Han Wan-sang, and an executive director of the National Business Association, Yoon Tae-yeop, as well as a professor of law at Ewha Womem’s University, Lee Bum-jun, a professor at Seoul National University, Kim Soon, and journalist Park Hyun-seo. They insisted that women’s organizations should fight political corruption, eliminating backroom political culture called “yojeong jeongchi.”<sup>103</sup>

“Yojeong” is a term for restaurants that employed young women as escorts. In traditional Korea, the restaurants served mainly male aristocrats with escort women who danced, sang, or played musical instruments in front of guests. During the colonial period, Japanese and Korean elites utilized more private places to meet people secretly, including yojeong. After liberation from Japan, the yojeong was considered a breeding ground for corrupting male elites in society.<sup>104</sup> Women’s group leaders pointed out that leaders of the Korean society, including government officials, politicians, and businesspeople, should become exemplary models, particularly by reducing their social gatherings in yojeong, and through reinventing the sound

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<sup>103</sup> “Mr. Yoon Dae-yeop about Anti-Corruption and reform of the social climate,” *Maeil Kyungje*, July 17, 1971; “Symposium of Korean Women’s Council, promoting anti-corruption,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 20, 1971.

<sup>104</sup> Joshua D. Pilzer, “The Twentieth-Century “Disappearance” of the Gisaeng during the Rise of Korea’s Modern Sex-and-Entertainment Industry” Edited by Martha Feldman and Bonnie Gordon, *The Courtesan’s Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 301.

and robust political culture as leaders. They also argued to alter the mindset of the high-ranking groups of people, who led the corruptive culture through illegal lobbying with government officials and politicians. However, the solution the CKWO suggested did not have any coercive force because members of the CKWO and its affiliated women's groups were reluctant to take action against leading politicians. Thus, it had no substantial social influence.<sup>105</sup>

At the National Women's Convention held in October 1971, the CKWO tried to encourage women to pay attention to environmental protection through the theme of "Human Environment Crisis." The principal lecturers were the Yonsei University professor, Kwon Sook-pyo, the Korea University professor, Kim Sun-soon, and the Ewha Women's University professor, Lee Hyo-jae. Although the environment protection issue was an important international issue, the environment issue isolated majority of Korean women who struggled from the lack of living expenses and gender discrimination. In order to prevent the crisis of the human environment, lecturers emphasized women's organizations' efforts to preserve the human environment on the planet through international cooperation and efforts to urge citizens' public education as well as promote legal measures and strong government policies. More than 1,000 people participated in the convention, including the first lady, leaders of women's groups, university student leaders, and city officials. The first lady underlined the active participation of women's organizations in establishing a robust and prosperous country as women's social activities diversified. Like other conventions in previous years, the convention drafted a resolution about industrial pollution prevention and control to the government. The suggestions they sent to the authorities, however, were utterly detached from Korean women's more

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<sup>105</sup> "Mr. Yoon Dae-yeob about Anti-Corruption and reform of the social climate," *Maeil Kyungje*, July 17, 1971; "Symposium of Korean Women's Council, promoting anti-corruption," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 20, 1971.

significant issues, such as women's unequal legal rights and gender discrimination at workplace.

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After declaring a state of emergency, in 1972, the number of women's organizations under the cooperative was increased to the number of twenty. The theme of women's organizational activities in 1972 was the continuation of the "consumer protection movement" and "the protection of the human environment," which were the theme of the activities of 1971. The CKWO planned to organize a special committee for this purpose.<sup>107</sup> The *Maeil Kyungje* reported the CKWO's future plan to work for the demographic and environmental issues with implementing enlightenment campaigns so that the CKWO could modify people's mindset and strengthen social participation during the rest-time.<sup>108</sup>

In March 1972, the CKWO insisted that the entire women's power be put together in the movement for rice saving to solve the domestic insecurity issue. They planned to gather 60 leading members from 20 groups, and then dispatched them to the downtown streets of Seoul on March 25 to distribute flyers saying, "Participate in Saving Rice." In this flyer, they introduced specific examples of rice substitutes under the catchphrase, such as "We, 15 million women! Let's solve the rice problem by improving our dietary life." The contents were as follows: "If you practice eating one barley mixed meal every day, you can ingest various nutrients necessary for your body. A family of five can save 3,000 won a month. Please stop importing rice and save

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<sup>106</sup> "29<sup>th</sup> the Su-un hall, Theme of the 9<sup>th</sup> National Women's Convention: Human Environmental Crisis," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 23, 1971; "Opening of the National Women's Convention," October 23, 1971; *Maeil Kyungje*, October 29, 1971; "Stop Environmental Crisis," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 30, 1971; "Environmental Crisis," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 06, 1971. The number of participants in this women's convention varies according to reporting newspapers. *Maeil Kyungje* reported the expected number of the participants in the meeting was 650 attendees in an article on October 23. In the case of the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, the article on October 30 reported that 1,000 women leaders from all over the country gathered at the national women's convention on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. In the *Dong-A Ilbo* article on November 6, the number of participants was 672.

<sup>107</sup> "Women's Organizations, incorporating New Year Projects into people's daily lives," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 13, 1972.

<sup>108</sup> "Active Consumer Protection Movement," *Maeil Kyungje*, January 4, 1972.

about 60 million dollars a year.” In the leaflet, the nutritional segmentation table for each type of grain and the easy making of the meal were explained in detail. They recommended eating noodles, kimchi dumplings, fried tofu ramen, and steamed bread made by flour as a substitute for rice.<sup>109</sup>

In 1972, the Park Chung-Hee administration pushed for a radical population reduction policy, moving to legalize abortion. In response, there was fierce public debate about the benefits as well as the potential pitfalls of the legalization of abortion. The CKWO held a public hearing on the issue. At that time, Korea outlawed artificial abortion under Article 169 and 170 of the Criminal Law. Since 1968, the Park Chung-Hee administration had attempted to legislate and pass the Maternal and Child Health Act, legalizing abortion, but strongly opposed. In particular, the Korean government planned to implement a policy for working-class married women. People who stood in opposition to the artificial abortion criticized the government's decision to legalize the murder because it meant to deny human dignity.

Furthermore, they pointed out that legalizing abortion has a lot of potentials to be abused by women who want to give birth to a son. At the CKWO's public hearing, a female lawyer, Lee Tae-young, indicated the prevalent perception of unfair treatment of women as inferior to men. Because of their gender, women were unfairly treated in all social, economic, legal, and political respects. They were also blamed when they did not give birth to a son or sons. Therefore, it was not surprising to selectively choose a boy baby if abortion is allowed. The female attorney argued that the improvement of women's legal status would be more significant than the implementation of the Maternal and Child Health Act. Proponents of the abortion act said that 25% of pregnant Korean women across the country already experienced artificial abortion even

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<sup>109</sup> “Benefits for Home: Mixed Meals with Flour and Rice-based foods, Seniors in Women's Organizations, Promoting Rive Saving Movement,” *Maeil Kyungje*, March 23, 1972.



though it was prohibited by criminal law in South Korea. Almost 40% of married women in Seoul had experienced abortion. Other urban women of one-third of the city population also experienced abortion. Therefore, they insisted that the government implement policies that reflected the reality of artificial abortion illegally conducted.<sup>110</sup>

The theme of the CKWO's 10th National Women's Convention in 1972 was "Women's Attitude toward National Unification." Leaders and professors from various social and academic societies participated as speakers. Kang Won-ryong, head of the Christian Academy, was the principal lecturer. Kim Nam-shik, a researcher at the Asian Studies Institute at the University of Korea, giving a lecture entitled "Today, North Korea." Along with him, there were Park Hyun-seo, chief editor of the *Daehan Ilbo*, saw the society in the panel discussion, and Choi Soon-yi, the head of the Yonsei University's Home Economics University, and Han Wan-sang, a professor at Seoul National University. Oh gi-hyung, the director of the Institute of Education and Research at Yonsei University, and Lee Eun-bok, chairman of the Korea Productivity Center.<sup>111</sup>

The head of the Christian Academy, Kang Won-ryong, emphasized that Korean women should take on significant tasks in achieving Korean unification at a historically critical time. He pointed out that men's role was greater in responding to military aggression, but women's role would be more critical in responding to ideological aggression. He also pointed out that Women insisted that women should have integration of intelligence, feelings, and strong will, instead of having romantic and emotional feelings. He highlighted intelligence and willingness more than feelings. He stressed that South Koreans should know more about North Korea and build an unshakable belief in freedom. He insisted that South Korean drive away from the decadent trend, bourgeois complacency, and defeatism because they became ideologically vulnerable due to

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<sup>110</sup> "The Legalization of Artificial Abortion" *Maeil Kyungje*, June 30, 1972.

<sup>111</sup> "10<sup>th</sup> National Women's Convention, 29<sup>th</sup> in the Su-Un Hall," *Maeil Kyungje*, September 21, 1972.

undesirable western influence. He listed crimes involved by women at the time, including various cases of jewel smuggling and gambling. According to his explanation, the women were obsessed with the trend of luxury and vanity deeply ingrained in Korean society. He argued that a significant role of women is to help the nation build a social welfare state through liberation from poverty.<sup>112</sup>

In 1973, the number of women's organizations under the CKWO rose sharply from 20 in 1972 to 52. The CKWO launched a clean election campaign in nine major cities with the catchphrase, "Reform the election culture with the power of women," during the ninth National Assembly election. Rarely the year of 1972, discussions about the role of women as voters drew people's attention as a social issue. At that time, the number of women voters was 7.98, that meant 160,000 more voters of female than those of male. The chairwoman of the CKWO, Lee Sook-jong, notified the power of women in all aspects of politics, economy, and society, and insisted that women should play a major role in improving the political culture. She also stressed that the restoration of fair elections would be the core of Yushin [restoration] tasks that the Park Chung-Hee regime encouraged people to achieve. She emphasized that in an honest and clean election atmosphere, the nation and society needed to be elected. Kim Bong-hee, the president of the RIWI (Research Institution of Women's Issues) belonging to the CKWO, also warned, "Clean elections are a key task in order to form the Yushin National Assembly, and Korea's democracy will be lost if a fraudulent and unfair election would be held." A Sookmyung Woman's University professor advised that women should first know the election law in order to effectively exercise women's power with their advantage of numerical superiority. She said that Korean women did not recognize the appreciation and responsibility for suffrage because they

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<sup>112</sup> "Women's Attitude towards National Unification," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 29, 1972.

gained suffrage with no efforts compared to Western women. Yang Soon-dam, president of the Korean Girl Scouts, emphasized that modern women could fulfill their mission as women only if they become voters caring about politics as well as a wife and wise mother.<sup>113</sup>

In 1973, the objective of the 11th national women's convention was to overcome a crisis of resource depletion through the frugal life of a housewife. The theme of the convention was decided as "The Crisis of Resource Depletion." The lectures of food and energy crisis issues were followed after the theme lecture. Lee Suk-jong encouraged women that they could overcome their lack of resources by exercising their wisdom. The *Kyunghyang Newspaper* evaluated the 11th National Women's Congress successful with a detailed description of the resolution of the federation of women's groups. According to the report, the women demanded that the state and corporations take their duties as they would take public responsibilities as citizens. They requested the government and companies to take their obligation. What they asked the government are the following:

(1) please control production stimulating excessive consumption and restrain unnecessary imports of consumer goods. (2) please establish policies encouraging farmers to produce more agricultural products, and plus rationalize the distribution process of agricultural products. (3) please promote energy conservation policies and arrange bicycle paths in each city. (4) please establish new policies to resolve population problems, causing resource depletion.

They suggested entrepreneurs as follows:

(1) Please do not rely on imports of raw materials from foreign countries and focus on the development of domestic materials as much as possible. (2) please be companies that reduce the consumption of energy resources. (3) please refrain from producing unnecessary luxury items.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Yoon Yo-joon, "Social Obligations and Responsibilities (Last)," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, February 19, 1973.

<sup>114</sup> "Post," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 19, 1973.

However, the resolution seems to be echoed of the government's voice through the voice of the Women's Association since the details of the public obligations of crucial agents in society were followed to the direction where the governments were pursuing at the time.

In late September 1974, the 12th national women's convention was held under the title, "The World Women's Year and the Reality of Korean Women," added with the subtitle of the revision of the Family Law. Professor Park Bo-hee of the Sociology Department at Ewha Women's University led the theme lecture encouraging the audience to confront the reality of Korean women.<sup>115</sup> Professor Park pointed out that motherhood in parenting and family care was the defined woman's role. The position of the role of a mother was rated as the lowest level of work in a home. Among women's domestic tasks, children's education was woman's duty and right that women could be recognized for their capacity.<sup>116</sup> That is why Asian mothers are obsessed with their children's education because the children's educational achievements are a sign of their mother's abilities.

In 1975, the national women's convention was held under the theme "Women Expecting a Developed Society." Thousands of female representatives across the country participated in the convention, including young female leaders coming from 28 universities as well as 2,500 representatives from general social organizations<sup>117</sup> The theme lecture dealt with women's issues: First, it pointed out the so-called problems of women in a developing society and emphasized the movement to find the rights of consumers and the humanization movement of working youth and working women. Secondly, it stresses the role of women in boosting

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<sup>115</sup> "The National Women's Convention, September 26<sup>th</sup>," *Maeil Kyungje*, August 26, 1974; "Theme of the National Women's Convention: The Reality Korean Women Confronted," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 20, 1974.

<sup>116</sup> "Women's Capabilities Must be Recognized: Substance of Lectures in the 12<sup>th</sup> National Women's Convention," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 27, 1974.

<sup>117</sup>—"13<sup>th</sup> National Women' Convention Opened," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 16, 1975.

economic development. The third point was to create the women expected by the political society, and finally to fulfill women's roles in education and in the house.<sup>118</sup>

In June 1976, the National Women's Security Convention was held to emphasize the role of women in the peaceful reunification of the country and the establishment of a national security system. The convention was designated to enlighten members of women's groups about national security and the role of women. More than 1,200 female representatives of women's organizations were proud of being part of working for the state. The critical points of their resolution were adopted as follows: women keep fighting against North Korea without emotional responding to their provocation. women undauntedly participate in eradicating any sources of social complaints and dissatisfaction to achieve social cheerfulness.<sup>119</sup>

### **Law for Maternal and child health and Single-mother and Child Welfare Act**

Since the early 1970s, the Park Chung-Hee administration became more aggressive in promoting population reduction policies. The enactment of the 1973 Maternal and Child Health Act shows the typical policy. Narrowing the scope of illegal abortion was a major part of the demographic policy. As a population reduction policy, the South Korean government had actively promoted contraception through family planning agents and made efforts to reduce the population by distributing contraceptive devices and educating women about contraceptive procedures. However, as the population decline did not occur as quickly as the government expected, the regime believed that the 'Mother and Child Health Act' could be a trigger reducing the population more quickly and efficiently. The maternal and child health law included

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<sup>118</sup> "Expected Women in a developing society," *Maeil Kyungje*, September 22, 1975.

<sup>119</sup> "National Women's Security Convention," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 31, 1976; "Women's Security Convention, leading the way to eradicate corruption," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 7, 1976.

provisions broadening the scope of abortion as well as conducting compulsory abortion towards a physical examination of pregnant women and their husbands about the possibilities of babies' genetic diseases. Until the family planning project began in the early 1960s, the project was only promoted sporadically by private organizations. Particularly, between 1957 and 1958, the Social Service Center was opened by members of the Methodist Church. Then, in 1958, Seoul National University Hospital received material assistance from the Unitarian Service Committee to provide family planning counseling. Family planning led by these private organizations became the basis for the implementation of state-led family planning projects later.<sup>120</sup>

Family planning project was one of longest lasting projects to achieve the economic growth in the Park Chung-Hee regime. After the successful military coup, what the military regime prioritized was national economic development. the relatively young military elites in power understood that rapid population growth was an impediment to economic and social development. Based on this, Park Chung-Hee and his associates adopted the family planning project as a national policy at the National Reconstruction Supreme Council in 1961, and at the same time lifted the ban on domestic production and import of contraceptives. In 1963, the Family Planning Division was established in the Maternal and Child Health Division of the Ministry of Health, and the full-fledged family planning project began. A small size of a family planning enlightenment center was located in *eup* or *myeon* [divisions of a county, *gun*] to take charge of educating people about family planning. The staff regularly visited rural homes and conducted group guidance for contraceptive distribution.

Even though the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs took the charge of promoting the Act, the ministry struggled with the structurally deficient budget to implement the policies and

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<sup>120</sup> <https://www.archives.go.kr/next/search/listSubjectDescription.do?id=002584&sitePage=1-2-1>

the lack of labor force. Due to the government's limited economic capacity, the bill was rejected and discarded, and legislation was pushed forward again in 1970 although it had already been handed over to the Vice Ministers' Meeting in 1966. The Mother and Child Health Act was enacted and promulgated in February 1973. At that time, abortion was permitted in the only following cases: (1) If a pregnant woman or her spouse has a eugenic or genetic mental disorder or physical disease (2) If a pregnant woman or her spouse has a contagious disease (3) If a woman is pregnant by being raped or in quasi-rape Cases (4) Pregnancy between relatives (5) Pregnancy is limited to cases where the pregnancy seriously harms or threatens the mother's health.<sup>121</sup> However, the impatient Park Chung-Hee government concluded an application of the Act for three years from 1973 to 1976 as a failure in delivering noticeable outcomes for the population reduction. The conclusion made the government amend the Act in 1976. The amended act allowed married pregnant women to have abortion just for economic and social reasons. In addition to this, the revised act had been added a section that pregnant women will get a subsidy in case when they have no economic capability to pay for surgery expenses.<sup>122</sup>

According to the Family Planning Research Institute (FPRI), which was the central institution implementing the government's population policy, almost 400,000 pregnant women had experienced abortion every year in South Korea. The FPRI explained that the legalization of abortion reflects the reality, pointing out that the ratio of births to abortions is 40 out of 100, indicating that abortion is widespread even though it is illegal for pregnant women. The institute

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<sup>121</sup> "Mojabogeonbeob-ui munjejeom [Problems with the Maternal and Child Health Act]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 23, 1970; Kim Bong-ho, "Legalization of artificial abortion [Ingong-imsin jungjeol-ui jayuhwa]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 30, 1976.

<sup>122</sup> Kim Bong-ho, "Legalization of artificial abortion [Ingongimsin jungjeolui jayuhwa]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 30, 1976.

justified the government's action for legalizing abortion in terms of the commitment of the government to eradicating widespread, unsafe illegal abortion.<sup>123</sup>

A major reason why abortion became so prevalent in Korea at this time, despite being illegal in Korea, was Koreans' preference for boys. According to statistics published in a 1976 newspaper, when there was no son in a family, most married women were not interested in contraception. The more sons the family had, the more active response to contraception the mother had. At that time, in South Korea, the rate of accepting the government's contraceptive recommendation was 37% when there was one son in the family, 58% when the family had two sons, 64% when the family had three sons, and 68% when the family had five sons. A Korean reporter who pointed out that the difficulties in implementing Korea's population reduction policy deprived from Korean women's ever-lasting consciousness, the obsession with their sons for a long time.<sup>124</sup>

In the early 1970s, the National Federation of Women's Protection Projects (NFWPP, *bunyeoboho saeob jeongug yeonhabhoe*), perceived the government's aggressive support for the enactment of the Mother and Child Health Act and the implementation as the government's commitment to women's welfare. The vice president of the Korean Association of Women's Organizations, Won Seon-hee, and its leaders of the CKWO decided to support the NFWPP for the urgent needs of vulnerable single mother families, proceeding to enact the Act.<sup>125</sup> The NFWPP had seen it as a signal for the right time to enact laws for practical welfare and benefits for single-mother and their families. The NFWPP was one of eight women's organizations that

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<sup>123</sup> "Maternal and Child Health Act and Population Policy [mojabogeonbeobgwa ingujeongchaeg]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 30, 1976.

<sup>124</sup> "Population Control [Ingueogje]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 6, 1976.

<sup>125</sup> Won Seon-hee, "Necessary measures for technical training [Gisulhunlyeon-eulo hanguhan daechaegpil-yo]," *Yeo-seong* (April 1973), 29.



participated in the establishment of the CKWO in 1959. The Korea Women's Association, The Korea YWCA Association, The Women's Issue Research Association, The Hanyang Women's Club, The National Federation of Women's Protection Projects, The Korea Mothers' Association, The Korean Women's Association, The Student Problem Counseling Center. (*daehan-yeohagsahyeobhoe, daehan YWCAyeonhabhoe, yeoseongmunjeyeonguhoe, han-yang-yeoseongkeulleob, bunyeobohosa-eobjeongug-yeonhabhoe, daehan-eomeonihoe, daehanbuninhoe*) These women's groups pointed out that most of single-mother families were put in impoverished living conditions in Korean society. In cases of these families, women's educational level was often low. For example, 95% of widows raising children had only a primary school degree or no degree at all, which made them almost impossible to have a stable, regular job for a living. For these single-mother and child families, the NFWPP argued that it is necessary to make more active use of the centers for single-mothers and children, to create welfare funds for financial assistance to single-mother and child families and to prioritize the employment of the single mothers. They also pointed out the need for support for the housing for them to settle.<sup>126</sup>

In the early 1970s, a public interest in protecting single-mother and child families got gradually increased. At the end of March 1971, a seminar was held jointly with the Seoul Metropolitan Government and the Christian Academy under the slogan of "Strategy for Resource Mobilization to Protect Single-mother and the Children" to discuss welfare facilities for them. Koo Ja-heon, the main presenter of the seminar, expressed a concern about the lack of social welfare funds granted by the government, stating the reduced funding for single-mother and the children welfare; downsizing of shelter facilities for single-mothers and the children has since

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<sup>126</sup> "Welfare Activities for Working Women [Jigobyeseong wihan bogji hwaldong]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 12, 1970.

1960. She also pointed out that in 1971 there were only 35 shelters across the country, where 3,491 people stayed. The presenter said that the shelters for single-mothers and children were ignored by both international organizations and the government whereas orphanages were in relatively better condition in finance due to the support from foreign aids, state treasury, and local subsidies. The stance of the central government was that once the mothers were trained to work, single-mother families would be good. However, Mrs. Koo claimed that single mothers, particularly widows who lacked work skills, working experiences, and assets, should be provided stable but easy jobs such as selling snacks or cleaning buildings. According to her, the government must be the principal agent who takes care of them.<sup>127</sup>

In 1973, the CKWO agreed to voice for the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act as the NFWPP promoted to enact the practical law for devastating single mother families. The NFWPP was able to hold a public hearing on the Single Mother and Child Welfare Act with the support of the CKWO. The CKWO and its affiliated women's organizations seemed to believe that the Park Chung-Hee government were ready to embrace women's demands for enactment of laws for women, based on the confidence that the government actively recruited women into politics. The Yushin regime had nine female law makers in the 9th National Assembly. The female representative proportion in the 1973 National Assembly dramatically increased to 5.8 percent, compared to 0.4 percent, the proportion of the female representative in the 1960 National Assembly.<sup>128</sup> The increasing number of female congresswomen publicly showcased the authoritarian regime's acknowledgement on the importance of women. Utilizing

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<sup>127</sup> "Jahwalui teojeonbuteo [From the source of self-reliance]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 24, 1971.

<sup>128</sup> Oh Jae-lim, "Hangug yeoseongui jeongchichamyeowa yeoseongjeongchaeye gwanhan yeongu: 1960nyeondaebuteo hyeonjaekkaji yeoseongjeongchi chamyewa yeoseong gyoyug mich jeongchaegui byeonhwaleul jungsimeulo [A Study on Women's Political Participation and Public Policies for Women in Korea: 1960s to Present-Exploring the Relationship between Women's Political Participation, Women's Education and Education Policies for Women]," *The Journal of Asian Women* 43, no. 1 (May 2004), 121.

the system of proportional presentation, Park Chung-Hee chose chose seven congresswomen, who were influential pro-government women. Only two congresswomen be were elected by elections. The CKWO president, Sook-jong Lee, was one of the seven. The CKWO congratulated the increasing number of women politicians as well as that of female Ph.D. degree holders in various fields such as medicine, pharmacy, treating the numbers as a visible achievement of women and evidence of the improvement of Korean women's social status.<sup>129</sup>

On March 30, 1973, multiple of women's organizations affiliated to the CKWO were invited to the public hearing on the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act hosted by the WPP. The female law professor at Goenkuk University, Bae Kyung-sook, who drafted the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act, lectured the significance of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. She worked as a legal expert in the NFWPP committee for creating the draft of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. She pointed out that the most vulnerable groups in Korean society were single-mother families. Particularly the war widows created by the Korean War easily got in trouble without any financial help. However, she explained that some women got in worse situations even though they had a husband in case their husbands were unable to work for a living for any reason. Most of the wives were forced to not only take care of her children and husband but also feed the whole family members. They worked wherever it was possible to make money. In many cases, their vulnerable economic conditions ended up working them as prostitutes to make a living after they tried to manage their lives by working as manual laborers

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<sup>129</sup> "Improvement of women's status [Yeoseongjiwihyangsang]," *Yeoseong* (April 1973), 4-5, 44-45; "Interviewing Prof. Bae Kyung-sook who drafted the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act [Inteobyu mojabogjibeob choan mandeun bae gyeongsug gyosu]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 30, 1976. The NFWPP formed an expert committee consisting of 10 specialists from various fields, including Bae Kyung-sook, Lee Tae-young, Lee Hyo-jae, Jang In-hyeop, and Park Young-sook in order to draft the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. In particular, the law professor Bae-Suk Bae was the lead drafter of the Act. She said that the draft was drawn up with reference to the welfare laws of the United States and Japan based on Article 8 of the Constitution, which stipulates value of human dignity and Article 30 of the Constitution, which stipulates the government's responsibility for social security.

in the construction site, as janitors, or as maids. The female law professor urged the audience in the public hearing that the enactment of the Act was significant to save the ignorant children as well as the poor single mothers. She stated that the children of single mother families, including 450,000 children of widows, did not receive any proper protection and education from their parents so that they were easily exposed to crimes and trapped in the vicious cycle of the poverty.<sup>130</sup>

She criticized the policy direction of the Park Chung-Hee regime, which reduced social and economic support for single-mother families, and ultimately drove them to the streets without being protected. She pointed out that even though the government promoted muvarious vocational programs for young women, the single mothers were not considered as targets. Sixty-three shelters for single mother families where they were allowed to stay for two years at the longest accommodated 7,556 members of 2,064 single mother family households in 1960. But in 1967 the number of the shelters decreased to almost half of them, thirty-three, which was able to accommodate only 3,325 members of 711 households.<sup>131</sup> She also pointed out that even this was difficult to maintain with the government's limited financial support for the single mother-and-children. She stated that the Park Chung-Hee government was paying only 3 hops of grain per day and 8 Korean won for living expenses per single-mother family as of 1970; there were regional differences according to a province, a city, a town, and a village. She exposed the absurd situation where presidents of the shelters for the single mother families had to bear all cost of 540,000 Korean won when running the private social welfare facilities, based on 100 people per year; all the expenses for running the shelters -- 50,000 won for utility bills, 24,000

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<sup>130</sup> Bae Kyung-sook, "Inevitability of Single-mother and Child Welfare Act [mojabogjibeobui bulgapiseong]," *Yeo-seong* (April 1973), 16-17.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

won for office expenses, 48,000 won for cleaning, 12,000 won for the health care, 48,000 won for the transportation, 300,000 won for labor costs, 60,000 won for building maintenance. The presidents, who were in charge of the social welfare facilities, paid most expenses such as housing for single mother families, job placement services fees, and other miscellaneous expense. Not surprisingly, the depressing situation was derived from the government's intentional ignorance toward the social welfare sector; the government assigned approximately 3% of the government's year budget for the Ministry of Social Welfare. However, the regime manipulated the mass media to call it a "Social Welfare State" while the private social welfare facilities suffered from lack of funding without government's financial support.<sup>132</sup>

The Park Chung-Hee regime placed both the care-taking and economic burden on private social workers who were many of them, Christians. Christian social workers dedicated to helping single-mother families escape from the poverty and survive in the devastating situation financially. One of the shelter presidents confessed that her religious faith and sacrifices were the driving force for her to maintain the social welfare facility.<sup>133</sup> According to the newspaper, *Dong-A Ilbo* published in 1979, the government provided the shelters with a limited amount of grain and food for the minimum livelihood of single mother families. The social welfare centers for the single mother families received only the salary of a manager and 310,000 won as an annual operating subsidy.<sup>134</sup> In many cases, the shelter presidents were not paid; Rather, some of them took on debt to finance the facilities. In order to escape from the financial difficulties, they had to make efforts to receive donations from churches, Christian groups, mass media, and

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>133</sup> Kang Man-choon, "Influence of Single-mother and Child Welfare Act on Social Welfare [mojabogjibeob-i sahoebogjie michineun yeonghyang]," *Yeoseong* (April 1973), 23.

<sup>134</sup> "Mercy on the Single-mother and child welfare here [Mojabogji yeogiedo gwangmyeongeul]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 19, 1979.

corporations in addition to the government. Among them, Christian organizations were main supporters for maintaining the facilities such as the Christian Children's Welfare Society (gidoggyo adong bogjihoe) and the Christian World Mission Society (gidoggyo segye seonmyeonghoe).<sup>135</sup>

Kang Man-Chun, head of the Social Welfare Institute and master's degree holder in social work in the United States, pointed out the significance of hiring single-mothers and the government's support.<sup>136</sup> He had no doubt that the Park Chung-Hee government would support the enactment of the Single-mother and Children Welfare Act, and he offered several opinions at the 1973 public hearings. He showed his great belief that the government would advocate to enact the single-mother and children welfare act, suggesting establishing a new center for a single-mother and child welfare. He pointed out that it was necessary to carefully consider whether to comprehensively deal with not only single-mother and child families but also other matters for the welfare of the family. He was a social worker who believed in the ideal of the social welfare state. He already strongly believed in the necessity of a social welfare office for family welfare. Thus, on the premise that the government would establish the social welfare office, he suggested whether to include single-mother and child welfare services in the office, or to establish an independent family welfare office and not only single-mother families. In addition to the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act, he argued the establishment of a

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<sup>135</sup> Kang Man-choon, "Influence of Single-mother and Child Welfare Act on Social Welfare [mojabogjibeob-i sahoebogjie michineun yeonghyang]," *Yeoseong* (April 1973), 23.

<sup>136</sup> Choi Ok-chae, "hangug sahoebogjihag bipyeong-hyeongseong chogi Isedaeui gaelonseowa yeogsajuui gwanjeom-eul jungsim-eulo [A Study on Criticism of Korean Social Welfare Studies in the Early Formative Period - focused on the First Generation's Introductory Texts and the Perspective of Historicism-]," *Hangugsahoebogjihag* 64 [*Korean Journal of Social Welfare* 64], no. 3 (August 2012), 231-255; 242.

committee where civilians could participate in the process of sharing and suggesting ideas with government welfare agents.<sup>137</sup>

Lee Tae-Young, the director of the Family Law Counseling Center, who participated in the panel at the 1973 public hearing, argued that the most necessary action was to expand the number of shelters to accommodate single-mother families because the reality of single-mother families was much worse than imagined for those gathered at the public hearing. Her story of infanticide that several single mothers committed galvanized audience to realize how much miserable and difficult for a single poor woman to raise a child alone and it sometimes ended up in tragedy to kill their children in order to make survive herself, the single mother. When defending them as a female attorney, she said she felt sympathy and pity for their miserable situations. Then, she resented that the court and the state did not take their circumstances into account and only imposed harsh punishments. She urged the female leaders of the women's organizations affiliated to the CKWO to recognize the critical need for social and institutional help for the single mother families. She stated that the most urgent issue was the establishment of shelters to accommodate single-mother families who had no place to sleep. She said that more and more single-mother families wandered in the streets while heads of institutions, mayors of cities, and high-ranking officers had vain discussion. She pointed out that the existing shelters also suffered from difficulties in operation due to the lack of economic and institutional support from the government. She claimed that the shelters should be tax-exempt as a social welfare organization. She pointed out that even though the facilities functioned as a non-profit

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<sup>137</sup> Kang Man-choon, "Influence of Single-mother and Child Welfare Act on Social Welfare [mojabogjibeob-i sahoebogje michineun yeonghyang]," *Yeoseong* (April 1973), 21-22.

organization for the public good, not only were they not granted duty-free measures, but were also not receiving state subsidies.<sup>138</sup>

Jeong Jeong-ryang, the head of the Buell Center for mothers and children, who attended the 1973 public hearing as a representative of private social welfare workers, agreed with the need for the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. However, she was skeptical of the actual practice of the contents discussed at the public hearing because the government had not provided any helpful support and environment where social welfare workers could “creatively” work, emphasizing that the central government had assigned only about 3% of the government budget for the portion of the minister of health and social affairs.<sup>139</sup>

The effort of the WPP, the CKWO, and its affiliated women’s organizations for the improvement of women’s legal rights had not been largely ignored by the state. As the president of the Buell shelter was concerned, the commitment of the women’s organizations for enacting the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act was vanished without a trace. Little had any major newspapers reported about the women’s effort to draft and enact the Act until 1976. This fact became evident when I examined the major media reports published in the 1970s. In 1973, 1974, and 1975, none of the major newspapers, including *Chosen Ilbo*, *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, and *Maeil Kyungje*, reported on any organizations or activities to support the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. On the other hand, it was not difficult to find articles about the Maternal and Child Health Act, which promoted the legalization of abortion for the purpose of maintaining an adequate population growth rate. At the end of January 1973, all major newspapers published similar articles on the Maternal and Child Health Act. From January

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<sup>138</sup> Tae-Young Lee, “Establishment of Single-mother and Child Welfare Act [Siljiljeog-in mojabogjibeob jejeong],” *Yeo-seong* (April 1973), 24-25.

<sup>139</sup> Jeong Jeong-Ryang, “Measures after being discharged from shelters are necessary [Jeongjeonglyang, “toewon huui daechaeg-i pil-yo],” *Yeo-seong* (April 1973), 30-31.



1973, the process of enactment of the Maternal and Child Health Act was reported in detail in all newspapers and media. They reported the process of drafting, enacting, and practicing the Maternal and Child Health Act.<sup>140</sup>

In 1974, articles on the Maternal and Child Health Act were easily found in many mass media. The government publicized the act as a great policy for protecting health of newborns and pregnant women. In January 1974, there was a report about the establishment of 12 family planning centers in the outskirts of Seoul, which operated maternal and child health projects related to contraception and abortion.<sup>141</sup> After the establishment of the Yushin regime in 1972, the government's intensity of media control and monitoring reached its peak. During this period the published news articles showed what severe censorship they were under. They had to release similar contents and sometimes published identical titles and pictures. In the case of articles about the establishment of family planning centers on the outskirts of Seoul, titles and content of the articles were almost identical. Under the Park Chung-Hee administration, women's policies were mostly used for national economic growth rather than for the purpose of improving women's welfare.

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<sup>140</sup> "Expanding the scope of legal abortion [habbeob nagtaeui beom-wileul hwagdae]," *Maeil Kyungje*, January 29, 1973; "Expansion of permissible scope of abortion for misdemeanor offense[bisang-gag-ui nagtaeheyong beom-wi, gyeongbeomdaesang hwagdae]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 31, 1973; "Passing of 38 bills including the Single-mother and Child Health Act [bisang-gugmuhoewi mojabogeonbeob deung 38gae beob-an-uigyeol]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 31, 1973; "Confirmation of the Forty laws, including the Cultural Heritage Protection Act and the Maternal and Child Health Act [Munhwajae boho-mojabogeonbeob deung 40gae beob-an hwagjeong]," *Chosun Ilbo*, January 31, 1973; "Legalization of Abortion [Ingongjungjeol-eul habbeobhwa]," *Maeil Kyungje*, May 10, 1973; "Maternal and Child Health Act enters into force [Mojabogeonbeob balhyo]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 10, 1973; "Artificial abortion with many side effects [Bujag-yongmanh-eun ingong-imsinjungjeol]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 16, 1973; "Enforcement Decree of the Maternal and Child Health Act [Mojabogeonbeob sihaenglyeong]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 28, 1973; "Protect Maternal Health [Moche-ui geongang-eul boho]," *Maeil Kyungje*, May 30, 1973; "After the Enforcement of the Maternal and Child Health Act [Mojabogeonbeob balhyoihu]," *Chosun Ilbo*, May 31, 1973; "Adequate regulation to control population [Ingueogjee jeogjeolhan jojeol-eul]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 1, 1973; "Report Abortion Targets within 1 week[Bulimsusuldaesang 1junaee singo]," *Chosun Ilbo*, August 14, 1973; "Contents of Maternal and Child Health Act [Mojabogeonbeob naeyong]," *Maeil Kyungje*, January 31, 1973

<sup>141</sup> "Permanent Family Planning Center on the outskirts [Byeondulie sangseolgajoggyehoeg senteo]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, Jan 14, 1974; "12 Family Planning Centers on the outskirts [Gajoggyehoegsenteo byeondulie 12gose]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 15, 1974.

The government attracted not only the mass media but also Christian women and Christian women's magazines to promote their women's policies. In 1973, a government agent contributed to one of major Christian women's magazines, *Sae Gajeong (New Family)* highlighting the need of the participation of Christian women for the government's birth control project. The head of the family planning department of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Jang Kyung-sik, tried to persuade Christian women, claiming that having fewer children was not only for protecting the health of mothers and babies, but also for "women's liberation." He explained that many traditional Korean mothers lived half their lives as slaves to pregnancy, childbirth, and raising and then persuaded women to break out of this vicious cycle by actively participating in the government's family planning. The official of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs claimed that the government's family planning could liberate women from misery and family breakdown and protect them from extreme hardships.<sup>142</sup> Regarding the government's aggressiveness to reduce population rate, Ji Seung-kyung in her recent paper articulates how the Park Chung-Hee government instituted policies to practice illegal abortion for the purpose of rapid fertility control by introducing Manual Vacuum Abortion (MVA) and applying it to many women in early stage of pregnancy.<sup>143</sup> Bae Eun-kyung in her article also argues that the Park Chung-Hee regime's family planning project not only undermined women's autonomy and infringed on "the women's emancipatory potential of fertility control" through aggressive and violent promotion methods rather than liberating women.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Kyung-sik Jang, "Korea's Family Planning Project [Ulinalui gajoggyehoeg sa-eob]," *New Family [Sae Gajeong]*, (Seoul: Christian Home & Family Life Association, 1973), 94-95.

<sup>143</sup> Ji Seung-kyung, "The Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea's Provision of Menstrual Regulation from 1974 to 1990 [daehangajoggyehoeghyeobhoeui chogi imsinjungjeolloseoui wolgyeongjojeolsul jegong-e daehan yeongu (1974-1990): guggau wibeobjeog jaesaengsan jeongchaeg-e daehan sogo], *Women's Studies [yeoseonghag nonjib]* 36, no.1 (2019), 121-158.

<sup>144</sup> Bae Eun-Kyung, "Gajoggyehoeg sa-eobgwa yeoseong-ui-1960-70nyeondae chulsan jojeol bogeub gwajeong-eul tonghae bon yeoseong-gwa 'geundae,'" *sahoewa yeogsa* [Women's Body and the State Family Planning Programs in

Not only public officials but also leaders of various social groups and professors collaborated with the government, promoting the family planning campaign for population reduction. For instance, members of religious organizations and faculty members in cooperation with the government brought up issues of humanization, human rights protection, family welfare improvement, maternal and child health, and a change of the mindset of male children preference. Korea YMCA, one of the biggest Korean non-profit Christians, held a seminar under the theme of 'family planning strategy and human values' working along with the government. The participants of the seminar defended the government's side against antiabortionist Korean Catholics. Lee Joo-hyeon, secretary general of the Korean Family Association (daehan gajog hyeobhoe) was invited as the key-note speaker of the seminar. He said that "[the practice of] family planning was an effort to make people live as human beings. He claimed that contraception and abortion could relieve mothers of health risks. He pointed out that contraception would be an easy and safe way to prevent disastrous situations in advance because in Korea, 280,000 abortions were performed annually, and it would be worse if included the number of children who died of starvation. He said that the goal of the family planning movement was to control the population through contraception before having abortion or forcibly limiting the number of children. The government agent shared his passion that the Korean Family Association could achieve the goal by enlightening [the people] through distribution of the information and education.<sup>145</sup>

Not only the civil servant but also a professor of seminaries was invited as lecturers at the Christian organization seminar to emphasize the necessity of abortion and contraception to the

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Korea: Examining 'the Modern' in Women's lives through the social history of birth control],” *Sahoewa yeogsa 67 [Society and History 67]* (2005), 268.

<sup>145</sup> “Family Planning Strategies and Human Values [Gajoggyehoe-g jeonlyaggwa ingangachi],” *Chosun Ilbo*, June 19, 1974.

audience. Seo Nam-dong, a professor of theology at Yonsei University, claimed that human beings must change the moral laws made by humans in order to survive in the extreme changes of nature. He underlined the need to convert from values of individualism and human beings to values for survival. The seminary professor paradoxically urged the Christian audience to emphasize and follow a human-centered, human-friendly view rather than God and His Word. For this, he emphasized focusing on the Holy Spirit rather than the Bible. To this end, he said that the interpretation of the Bible should be asked by the Holy Spirit rather than be bound by the passages of the Bible written in the background of thousands of years ago because the present time was bound to follow the ethics of emergency.<sup>146</sup> The theological professor's assertion actively refuted the claims of anti-abortionist Catholic priests and members who adopted the "Pastorship Letter" stating that they would not accept artificial abortion and sterilization in the name of the national law and conscience.<sup>147</sup> The pastoral letter defined abortion as an act of murder and pointed out that all sterilization practices should be banned.<sup>148</sup>

A re-discussion on the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act for women's welfare rather than the Single-mother and Child Health Act was held in 1976. The NFWPP tried again to hold the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act seminar, inviting female lawmakers and the director of the Women's and Children's Bureau as panels in 1976 after the 1973 seminar for the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act.<sup>149</sup> The existence of the 'Draft Single-mother and Child Welfare Act' was reported briefly in the mass media in December 1975 for the first time in *Maeil Kyungje*. However, in this report, there was no mention of any specific details of the

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> "Conscience, Faith, and Law [Yangsingwa sin-ang-gwa beob]," *Chosun Ilbo*, July 27, 1973.

<sup>148</sup> "Catholic Bishops of Korea not admitting sterilization surgery [Bulim susul injeonganhae katollig hangugjugyodan]," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 20, 1973; "Opposition to abortion surgery [Bulimsusul jungjeol bandae]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 20, 1973; Kim Mong-eun, "Conscience precedes the law [Yangsimeun beobboda apseonda]," *Chosun Ilbo*, July 29, 1973.

<sup>149</sup> "Seminar on Single-mother and child welfare law [Mojabogjibeob semina]," *Chosun Ilbo*, November 23, 1976.

Single-mother and Child Welfare Act prepared by the NFWPP and the CKWO's affiliated women's organizations. This seminar was a process for women's organizations to face the reality of the government and society indifferent to women's welfare and to accept this reality.<sup>150</sup>

The *Chosun Ilbo* editorial member, Park No-kyung as the theme lecturer listed three reasons why the Park Chung-Hee government and Korean society did not show much interest in the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. According to him, the first reason was that Koreans had a pre-modern way of thinking that looked at people's misfortunes as the individual's failure and attributed them to individual responsibility, not societal or governmental responsibilities. The second reason was that Korean recognized that it was normal for the government or society to not take any responsibility in an individual's failure or misfortune. Rather people believed that the family or relatives had to help the unfortunate family member. He pointed out that the third reason was that the government and ruling party politicians did not have any room to actively interpret the social security provisions in Article 30 of the Korean Constitution. He argued that activists should make efforts to change the pre-modern way of thinking and customs of the government and citizens prior to promoting the enactment of the Act.<sup>151</sup>

However, with the exception of WPP, the CKWO and its affiliated women's groups, which had made many efforts and interest in enacting the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act in 1973, showed no interest in enacting the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. They were reluctant to engage in any activities and movements that the government opposed. In 1976 and 1977 the women's organizations organized and operated several government-backed campaigns

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<sup>150</sup> "Park No-Kyung Claiming an Urgency to the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act at the Women's Welfare Seminar [Mojabogjibeob sigeubhada Park No-Kyungssi bunyeobogji seminaseo jujebalpyo]," *Chosun Ilbo*, November 25, 1976.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

such as savings and consumer campaigns.<sup>152</sup> In 1976 and 1977, the CKWO collaborated with the Korean Family Planning Association and their projects, a key institution in the population reduction policy focusing on abortion and contraception rather than enacting the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. The CKWO also regularly participated in the Family Planning Association promotion contest. It is interesting to note that The CKWO categorized a population reduction family planning project in their regular report as a women's status improvement project.<sup>153</sup>

At the end of November 1976, the *Dong-A Ilbo* reported an interview with Professor Bae Baek-sook, who drafted the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act. In an interview, she introduced various measures she made in the Act draft such as lending a small amount of money to single-mother and child families, teaching them job skills, and giving priority to work in a cafeteria in public buildings. However, she was skeptical that the draft containing her suggestions would pass in the National Assembly.<sup>154</sup>

As the female law professor predicted, the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act was not successful. Even the discussion about the welfare for the marginalized women disappeared from the mass media until the late 1980s when the two authoritarian regimes came to an end. Discussions on the enactment of the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act resumed in 1988, the year of the peaceful transition from the military regimes to the civilian one. At this time, the civilian government took the initiative and instructed the government-affiliated Women's Development Institute to prepare a proposal, and a public hearing was held. The 1988

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<sup>152</sup> "Project Report for 1976," *Yeoseong* (January & February 1977), 14-22; "Project Plan for 1977," *Yeoseong*, (January & February 1977), 23-26.

<sup>153</sup> "Project Report for 1976," *Yeoseong* (January & February 1977), 15; "Project Plan for 1977," *Yeoseong* (January & February 1977), 25.

<sup>154</sup> "Interviewing Prof. Bae Kyung-sook who drafted the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act [Inteobyeu mojabogijibeob choan mandeun bae gyeongsug gyosu]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 30, 1976.

draft had many similarities with the 1973 draft done by the special committee for the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act.<sup>155</sup> The civilian government finally decide to take responsibilities as a social welfare state. In 1989, the Single-mother and Child Welfare Act was finally enacted.

Although The CKWO started with the goal of gathering women's voices for the advancement of women's status, their activities under the Park Chung-Hee regime were far from directly improving the status of women. In the 1970s, the umbrella women's group became an unofficial spokesperson for the military regime and put much effort into promoting and implementing the government's policies.

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<sup>155</sup> "Draft Welfare Act for Single-mother and Child Families [Moja gajeong daesang bogjibeob sian]," *Hankyoreh* , June 26, 1988.

## **CHAPTER 2. THE CONSUMER ISSUES: THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT AND THE CREATION OF PATRIOTIC CONSUMERS**

In the 1960s, the consumer protection movement rapidly spread in Europe, the United States, Japan, and later to South Korea. At this time, information about the foreign consumer movement was circulated through the Korean media. Korean women viewed it as a chance to prove their capability as qualified citizens for the country. They actively participated in showing the level of their consciousness as consumers who were parallel to their western counterparts. After the 1965 Normalization Treaty between South Korea and Japan, the Korean mass media reported the significance of women's roles as thrifty consumers. To keep up with the increasing public attention, major women's organizations participated in the consumer movement under a banner of consumer protection. The mass media began reporting on consumer issues and activities of the mainstream women's groups affiliated with the CKWO such as the Research Institute of Women's Issues (RIWI), the Korea YWCA, and the Korean Women's Association (KWA).<sup>156</sup> The news media publicized that female activists organized consumer programs to develop women's savings habits and to educate housewives about consumers' rights.

Hierarchical power dynamics between the state and women's organizations became clear in the late 1960s and early 1970s Korean consumer movement. South Korea's authoritarian government drove the women's organizations to go public and mobilize more women in the movement. The government and women in the organizations sometimes collaborated and sometimes conflicted with each other. First, this chapter explores how the Korean government

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<sup>156</sup> The KWA [hanguk buinhoe] was established in 1963 by conservative female leaders, including the female pro-ruling party politician, Yim Yong-sin (her English name, Louise Yim), Park Geum-soon, Jang Yeo-ok, Kim In-ok. "Hoejange imyeongsinssi, hangugbuinhoe baljog [Yim Yong-sin, elected as a chairwoman in the newly established Korean Women's Association]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 11, 1963.



utilized women's organizations and the international consumer movement influencing the women's organizations and consumer groups. It also describes a patriotic motive in the late 1960s when the military tension between South and North Korea became extremely high. Then, it shows how the women's organizations promoted the consumers' desire to have safe and good quality products with reasonable prices. The military government was, however, less supportive in helping the women's organizations because the government considered women's requests as an obstacle to hinder the growth of domestic industries and businesses.

In the 1960s, the South Korean government made a great effort to participate in the tide of the Western consumer movement. The decision was not because that the Korean society entered the so-called consumer society, but because South Korea was included in a global socio-economic arena led by western countries which South Korea considered its allies. Participating in the consumer movement meant that the government could show that the country tried to meet the international standard in retailing on the global market. As one means to this end, the South Korean government initially positioned women's organizations as leading groups. A few women's organizations were encouraged to lead various consumer events. However, the government did not support women's groups and consumer organizations financially and institutionally. Because the women's groups possessed only limited resources, they could only carry out a few public hearings, market surveys, or consumer exhibitions. Without functioning of the product testing, women's groups and consumer groups hardly had a strong voice against product producers. Members of women's groups and consumer groups were exploited by the government falsely used to show its allies evidence of grassroots movements and add a democratic element to the society in the Korean peninsula. In particular, the Korean government

tried to appeal to the enthusiasm and efforts of the consumer movement during the visits of American consumer activists, Colson E. Warne and Esther Peterson.

In the 1960s, a consumer movement was not attractive to Park Chung-Hee's regime, which was obsessed with achieving national economic growth. After the 1961 military coup, the newly established regime was not considered as a legitimate government. Therefore, Park Chung-Hee believed that commercial success and better international recognition for South Korea would allow his government to attain international approval for governing the country. The Korean military-political leaders considered every issue within the economic spectrum for the survival of the regime. Park's administration viewed Korean women as helpful in achieving economic development. The government encouraged women to live a frugal life, promoting consumer campaigns such as the "Women's Consumer Awareness Campaign," the campaign of "Let's Consume Wheat Instead of Rice" and the "Do Not Eat Beef Campaign."<sup>157</sup> The newspaper's coverage praised Korean women who initiated the consumer movement to end the wasteful spending of urban women and pursued a frugal life.

The Korean military government in the 1960s conceived an idea to benefit from women by mobilizing women in savings campaigns. The government believed that women could help pay back the foreign loans that the state borrowed to make the first National Five-Year Economic Plan (1962-1966) a success. The Economic Planning Board, an economic agency to set up developmental economic policies, issued some proposals to the State Council in 1967. One of the agendas articulated a consumer project as a tool for price stabilization and the growth of economic development. As part of this plan, government bureaucrats made sure that the consumer movement would not flow into the direction of institutional sanctions, including the

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<sup>157</sup> "Heoyeongsime jongjibu [The End of Vainglory]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 19, 1965.

Consumer Protection Act or other laws to restrict Korean companies' producing goods and retailing them domestically and internationally. The government emphasized consumers' obligations rather than protecting consumers' rights. Park Chung-Hee's government planned to save money and accumulate capital by mobilizing Korean housewives through stressing "consumer responsibilities and obligations" in the consumer movement.

### **The Beginning of the Korean Consumer Movement**

Since the mid-1960s, several women's organizations, such as the Research Institute of Women's Issues (RIWI), Korea YWCA, and Korean Women's Association, participated in the consumer movement under a banner of consumer protection. Lee Hee-ho, leader of the RIWI, appeared in the media as the first female representative and actively engaged in the movement.<sup>158</sup> The *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that Lee Hee-ho initiated a consumer campaign called the "Great Awakening Movement of Female Consumers."<sup>159</sup> On July 6, 1965, citizens and expert panels participated in a public hearing held by the RIWI. The public hearing was intended to be a public discussion about Korean consumers' issues and the solutions. However, the event was actually a rally in disguise, during which six panelists delivered the government's propaganda to almost three thousand audience members. The six panelists consisted of two professors, a bureaucrat, a pastor, and two businesspeople. Two figures, Lee Eun-bok and Kang Won-yong, emphasized the difficult national economic situation and the responsibilities of consumers for the country as representatives of product producers and the government.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> "Heoyeongsime jongjibu [The End of Vainglory]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 19, 1965. In cooperation with the South Korean government, they participated in the "Awakening Movement of Women's Consumer Awareness" by encouraging women not to purchase imported cosmetics but to save the money in a bank.

<sup>159</sup> "Women's Movement on a Right Track," *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 19, 1965.

<sup>160</sup> "Suibgwa jichul-en gyunhyeong-eul jilnappeun sangpum cheoljeobaegyeog [Thorough rejection of low quality of commodities in household consumption expenditure]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 08, 1965; Kang Won-yong was a chairman of Korea's Productivity Center which was established as a foundation in August 1957 based on the US aid.

The panelists pointed out the significance of the government's guidance and women's collaboration with the authorities. Lee Eun-bok, the chairman of the Korean Productivity Center, delivered the message that the state should guide consumers in the right direction for the rational purchases. Mr. Lee claimed that housewives in charge of purchasing goods in the home should be guided by the state in making efficient purchases. Bae Eung-do, as a representative of product producers, asserted that consumers as rational citizens should not purchase any defective goods. Koh Hwang-Kyung, the founder of Seoul Women's University and a female professor, participated as a representative of consumers. She supported the male businessman and the government official, claiming that Korean consumers should buy domestic products in order to be patriotic. The pastor, Kang Won-yong, also stressed that Korean consumers should maintain a frugal life at least for three to four years to make the country prosperous."<sup>161</sup>

The Korean media portrayed women's organizations as key players leading the consumer movement and put the government in a supporting position. Korean women's organizations organized subgroups dealing with consumer issues and conducting consumer education programs in their organizations. Initially, the RIWI created the Home Economy Protection Committee (HEPC) as an affiliated group to the RIWI. In November 1965, after the public hearing emphasizing the significance of the government's guidance and women's collaboration with the government, the HEPC conducted a market survey. The national government dispatched officials of the Central Bureau of Metrology and Seoul Metropolitan Bureau. They visited the Namdaemun local market to check whether market merchants were selling products in the same weights and measures promised to customers.<sup>162</sup> According to

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<sup>161</sup> "Thorough rejection of low quality of commodities in household consumption expenditure [Suibgwa jichul-en gyunhyeong-eul jilnappeun sangpum cheoljeobaegyeog]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 08, 1965; The government issued a guideline to regulate false and exaggerated advertisements.

<sup>162</sup> "Consumer protecting," *Dong-A Ilbo*, February 24, 1966

newspaper reports, the RIWI continued hosting social and academic events related to consumer protection issues. They invited public figures to their events and organized meetings to educate attendees, mostly housewives. The speakers lectured housewives to be rational consumers. They urged the women to take responsibility to manage a household without wasting their husbands' wages. Following the establishment of the RIWI, the Korea YWCA also launched the Consumer Protection Committee (CPC) as an affiliated group in 1968. The CPC announced its missions, including the task to review products released on the market and to publish the reviews as foreign consumer groups did.<sup>163</sup>

The Korea YWCA imitated foreign consumer programs and activities. According to the Korean media, the YWCA Korea chose the Japanese Housewives Federation (JHF) as a model organization to help set the direction of their Korean consumer activities. Presumably, the Korean military government played a significant role to encourage the Korea YWCA to study Japanese cases, even though there were no direct statements explaining how the Korean government had been engaged in choosing the conservative Japanese women's organization and dispatching a YWCA leader to the JHF. To the Korean military government, the JHF was an exemplary women's organization because the JHF was not concerned with any political issues but cooperated with the Japanese government, only focusing on housewives' duties and their voluntary work for the country and society.

Park Chung Hee believed that female activities should be confined to non-political issues without disturbing the domestic politics. The JHF described its identity by that core tenant. The Korean regime believed the direction of the JHF's activities would fit well in Korean political and social context because the JHF avoided overt political protest and other forms of political

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<sup>163</sup> “Seoul YWCA- Established Consumer Protection Committee,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 22, 1968; “Post,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 12, 1968.

advocacy. South Korea's military government wanted Korean women's organizations to follow the Japanese pro-government organization model. The Korean government saw that consumer activities of the JHF could also be applied to the Korean situation.<sup>164</sup>

The Korea YWCA dispatched a YWCA leader in charge of consumer issues to Japan to learn about consumer protection programs. A Korean newspaper reported on the JHF as a Japanese women's organization where the members successfully ran their consumer programs.<sup>165</sup> On August 11, 1968, the YWCA leader of the CPC, Jung Gwang-mo, who was an influential female journalist, visited the JHF for two weeks, meeting JHF members and learning how to promote a consumer protection movement. Five months before the Korea YWCA leader visited the JHF, the JHF appeared on Korean media. The Korean newspaper, *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, introduced that the JHF was one of the largest Japanese women's organizations with approximately 100,000 members across Japan, achieving considerable success in the consumer protection movement. Furthermore, the Korean newspaper also introduced that the members of the JHF succeeded in having Japanese housewives engage in the campaign, specifically urban members. The Japanese women's organization trained consumer specialists who would be able to investigate the quality of newly released Japanese products. In its own published periodical, the JHF compiled information on consumers' opinions, consumers trends, and the JHF's activities as part of the consumer protection campaign. The Korean media praised the JHF's

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<sup>164</sup> Patricia Maclachlan, "Consumer Politics Under Early One-Party Dominance: 1955 to the Late 1960s," *Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan: The Institutional Boundaries of Citizen Activism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 92-93.

<sup>165</sup> "Japan's Housewives Federation (JHF) Leads the Consumer Protection Movement," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 11, 1968.

well-connected local network with over four hundred local branches covering almost the whole country.<sup>166</sup>

On top of that, the JHF was supported by their government. The Japanese government positively responded to the JHF's activities by establishing a governmental institution named Fair-Trade Commission to support the consumer protection activities. The Fair-Trade Commission regulated exaggerated advertisements and fraudulent traders.<sup>167</sup> The Japanese government also provided legal support by enacting the Basic Consumer Protection Act in 1968.<sup>168</sup>

### **Uncooperative Government and Frustrated Women's Consumer Movement**

The Korean financial newspaper, the *Maeil Kyungje*, played a significant role in promoting the Korean consumer movement. The *Maeil Kyungje* was the only newspaper to establish a consumer education center, which opened in May 1967.<sup>169</sup> They ran education programs teaching housewives about homemaking and the domestic science, similar to the "lifestyle schools (Seikatsu Gakko)" that the JHF operated.<sup>170</sup> The JHF ran a consumer education program, with the lifestyle schools holding 850 classes with participants from fifty to a hundred Japanese women in each class across the country. Japanese housewives learned about how to become wise consumers and frugal housewives.<sup>171</sup> Additionally, the *Maeil Kyungje* started the lifestyle school program in June 1968, where approximately one hundred fifty Korean

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<sup>166</sup> "The Regular General Meeting of the Female Journalists' Club," *Mail Kyungje*, December 22, 1966; "Seoul YWCA- Established Consumer Protection Committee," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 22, 1968; "Post," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 12, 1968.

<sup>167</sup> "Japan's Housewives Federation (JHF) Leads the Consumer Protection Movement," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 11, 1968.

<sup>168</sup> "Consumer Protection in Japan," *Maeil Kyungje*, September 04, 1969.

<sup>169</sup> "Providing more accurate consumer protection direction in close contact with consumer protection organizations around the world," *Maeil Kyungje*, May 10, 1967.

<sup>170</sup> "The first meeting of housewives in housewives, hosted by the head office," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 25, 1968.

<sup>171</sup> "The Consumer Protection in Japan," *Maeil Kyungje*, September 4, 1969.

housewives attended. The curriculum of lectures in the program ranged from international trends of the consumer protection movement to rational shopping guides and seasonal home management and information on home disciplines as well as skincare.<sup>172</sup>

Korean women's organizations and consumer protection groups tried to catch up with what the *Maeil Kyungje* had done for the consumer education. As part of mass mobilization campaigns, main activities were to operate consumer education programs and to hold exhibitions of recycling or defective products. However, the Korean women's organizations and consumer protection groups struggled from the lack of resources even though they had a foreign model organization conducting various successful projects and programs. The Korean women's organizations and consumer groups were not able to successfully adopt the programs of the JHF, which was funded not only by its members but also by the donations of Japanese companies, in addition to the subsidies of the Japanese government. Most of the Korean women's organizations and consumer protection groups lacked financial resources to carry out investigations of released products, unlike consumer groups in European countries, the United States, and Japan. Korean social organizations did not receive enough funding to support their non-profit, independent consumer organizations through the support of paid members or subscribers who could pay monthly or annual membership fee that the International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU) envisioned as an exemplary fundraising model. However, the majority of consumer groups in other Asian and African countries as well as those in Latin American countries all shared this kind of financial problem.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> "The Show Window of New Housekeeping and Wisdom, the 6th Life College hosted by the [*Maeil Kyungje*] head office," *Maeil Kyungje*, September 12, 1969.

<sup>173</sup> Matthew Hilton, "Consumers of the World Unite: Consumption and the New Global Order," *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 103, 106.



The members of the women's organizations and other consumer groups expected to receive help from the government. They assumed that they could overcome the financial difficulties if they could conduct their product tests in national laboratories without any cost. At that time, Korean women's organizations and consumer groups were unable to establish laboratories for the product tests due to the lack of funds. Instead, they decided to utilize existing national science laboratories that belonged to the following ministries: the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. Among these laboratories the National Industrial Laboratory (NIL) of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry was in practice the only well-functioning laboratory. Aside from requests for product tests, there was a long wait for the chance to carry out separate industrial inspections in the NIL. The national laboratory had conducted almost 20,000 quality assessments every year.<sup>174</sup>

In August 1967, the NIL received 418 requests from the military, 551 requests related to Korean Industrial Standards (KS, Hangug Saneob Pyojun) labeling, and 1914 requests from private companies. There were very limited opportunities for the NIL to conduct the product tests. The requests of consumers' groups were often unprioritized and postponed.<sup>175</sup> In the late 1960s, the voice of Korean consumers was barely heard. The movement for consumer protection was nothing more than an empty slogan without the government's support. The consumers' rights represented by housewives were effortlessly ignored. Female participants in the Korean consumer protection movement struggled to build up channels and recourses to implement their

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<sup>174</sup> "Consumer Protection Cartel (2) Analysis and the Publication," *Dong-A Ilbo* September 28, 1967.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

plans and programs. They were not able to investigate defective products and publish the findings. They were excluded from contributing to expansion of consumers' knowledge.<sup>176</sup>

The Korea Productivity Center (KPC), a semi-governmental agency in implementing and promoting national economic policies, had the privilege to conduct the product tests and to publish a consumer magazine. In contrast, few women's groups and consumer groups succeeded in product testing and publishing. The KPC was a different agency created after the Korean War to help revive the Korean industry using American financial aid, connecting the government with corporations and supporting the government to implement its economic policies efficiently. The KPC's position in the Korean society was to support shrewd product producers. The organization's main role was to boost Korea's industrialization and to cultivate skillful sales and production managers. Their projects focused on collaboration with domestic and foreign private companies. Its ultimate goal was to maximize Korean companies' productivity, not to restrain them.<sup>177</sup> With abundant human and material resources, the KPC conducted product tests and published the consumer magazine, *Consumer Protection*, circulating 2,500 copies. The magazine included so-called public opinion surveys and scientific analysis conducted by the NIL.<sup>178</sup>

Ironically, the KPC published both magazines for consumers and for businessmen. In 1958, a government agency started publishing *Business Management*, the monthly business magazine.<sup>179</sup> In the 1960s, the semi-governmental agency took over the task of publishing production and consumer knowledge, showing that the Korean government intended not only to

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<sup>176</sup> Matthew Hilton, "Cold War Shoppers: Consumerism as State Project," *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 51-52.

<sup>177</sup> "Acquired US \$ 860,000 as financial aid from the International Labor Organization," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 4, 1962.

<sup>178</sup> "Consumer Protection Cartel (2) Analysis and Publication Facility," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 28, 1967.

<sup>179</sup> The advertisements of the *Business Management* have been found in major newspapers, including the *Dong-A Ilbo* and the *Kyung-hyang Shinmun* since January 1958.

control consumers' voices but also to block any information that could damage the domestic businesses.

Next, we will see how South Korea's military government used consumer groups and their activities as a showcase to appeal to two American influencers in the international consumer movement. The first figure is Colston E. Warne, the president of the American Consumer Association and the International Consumer Federation. The second one is Esther Peterson, who was a distinctive advisor of Consumer Affairs of the Carter administration.

### **Colston E. Warne's Visit to South Korea and the KCU**

In the late 1960s, the Korean government invited a prominent American consumer activist, Colston E. Warne to appeal to him how Korean consumer activities fit in the global consumer trend. The military government was eager to display the enthusiasm of the Korean government in the consumer movement, as well as to lead him under the pretense that Korea was not reluctant to establish the Korean Consumer Association. In 1969, Dr. Warne visited South Korea.<sup>180</sup> At the time, Dr. Warne, Warne in economics at Amherst University visited South Korea as a 40-year contributor to the consumer protection movement. In December 1969, the conservative financial newspaper, *Maeil Kyungje*, invited Warne to Seoul. Even though he was officially not invited by the government, his schedule proceeded parallel to the government-invited guest. He held talks in front of Korean government officials and consumer activists. He stayed for four days from December sixth to ninth, 1969, in Korea.<sup>181</sup> When Warne arrived in Seoul, his first official schedule was to meet Korean bureaucrats of the Ministry of Commerce

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<sup>180</sup> "International Consumer Union," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 5, 1970. The International Consumer Union, chaired by Colston E. Warne, was an international organization founded in April 1960 for the benefit and protection of consumers, centered in the West.

<sup>181</sup> "Consumer Protection Lecture, 8 Day YWCA," *Maeil Kyungje*, December 6, 1969; "Consumer Protection Movement," *Maeil Kyungje*, December 8, 1969.

and Industry, including Shim Sang-Hwan. In the evening after the meeting, he attended a dinner party hosted by the president of the *Maeil Kyungje* where he met with people related to the national consumer movement and shared his experiences with the consumer movement in the United States. A few days later, he lectured on the International Consumer Protection Movement as a guest speaker in the Hall of the Korea YWCA in Seoul. In the YWCA lecture, Warne optimistically predicted the results of the Korean consumer movement, saying, “Korean government officials are very cooperative for the movement, and they emphasize their willingness to support the movement.” He suggested that most of all, the establishment of an Integration Consumer Organization could help work with Korea’s scattered and fragmented consumer groups more efficiently. Also, he recommended they work collectively rather than to carry out separate activities.<sup>182</sup> Warne urged South Korean government to give aid and support. He stressed state support for the consumer movement because product producers already received institutional and financial support from the government.<sup>183</sup>

During his visit to South Korea, he noticed that Korean consumer activists hardly received institutional or financial aid. Additionally, he stated that even though it might be inevitable for female consumer groups to lead a consumer protection movement in South Korea, women’s participation alone in the movement would not be enough to raise consumers’ power and influence. For instance, American males had made a great effort to run and activate the movement, and the process worked well to draw more and more females following after the male consumer activists. Warne encouraged Korean female consumer activists to pay close attention

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<sup>182</sup> “Speaking to Dr. Warne, the President of the US Consumer Federation, To Create an Alliance for Consumers,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 9, 1969.

<sup>183</sup> “Integration Consumer Organization,” *Maeil Kyungje*, December 9, 1969

to men's participation in the movement, but to be careful of men who might benefit from the consumer protection movement for their own self-serving economic interests.<sup>184</sup>

A month after Warne's visit, the Korean Consumers Union (KCU) was founded with the main aim of expanding protection of the Korean consumers. The newly established consumer group reflected men's active involvement in the consumer movement, as Warne had suggested. Korean male members occupied most of the top executive positions, including the chairman position, a vice-chairman position, an executive director, and directors of two committees dealing with legal issues. The male leaders' professions were varied from that of a professor, a journalist, an attorney, and a charity group leader. However, not all females were excluded in the top positions. The de facto leader of the KCU was Jung Gwang-mo, the leader of The Korea YWCA. Previously in 1968, she visited Japan to learn about the JHF, later becoming a vice-chairman and committee director of the publication. The influential female journalist was a propagandist actively collaborating with the nationalist campaigns in the Park Chung-Hee regime.<sup>185</sup>

Female members who were leaders of women's organizations, and consumer-related groups such as the Seoul YWCA, the Korean National Mother's Association, the Council of Korean Women's Organizations, and the Seoul Girl Scouts, filled the remaining positions of committee directors. The list of key leaders of the KCU is as follows: the chairman, Kim Byung-kuk (professor at Gyeongsang National University and specialist of Asian Development Bank), a vice-chairman and publication committee director, Jung Kwang-mo (deputy head of the political desk, *Hankook Ilbo Newspaper*), a vice-chairman, Park Hee-seop (President of Cooperative

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> The Website of Consumer's Union of Korea, <https://cuk.or.kr/introduce/03.asp>  
Jung Kwang-mo attended the 6th IOCU in Vienna, Austria, as vice-president on June 25, 1970.

Education Institute), executive director, Park Sung-ho (head of the general affairs of Cooperative Education Institute), legislative committee director, Seung-Hyun Han (Lawyer), commodity inspection committee director, Kim Soon (Korean National Women's Association), and education committee director, Lee Yo-Sik (Seoul YWCA secretary-general). The organization imitated the structure of the US Consumers Union so that the KCU consisted of six committees: the Complaint Process Committee, the Goods Inspection Committee, the Protection Laws Legislation Enforcement Committee, the Price and Measure Committee, the Consumer Education Committee, plus two other committees: the Publication Committee and the Organization Committee.<sup>186</sup>

The KCU considered the “financially independent” US Consumer Union as an ideal model. Kim Byung-guk, the president of the KCU, emphasized the independence from external influences, such as private enterprises, and insisted that the KCU become a “pure” consumer organization like the US Consumer Union. The KCU criticized some major Japanese consumer groups that received considerable financial support from private manufacturers. Warne considered independence to be one of the most critical elements in operating a consumer group. In Warne's lecture, he criticized Japanese consumer groups receiving donation from a major Japanese corporation. The manufacturer donated about one-third of the organization's budget. While the president of the IOCU stated that the IOCU warned a few Japanese consumers groups about their harmful dependence on private companies. The international consumer organization alerted them that they could be removed from the IOCU if the Japanese consumer organizations would keep relying on private corporations financially.<sup>187</sup> The American Consumers Union

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<sup>186</sup> The Website of Consumer's Union of Korea, <https://cuk.or.kr/introduce/03.asp>

<sup>187</sup> Richard L. D. Morse, Editor, “New Initiatives on the International Consumer Front,” *The Consumer Movement: Lectures by Colston E. Warne* (Manhattan, Kansas: Family Economics Trust Press, 1993), 206. In Warne's lecture, he found that “a leading manufacturer did indeed pick up about a third to a half of the budget.”

aimed to be financially independent. The union collected \$6 million a year from 1.6 million members as membership fees, setting up the union's laboratory to conduct product tests and publishing the product test results in a magazine for consumers to provide consumer information and advice. Korea's Consumers Union expected to be a self-sustainable organization supported by its membership fees and the government's aid. The leaders of the KCU assumed that its 500 Korean won membership fees would be enough. They took an optimistic though naive, view that their product tests would be carried out using facilities in universities or industrial research institutes. They believed that they could publish the test results in a monthly consumer magazine.<sup>188</sup>

In 1969 when Warne visited South Korea, the state bureaucracies in the Park Chung-Hee administration seemed passionate in supporting the consumer protection movement. However, in reality, the Korean government did not have a genuine desire to provide financial or institutional support for Korean consumer groups. Even though the government established the KCU, like other women's and consumer groups, it did not receive any funds from the government. The lack of financial resources restricted the scope of the movement. There were no more productive organizational activities except for attending international consumer conferences as consumer representatives which started in 1970 when Jung Kwang-Mo became a vice-chairman of the KCU. She participated in the 6th IOCU International Consumer Congress in June 1970 in Vienna, Austria.<sup>189</sup> Consequently, the KCU failed to become a leading consumer association consolidating the various consumer groups. Except for the women's organizations, there existed only four consumer groups to keep to their consumer groups' names - Consumer Protection Division, Women's Consumer Association, Seoul Consumer Affairs Division, and Consumer

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<sup>188</sup> "Consumer Protection Movement on the Right Track," *Kyunghyang Sinmun*, April 4, 1970.

<sup>189</sup> The Website of Consumer's Union of Korea, <https://cuk.or.kr/introduce/03.asp> History of the KCU, 1970-1989.

Opinion Association. By the mid-1970s, their names were listed on legitimate consumer groups of the ministry of commerce. According to Article 33 of the Civil Code, the KCU became the first designated social organization of the Economic Planning Board and became an organization of the Korea Consumer Council in 1979 just before Park Chung-Hee's assassination.<sup>190</sup>

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the influence of the IOCU had rapidly expanded in the Asia-Pacific region, Colston E. Warne, the president of the Consumers Union of the United States, revisited South Korea in 1971. At Warne's second visit to South Korea, even though he was no longer the president of the IOCU, he was still passionate to help expand consumer movements in Asia. The American consumer leader understood the different political and social situations that Asian countries confronted. Therefore, he emphasized that Korean consumer groups' collaboration with the government was inevitable. He proposed that the government-centered consumer movement in South Korea would be realistic regarding these needs. Additionally, he was not hesitant in confronting the American government, pointing at the unfairness of Harry S. Truman's Executive order of a loyalty questionnaire examining ideological verification.<sup>191</sup>

Warne's goal for his visit to South Korea was to help boost the consumer movement in Asia. He stopped in South Korea at the end of November 1971 before joining the international IOCU conference held from 14 to 17 December 1971 in Bombay, India.<sup>192</sup> Warne encouraged

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<sup>190</sup> The Website of Consumer's Union of Korea, <https://cuk.or.kr/introduce/03.asp> History of the KCU, 1970-1989.

<sup>191</sup> Gerald Gold, "A Long-time Champion of the Consumer," *New York Times*, June 30, 1970.

<sup>192</sup> Although, in the 1970s, quite a few Asian governments embraced the needs of the consumer movement, their conflicting political and economic interests in Asia sometimes made it challenging to work hand in hand for the international consumer cooperation in the Pacific region. In 1974, the regional tensions even negatively influenced the selection of the venue for the 1974 regional IOCU conference. Initially, the venue was planned to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which was changed to Boom Bay in India due to the internal division of IOCU. However, as the political dispute between Pakistan and India worsened, the venue was changed from Boom Bay to Singapore. Matthew Hilton, "Consumers of the World Unite: Consumption and the New Global Order," *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 107.



the members to help more male lawyers and male college students to engage in consumer activities in order to conduct the movement more efficiently. He explained that Korean women's efforts alone in the consumer movement would not be enough to change society and legal institutes in favor of consumer protection.<sup>193</sup> Another recommendation he made was to publicize the consumers' issues so that more Korean politicians and political parties would try to give citizens positive impressions about protecting and caring for consumers. He said that, for instance, both American Republicans and Democrats in the United States had been trying to build up the right image of their parties protecting consumers and the consumer society.<sup>194</sup>

Despite Warne's emphasis on Korean men's active participation in the consumer movement, Korean men considered consumerism belonged to women not men. The Korean government was rhetorically supportive but reluctant to implement tangible measures, regulations, and practices toward private sector. The Korean authorities did not want to hinder or block domestic industrial development. The male elites, who put their name on the member list of the KCU, were not engaged in the consumer issues as female consumer activists were. The female consumer activists were placed in a difficult situation in which they were not able to take actions at will.<sup>195</sup>

The female consumer activists and the consumer movement were utilized as a showcase which displayed consumer protection activities toward its international community. The Korean government allowed consumer activists to work on consumer issues within a limited range. Leading middle-class consumer activists tried to create a consumer society satisfying the government in the existing economic and social structure. Korean female consumer activists

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<sup>193</sup> "Lecture by Dr. Won, Chairman of the Consumers Union of US," *Maeil Business Newspaper*, December 1, 1971.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> The Website of Consumer's Union of Korea, <https://cuk.or.kr/introduce/03.asp> History of the KCU, 1970-1989.

agreed that male participation in the consumer movement was a fundamental solution for the promotion. The majority of female participants in the Korean consumer movement accepted male superiority but showed their frustration in that Korean men lacked interest in the consumer movement. When the 9th IOCU World Congress was held in July 1978 in London, England, twelve Korean representatives attended there.<sup>196</sup> Only the male representative among them presented in the international meeting. Dr. Kim Dong-gi criticized Korean women's organizations who passively conducted the movement leaving much room for improvement. He insisted that the consumer movement should be carried out by professional consumer organizations in earnest. Additionally, he emphasized that collaboration between social and private organizations in the consumer campaign would be most desirable to undertake a transitional process.<sup>197</sup> Park Kim-soon, the chairman of the Korean Women's Association, reported her experience of attending the international IOCU conference. She stated that she was jealous of western countries where active participants in the consumer protection movement were men with various professions such as policymakers, civil servants, politicians, market specialists, and journalists. She encouraged more men should pay attention to consumer protection.<sup>198</sup>

Warne lectured under the title, "the Economic Development and Role of the Consumer Protection Movement" at the hall of the Korea YWCA on November 29, 1971. In the lecture, he underlined those crucial activities for the consumer movement were to conduct thorough product tests, to share the information, to weed out deceiving traders, and to exclude all unscrupulous

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<sup>196</sup> "Sook-Jeong Ha, Leaving for the International Consumer Conference," *Kyunghyang Sinmun*, July 20, 1978.

<sup>197</sup> "Specialization of the Consumer Protection Movement, Briefing Session Hosted by the Korean Women's Association after the Return from the IOCU Conference in London," *Maeil Business Newspaper*, August 19, 1978.

<sup>198</sup> "Park Kim-Soon, chairman of the Korean Women's Association and attended the International Consumer Conference, the consumer movement could greatly influence the policy decision," *Kyunghyang Sinmun*, August 10, 1978.

consumer goods from unsanitary foods to misbranding medicines. He introduced his organization, the US Consumers Union, as a successful consumer group to independently conduct product tests in its laboratory and to publish monthly Consumer Reports informing product ratings, consumer guides, and product evaluations.<sup>199</sup>

Warne willingly became a delegate to deliver updated information about new consumer issues and trends in the west. After the lecture, he met with Jung Jin-gi, president of the financial newspaper of *Maeil Kyungje*, who officially invited him to visit South Korea. They discussed the guidelines of the consumer protection movement in which the *Maeil Kyungje* participated. The president of the Korean newspaper showed considerable interest in learning the list of up-to-date activities conducted by western consumer activists. Warne promised Jung to send any IOCU publications, including information on the trends of the global consumer protection movement.<sup>200</sup>

### **Esther Peterson's Visit to South Korea**

After Warne's two visits to South Korea in 1969 and 1971, another American consumer expert visited South Korea in June 1978 with the spirit of internationalism. The American visitor was Esther Peterson, the exclusive advisor of Consumer Affairs of the Carter administration. She had held consumer advisory positions in the three presidential administrations in the United States. She attained the highest rank of women as assistant secretary of labor in the Kennedy administration. Her official schedule in South Korea had repeated the schedule of Warne. It started with an official meeting with the vice-minister of the Economic Planning Board dealing with the decision of Korea's economic policies. The Korean authoritative government was

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<sup>199</sup> "A Meeting with President Jung, Visiting the Head Office," *Maeil Kyungje*, November 30, 1971.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

sensitive to its international reputation and the evaluation of the country image. A de facto host of the invitation might be the Korean government even though the *Maeil Kyungje* officially invited her. The high-ranking Korean official tried to give a good impression to her, talking about consumer issues regarding how the Korean government could support the consumer movement in Korea.<sup>201</sup>

Another official schedule for Mrs. Peterson was to lecture about the consumer movement at the US Embassy in Seoul. After the consultation with the Korean bureaucrats. She delivered the lecture in front of the Korean audience of two hundred people, including leaders of women's organizations and business people. The title of her lecture was, "how can we achieve goals of the consumer movement?" She said to her audience that she considered a consumer movement as a practice of democracy. Her way of articulating the movement using the concept of democracy during the lecture seemed to make the atmosphere frozen. Korean bureaucrats and government allies felt uncomfortable with the term because the Korean authoritarian regime was established through non-democratic way, which was a military coup. The Korean newspapers, *Maeil Kyungje* and *Dong-A ilbo*, delivered the summary of her lecture, but their understandings of the lecture were quite different. The *Maeil Kyungje*, with a pro-government viewpoint, concluded that Mrs. Peterson's emphasis was more on consumers' obligations and duties to protect themselves rather than the legislation of legal protection like the consumer protection general law.<sup>202</sup> On the other hand, the *Dong-A Ilbo* with a liberal point of view indicated that Peterson's main point was that Korean consumers as a whole must unite in order to fight against heartless

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<sup>201</sup> "Seminar Invited with Mrs. Peterson, Special Assistant to the Consumer Protection Affairs, US President Carter," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 19, 1978; "Consumer protection is a Consumer Awakening, U.S. President Special Assistant, Mrs. Peterson," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 28, 1978.

<sup>202</sup> "Mrs. Peterson's Lecture on Consumer's Awareness prior to the Legislation," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 30, 1978.

companies, understanding the consumer movement as a form of democracy.<sup>203</sup> Although she did not intend it, her lecture was held on the Achilles' heel of the Park Chung-Hee regime.

Despite the Korean government's reluctant attitude towards the consumer protection movement, Korean females as consumers began to voice their opinions about their vulnerable position on the market. In the early 1970s, Korean consumers complained about the high prices of Korean domestic products. Korean consumers had been abused by Korean companies that produced expensive but low-quality goods. Often Korean consumers paid 2-3 times more to purchase new products in a new package without any qualitative improvement of the product. It was possibly due to cartels and trusts of Korean companies that the government-backed.<sup>204</sup> Notably, Korean automobiles and electrical products companies made an excessive profit in the domestic market. The Korean companies delighted not only in the protection of the government but also in the financial partnership with the government, who helped the companies acquire foreign loans as a financial guarantor. Not surprisingly, the government willingly showed much tolerance in scenes where large companies made excessive profits by playing tricks on consumers.<sup>205</sup> At the time, Korean women were unable to express direct dissatisfaction with the government and large corporations because they were too socially and economically underprivileged to survive alone. Even women in the middle class were vulnerable and powerless in their homes, so it was rare to challenge men and the government.

In response to the criticism and dissatisfaction of the consumer groups and women's groups, the ministry of commerce and industry and the women's affairs division in the government ran a joint project of an exhibition, displaying defective products for three weeks in

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<sup>203</sup> "The Lecture of Mrs. Peterson, US Special Advisor of the US President, Consumers can protect their rights through the acquisition of consumer knowledge," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 1, 1978.

<sup>204</sup> "Consumers Must Protect themselves," *Maeil Kyungje*, May 02, 1970.

<sup>205</sup> "Trampled Consumer Rights," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 2, 1970.

September 1970 in Seoul. One thousand five hundred thirty-nine defective products were displayed. Over 200,000 people visited the exhibition in the first two weeks. Defective electric appliances of well-known Korean brands were humiliated. Civil servants, who were in charge of the product tests on the electrical goods, confessed that most of the collected ones were defective. The space of the exhibition was not large enough to display all the defective products.<sup>206</sup>

The defective product exhibition proved that the government's quality certification process did not work properly. A large number of well-known Korean makers with Korean Standards (KS) occupied considerable space in the defective goods exhibition. Korean consumers felt betrayed by the government. They believed that the KS mark was reliable evidence because it meant the product with the mark passed the government's quality control process. The KS products displayed in the fair were continuously advertised on radio and television on a daily basis, which made consumers of the products disappointed and frustrated. At that time, Korean companies had to meet multiple requirements to earn the KS mark. Even though a national laboratory's engineers inspected newly released products through all the processes of manufacturing, it was just one time one sample product test. The exhibition uncovered a critical blind point.<sup>207</sup> The *Maeil Kyungje* evaluated the government's exhibition as an opportunity for Korean consumers to judge the immorality of 406 businessmen.<sup>208</sup> The *Dong-A Ilbo* also exposed that the government rarely considered Korea's consumer protection issues

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<sup>206</sup> Shin Dong-Ho, "The Economic Focus on the 70-Year Savings (6) Bad Products and Consumer Awakening," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 29, 1970.

<sup>207</sup> "After attending the defective exhibition, I don't trust even the KS mark," *Kyunghyang Shinmun* September 17, 1970.

<sup>208</sup> "Awakened Freedom of Choice," *Maeil Kyungeje*, October 3, 1970.

seriously was in reality, specifically about the problems and solutions of defective products, pollution, and sudden price increases.<sup>209</sup>

Based on the results of the exhibition, the government announced to promote the consumer protection and removal of defective products on the market as a long-term policy project. The government promised three institutional changes for the consumer protection: the establishment of a consumer complaint center as a permanent organization, the revision of the existing enforcement law, and the integration of separate control acts into a single bill. The government decided to reorganize all scattered consumer groups into one integrated organization. The measures that the government planned meant that the state would more tightly control consumer issues. More specifically, the government could influence the direction of economic development through the non-consumer goods of heavy industry.<sup>210</sup> However, the infamous blacklist of the companies, whose products were displayed in the defective goods exhibition products, expressed their dissatisfaction with the government. The Korean entrepreneurs criticized the ambiguous selection criteria of the exhibition. They argued that there was no clear line differentiating their products from those of competing brands that were not blacklisted. They felt devastated by the fact that the blacklist ruined the brands' positive images.<sup>211</sup>

The government guided various Korean women's organizations and consumer groups to make various efforts to arouse consumer awareness by holding junk food exhibitions and enlightenment classes, publishing periodicals that convey consumer protection-related information or operating consumer complaint centers. Korean women welcomed the

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<sup>209</sup> Shin Dong-Ho, "The Economic Focus on the 70-Year Savings (6) Bad Products and Consumer Awakening," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 29, 1970.

<sup>210</sup> "Awakened Freedom of Choice," *Maeil Kyungje*, October 3, 1970.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

government's decision to establish a permanent complaint center and to revise the existing law to promote consumer protection. The Consumer Protection Committee members of the Seoul YWCA regularly held small-scale unsanitary food exhibitions and enlightenment classes, awakening the consumer consciousness. The Korean Women's Association, led by South Korea's first congresswoman, conducted a yearly consumer poll. As part of the consumer protection movement, they ran a consumer complaint center. It appealed to female housewives as wise consumers as good mothers. The Korean Women's Association created "Good Mother Awards" to promote wise consumers as a new ideal mother.<sup>212</sup> Since 1967, the RIWI ran an affiliated consumers' group holding a bazaar. Korea's Consumer Protection Federation decided to boycott seven products of 13 manufacturers in response to the government's exhibition of defective products.<sup>213</sup>

The South Korean government's attitude toward the consumer protection movement was very deceptive. The Korean government was lukewarm in establishing legal sanctions or regulations for consumer protection, tried to minimize regulations by adjusting existing laws, and continued to postpone the establishment of fundamental consumer protection laws. Lee Nak-sun, the minister of commerce and industry, promised to support the action of boycotts against purchasing unsanitary foods in early 1971 when he attended the monthly invitation lecture hosted by the New Seoul Club of Korean Working Women's Federation and the YMCA lecture.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Shin Dong-Ho, "The Economic Focus on the 70-Year Savings (6) Bad Products and Consumer Awakening," *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 29, 1970; "Designing a New Year for Women's Organizations Focusing on the Rationalization of Livelihood," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 05, 1971.

<sup>213</sup> "The empty political resolution of Building a Women's Hall," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 30, 1970.

<sup>214</sup> "Support for boycotts against unsanitary foods," *Maeil Kyungje*, March 23, 1971



However, in practice, the Korean government hesitated to launch legal and institutional mechanisms to support the consumer movement. Consumer rights that people had learned through consumer education—especially the four consumer rights to be safe, informed, heard, and choose in the Consumer Bill of Rights of the John F. Kennedy Administration in the United States in 1963. In other words, the rights to which opinions had been rarely reflected in the Korean administration. Despite the high cost of the low quality of products and consumer financial damage, there were few legal sanctions for preventing Korean consumers from being harmed by purchasing and utilizing Korean domestic products. Monopoly regulation and fair-trade law were drafted in 1966 and then submitted to the Korean national assembly but were abandoned just after the closing of the sixth national assembly. In April 1969, New Democratic Party, a liberal party, submitted the antitrust legislation bill to the seventh national assembly, replacing the legal sanctions and contents, instead of submitting previous the fair-trade act. The antitrust legislation was abandoned without even a deliberation in the national assembly due to strong oppositional pressures of the powerful Korean business circle.<sup>215</sup>

### **The Dual Consumer Identities**

Since the early 1970s, the Korean consumer movement began to slogan consumer saving rather than consumer protection. The National Federation of Women's Savings and Livelihood (NFWSL), established in 1967 under the support of the ministry of finance, planned to run a consumer guidance program in 1971. The main goal of the NFWSL was to teach housewives

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<sup>215</sup> "Exclusive Price Deliberation Committee – Its Functions and Problems," *Maeil Kyungje*, March 02, 1971.

about how to keep a domestic account book as part of a frugal campaign.<sup>216</sup> In 1972, Korean women's organizations and consumer groups resisted the reality with no protective institution for consumer protection, including the consumer protection act, the fair-trade act, and the advertising regulation act. The women's organizations' members participated in the consumer protection movement resisting any unsanitary food on the street or in shops and restaurants. They picked up the picket and collected consumers' complaints. Some women's organizations started publishing their consumer magazines. Furthermore, they utilized the consumer cooperatives to buy products directly from producers or mediators and sell the products at low prices to members. In 1972, the YWCA mobilized 40 members to conduct the market survey and to request an analysis of commercial products. The Seoul YWCA encouraged housewives to report any consumer issues to them. When some women raised consumers' issues of their products to Y, the YWCA requested the product producers to solve the issues or refund the cost to the customers. If the producers did not respond to them in the right manner, the consumer groups released the information to the public. Despite those women's efforts to promote the consumer protection campaign, Korean authorities had still been reluctant to provide institutional and administrative support for the consumers' protection.<sup>217</sup>

As mentioned in the earlier pages, product inspection requests of women's groups were ignored and put behind other test requests in the national laboratory. Even if a consumer group finally succeeded in conducting product test, often the test result came out very late to use the data. Therefore, consumer activists often complained about the situations. For example, when

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<sup>216</sup> "The Establishment of the Korean Women's Frugal Life Association, One Housewife-One Bank Account Movement," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 02, 1967; Designing New Years for Women's Organizations Focusing on the Rationalization of Livelihood," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 05, 1971.

<sup>217</sup> "Housewives Devoted to the Action, Remove out Unsanitary Foods with Our Hands," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 25, 1972.

they inspected a unsanitary food case, often the result came out after the sick person or the poisoned consumer got over. On top of that, product producers and sellers did not consider consumers' complaints as a threat. Some deceptive merchants kept running their business, pretending nothing happened after one or two months when reported. The more fundamental problem was the government's ignorant attitude toward the consumer protection. The government's actions were slow and negligent to regulate deceptive producers even when the clinical symptoms of the consumers became obvious. The consumer activists in women's organizations worked hard but often felt powerless and helpless throughout the process to ask for the product inspects, wait for the result, and access to the policy-making process.<sup>218</sup>

After the 1970 national exhibition of defective products, the government promised various institutional supports for the elimination of defective products on the market. The women's consumer organization, however, evaluated that the government did not adequately guide the consumer movement in 1971. The government and officials unofficially and silently denied the enthusiasm and willingness of the women's organizations for consumer protection. The consumer protection movement often ended up sporadically in the absence of substantial financial and institutional supports. Through the mass media, the government announced that consumers could access consumer complaints centers affiliated to government agencies where consumers could report their damaged products, their physical damage due to the defective product, or anything related to consumer issues. The office of food hygiene division under the ministry of health affairs, the health office, and the mayor's office of each municipality was open to consumers. The telephone numbers of the offices had been distributed to lots of citizens through newspapers at the national and local levels. It seemed to show how much the

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

government was ready to help Korean consumers. The problem, however, was that the consumers' reports were not properly handled. The administrative penalties had been rarely imposed on reported companies that damaged consumers or produced defective products.<sup>219</sup> After the establishment of the complaints center for consumers, most of the tasks were assigned to volunteers. Even if various governmental agencies such as the ministry of food and drug administration, the health and mayor's office of the city hall, and the public health Center were assigned the tasks, the operation of the center relied on officials' voluntary works and human resources of women's organizations.<sup>220</sup>

The Korean government's definition of consumers was different from that of women's organizations and consumer organizations. Korean women's groups and consumers' organizations defined consumers as the weak of the market as opposed to producers, and their purpose was to help consumers from being deceived by companies. On the other hand, the Korean government did not consider consumers weak in the relationship between a consumer and a producer. According to the government's point of view, the critical role of Korean consumers was to overcome the national economic difficulties together through supporting domestic companies, buying domestic goods and not buying luxury goods, and saving more money in banks.

Since the late 1960s, Korean consumers had suffered from continued inflation, and the Korean government encouraged Korean consumers to purchase cheap domestic goods through joint or collective purchases to save money except for the minimum living cost. The Korean government often negatively described Korean female consumers who were emotional, insecure,

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<sup>219</sup> "Lee Ok-Ki, director of the Consumers' Confederation of Korea, insists the Collaboration, " *Maeil Kyungje*, June 02, 1970; "the Consumer protection activists, lining up for battles," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 17, 1971.

<sup>220</sup> "Housewives Devoted to the Action, Remove out Unsanitary Foods with Our Hands," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 25, 1972.

and extravagant on the Korean media. The government criticized that the mental anxiety of female consumers exacerbated inflation, often without mentioning the national economic measures or policies influencing price increases. After the Korean presidential election in April 1971, the price increases of groceries became severe. The Korean government announced that by April 1971, wholesale prices and consumer prices rose respectively 2.4 percent and 2.7 percent, compared to those in 1970. In June 1971, the Korean government encouraged housewives to find the solution by themselves, stating, "A wise housewife could fight with the cheapest shopping and the cheapest diet."<sup>221</sup>

The government's suggestion to fight for inflation was embodied in the statement of women's organizations. Conservative female social activists publicly supported the government. An anonymous female leader not only supported the government through mass media but also promoted actions to fight against price increases. Her first idea was to collect price information about necessary goods and purchase the products at the lowest price. The second one was to resist merchants' decision to raise the prices all of a sudden through the demonstration. She argued that consumers could resist sudden alleged rises. She encouraged housewives to protest either collectively or individually in order to fight against the sellers' unfair, forced, and sudden price increases.<sup>222</sup> Women's groups and consumer groups seemed to follow the solution that the government offered rather than to trust their own judgment. In the case of the Seoul YWCA, the direction of the consumer movement was to "set up plans after meeting authorities and being guided about their future actions." Kim Jae-ok, head of the Seoul YWCA Consumer Protection Committee, asserted that Korean women should aggressively fight against their inflations like American and Japanese women did. She said that the foreign women confronted their economic

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<sup>221</sup> "Housewives' Strategy to control the Home deficit," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 03, 1971.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

difficulties with the faith that they could overcome them, exclaiming that they could definitely curb their unnecessary consumption. Mrs. Kim stressed that all Korean housewives should collectively participate in the movement based on the spirit that “all joined front” or “no one left behind.” She also recommended, for example, that if the price of beef was raised, housewives should consider substitutional options such as pork or fish replacing beef. Then, the price of beef would be dropped some day.<sup>223</sup>

In the early 1970s, the typical way of participating in the Korean consumer campaign was a group-purchase. The Korean media introduced the consumer’s activity through the American Buying Club in Chicago. The newspaper portrayed that the Buying Club was a good exemplar for Korean consumers who suffered from the broad exposure to damaged and defective products, as well as continued price increases. The collective buying helped them save 20% on the cost of weekly spending. Thousands of American buying clubs, co-operated by neighborhoods and families who lived far from urban centers in the United States, bought their daily necessities at low prices. The *Mail Kyungje* delivered the details about how to operate the collective buying. The American clubs generally consisted of 15-30 households, which were divided into three groups, the groups of purchasing, accounting, and distributing. The purchasing group first created a list of daily necessities and contracted the wholesaler or agency that could offer the lowest price among wholesalers and agencies in the area. The distributing group selected 25-30 popular items with high price margins and distributed the list of items, price, brand, and a table to order the members. The member then paid the money to the accounting group first, along with a document documenting the required quantity of goods. The purchasing group ordered the products based on the order forms. The distributing group checked out the arrived goods, and the

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<sup>223</sup> Suh Seok-sik, “Women’s Power Fighting against the Price increases,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 12, 1971.

accounting group proceeded the step for each member to take each item home before after payment.<sup>224</sup>

The Buying Club project, promoted in the Korean newspaper, was embodied by various Korean women's organizations. In the case of the Korea Women's Association, the members started a joint purchase project of buying soy sauce and wheat. The branches of two districts, Yeongdeungpo, and Seongbuk in Seoul, initiated to buy soy sauce. The members of the districts, first of all, toured seven factories of soy makers and selected one of them who offered the lowest wholesale price. When they bought wheat, a substitute for barley rice, they tracked the pattern of the US buying club, in which members ordered in advance and received items in the market at wholesale prices. However, it did not work well for Korean consumers because the consumers invested too much time and effort to get such a small margin; they had to find the right wholesalers, document applications of product purchasing, to order items, to pay money, and to distribute the items.<sup>225</sup>

Despite the small rewards, Korean women's organizations continued to work in consumer cooperatives. In 1974, the co-purchase effort continued with the name of the consumers' rights. The YWCA and Korean National Council of Women (KNCW) had worked together to increase the size of the joint purchase starting from Seoul. The Seoul YWCA ran a training program to foster leaders for joint purchase clubs. The KNCW selected 200 females from women's organizations for the program. They decided to set up a joint purchase club at the Geumhwa Citizen Apartment in Seodaemun-gu, Seoul. They selected the Geumhwa Apartment because of the two main reasons; firstly, the residents had a similar living standard; secondly, the area lacked markets nearby for the grocery shopping because the area was close to the primary

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<sup>224</sup> "Housewives' Strategy to control the Home deficit," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 03, 1971.

<sup>225</sup> "Rapidly Increasing Prices," *Kyunghyang Sinmun*, September 04, 1971.

business district.<sup>226</sup> In 1974, the consumer protection activities of women's organizations continued, but they lost their vitality in the indifference and cold attitude of the government.<sup>227</sup>

Korean women's organizations and consumer groups worked cooperatively with the government's policies and demands as much as possible but gradually began to feel skeptical about their consumer movements as the gap between consumer education and government's leading direction widened. In particular, the government had demonized female consumers of cosmetics, which were women's necessities. The government tolerated predatory sales behavior of Korean cosmetics companies that made unfairly huge profits through selling low-quality cosmetics at high prices. One of the most sensitive issues among female consumers in the 1970s was the purchase of cosmetics. Korean women accumulated their complaints against costly but low-quality Korean cosmetics. At the time, Korean cosmetics companies enjoyed their monopolistic position in the domestic market in which the government set up trade barriers against all foreign cosmetic products. The Korean government and Korean cosmetics companies both ignored the consumer's rights to be protected. Under these circumstances, a women's organization launched a group to analyze technical problems in terms of ingredients and technologies of Korean cosmetics for female consumers. In 1971, the Seoul YWCA founded the Group of Cosmetology Research, consisted of the eleven members of experts in Dermatology, pharmacy, medicine, cosmetics manufacturers, and Seoul YWCA representatives. The goal of the affiliated group to the consumer committee was to inspect Korean cosmetics, whether the Korean cosmetics possessed harmful ingredients or not. Additionally, the Group of Cosmetology

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<sup>226</sup> "Let's Protect Consumers' Rights," *Kyunghyang Shimun*, March 19, 1974.

<sup>227</sup> "Pungseonghan haengsa-e gyeolsil-eun bin-yag [Poor Outcomes of Various Events]," *Dong-A Ibo*, December 24, 1974.



Research paid attention to improve the quality of Korean cosmetics and to promote technical research about Korean cosmetics.<sup>228</sup>

In the 1960s and 1970s, Korean women became more and more aware that cosmetics for taking good care of their appearance was essential. To secure better husband candidates in the marriage market, Young Korean women wanted to have soft and bright skin. However, the Korean government categorized the Korean women's basic necessity into the category of luxury goods. Korean cosmetics companies used it as an excellent opportunity to sell cosmetics at a high price, sometimes including harmful ingredients such as mercury. There were no laws or regulations to sanction them. Even there was no pressure for Korean cosmetics manufacturers to improve the quality of the existing products. As a result, trafficking of foreign cosmetics or fake foreign cosmetics became a social problem since the late 1960s.<sup>229</sup>

The Park Chung-Hee regime protected Korean cosmetics companies under the policy of "promotion of domestic product purchase" and "protection of domestic industry" and enjoyed this monopoly position throughout the Park Chung-Hee regime. Not surprisingly, the Korean government's tariffs and protection policies did not boost the export of Korean cosmetics firms; rather, Korean cosmetics companies had been profiting in the domestic market, so they had no desire for technological innovation in their products whereas the Korean government seriously

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<sup>228</sup> "The Group of Cosmetology Research affiliated to the YWCA Consumer Protection Committee Founded," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 28, 1971; "Laboratory," *Maeil Kyungje*, August 31, 1971.

<sup>229</sup> "Confiscated Foreign Goods," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 5, 1967; "Smuggling Japanese Cosmetics, Detaining the Captain Park," *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 11, 1967; "Counterfeiting US Cosmetics," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 30, 1967; "Fake cosmetics of the Retel," *Maeil Kyungje*, January 31, 1967; "Requires Fundamental Measures to Eliminate Foreign Cosmetics," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 09, 1967; "Confiscated Japanese cosmetics with 1.1 million won value," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 17, 1967; "Fake Korean Japanese sold fake Japanese Cosmetics," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 24, 1967; "Smuggling before the end of the year," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 4, 1967; "2.5 million won of Smuggled Cosmetics," *Maeil Kyungje*, March 13, 1968; "400 Million Won in Seizure," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 13, 1968; "Thirty Merchants of Foreign Goods," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 20, 1968; "Shocking Fake Foreign Cosmetics," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 26, 1968; "Cosmetic Smuggling," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 16, 1968; "Hired Salesperson Selling Illegal Foreign Cosmetics," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 09, 1969; "Leading Foreign Brand's Cosmetics but all ingredients inside fake," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 9, 1969.

took the situations of smuggling foreign cosmetics or manufacturing fake foreign cosmetics. As of 1978, 48 Korean cosmetics companies, including two major companies, ran their cosmetics business. The Pacific Ocean Chemical Co. Ltd. and Korean Cosmetics Company occupied 80 % of the total domestic production.<sup>230</sup> In particular, the Pacific Ocean Chemical Co. Ltd. grew into a powerful conglomerate group, gaining an exclusive status during the Park Chung-Hee period. The Pacific Chemical increased its capital by 750 times in less than 20 years through the Park Chung-Hee regime. The Pacific Chemical was founded in September 1959 with a capital of 10 million won, and its capital, estimated at 31 December 1977, increased to 7.75 billion won. The Pacific Chemical started out as a cosmetics company and then diversified its business even into non-consumer goods as well as the consumer goods industry.<sup>231</sup>

In the 1970s, Korean media criticized that Korean domestic cosmetics did not invest in the improvement of product quality and production management. Even though the Korean cosmetics companies made a substantial investment in advertising and hiring sales associates, they sold the low quality of products produced by low-quality raw materials in the falling behind facilities. For example, factories of Korean cosmetics used a heat exchanger in a batch, whereas those of the US adopted the batch cooling system. Disappointed Korean consumers turned to foreign cosmetics produced in Japan, the United States, and Europe.<sup>232</sup> In 1978 August, the Korean Marketing Association researched the comparative Marketing strategy of Korean and foreign companies. According to this research, the R & D investment costs of Korean cosmetics

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<sup>230</sup> "Lack of Quality Control in Cosmetics According to the Marketing Research Association," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 28, 1978.

<sup>231</sup> Jang Byeong-chang, "Is it okay to leave cosmetics companies to make unreasonable profits? (2) It is the time to protect consumers," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 24, 1978.

<sup>232</sup> Jang Byeong-chang, "Is it okay to leave cosmetics companies to make unreasonable profits? (1) High quality and high price," *Maeil Kyungje*, February 22, 1978.

companies accounted for only 0.3% of the total sales, which was much lower than the costs of Japanese companies investing 2% of the total sales.<sup>233</sup>

In this situation, the Korean government finally decided to open the Korean cosmetics market despite only limited items in August 1978. There were 14 cosmetic items such as hair bleach, nail nourishment, hair fragrance, eau de cologne, fragrance, and fragrance used by mainly western women. Korean women, however, became disappointed when they knew that the imported items would be useless for them. The female consumers expected to purchase their daily necessities, such as lotions, cold creams, and foundations. In other words, the ministry of commerce and industry opened the restricted items exclusively useable only for western females at that time.

Korean cosmetics producers expressed outrage, claiming that the cosmetics import liberalization not only would boost more women's desire to purchase luxurious goods but also would create a risk of shrinking the domestic cosmetics industry. Entrepreneurs in the Korean cosmetics industry became shocked by the government's plan of the two-stage import liberalization. They held emergency meetings and decided to appeal to the government for their long-term survival in the market.<sup>234</sup> The owners of the major cosmetics companies argued that the government allowed them to take the government's subsidies as well as to introduce new foreign technologies for upgrading the quality of Korean cosmetics to strengthen the international competitiveness of the Korean domestic cosmetics industry.<sup>235</sup> On August 28, 1978, the Korean cosmetics industry published a publication entitled, "The Current Status and Problems of Korea's Cosmetics Industry in preparation for the Import Liberalization" and tried to

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<sup>233</sup> "Lack of Quality Control in Cosmetics According to the Marketing Research Association," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 28, 1978.

<sup>234</sup> Woo Byeong-dong, "Cosmetic companies, rushing to introduce technologies," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 21, 1978.

<sup>235</sup> Jang Byeong-chang, "Challenged Domestic Products (2) Cosmetics," *Maeil Kyungje*, July 28, 1978.

convince bureaucrats to the direction of national economic policy in their favor. This publication requested that the government would gradually open the market to foreign cosmetic items by importing limited items and by informing the imported items in advance. Moreover, they insisted that the government should postpone the full import liberalization by 1980. Their ideal import plan was to import only less popular items among Korean women such as eyeshadow, eyeliner, eyebrow pencil, and body shampoo even after 1981.<sup>236</sup>

Various South Korean beauty and cosmetics companies announced their plans to introduce developed technologies from Japan, France, and the United States, requesting the suspension of the import plan. The Pacific Ocean Chemical Co. Ltd., the most dominant Korean cosmetics conglomerate, stated that they would work with the Japanese cosmetic company, Shiseido. Korean Cosmetics, the second-largest cosmetics company, chose another Japanese company, Juju. Korean cosmetic company affiliated to Daewoo, a Korean conglomerate, decided to work with a French company. The Pacific Ocean Chemical Co. Ltd revealed a plan to localize 90% proportion of fragrances and distinct raw materials imported from Japan, the US, and France. They asked the government to attain adjusting time to fight against foreign competitors at least 5-6 years later, which was after 1984.<sup>237</sup>

Members of Korean women's organizations expressed disappointment with the plans and decisions of the government and cosmetic companies. Han Jung-ja, head of the Consumer Protection Group Council, criticized the government's decision to deceive Korean consumers. She pointed out that cosmetics became women's necessities. Thus, the government must take actions benefiting mass consumers, not a handful of businessmen. She also claimed that the

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<sup>236</sup> "Untimely Opening onto Foreign Markets of Finished Products," *Maeil Kyungje*, August 28, 1978.

<sup>237</sup> "The cosmetics industry's Plan to introduce foreign technologies in preparation for import liberalization," *Maeil Kyungje*, July 26, 1978.

import liberalization policy should be carried out in a way that could lead to the price adjustment of domestic cosmetics. An interview with the sales manager of the Midopa Department Store indicated that even salespeople admitted a few Korean cosmetics companies' financially abusive behaviors toward female buyers.<sup>238</sup> A housewife living in Daegu also criticized the government that rhetorically benefited from the term, consumer protection. In reality, the authorities emphasized protecting producers by promoting patriotism as well as being reluctant to create and impose regulative measures on them. The Korean housewife argued that the Korean cosmetics market should be fully opened if the government cared about Korean consumers.<sup>239</sup> Medical professors also supported the opinions of these female consumers. Yonsei Medical professor, Lee Seong-nak, also agreed with the female's opinion. In *the Dong-A Ilbo*, he stated that Korean women considered cosmetics necessities as necessary as food, clothing, and shelter after puberty like ordinary women in other countries. He said that if the price of Korean domestic cosmetics became cheaper due to imported cosmetics, the import liberalization would be desirable in terms of consumer protection.<sup>240</sup>

Although Korean consumer activists, consumers, and intellectuals ardently advocated the expansion of imported cosmetics in the Korean market, the Korean government favorably responded to the request of Korean cosmetic companies. In the end, the government nullified foreign cosmetics import plans and allowed cosmetic companies to introduce foreign technologies. Besides, there were internal conflicts among the ministry of health and social affairs, the ministry of economic affairs, and the ministry of commerce and industry. Each

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<sup>238</sup> "Most imported cosmetics are luxury goods, women's organization's members evaluated," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 15, 1978.

<sup>239</sup> Kim Dal-yong, "To whom for the Partial Cosmetic Import except for popular skincare items? It only promotes extravagant luxury." *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 2, 1978.

<sup>240</sup> "Medicine and cosmetics must be imported," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 22, 1978.

agency held on to different stances on the issues of consumer protection, price stability, and currency exchange. The conflicts of various government agencies were quickly resolved immediately under the direction of Park Chung-Hee. According to an article in *the Dong-A Ilbo*, an anonymous high-ranking figure in the government, presumably Park Chung-Hee, dictated the bureaucrats to nullify the previous import plan and to allow the introduction of foreign technologies to Korean companies, emphasizing the significance of “thrift and saving.”<sup>241</sup> Ultimately the Korean government and Korean cosmetics companies implicitly admitted that Korean domestic cosmetics were not competitive in price and quality in the global market. At that time, Korean female consumers were deprived of the opportunity to consume importing foreign cosmetics at reasonable prices. However, in the long run, their voices and demands provided the groundwork for Korean cosmetics companies to move forward.<sup>242</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Korean consumers started raising questions about the reliability of Korean products’ price and quality. They were able to compare Korean products to foreign ones. The Korean government considered this tendency as an undesirable preference for foreign goods, prevailed among well-educated consumers. A Korean media pointed it out problematic that producers of Korean domestic products gradually faced domestic consumers' neglect after Korea’s liberalization of the import. The Korean Productivity Center conducted a consumer survey about the preference of foreign products with 1,500 Korean participants in June 1978. 34.5% of Korean consumers with higher education degrees responded that they felt guilty when purchasing foreign products. In contrast to the answer of the high educational consumers, 71.4% of respondents with primary school degree or without any official educational background

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<sup>241</sup> Woo Byeong-dong, "Cosmetic companies, rushing to introduce technologies," *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 21, 1978.

<sup>242</sup> “The cosmetics industry's Plan to introduce foreign technologies in preparation for import liberalization,” *The Mael Kyungje*, July 26, 1978.

answered that they felt guilty. The newspaper interpreted that Korean consumers were going the wrong direction when such a low percentage of 34.4% of respondents answered that they felt guilty after purchasing different products.<sup>243</sup>

Another consumer survey was conducted by the Korean Women's Organization for 1500 consumers, including housewives, intellectuals, and businessmen across the country in June 1978. The study showed that Korean consumers had recognized their consumers' rights and expressed high expectations on the institutional consumer protection. The Korean government budged from the zero lines of the consumer protection by establishing some provisions for the product labeling but continued to postpone the enactment of the consumer protection basic laws. Almost 98.5% of the respondents answered that consumer protection was necessary, and most of all, urgently needed to enact consumer protection laws. To the question of why consumer protection did not work, 28.3% of the respondents chose the lack of government policies as their answer, and 25.5% of the respondents chose the lack of awareness of manufacturers and distributors. At that time, 45.3 percent of the total respondents pointed out that there was still room for improvement in the institutional consumer protection.<sup>244</sup>

Although the Korean government continued confronting call for enactment of the consumer protection basic laws, the government underlined both consumers' obligations and manufacturers' obligation. It urged Korean consumers to reduce consumption and save money in a bank for the price stability goal. The government required manufacturers' obligation to informative labeling, particularly emphasizing the detailed provisions on the labeling of foods. On March 24, 1978, the government-appointed or commissioned nine people to the Price

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<sup>243</sup> "A Weakening Sense of Use for Domestic Products, according to the Productivity Center's Survey." *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 5, 1978.

<sup>244</sup> "Mass Consumers are Stricken with a Victim," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 24, 1978.

Stabilization Commission. The nine members are following; Song Ki-cheol (Professor, Korea University), Choi Joo-cheol(former CEO of a construction firm), Kim Seong-du (*Chosun Ilbo* editorial board member), Kim Jung-tae (*Hankook Ilbo* editorial board member), Attorney Kim Dong-hwan, Jung Gwang-mo (Head of YWCA Consumer Protection Committee), Bae Sang-ho(Chairman of National Transportation Union), Seo Byung-kyu (Vice-Chairman of Korean Commercial Arbitration Association).<sup>245</sup> On May 16, 1978, the Korean government held a meeting of the Consumption Control Committee chaired by Prime Minister Choi Gyu-ha and finalized to promote the consumption control project as a national plan. The meeting of the Consumption Control Committee was attended by representatives of not only the bureaucrats but also businessmen and leaders of consumer protection groups. At this meeting, they discussed the enactment of the energy-saving promotion act and the project of remodeling Korean houses in a new structure.<sup>246</sup> The educated Korean public expressed the need for consumer protection basic laws.<sup>247</sup> However, the enactment of the framework of the act on the Consumer Protection continued to be delayed.

Instead of the legal stipulation of protecting consumers, the government made provisions for labeling goods. For example, the Food Sanitation Act enforced to fix the labeling position so that the food manufacturing date must be displayed in the center of the product name under the strict control of the distribution of processed foods and be used by the indelible ink with the bigger size of the letter no. 5. The new labeling act came into effect from December 1978. The government announced to cancel the business for 15 days for the first violation, one month for

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<sup>245</sup> “Seoul National University Professor Chung Byung-Ho, Appointed members of the Price Stabilization Commission,” *Maeil Kyungje*, March 25, 1978.

<sup>246</sup> “Promotion of the Energy Saving Fund,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 16, 1978

<sup>247</sup> “Consumer Protection and Reporting Abusive Consumer Cases,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 17, 1978.



the second violation, and the permission to produce the item from the manufacturer for the third violation.<sup>248</sup>

On March 21, 1978, the Economic Planning Board (EPB) of the administration announced the launch of the Consumer Protection Association (CPA) as a consumer protection corporation under civil law. The idea of the formation of the CPA was brought into the meet of the EPB, where Park Chung-Hee ordered the bureaucrats in the EPB. Park said, “consumers should help control prices by not buying things when products are expensive.” The EPB formed CPA shortly after this meeting. By integrating the existing four largest women’s organizations except for the Korean Women’s Organization, the EPB was able to make the CPA as the largest consumer association. The number of the newly launched CPA ultimately reached approximately 900,000 people, including the Korea YWCA’s 400,000 members and the National Housewives Association’s 230,000 members.<sup>249</sup> The Korean mass media, however, emphasized the formation of the CPA as a legal body-protecting consumer from abusive producers and preparing the foundation for mature consumer protection activities.<sup>250</sup> The EPB supported the CPA with a 20 million won reserve. Its basic policy was to regulate producers’ detriment in terms of market price and quality and to protect consumers from floods of defective products. Lee Sook-jong became the chairwoman of the CPA. She was also a chairwoman of the Korean National Women’s Association (KNWA) closely collaborated with the government. The government expected her to secure and mobilize a large number of KNWA members.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> If not followed the Rule, the Producing Permission of the Item will be canceled. *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 24, 1978; “Marking of Manufacturing Date monitored by Health and Social Affairs,” *Maeil Kyungje*, May 24, 1978.

<sup>249</sup> “Established consumer protection corporation,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 21, 1978; “Unification of Consumer Organizations,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 21, 1978

<sup>250</sup> “Strengthened consumer rights, allowed consumer protection groups to be a corporation,” *Maeil Kyungje*, March 23, 1978

<sup>251</sup> “Established consumer protection corporation,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 21, 1978; “Unification of Consumer Organizations,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 21, 1978

In November of that year, the CPA held the first nationwide consumer conference under the theme of “Be a Consumer in Action! Report Defective Products!” More than 1,200 participants coming from across the country attended. The majority of the participants were members of the Korea YWCA, the Korea Women’s Association, the Housewives Clubs Association, and the Housewives’ Class Association. Besides, male participants with varied professions also joined following professions: businessmen, bureaucrats, intellectuals, and bankers. Lee Sook-jong highlighted the consumer movement as a civil movement. She argued that “Korean consumers are not victims but well-serviced buyers by the market.” Seo Seok-jun, deputy minister for economic planning, stated that “the consumer’s own willingness in the movement is the most important, and the consumer organization should lead educational campaigns for changing behaviors of consumers.”<sup>252</sup>

The CPA, promoted by the government, was founded in March 1978. The first president of the organization was Lee Sook-jong, president of the Korean Women’s Association tightly collaborated with the government. The president position of the CPA was changed to Jung Gwang-mo, three months later in September 1978 when the organization began to operate. Jung Gwang-mo was the woman who built up her career as an influential female journalist, pro-government social activist, and leader of the Consumer Protection Committee (CPC) affiliated to the Korea YWCA.<sup>253</sup>

At the end of September 1978, the consumer association invited experts to hold a discussion to review and supplement the proposed consumer laws. The participants agreed that

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<sup>252</sup> “Holding the 1<sup>st</sup> Consumer Conference in the Sejong Center, *Sejong Center for the First Consumer Contest ‘From Perspective of Consumer Protection Movement’*,” *Maeil Kyungje*, November 6, 1978; “Consumers are not economic victims,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 6, 1978; “Let’s be a consumer reporting a defective product,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 6, 1978.

<sup>253</sup> “Seoul YWCA- Established Consumer Protection Committee,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 22, 1968; “Post,” *Kyunghyang Newspaper*, August 12, 1968.

the key to the basic consumer laws was to protect consumers and to elucidate the obligations of corporations and the government. At the beginning of its formal conversation, however, they started concerning less possibility that Consumer Protection Basic Laws could be passed the national assembly due to strong corporate resistance. Particularly, it was important to pay attention to the comments of three specialists in the legal and environmental fields. The first figure was Kim Dong-hwan, drafting the consumer laws, and working at the CPA.<sup>254</sup> At the meeting of the consumer protection group, attorney Kim Dong-hwan stated that consumers would be finally entitled to the consumer protection act guaranteeing a healthy environment and compensation for damages. He also insisted that the act should include the establishment of a consumer protection committee as a decision-making body under the prime minister, conducting mandatory standards of corporations in labeling inspections and compensation for consumers' damage or loss. Another legal expert working at Ewha Woman's University, Choi Byung-wook, emphasized that it was urgent to establish a system simplifying the official process to receive the compensation as soon as possible as well as to run educational programs for consumers effectively. He suggested that the company firstly compensate for the damaged cost to the consumer. The third figure was an expert on the pollution and environment, Professor Suk Pyo-kwon at Ewha Woman's University. She suggested promoting consumer protection organizations offering legal services and acting for consumers for their compensation. She argued that if consumer groups provide legal services, and this leads to prompt compensations to consumers, more consumers will be more active in the consumer protection movement because Korean consumers were extremely legally venerable. She emphasized sellers' obligation over

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<sup>254</sup> "The Consumer Act Review & Complementary Debate," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 29, 1978.

consumers' obligations. Professor Suk stated that manufacturers must conduct the self-product inspection in their laboratories.<sup>255</sup>

Finally, members of the conservative party promised that they would submit the proposed Act on Consumer Protection Basic Laws to the National Assembly. Two ruling parties, the Republican Party and Youjeonghoe, initially started from the advisory committee of Yushin in 1973 and then became a political group, stated they would push for the Consumer Protection Basic Laws to be enacted in the second half of 1978 in the National Assembly. The conservative politicians promised the principles of safety to protect the human body and property damage. They also assured that the consumer laws could defend a consumer's rights such as a right to select products freely, a right to form a consumer protection group, a right to demand compensation claims for damages.<sup>256</sup> However, the government decided not to enact the Framework Act on consumer protection but to define declarative statements without specific sanctions and regulations validating that states and businesses should pursue comprehensive measures for consumer protection.

The EPB decided to reflect only the basic policy of the government in the preliminary consultation with the ruling party when the basic bill for the consumer protection is submitted to the National Assembly as legislative legislation. The basic bill was designed to stipulate that both the state and producers are responsible for dealing with consumers' damages and for establishing the governmental agency for consumer protection. The measures of the bill were so comprehensive that it was difficult to apply in practice. The content of the bill did not go beyond

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<sup>255</sup> "Discussion to Simplify the Process of Compensation in Consumer Basic Laws," *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 29, 1978; "The Framework on Consumer Protection Basic Laws, the Association of Protection Groups," *Maeil Kyungje*, June 29, 1978.

<sup>256</sup> "Eight legislative committees of the national assembly would enact consumer protection laws in session," *Maeil Kyungje*, October 17, 1978.

the provision of the labeling of products. The Korean government stated that it would not specify compensation claims for damages because it could be difficult to identify the actual cause of the damages to consumers.<sup>257</sup>

There was a voice criticizing the insufficient function and deformed establishment of the institution. *The Dong-A Ilbo* editorial manifested that obligations of the government and corporates in consumer protection should be validated in the written form. The liberal newspaper pointed out that it was most appropriate for the administration to submit the bill of the consumer protection basic laws bill to the national assembly, integrating opinions of consumers, producers, and merchants, instead of mimicking the democratic form superficially for a political party to submit a bill and pass it. *The Dong-A Ilbo* delivered the government's responsibilities to prepare comprehensive measures for consumer protection. Particularly, the government should protect and foster consumer groups. Plus, it should establish an administrative organization that can centrally manage consumer activities.<sup>258</sup>

Before the November 1978 general election, *The Dong-A Ilbo* expressed suspicion of the conservative politicians' actions about the legislation of the consumer protection basic laws. *The Dong-A Ilbo* pointed out that the government and the ruling party members benefited from the consumer protection legislation process as a political stunt for the sake of general elections. The newspaper also raised an issue of holding public meetings with women's associations to amend consumer protection legislation. Its assumption was that the government mobilized female members of the consumer association for election campaigns. At the end of October 1978, the republicans extensively announced on the plan to submit the consumer protection bill to the national assembly on October 31. However, the newspaper doubted that the plan is realistically

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<sup>257</sup> "Delegated to individual laws such as the government policy metering method," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 18, 1978.

<sup>258</sup> "The Necessity of Consumer Protection Laws," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 18, 1978.

possible to conduct in time because of the lack of time within the term of the national assembly. Republicans stated that they would deal with it. The Republican Party said that they would propose a consumer protection bill, listen to the opinions of representatives of consumer groups such as the Women's Association, and submit it to the national assembly through a joint reconciliation meeting between the republican and the semi- ruling party, *yujeonghoe*. The Republican Party held a public hearing in the name of synthesizing opinions with consumer groups, such as the Women's Association.<sup>259</sup>

The Framework Act on Consumer Protection, amended by Republicans and *yujeonghoe*, included obligations of the government and corporate responsibility in consumer protection. The bill also stipulated the government's responsibility to establish consumer complaints centers, to examine consumer complaints, to publish results of product tests, to support consumer organizations, and to promote consumer protection policies. The bill also included adding the clause guaranteeing a consumer protection committee in the Economic Planning Board.<sup>260</sup> The ruling party, however, postponed the enforcement in the end. The consumer protection group was not satisfied with the politicians' and the government's reluctant and decisive attitude and lax consumer protection laws. Even the failed bill did not include a clear line of responsibilities of the government and corporate.<sup>261</sup> In South Korea, the consumer protection act was finally approved by the national assembly on January 4, 1980, two months after President Park Chung-Hee was assassinated. 3,257 was finally promulgated.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> "The Consumer Protection Bill was submitted due to the purpose of a showoff for the general election," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 1, 1978.

<sup>260</sup> "The government and Ruling party decided to enact the consumer protection laws," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 1, 1978.

<sup>261</sup> "The Nationwide Consumer Protection Conference," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 7, 1978.

<sup>262</sup> Agendum No. (1216) Prime Minister Shin Hyun-Hok (Minister of Legislation), Promulgation of Consumer Protection Act, December 20, 1979.

Women consumer activists in the 1960s and 1970s South Korea's consumer movement attempted to construct a modern consumer society and culture for Korean consumers, but their attempts were often ignored and sometimes got benefited by the government. As will become clear in the succeeding chapters, the new modern state that the military government envisioned was not a paradise to Korean women. However, one thing we have to bear in mind is that Korean women had been gradually building up their potentials through expanded educational opportunities and social participation.

### CHAPTER 3. SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT OF THE HOUSEHOLD

A 37-year-old housewife with three children was excited in the fall of 1973 when her award-winning work in the 1972 National Science Contest was commercialized. This award recognized her as a capable woman who resolved her own domestic issue and helped other women struggling with cold fall and winter nights in similar humble circumstances. Her product, the Gap-soon coal briquette heater carried her name, Yang Gap-soon. A newspaper commercial in the *Maeil Kyungje* introduced her heater as a winter necessity that would provide warmth on long cold nights.<sup>263</sup> Judges in the national science contest explicitly praised her invention of the heater for improving the quality of life of other housewives, even as she fulfilled her own needs.<sup>264</sup> The prize awarded to Yang Gap-soon and the press attention that followed show that Park Chung-Hee regime supported the idea that women could enhance their households using scientific knowledge, thinking, and management. The opportunities of the Park Chung-Hee regime provided for Korean women to show their capacities and take recognition for their efforts were part of a mass campaign, to extend scientific thinking to the private sphere, the home.

This chapter will show how the Park Chung-Hee regime used the national campaign for scientific management of life to mobilize Korean women to support the national goals of the regime. The first half of the chapter will outline the governmental structure entrusted with the

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<sup>263</sup> “The Gap-soon Ondol Briquette Combustor granted the grand prize of the Minister of Science and Technology for National Living Science and Technology in (19)72 [72nyeondo gugminsaenghwal gwahaghwa gwahaggisulcheo jang-gwan daesang-e bichnaneun gabsunsig-ondol-yong yeontan yeonsogi],” *Maeil Kyungje*, October 6, 1973.

<sup>264</sup> “Yang Gap-soon’s Idea chosen: Her Briquette Makes Heat Evenly Distributed. [Yang-gabsunssi saenghwal-aidia ppobhyeo yeontanbakkeseuleul biseudeumhi neoh-eo yeoljibjung mag-a],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 12, 1972; “Interview of Mrs. Yang Gap-soon: An Idea of the Improved Briquette, Winning Grand Prize [Inteobyu gaelyang yeontan bakkeseu aidieo daesang tan yang-gabsun yeosa],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 12, 1972. Ministry of Science and Technology hosted the science competition to encourage students and citizens, mainly males, to work on science and technology since the early 1950s. “The Third National Science Contest [Je3hoe jeongugwahagjeon],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 22, 1955.



campaign and its antecedents. The part of second half will show, once the campaign was well underway, the government mobilized women's organizations and female professors to support government policies. The last section examines the "One Person, One Skill" Campaign of the 1970s. Although the aim of the campaign for scientific management was obviously to bolster the Park Chung-Hee regime, increase the national wealth, and strengthen the military-diplomatic situation of the nation, the campaign also provided, as the case of Yang Gap-soon shows, recognition for women's ability as well as an appreciation for the value of women's traditional work.

### **The Structure, the Beginning, and Antecedents of the Scientific Management**

The national campaign for scientific management of life was launched by the pseudo-civilian group, National Reconstruction Movement (Guggajaegeon undong, NRM). The committee of the NRM consisted not only of influential intellectuals but also of young military leaders who had participated in Park Chung-Hee's successful coup. Several of the military officers, including Park Chung-Hee, were also members of the Supreme Council for National Construction (Guggajaegeonchoegohoeui, SCNC), the governing body that exercised three powers of the legislative, administrative, and judicial powers central to normalizing the government's functions after the military coup. Park Chung-Hee, who led the coup in his early forties, was in charge of the chairmanship of the SCNC. Not surprisingly, the SCNC controlled the headquarters of the NRM to organize and launch a national enlightenment campaign throughout the country. The campaign's main goal was to rationalize people's economic and daily lives, particularly to get rid of irrational traditional customs and practices under the

government's guidance. Park Chung-Hee and his associates believed that a centralized and strong government could achieve the rationalization of people's lives.<sup>265</sup>

From the earliest days of the Park Chung-Hee regime, the headquarters of the campaign for scientific management sponsored various cultural events such as exhibitions or lectures to enlighten citizens. One example of their activities of the RNM was an exhibition which displayed multiple samples of clothing and various research materials related to frugal habits. Further on December 16, 1961, the RNM announced the launch of a national educational campaign to improve women's consumption habits. The campaign lasted about two months, from January 1 to February 28, 1962.<sup>266</sup>

In 1962, the government initiated another national campaign related to women's responsibilities for the management of life, this one of food shortages and nutrition. The campaign increased housewives to substitute other grains for rice. The campaign particularly emphasized wheat, which was imported from the United States as part of food aid. For the South Korean state, the rice shortage was one of its most pressing economic issues. By December 1962, the national rice production had decreased to almost 20% amount of that of the previous year due to the damages by drought, blight, and harmful insects.<sup>267</sup> The transitional government assumed that women were responsible for solving this economic problem. The government argued that South Korea could overcome the rice shortages if only Korean homemakers varied their usual habits and planned meals with wheat flour for at least one meal a day, instead of eating rice three times a day. Numerous news media introduced the nutritional advantages of eating other grains.

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<sup>265</sup> "Uibog uilye gansohwa [Do Simplify Clothing and Rituals]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 29, 1961.

<sup>266</sup> "Usaenghwal gwahaghwaleul chujin, jaegon bonbuseo jeonsihoe malyeon [Promotion of the Scientification of Clothing Life, the Reconstruction National Movement Headquarters is Planning an Exhibition]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 16, 1961.

<sup>267</sup> "Siglyangsajeong taji [The Current food situation]," *Chosun Ilbo*, December 1, 1962.

The news media emphasized the nutritional advantages of eating grains other than rice. Wheat was praised for its contribution to balance nutrition. Korean housewives were exposed to various events such as exhibitions, cooking workshops, and lectures about nutrients and their sources of nutrition. Presentations on the scientific management of life provided visitors sample bread such as steamed soybean bread or French bread with milk. For middle class women, these were chances to taste various loaves of bread to. The Living Culture Center (LCC, Saenghwal munhwagwan in Korean) cohosted to open a course on “The Scientific Management of Life.” These events provided women a place to experience new cuisines, receive education on food and nutrition, and obtain training opportunities to be good bakers.<sup>268</sup>

The Living Culture Center that was so prominent in 1962 in the campaigns for the Scientific Management of Life did not have a physical building even though the organization participated in New Life Movement since 1960. When the organization gained a two-story building in August 1962, it became a hub that provided housewives with the comprehensive education for life improvement. The center offered programs to learn knowledge related to domestic life and practice it. Its various facilities included a Living Science Laboratory, Food Science Laboratory, and an exhibit hall for displaying science textbooks. These laboratories allowed Korean housewives to experience the conveniences of modern housing such as water heater. It was impressive for them who were accustomed to the traditional underfloor heating system. The center also organized study-groups for housewives to learn how to modify kitchens and research convenient heating systems for Koreans.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>268</sup>The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs decided to play a movie about lifestyle improvement twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. “Silcheone olmgyeojineun bunsig-undong [Eating Campaign of Flour-based Food],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, February 3, 1962.

<sup>269</sup>Moim [Meetings], *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 3, 1960. “8wolmal gaegwandoel saenghwalmunhwagwan [Living Culture Center Opens at the end of August],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 17, 1962. The Living Culture Center was involved in promotional activities for New Life Movement in 1960.

The 1964 session of the national science exhibition held annually ever since liberation from Japan in 1945, expanded its themes to include daily life rather than simply general scientific knowledge. Traditionally, the science exhibition displayed scientific inventions submitted by students and teachers from everywhere in the country. The Ministry of Education, the host of the exhibition, chose practical life as the theme for 1964. These themes differed from earlier themes such as electricity, machinery, physics, chemistry, plants, animals, agriculture, fisheries, meteorology, terrestrial resources, forestry, and so on. With this theme, women's work within the home was invited into the realm of science heretofore a male preserve.<sup>270</sup> At the 1964 science exhibition, a male middle school teacher presented a study on the prevention of oxidation of summer kimchi, which is easily oxidized in summer, by adding easily purchasable chemicals that are harmless to the human body and prevent the contamination of kimchi by bacteria. The *Kyunghyang Shinmun* published an article explaining the application process in detail so that the housewife readers can easily follow the procedure. Female students also contributed to this exhibition, submitting their findings about food preservation. The students in the biology class of Busan Girls' High School worked on how to slow down the spoilage of food with natural ingredients such as garlic juice and ginger juice.<sup>271</sup>

Although the military regime of Park Chung-Hee made extensive use of the rhetoric of scientific management, the regime had not itself invented the concept. The American Frederick

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<sup>270</sup> "Daegyumo gwahagejeon sib-wolgyeong seoulseo gaechoe [Large-scale Science Exhibition held in Seoul in around October]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 29, 1954; "11wol-e gwahagejeon [Science Exhibition in November]," *Chosen Ilbo*, September 16, 1955; "Saenghwal-ui gwahaghwa, gwahag jeonsieseo [Scientific Management of Life, in the Science Exhibition]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 18, 1964.

<sup>271</sup> "Saenghwal-ui gwahaghwa, gwahag jeonsieseo [Scientific Management of life, in science exhibition]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 18, 1964.

Winslow Taylor published his book, *The Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911.<sup>272</sup> His ideas were influential throughout the world, including in Japan, from where they spread to Japan's colony, Korea. Nor was the idea that women should be included in scientific endeavors an entirely new idea in 1960s Korea.<sup>273</sup>

We can see from 1920s Korean-language newspapers that there were some Korean intellectuals who argued that women's development of science would be crucial in preserving national sovereignty. One such person was Lee Heon-gu, the founder of the Korean newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo*. On November 3 and 10, 1924, he published two impressive columns with the title of "Home and Science." In the column, the Korean intellectual showed his belief that science could fix the nation's backwardness and get back the national sovereignty. He claimed that the household must be modernized and rationalized because a family is the core of society. According to him, homemakers take great responsibility for whether a nation survives or not. Therefore, he insisted that women be prepared by taking proper science education. He highlighted European and American housewives as successful exemplars who succeeded in performing their domestic tasks efficiently. This Korean intellectual argued that the praise-worthy efficiency of western women was rooted in scientific knowledge.<sup>274</sup>

After 1945 when Korea was liberated from Japan, Korean intellectuals—including educators and journalists—created a discourse on the importance of science and modern lifestyle. Many of them blamed Korean traditional customs as the cause of national backwardness. They maintained that housewives could improve the situation by acquiring

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<sup>272</sup> Frederick Winslow Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York, London: Harper & Brothers, 1911).

<sup>273</sup> William M. Tsutsui, *Manufacturing Ideology Scientific Management in Twentieth-Century Japan* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1998).

<sup>274</sup> Lee Heon-gu, "Home and Science," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 4, 1924; Lee Heon-gu, "Home and Science," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 10, 1924.

scientific knowledge and managing their households efficiently. Professor Lee Kyung-ho at Ewha Womans University argued in *The Kyunghyang Shinmun* in a column titled “Home and Science” that housewives must be able to “scientifically think, observe, and utilize everything.” Professor Lee encouraged housewives to raise the level of scientific knowledge by reading science magazines and books. Moreover, he urged housewives to learn how to repair electric stoves and other simple home appliances if they broke down.<sup>275</sup>

Some advocates of the scientific management of life criticized the “unscientific” traditional garments, *hanbok*. They pointed out how inconvenient and uncomfortable traditional clothes are. The everyday Korean clothes hanbok consists of *jeogori*, the blouse shirt, *chima*, the wrap skirt for women, and a shirt and pants for men. The hanbok had no pockets; its wide sleeves made it challenging to move the arms. The hanbok made of white cotton needed to be washed frequently to keep the clothes clean. The women’s *hanbok* required extra clothes such as *dansokgot*, the pants-shaped underwear worn inside *chima*, and *heoritti*, the cotton belt. The president of Yangjae Women’s Academy, a vocational school for women in Seoul, broke with tradition by raising the question of wearing the white hanbok. She argued that wearing the hanbok strayed from the modern trend of robust and practical styles of clothing that help people be more productive at work. The president claimed to establish a new tradition. She suggested women wear simplified and westernized garments. According to her, it would follow the trend of increasing women’s social advancement because the reformed women's clothes would help women achieve more social success.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Kyung-ho Lee, “Gajeong-gwa gwahak: gwanchal, yeongu, hwalyong gajeongsaenghwaleul gwahaghwahaja [Home and Science: Observation, Research, and Utilization – Modernize Domestic Life],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 26, 1947

<sup>276</sup> Nan-gong Kim, “Hyeondaeyeoseongui bokjanggo [Thoughts about Modern Women’s Attire],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 25, 1947

The scientific management of a nation became a national agenda in 1948 when the Republic of Korea was established in the south with Syngman Rhee as President.<sup>277</sup> Two high-ranking government officials— the prime minister and the director of the science bureau at the Ministry of Education — shared the firm conviction for the necessity of the national scientific management. The first figure who publicly addressed the importance of science was the first South Korean prime minister. He brought up the issue to citizens on Korean Independence Day in 1948. At the third ceremony of the National Liberation Day, the prime minister said that “We [Korean] are able to be genuine citizens for the new country through painstaking removal of all of unscientific conventions and traditions and inaccurate scientific actions.” He predicted that preserving unscientific and regressive traditions would prevent the new country from achieving national development. Dr. Choi Gyu-nam is another figure who emphasized the nation’s scientific management in colonized Korea and then became the first director of the bureau of science at the Ministry of Education under the Park Chung-Hee regime.<sup>278</sup>

After the 1945 liberation from Japan, particularly after the three-year tragic Korean War in the 1950s, we can more frequently find the emphasis on the efficiency of the scientific home management in the media. One of them was the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*’s column titled “A Kitchen is the Heart of Home.” The columnist claimed a kitchen as an arena presenting the rationalization and the level of scientific management of the home in the column in the. In the column, housewives’ principal task is to deal with family health and hygiene for the family life. The columnist said that the bottom line was for Korean housewives to “scientifically” exercise

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<sup>277</sup> Due to the internal and external tensions, many Koreans had to see two separate governments established in the Korean peninsula in 1948. Not surprisingly, the two Korean governments were supervised by foreign powers: The United States more tightly controlled South Korea politically, military, and economically. Some Korean politicians in neutral parties in the south and the north were excluded in the politics; some of them voluntarily left there. Syngman Rhee led the sole general election in 1948 with American support.

<sup>278</sup> He was Korea’s first Ph.D. in physics, who graduated from Michigan State University in 1932. He became a minister of education in 1956.

their tasks. The journalist urged housewives to treat a kitchen as a laboratory where the housewives should make the place where family members used not just for survival but also for enjoyment.<sup>279</sup>

Many of the contests and exhibitions that the Park Chung-Hee government supported in the opening years of their regime in fact dated back to the late 1950s. Female students in Home Economics at women's universities started holding exhibitions with themes related to the improvement of standard of living since the late 1950s. In 1958, students from the Department of Home Economics at Sudo Women's University exhibited works on the theme of improving life and held an exhibition.<sup>280</sup>

In contrast to occasional rhetoric of the scientific management of life and scattered exhibitions in the early twentieth century, the Park Chung-Hee government mobilized women to incorporate the scientific management of life into every aspect of the home, in order to enhance national economic development. Women's organizations and female elites participated in the government's projects for the improvement of living conditions in South Korea.

### **Lifestyle Improvement Movement and Women's Mobilization**

Since Park Chung-Hee came into power, the new government was more supportive of a movement focusing on practices of a frugal life and modernization of daily lives than the previous governments of Syngman Rhee and Chang Myon. The National Reconstruction Movement Headquarters (NRMH), consisted of the Park Chung-Hee coup d'état key members, planned a new lifestyle movement. Park Chung-Hee utilized government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, and Social Affairs to promote the

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<sup>279</sup> "Bueokeun gajeong-ui jungsimbu [A Kitchen is the Heart of Home]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 3, 1955.

<sup>280</sup> "Munhwagye sosig [Culture News]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 19, 1958.



movement. To promote the movement, Park Chung-Hee opened the Lifestyle and Culture Center (Saenghwalmunhwaseoteo) in the building of the NRMH in 1961. The military government announced the new lifestyle campaign to enlighten and promote women's need to improve their daily lives. The campaign included plans that pursued rationalization and modernization of lifestyle such as improvement of housing conditions, dietary habits, and frugal lifestyles. In particular, the issue of housing improvement drew a lot of attention from Korean housewives.<sup>281</sup>

The government designated November and December 1961 as the special period for the rationalization of daily lives. In November of that year, an exhibition was held at the center of the Reconstruction Movement Headquarters building. In the exhibition, housewives were invited for them to learn about how to improve the hygiene level of the household, how to make a modern countertop and cupboard, or what kinds of kitchen renovation materials were being sold in the market.<sup>282</sup> Korean National Housing Corporation, (KNHC, Daehan jutaeggongsa) established by the 1962 Korean National Housing Corporation Act, also held an exposition to display the future Korean housing to citizens. The modern house exhibited by The KNHC was a western style house and had a layout that made it easier for housewives to work in the kitchen by making the floor of the room and the floor of the kitchen the same.<sup>283</sup>

The government mobilized elite women, including female educators, female college students, and female college graduates, to encourage women to participate in the transition to a modern lifestyle. Gyeonggi Girls' Middle School Principal Son Jeong-soon in the media

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<sup>281</sup> "Sigaenghwal jutaeggaeseon, jeoljeon, jeochug deung daedaejeog undongjeongae [Promotion of the Campaign for Dietary and Housing Improvement, Energy Saving, and Savings]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 28, 1961.

<sup>282</sup> "Ulisallim bonbogi doel saenghwalmunhwa ssenteo [The Lifestyle and Culture Center that Will Show a Good Lifestyle to Us]," *Chosun Ilbo*, November 21, 1961.

<sup>283</sup> "Sallimjibui milaesang sintaeggongsa jutaegjeonui imojeomo [New Future Housing Exhibition]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 19, 1964.

stressed that “mothers” should participate in improving Korean daily lives in order to eliminate not only old-fashioned practices and old customs but also national corruption. She suggested that women work together to make the country prosperous as well as improve their living condition. She thought that women were capable to fix their own problems, reduce the burden of housework, and then could enjoy free time.<sup>284</sup> A female professor at Dongduk Women’s University in a *Dong-A Ilbo* column also underlined kitchen renovation and the improvement of daily lives, pointing out the backwardness of Korean kitchens. She indicated that the backwardness of Korean kitchens was prevalent not only in rural areas but also in large cities and claimed that the renovation of urban kitchens was a more urgent mission than that of rural ones. She argued that urban households must prioritize the renovation of the kitchens for improving hygiene level and making daily lives more convenient. According to the results of a survey conducted in Seoul in 1962, only 20% of households in Seoul had upgraded western style kitchens.<sup>285</sup>

Not only female educators but also young, educated women were also mobilized to promote the new lifestyle movement. In 1962, the *Chosun Ilbo* reported the story of a 23-year-old young woman, Son Jeong-ja, who enlightened rural women after graduating from a city high school by organizing and leading a lifestyle improvement group. She founded the lifestyle improvement group and educated rural housewives about the necessity of modernization of rural lives and the methods including kitchen renovation. In order to

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<sup>284</sup> Son Jeong-soon, “Saenghwalgaeseon-eul iuskkili seolodobgo salja [Let’s help each other improve our living conditions],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 9, 1962.

<sup>285</sup> “Saehae saesallim seolgye uisigju [Food, Clothing, and Shelter for New Year],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 1, 1963.

convince rural women who did not attend her meetings, she visited them door-to-door to show them how to improve rural kitchens with their own hands.<sup>286</sup>

In addition to Son Jeong-ja, the *Chosun Ilbo* also reported another young woman, Yoon Hye-ja, who was working to improve the rural life community. After graduating from Sudo Girls' High School in Seoul, she entered Korea University, but due to the financial situation of her family, she dropped out the school and moved to Goyang-gun, Gyeonggi province. She started her voluntary activities for rural community. She gathered rural housewives and educated them by running an enlightenment program on rural community. As an instructor, she persuaded the housewives to improve their homes, and guided them how to do that without spending much money. To raise money for a kitchen renovation, she worked with the rural women to make clay bricks and participate in the government's rice saving campaign.<sup>287</sup>

### **Home Economics and Female Professors' Participation**

By 1966, the Park Chung-Hee regime found that the lifestyle improvement movement was beneficial to achieve the greater goal of the country's economic development as well as to improve the household economy and people's living conditions. The movement became part of the national plan, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Five-Year Economic Plan. In that plan, scientific management was to be applied not only to industry but also to daily life in order to strengthen the military and secure South Korea's economic independence.<sup>288</sup> It is emblematic of the great importance the

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<sup>286</sup> "[Nongchon-eul balg-ge haneun yeoseongdeul (3) saenghwalgaeseonhoedo kkumyeo hyangto gyemong-e himsseuneun sonjeongja yang] The Women Enlightening Rural Women (3) Son Jeong-ja, who Organizes a Lifestyle Improvement Group and Strives to Enlighten the Local Community," *Chosun Ilbo*, July 14, 1962.

<sup>287</sup> "Nongchoneul balg-ge haneun yeoseongdeul, heulgyeogdol jjiggi bannyeon saenghwalgaeseone balbeosgo naeseon yunhyejayang [The Women Enlightening Rural Women: Yoon Hye-ja who devoted herself to improving living conditions, making clay bricks for half a year," *Chosun Ilbo*, July 17, 1962.

<sup>288</sup> "je2cha 5gaenyeon gyehoegbipan (6) gwahaggisuljinheung [Criticism of the Second Five-Year Plan (6) Promotion for Science and Technology]," *Maeil Kyungje*, July 21, 1966.

government placed on science that the government established the Ministry of Science and Technology in 1966 when the second five-year plan was released. At a press conference, the first minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology expressed his opinion about the value of science in South Korea at a press conference. He stated that Korea must overcome its backwardness through the advancement of science and technology. The minister also added that all citizens should develop scientific minds in order to modernize the motherland through the scientific management of their lives. He gave a specific example of cultivating, scientific thinking. In bathing, people need to purposely think more logically. He said that, for example, it might be good for the bathing person to have knowledge about the proper temperature for bathing; a thermometer would be helpful to check the water temperature so that the person could add more hot water or cold water once he or she found that the water is two degrees hotter or colder than the desirable temperature for bathing. He explained that the practice of measuring materials was a good training for improving the scientific management of life.<sup>289</sup>

Reformist women's organizations confidently accepted the government's measures and emphasized their responsibilities as modern women through scientific management and rationalization. Kim Hwal-ran, the president of the Council of Korean Women's organization (CKWO), clarified that this process would be part of helping the motherland live better materially. She stated the definition of "modernization" as "to live better" at the National Women's Congress, held in 1966 under the theme of "Women's Responsibilities for Participating in Modernization" hosted by the Women's Association. She also pointed out that

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<sup>289</sup> Bae Byong-hyu, "Yongdusami (7) Saenghwal-ui gwahaghwa [A Fair Beginning but an Ending in an anticlimax (7) Criticism on Scientific Management of Life], *Maeil Kyungje*, December 23, 1968. Bae Byong-hyu that science in Korea is boring, making people's heads heavy so that people lost interest in studying science.

“Scientific Management of Mental Life” and “Rationalization of Lifestyle” would be the most important tasks for women.<sup>290</sup>

The Korean Home Economics Association (KHEA) mainly consisted of female professors and college graduates in home economics took the lead in the Scientific Management of Family Life. This elite organization of women was founded in 1947. After 1963 when the KHEA was registered by the Ministry of Education’s Science Education Bureau, it became known as the sole women’s organization of domestic science. The state gradually co-opted them into serving its national modernization purposes.<sup>291</sup> The members the KHEA focused explicitly on the modernization of lifestyles and house renovation as part of the scientific management of family life.<sup>292</sup> The prominent members of this group were professors of home economics at women’s colleges and principals of girls’ high schools.<sup>293</sup>

Among them, Pyo Gyeong-jo, a professor of family management at Sookmyung Women’s University, was a well-known figure as a pioneer who strove to achieve scientific management of family life. She emphasized the importance of modernizing the country’s housing structure and transforming the attitude of urban housewives towards modern lifestyles. She heavily stressed the significance of modernizing the family and making women aware of urban home living spaces. She continued to educate female college students and homemakers as a professor of home economics at a women’s university as well as president of the KHEA. The

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<sup>290</sup> “Yeoseong-ege jiwojindu gajiui chaeg-im [Two Responsibilities Placed on Women],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 17, 1966.

<sup>291</sup> *A Manual for Women’s Organizations* (Seoul: The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 1974), 48.

<sup>292</sup> “Yeoseong-gyehaengsa [Events for Women],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 19, 1966.

<sup>293</sup> “Saenghwal-ui gwahaghwa-e ibaji [Contributing to the scientific Management of life],” *Maeil Kyungje*, December 6, 1968; “Uli sallim-eul boda pyeonhage [Make our life more comfortable],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 15, 1968. She suggested some reasons for modernizing the urban home living space. One of the main reasons is that the need for limited spaces drastically increased due to the urban concentration of the population. The urban space per person became smaller as more and more people enter cities. Therefore, women must be aware of efficient ways of housing a large population.

government was aware of Professor Pyo's effort for the modernization of the state. She was chosen as a national hero who modernized Korean women, educating about how to practice the scientific management of life. She became only the female winner out of ten prize winners in the 1st Science and Technology Awards in 1968, commemorating those who made significant efforts with the scientific management method in order to achieve national development. She expressed her excitement in receiving the Science and Technology Award, saying that she accepted the award as a sign that Home Economics was now recognized as a science field in South Korea.<sup>294</sup>

Another leading member of the KHEA, strove for the scientific management of life, was Jung Myung-wook, president of Seoul National University College of Home Economics. Professor Jung was elected as a president of the KHEA after Professor Pyo in 1970.<sup>295</sup> As a home economics professor, her academic interest was on the issue of kitchen renovation. Professor Jung conducted various research to show current situations surrounding Korean kitchens and housewives' working conditions in the kitchen. Her academic results were distributed through the media. In 1962, the *Chosun Ilbo* introduced her study to show a close relationship between kitchen layouts and the amount of housework. She argued that housewives working in traditional kitchens worked more hours than housewives with western-style kitchens and advocated replacing Korean kitchens with western-style kitchens.<sup>296</sup>

As educator, Professor Jung also tried to enlighten housewives to change their attitude towards living a modern lifestyle. Her view was found in various newspaper articles. One of

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> "Hoejange jangmyeongugssi seonchul gajeonghaghoe chonghoe [Jung Myung-wook elected as the President of the Korean Home Economics Association in the General Assembly]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, August 25, 1970.

<sup>296</sup> "Saenghwalgaeseonui jinjihan yeongu [Serious Study for the Lifestyle Improvement]," *Chosun Ilbo*, November 18, 1962.

them was her column in the 1972 *Kyunghyang Shinmun*. In the column, she claimed that Korean housewives ignored the opportunity to modernize, although doing so would allow them to live economical and efficient lives. She said that “It seems that Koreans [Korean housewives] lack a sense of quantification. When they heard the word gram, they were distressed. In terms of kitchen renovation, [educators] enlightened [housewives] to renovate their kitchens and to change the layout of the inconvenient kitchens in an efficient way. Nevertheless, many houses have still been following the conventional way.”<sup>297</sup>

Professor Jung also encouraged her female students to join various lifestyle improvement projects helping modernize Korean housing. In 1964, under her guidance of Professor Jung, her female students participated in the project to build two showcase houses. The two houses contained a western-style kitchen and laid out in a way that housewives could work efficiently. Moreover, the kitchens in the showcase houses were equipped with cupboards considering Korean women’s average height, 156 cm (5.12ft).<sup>298</sup>

In addition to Professor Jung Myung-wook, other female professors in the Department of Home Economics at various universities were also passionately involved in providing opportunities for housewives to experience the modern lifestyle and attain home-based knowledge outside as well as inside of a university in the name of the scientific management of home. Professor Jang Jeong-ok of the Department of Home Economics at Kyung Hee University offered dietary information for housewives to serve an efficient diet at home. She encouraged housewives to follow a streamlined diet with enough nutrients to cook in a short

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<sup>297</sup> “Aswiun saenghwalui gwahaghwa [Unsatisfying Scientific Management of Life],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 20, 1972.

<sup>298</sup> “Isangeog-in jutaeggaelyang [Ideal House Renovation],” *Chosun Ilbo*, May 14, 1964.

period of time, rather than the traditional Korean diet, where cooking time takes longer even without considering nutritional aspects.<sup>299</sup>

Women were exposed to limited but valuable arenas for the presentation of their capacities. The government and some private organizations allowed women to enter contests, training programs, and workshops for women which had been primarily for men. These activities offered women opportunities to learn and receive feedback on their works. The Ministry of Science and Technology held the 2nd Idea Contest for scientific management of life on August 29, 1969. The government agency held the national competition to recruit ideas, based on the intention of inspiring citizens, mainly housewives, to share with other people about how to efficiently utilize their household goods or how to recycle unnecessary used household products. Four of the six ideas selected at this event had the potential for housewives to take advantage of them in doing laundry, storing grains, and farming.<sup>300</sup>

A 1976 article by Im Won-ja, a woman who was professor of Home Economics at Seoul National University, ended with the slogan, “Let’s all learn technology and build a science-based Korea [Neodonado gisulbaewo ilughaja gwahaghangug],” The studies of professors in the Department of Home Economics stood out in doing research about women’s scientific management of life. Particularly, the issue of women's clothing was frequently dealt with female scholars. Professor Im’s study was on rational clothing. She argued that housewives could conserve money and time in their clothing life through consumption of ready-made clothes and plans for buying clothes. She referred to the cases of the United States and Japan in the mid-1970s, where the market share of ready-to-wear clothes gained 80% and 60%, respectively. In

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<sup>299</sup> Jang Jeong-ok, “Sigsaenghwaleun yeongyangwijulo [Diet with Essential Nutrients],” *Maeil Kyungje*, January 1, 1969.

<sup>300</sup> “99 geon jung dangseonjag 6geon, saenghwalgwahaghwa aidieo mojob [Six Prize Winners out of 99, The Idea Recruitment for Life of Scientific Management],” *Maeil Kyungje*, August 30, 1969.



particular, she stated that “rationalization of (Korean) clothing life helps achieve the improvement of national consumption.” She urged that the data from the nationwide physical examination in South Korea be used to generate recommended clothing sizes for the state to expand market share of ready-made clothes in the domestic market as Japan did.<sup>301</sup>

Professor Im, as a professor of home economics, considered the problem of Korean clothing closely related to the national economic issues. She stated that if wearing ready-made-garments became a trend in South Korea, it could help to transform the national clothing industry as well as rationalize the life of the Korean family. Since most of the Korean apparel industry imported raw materials, reprocessed, and then exported them, the Park Chung-Hee government encouraged the people to wear clothes made from synthetic fibers that were more economical and easier to handle than cotton or wool, which were expensive natural raw materials. According to Professor Im, the consumption of synthetic fibers such as a polyester had increased while the consumption of natural fibers had decreased because synthetic fibers are lighter, softer, and more hygienic than the natural ones.<sup>302</sup> Her intention to encourage consumers to purchase fabrics and clothing made of chemical fibers was to promote the use of domestic products over foreign products. She as an expert publicized the advantages of chemical and synthetic fibers because the government implemented economic policies to develop export-oriented industries including chemical fiber industry since 1966.<sup>303</sup> Professor Im’s education towards housewives and consumers was part of the national economic development project. She contributed to the

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<sup>301</sup> Im Won-ja Professor of Home Economics at Seoul National University, “Scientific Management of People’s Lives – Gugminsaenghwal-ui gwahaghwa-uisaenghwal-ui munjeom [Problems in Clothing Life],” *Gwahaggwagisul* 9 [Science and Technology] 9, no.7 (July 1976), 15-16.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>303</sup> “Jungsogieob-yugseongan malyeon [Small and Medium Business Development Plan],” *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 7, 1966. \$80 million foreign loans of the government were invested in export-oriented businesses, including chemical fiber and metal industries by 1966.

implementation of the economic policy by emphasizing rational and scientific reasons of chemical fiber clothes rather than stressing patriotism.

Professor Im also utilized statistics and rational evidence to encourage women to join a national movement to support frugal habits rather than simply emphasizing personal sacrifices to save money or rice. In her article, she criticized Korean's spending habits. She pointed out that Korean consumers spent too much money on clothing compared to developed countries, such as France, the UK, and Germany. According to her research, clothing consumption in Korea occupied 11% of the total household expenditure, which was higher than the 9.2%, 7.3%, and 9.1% of the total household income in France, the UK, and Germany, respectively. Presenting these figures, she concluded that Korean consumers' spending on clothing was excessive; there was room for them to be frugal and save family funds. She pointed out that Korean women should reflect on their economic over-consumption attitude and change it. She stated that it was necessary for housewives to become a perfect household manager in order to maintain the rational clothing life expected of good housewives.<sup>304</sup>

### **National Contests for the Scientific Management of Life**

The Ministry of Science and Technology held the same contest for the recruitment of ideas three times in 1970. The government agency published a 137-page book including 167 winning ideas in the three competitions and distributed it to communities at no cost. The book introduced not only the winning ideas, but also the economic value of simple but groundbreaking ideas and the way to protect intellectual property through patent registration.<sup>305</sup> The *Maeil*

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<sup>304</sup> *ibid.*, 19.

<sup>305</sup> "Saenghwalui gwahaghwa aidio [Ideas for the Scientific Management of Life]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, February 4, 1971.

*Kyungje* likewise held up some of the winning ideas of the contest as good advice for cooking, cleaning the house, and repairing household items.<sup>306</sup> The contest that was held in July 1970, received more than almost 6 times more applicants compared to the 1969 contest. The 1971 idea contest for the scientific management of life selected 12 works out of submitted 588 ideas. The winners were largely divided into two categories. Some winners had ideas for products made from recycled waste materials: others had devised items that served multiple functions. The government instructed housewives to be creative in saving limited domestic material resources.<sup>307</sup>

### **National Promotion of Scientific Management in the 1970s**

In 1972, Park Chung-Hee proclaimed the institution of the “Yushin System,” which historian Bruce Cumings has termed a “turn toward full-blown, formal authoritarianism.”<sup>308</sup> Under this system, Park acquired new powers under a new constitution, the National Assembly was reduced to a rubber stamp, and suspended civil rights. Although this era is usually associated with the suppression of male protesters and male oppositional candidates by the male military regime, this chapter shows that during the Yushin period, the Park Chung-Hee continued to use the rhetoric of the scientific management of life to mobilize women for national purposes.

In 1973 the Park Chung-Hee administration announced a movement for the scientific management movement of people’s lives: the movement endeavored to foster scientific minds in all citizens in order to advance technological development. The government mobilized private

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<sup>306</sup> “Altteulhan sallim-e-ui jileumgil [Shortcut to Frugal living],” *Maeil Kyungje*, January 13, 1970.

<sup>307</sup> “Saenghwalui gwahaghwa aidieo ibseon, gwagicheo 12jeom balpyo [Winning Ideas for the Scientific Management of Life, Ministry of Science and Technology Announced 12 Works],” *Maeil Kyungje*, July 30, 1971.

<sup>308</sup> Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 358.

agencies and women's organizations in its efforts to make science more central to the lives of housewives and female students. The Korean Foundation for the Promotion for Science and Technology (KFPST) was a private institution that was involved in the scientific management of the nation. Crucial functions of this private institution were promoting science and technology and implementing projects that would help create a science-friendly environment. Housewives and teenagers were the main targets.<sup>309</sup> Shim Seung-taek, executive director of the KFPST, stated that the core of the nation's scientific campaign should be housewives and the youth. Women had been included in the project when the government announced the scientific management movement since 1973. The KFPST held living science lectures for housewives in consultation with major women's organizations. At its founding, the movement also concentrated its attention on adolescents. In 1973, the Foundation formed a science reading society for 150,000 students and expanded a distribution project of the student science library. In the same year, it imported and screened 37 science films to foster students' passion for science.<sup>310</sup>

A national mobilization project we will look at next is about the 1973 government project of One Skill for One Person to train all citizens as skilled laborers. A speech by Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil at the ceremony for Science Day in April 1973 revealed that the Park Chung-Hee administration was using the national scientific management movement to promote a new type of ideal housewife. In his speech, Kim Jong-pil stressed that it is necessary to develop scientific lifestyles and ways of thinking of all people in order to promote the spirit of creativity,

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<sup>309</sup> "Gwahaggisul jinheungjaedan god baljog [Science and Technology Promotion Foundation will be launched soon], *The Maeil Kyungje*, February 1, 1972.

The KFPST was a private institution on the surface. Still, it was close to a semi-governmental non-governmental organization because some government officials, the chief secretary of the Blue House and the Vice Minister of Science and Technology, largely influenced the institution's operation. Moreover, the government was subsidized by 28% of the funding to establish the institution.

<sup>310</sup> "Jeongugmin gwahaghwa chujin [Promoting the scientific management of the whole country]," *The Maeil Kyungje*, March 12, 1973.

productivity, and progress. He further emphasized that all people should learn skills and each person should acquire one skill. He stated that the ultimate goal of the South Korean government's industrialization and rural development was to build a modern state by developing and maintaining economic and military security. The prime minister suggested a national scientific movement that would eliminate all the irrational and unproductive elements rooted in Korean lives.<sup>311</sup> The government encouraged all citizens to learn a practical skill to earn money by launching the "Ilin Ilgi [One Skill for One Person]" campaign. Housewives were a main target of the movement. The government claimed that housewives should make a significant effort to become skilled laborers.<sup>312</sup>

The mainstream media joined the government in promoting women's participation in the campaign, One Skill for One Person. The *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, one of the leading newspapers, published a series of columns from 4<sup>th</sup> of April to 26<sup>th</sup> of December. The author of these columns was Jeong Soon-hwa, a woman who worked for the International Skills Olympics as Deputy Secretary General of the Korean Committee. Her column titled "Scientific management of the whole nation; One Skill for One Person" introduced promising skills to her readers. Approximately half of the items on the 37-skill list she introduced were skills suitable for women.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> "Gwahaghwallo sahoegipung swaesin [Renewing the social spirit through science]," *Maeil Kyungje*, April 21, 1973.

<sup>312</sup> Jeong Soon-Hwa, "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (5) pyeonmul [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Person One Skill **(5) Knitting**]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 23, 1973.

<sup>313</sup> Jeong Soon-Hwa, "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (1) Johwa [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(1) Artificial Flower**]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 04, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (4) Moggongye [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(4) Woodwork**]," April 16, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (5) pyeonmul [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person (5) Knitting]," April 23, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: Sujasu (9) [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(9) Embroidery**]," May 07, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (10) sigye sul [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(10) Watch Repairing**]," May 10, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (11) chogyong-gagong [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(11) Fiber Craft**]," May 14, 1973; "Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (13) jugse gongye

Jeong encouraged women to work at home as skilled workers. The one skill for one person campaign showed that women's labor was an integral component in society. The mass media, particularly newspapers, articulated the economic value of women's labor in the domestic economic and thus boosted women's pride as essential members in society. Jeong Soon-hwa highlighted various fields as she reported the increasing exports in knitting bamboo crafting, tie-dyeing, crafting with beads and other things that women were able to make using their skilled hands. She brought up the fact that South Korean export of artificial flowers tripled to 1.2 million in 1972 from \$400,000 in 1967. She pointed out that Korean women with good dexterity could take advantage of this opportunity to raise extra household income by making artificial flowers.<sup>314</sup> She noted that the value of knitted goods exported from Korea 1972, including to Japan was more than \$10 million. The campaign aimed to have more Korean women produce more products in the manufacturing industries, as the demand in foreign markets for Korean exports increased, which benefited both Korean households and the state.<sup>315</sup>

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[Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(13) Bamboo Craft**],” May 21, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (14) hamseoggong [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(14) Galvanized steel technician**],” May 28, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (16) pangeum [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(16) Plate Steel**],” June 6, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (20) Inhyeongjejag [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; (20) Doll making],” June 27, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (22) geumsog gongye [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(22) Metal Craft**],” July 13, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (23) holchigi [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(23) Tie-Dyeing**],” July 20, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (24) guseul baeg [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person **(24) Beads Bag**],” July 30, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (26) Yangboggong [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(26) Tailoring Men's suits**],” August 17, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (27) Gabal [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(27) Wig**],” August 31, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: Pihyeoggong (28) [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; Leather worker (28)],” September 12, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (29) Ganunsseob [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(29) Fake eyelashes**],” October 05, 1973; “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (30) Yangjang [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; **(30) Tailoring Women's clothing**],” October 12, 1973.

<sup>314</sup> Jeong Soon-Hwa, “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi: (1) Johwa [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person; (1) Artificial Flower,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 04, 1973

<sup>315</sup> Jeong Soon-Hwa, “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (5) pyeonmul [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Person One Skill (5) Knitting],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 23, 1973.

The government campaign for skill mastery created an environment that encouraged women to participate in various vocational training programs and encouraged working women to take the national technical qualification examination. In the case of knitting, women were able to learn knitting techniques at 110 knitting academies across the country, homecraft centers, or from private tutors.<sup>316</sup> In the metalworking industry, the craft and other departments of the higher vocational school offered regular courses. Some women who could not afford regular education were trained for around six months through apprenticeships in small jewelry workshops.<sup>317</sup>

The one skill for one person campaign had an impact on the expansion of vocational high schools fostering technical experts. The government assumed that vocational schools would help the domestic economy prosper in contrast to humanities high schools that focused on college entrance exams. The Park Chung-Hee administration expected that the skill training programs could foster skilled men and women workers.<sup>318</sup>

Higher officials kept reminding people to remember the significance of science and technology. For instance, at the ceremony for Science Day in 1974, when Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil made a speech to an audience of 500 governmental and educational leaders, he said, “It is necessary to create a sound environment in which all citizens value scientific thinking and action as well as productive technology. A country that competes with others must compete in achieving scientific and technological goals... For the stability and prosperity of the motherland,

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<sup>316</sup> Jeong Soon-Hwa, “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (5) pyeonmul [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Person One Skill (5) Knitting],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 23, 1973.

<sup>317</sup> “Jeongugminui gwahaghwa; ilin ilgi (16) pangeum [Scientific Management of the Whole Nation; One Skill for One Person (16) Plate Steel],” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 6, 1973

<sup>318</sup> “Sigeubhan gisulinlyeog gaebal (3) 3cha 5gaenyeon [Urgent technical manpower development (3) The 3rd 5 years],” *Maeil Kyungje*, May 16, 1973.

we have to raise the level of our science and technology to the level of advanced countries as soon as possible.”<sup>319</sup>

A *Maeil Kyungje* columnist on April 23, 1974 pointed out that the scientific management of life is connected to modernization and rationalization. The columnist claimed that Koreans should have a scientist-like mindset in both thought and action.<sup>320</sup> Seoul National University professor, Hong Mun-hwa, claimed that the reasoning process in everyday life should be scientific, supporting the government’s policy on expanding the National Scientific Management of Life Movement. He added that Koreans have to follow “the way,” that is, acting on knowledge, rather than feelings; a scientific life is based on a rationality. He criticized the traditional view of life in which people did not examine things closely and carefully. Such traditional perspectives were the biggest barriers that prevented people from acting scientifically.<sup>321</sup>

Middle-class housewives did not practice the scientific management of life in the same way as their lower-income counterparts. Middle-class housewives focused on acquiring and using essential knowledge and on quantifying family life. Housewives from lower income households practiced the scientific family life by acquiring vocational skills. At a symposium for housewives, hosted by *The Kyunghyang Shinmun* in 1975, five housewives, invited to commemorate the first anniversary of the founding the newspaper, shared how they participated the scientific management in their own lives. The housewives pointed out that newspapers were an important source of knowledge for them. Housewife Jung In-soon stated that it is difficult for

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<sup>319</sup> “Gimchongli chisa, ‘saenghwal gwahaghwa’ josog ilug [Prime Minister Kim’s Praising Speech, ‘Scientific Management’ achieved soon], *Mail Kyungje*, April 22, 1974.

<sup>320</sup> “Gwahaghwaneun god geundaehwa [‘Scientification’ is modernization],” *Mail Kyungje*, April 23, 1974.

<sup>321</sup> Hong Mun-hwa, “geongangui heosil (25) mogyog [ Truth and False about Health (25) Bathing],” *Mail Kyungje*, October 3, 1974.



Korean housewives to acquire new knowledge if they are over 40 years old; Newspapers provides women valuable legal and medical information. Housewife novelist Han Mal-suk also admitted the utility of acquiring legal knowledge through the newspaper. She said that the newspaper's legal counseling section provided vulnerable people with sound advice on financial and legal matters. Another participant in the symposium read newspaper articles not only helpful in real life but also inspiring stories of foreign housewives and career women such as columns titled "The Foreign Family I have experienced" or "Female President."<sup>322</sup>

The *Maeil Kyungje* recommended that housewives to keep household accounts as a way of practicing scientific management in their lives. The newspaper published a special article encouraging housewives to carefully plan the annual family budget, including household savings, family events, and the purchase of major household items. Hyun Ki-soon, President of the Women's Federation of Frugal-Living (Yeoseong jeochug saenghwal junganghoe, WFFL), included keeping household accounts as one of the responsibilities of an ideal housewife. She introduced the six principles of family life, "Middle and high schoolers should develop frugal habits in order to save their school supplies and allowance as well as to strengthen self-reliance and resilience; college students should devote themselves to academic achievements; mothers should keep household accounts in order to create a happy family; fathers should increase the time spent with their family members."<sup>323</sup>

A meeting sponsored by the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* on Science Day 1973 demonstrates the way that government and scientific experts stressed the importance of women's active participation in scientific management of the nation. The newspaper invited scientific and

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<sup>322</sup> "Gyeonghyang gajeongmyeon [Kyunghyang's Household Page]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 1, 1975.

<sup>323</sup> "Saehae uljibgyehoeg-eun ileohge [The New Year Plan for Household like this]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 5, 1976.

economic experts, including the former Minister of Science and Technology, member of Parliament, economic expert, and the dean of Seoul National University Medical School.<sup>324</sup> The government not only cooperated with private organizations and utilized various media channels but also utilized the influence of foreign personnel to persuade and expand the scientific management movement. In May 1973, a Japanese professor was invited under the Korea Federation of Science and Technology Societies (KOFST). Furuta Shosaku was a professor at Osaka University of Commerce, Japan. As the theme speaker for the seminar, he delivered a speech on the relation between the scientific management and people's lives. In his lecture, he particularly stressed women's education in maintaining a successful family life. He argued that a close relationship between housewives and domestic science knowledge is vital to the process of national science and technology improvement. He pointed out that Japan faced various problems it had overlooked the fundamental value of the people's scientific management and instead focused on the superficial success of the innovation in science and technology. His definition of Scientific Management of People's Life is the problem-solving process based on scientific thinking in everyday life. The problem-solving steps are the following: grasping the current problem, analyzing the cause of the problem, establishing countermeasures, implementing the concrete plan, and evaluating the results. Above all, Furuta emphasized that mothers must be scientific mothers to earn respect and trust from their children. For example, housewives should use scientific knowledge to use suitable detergents and proper laundry methods depending on the textiles. Moreover, they should acquire knowledge about electricity and appliances and be familiar with proper handling of electric household items. He stated that if housewives continued to acquire life-related knowledge, they would not fall behind in new science and technology

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<sup>324</sup> "Gwahagui nalmaja jeonmungadeul jwadam [Meeting with Experts on the Science Day]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 20, 1973.

trends. He concluded that housewives have potential to close the knowledge gap with men and should make it.<sup>325</sup>

In 1974, Park Chung-Hee's government's emphasis on scientific management continued. At a ceremony celebrating the 7th Science Day in April 1974, prime minister Kim Jong-pil claimed, "We must create a sound environment in which all citizens value scientific thinking and action as well as high productivity." Besides, he stated, "The competition of national power is the same as the competition of science and technology. [The Korean government] will raise the level of science and technology in South Korea to the level of advanced countries as soon as possible for the stability and prosperity of the motherland."<sup>326</sup>

The government's view on scientific management was echoed in the mainstream media. In particular, the two newspapers, the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* and the *Maeil Kyungje*, showed deep interest in women's scientific management and social participation. In the case of the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, this newspaper had begun to provide helpful information for women and from September 1, 1975, allowed housewives and women to submit ideas of domestic science. The *Kyunghyang Shinmun* boasted that the page for women proved its dedication to the mission of the times.<sup>327</sup> In addition, in November 1975, the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* hosted symposiums to accommodate the needs of women by inviting housewives and listening to their interests. The newspaper evaluated itself as a great source of important information, knowledge, and essential reading lists for women to live socially as housewives and mothers. The five housewives who participated in the symposium were particularly interested in having opportunities to submit and

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<sup>325</sup> "Sallim-eseo baewoya [Learning from the Housekeeping]," *Maeil Kyungje*, May 5, 1973.

<sup>326</sup> "Gimchongli chisa 'saenghwal gwahaghwa' josog ilug [Prime Minister Kim states that 'scientific management for life' must be done immediately]," *Maeil Kyungje*, April 22, 1974.

<sup>327</sup> "Gajeongmyeon sinseol 'naega mandeuneun peiji' tugo mojib [A Newly Created Page about Household' the Page I Make 'Recruitment of Contributors]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 1, 1975.

share their essays. They also revealed their interests about articles about foreign women's lifestyles and career women's stories. One of the participants, Mrs. Jeong, said that it was a great pleasure to take respect from her family and make a decent amount of money by submitting essays with her thoughts and opinions to newspapers. Another participant, housewife novelist Mrs. Han, pointed out the effectiveness of obtaining legal advice from newspapers.<sup>328</sup>

Another newspaper, *The Maeil Kyungje*, also showed interest in the scientific management of life for housewives. The *Maeil Kyungje* articles recommended quantifying and measuring materials to achieve efficiency and rationality in the ideal domestic life. Most of the articles ended in emphasizing women's thrift. Keeping a household account book was considered a critical habit in order to maintain a surplus household without indebtedness. According to new year's advice in the newspaper, housewives had to create a consistent pattern of efficient shopping for groceries, clothing, and housing. The newspaper article encouraged housewives to budget for household expenses by taking into account principal family events across the year, tuition fees for children, as well as essential expenses such as making Kimchi. *The Maeil Kyungje*'s article also pointed out that housewives need to set up a long-term savings plan.<sup>329</sup>

Another article in the *Maeil Kyungje* emphasized that housewives carefully apply their knowledge to their daily lives and develop the habit of managing their lives scientifically. The journalist advised that housewives could be learned the scientific attitude by finding the pleasure of improving, not thinking that housework is too demanding. She advised housewives about feeding, sheltering, and clothing their families. The article argued that housewives should also feed their families nutritionally balanced and harmonious foods for a rational diet. She also

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<sup>328</sup> "Gyeonghyang gajeongmyeon [Kyunghyang Page for the Household]," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 1, 1975.

<sup>329</sup> "Saehae ulijibgyehoeg-eun ileohge [New Year Plan for our Family like this]," *Maeil Kyungje*, January 5, 1976.

emphasized the importance of purchasing clothes that fit the family budget. She added that housewives need to be fully aware of the information on the adequate sizes, fabric, washing, and ironing of clothes. Her further point was that if housewives had scientific knowledge to enable themselves to manage effective thermal management, they could solve the indoor cooling and heating problems in summer and winter. When it comes to rational eating, she encouraged housewives to provide family members with meals of balanced nutrients. For example, she advised that housewives should be able to plan by mixing rice, the basic staple food of Korea, with mixed grains high in vitamin B for the human body's digestion.<sup>330</sup>

Korean intellectuals started recognizing the concept and value of scientific management of life since Japan brought into colonized Korea in the 1920s. Yet, it was under the Park Chung-Hee administration that the concept of rationalization and modernization of Korean lives was applied to the masses in a national scale. The Park Chung-Hee regime had two major goals to achieve: the first was the economic growth of the country, and the second was the achievement of modernization/rationalization of the country. Since the Park Chung-Hee government considered that the home economy is directly connected to the national economy, it could be partially resolved economic problems such as the national rice shortage and national budget by mobilizing housewives. The government endeavored to modernize the lives of Koreans, focusing on housewives' mobilization, through national campaigns such as the lifestyle improvement movement and the scientific management movement.

The Supreme Council for National Construction (SCNC), organized to control the state after Park Chung-Hee's coup in May, chose a campaign for scientific management of people's lives as one of the first social policies promoted through the group called National

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<sup>330</sup> Lee Sunhui, "Gasa-eseobuteo gwahaghwaleul [Scientific Management from the Household]," *Maeil Kyungje*, April 22, 1977.

Reconstruction Movement (NRM). The scientific management of life was the concept that the government came up with to mobilize women. The scientific management of life aims to improve the people's living standards and reduce working hours. The scientific management campaign claimed that Korean must eliminate irrational customs and wasteful spending habits. The new military government set up the Living Culture Center in 1962 in the SCNC building to support the scientific management of life campaign, planning women's mobilization.

In order to mobilize women for national economic development and modernization, the government selected women's elites, mainly educators, and women's organizations, for the representing and educating roles of women. The government encouraged women to make things sold in the open market. In these ways, the government's direction opened more possibilities for women to achieve economic independence which was not the original intent of the government.

Women's organizations participated as co-organizers in various exhibitions hosted by the government, or they also organized events, contests, training programs, and workshops related to scientific management of life in the name of women's organizations.

Among various women's organizations, the Korean Home Economics Association (KHEA) actively welcomed and supported the government's project to modernize life. The KHEA and its leading members, professors of home economics, researched the scientific management of life and played a role in educating women based on their research. Professors in Home Economics were also passionately involved in the government's modernization project of daily lives. In the process, family life was recognized as a part of science at government-sponsored science events. Women had become aware of their cooking and family life in scientific and economic terms. In addition, women had experienced that they could fix something uncomfortable and inconvenient

by themselves and even invent new products and sell them through the participation in various competitions, events, and activities.

## **CHAPTER 4. WOMEN INVITED INTO THE INTENSIVE VOLUNTEERING WORK IN THE 1970S SAEMAUL MOVEMENT**

The 1970s Korean media gave tremendous attention to Korean women's voluntary activities in contributing to modern state-building and raising household income. At the center of the women's volunteer involvement was the government-led *Saemaul* movement. Literally meaning for "New Community Movement," the *Saemaul* movement, aimed to modernize the Korean countryside with villagers' voluntary support. However, Park Chung-Hee's military government later implemented the campaign across the whole country. The *Saemaul* movement emphasized the spirit of self-help and efforts for community development, encouraging all Koreans to help the nation survive a difficult situation in international politics and markets. In the 1970s, the government largely mobilized Korean women in dealing with landscaping, frugal spending, and birth control projects. Through these initiatives, women were encouraged to participate in the goal of modernizing the nation.

During the 1970s, Korean women took the chance to expand their boundary from the home to the public sphere in economics and social development. Women tried to overcome the long-lived traditional belief that women were inferior to men in both physical and intellectual capacities. The women's mobilization project put women to work in multiple public spheres without any payment. Instead of wages, the government publicly praised women's social activities and participation. Women's voluntary social works were broadly recognized through the mass media. Korean women acquired media's more attention on their activities in public domains or for public interests. Women's organizations as well as individual women began appearing in leadership roles in the national movement for modernization. Their opportunities



included serving in positions such as female *Saemaul* leader and vice-president of a neighborhood association.

Mainstream scholars in South Korea have argued that the national *Saemaul* project resulted in the improvement of women's social status by allowing a circumstance in which women were invited in a leadership role. More and more women participated in the community development project and were allowed in the decision making circle during the state-led modernization movement.<sup>331</sup> Cho Hee-Keum also agrees that rural women attained the right to join in the decision making process and expanded their voice in the 1970 *Saemaul* movement proving the significance of their labor and capacity.<sup>332</sup> Yoo Jeong-mi also focuses on women's active participation in the movement, exploring women's willingness in community development projects. She argues that women's participation should be considered as the resistance against the patriarchal gender rule, not the support of the authoritarian regime.<sup>333</sup> On the other hand, Gills disagrees that Korean women actively and willingly participated in the movement. Instead, she argues South Korea's economic achievements were based on the exploitation of women's labor. She calls the exploitation the "triple exploitation," representing the developmental government, consolidated patriarchal system, and subordination of agriculture to urban industry.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> Lee Jeong-ju, Lee Yun-Kyung, and Kwon Chong-Hyon, "1970nyeondae yeoseong saemaul lideo judo saemaulsaebui bunseoggwa hamuisaemaulsaebui dangyebyeol, saeobbyeol bunlyuleul jungsimeul [Analysis and Implication of Saemaul Project led by Female Saemaul Leaders in the 1970s – Focusing on the Stages and Classification]," *Social Economy & Policy Studies* 7, no. 2 (June 2017): 71-99.

<sup>332</sup> Cho Hee-Keum, "Nongchonyeoseongui nongeobnodong mich uisagyeoljeong chamyewui byeonhwa-1960nyeondaebuteo 1990nyeunkkajui byeonhwaleul jungsimeulo. [The Change of Agricultural Labor Participation and Decision-Making Involvement of Rural Women in Korea- from the 1960s to 1990s]," *The Journal of Korean Home Management Association* 20, no.1 (February 2002): 75-86.

<sup>333</sup> Yoo Jeong-mi, "[An Analysis on the Experience of Women who Participated in State-led development-focusing on the example of Saemaulbuneujidosal]," *Master Thesis of Department of Women's Studies at Ewha Woman's University*, 2001.

<sup>334</sup> Dong-sook Shin Gills, *Rural Women and Triple Exploitation in Korean Development* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Building on the trend to highlight the achievements of the authoritarian regime in developing the national mechanism for women to work outside home, I show how women participated in the *Saemaul* movement by working in their expanded arenas to communicate with other women and solve societal issues outside the home. Mainly, I discuss gendered activities in the movement dealing with landscaping, frugal spending, and birth control projects to show the mechanism whereby marginalized women in the house and family were provided a new identity with the collective capacity to change things not only in the house but also in society. Those opportunities for women to take public actions allowed them to prove themselves as qualified citizens who contributed to economic and social growth.

Studies about Korean women's roles and identities in the Park Chung-Hee regime is scarce. Therefore, I have seen few academic works on women in the *Saemeul* movement including women's participation in the public sphere and their expansion of political and economic opportunities except female workers' stories in Korean labor history. One rare piece of research is a master thesis by Yoo Jeong-mi on the Korean women's experiences in the state-led *Saemaul* movement. Yoo argues that the purpose of women's participation in the movement was not to support the regime and country but to resist patriarchal gender rules since the movement provided resources to organize various women's groups and backup better positions in the house and society.<sup>335</sup>

This chapter examines women's mobilization led by the state during the 1970s *Saemaul* movement, particularly focusing on national projects related to landscaping, frugal savings, and birth control. It looks into the women's roles in these three areas in terms of how the

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<sup>335</sup> Yoo Jeong-mi, "An Analysis on the Experience of Women who Participated in State-led development-focusing on the example of *Saemaul* buneujidos," *Master Thesis of Department of Women's Studies at Ewha Woman's University*, 2001.

government mobilized women and how the women carried out their assigned duties. Due to the restricted nature of my primary sources published under the political censorship as I mentioned in the introduction, it is difficult to find women's resistance to the government or their complaints on agendas the government offered.

### **The Origin of the *Saemaul* Movement**

The *Saemaul* movement started as a pilot project in rural areas during the 1970 presidential campaign period. The ruling party politicians and public officials announced that the movement would help farmers improve their living conditions. Rural areas were excluded by the government's modernization project, focusing on urban-centered industrial development policies. The *Saemaul* project encouraged farmers and agricultural workers to build new roads, roofs, walls, and sanitary systems. Ruling party politicians and government officials visited rural villagers and donated them money and material to initiate the construction. The farmers and peasants appreciated the effort from the state and willingly voted for the political party of Park Chung-Hee whom they believed as a national hero. The 1969 Constitutional Amendment and the 1970 *Saemaul* pilot project made Park Chung-Hee possible to be not only an eligible but also the most influential presidential candidate in the 1971 presidential election. Even though Park Chung-Hee succeeded in being reelected as a president, he desired to consolidate his political power by declaring the martial law and amending the constitution to limit a presidential term. He was not satisfied by his short-term political victory. Particularly, his victory turned out a very small margin compared to the number of votes that his rivalry, Kim Dae-jung received. Park Chung-Hee concluded that he must take measures to sustain his power. He concluded to take two measures to have him to exercise his upmost power on people's whole lives. That was the time

when his administration announced to expand the regional level *Saemaul* project to the nation level.

The authoritarian government mobilized university professors and pro-government intellectuals to promote the *Saemaul* movement. By late 1972, the government recruited faculty members who could propose various ideas and plans to boost Koreans to ardently follow the guidelines of the government in the *Saemaul* movement. In November 1972, the government held a symposium to invite professors and other educators and collect various ideas, new projects related to the *Saemaul* movement. The Cabinet Planning and Coordination Office (CPCO) of the Prime Minister's Office, considered as the thinktank of the administration, took charge of the event. The CPCO invited approximately two hundred professors from all over the country to attend the symposium: ninety participants were assigned for the assessment of the central plan of the movement; one hundred ten participants were assigned for the regional development assessment. In the symposium, the *Saemaul* movement was described as an efficient means of achieving the national modernization and economic development.<sup>336</sup>

Women's participation was one of important agendas for the symposium. A propose of Lee Bum-joon, who was a pro-government activist as well as female professor of political science at Ewha Women's University, was drawn to government officials' attention. She presented her idea titled "women's roles in the *Saemaul* movement." Her presentation seemed to give a strong impression to the government officials and ruling-party members. After the symposium, Professor Lee became a congresswoman through a proportional representation system established under the Yushin regime. She had the proportional representation with the

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<sup>336</sup> "Saemaul Symposium," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 10, 1972; "The two hundred professors of Saemaul Movement Symposium, Philosophy, and the Discussion," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 10, 1972; "Saemaul Symposium," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, November 10, 1972; "Saemaul Principle," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 11, 1972.

recommendation of Democratic Republican Party, which was the ruling party, not through an election.<sup>337</sup>

The government reorganized existing measures in a coherent direction for the systematic mobilization of women. Mobilizing women in national campaigns was not new but previously was on a small scale. In 1972 May, the government had held a *Saemaul* Promotion Conference where pro-government women's groups were invited from all around the country. The women's organizations functioned as headquarters for women's mobilization soon. Approximately three thousand members attended the Conference. Park Chung-Hee appealed the women participants that the government considered women as important citizens to work with. The first lady, several high-ranking officials such as ministers of education and finance delivered attended the conference. When delivering a speech, the first lady particularly stressed women's patience and tolerance. She said, "There is no miracle or luck for a success of the *Saemaul* movement, but endurance of hardships." She encouraged the female participants to undertake their missions to help the government build a successful industrialized state. She also convinced them to pass on to their children a unified and prospering homeland by fulfilling the mission.<sup>338</sup>

Newspaper, *Dong-A Ilbo*, described those leaders of women's groups adopted three resolutions for the *Saemaul* movement in the promotion conference. The three resolutions are following: "We [women] take the lead to living well together in the *Saemaul* movement," "We must lead the establishment of our self-reliance economy by reducing our waste and consumption," and "We must lead the establishment of independence economy." The female

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<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> "*Saemaul* apjang dajim, yugyeosa deung samcheon yeoseongmoyeo chogjindaehoe [Pledge of Participation for the *Saemaul* Movement, three thousand women gathering in the Promotion Conference, including the first lady]," *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 5, 1972.

leaders declared to support the *Saemaul* movement collaborating with other major women's groups across the country.<sup>339</sup>

Female politicians were also encouraged to participate in the *Saemaul* promotion campaign. Several female politicians in the Democratic Republican Party initiated to educate other politicians' wives even though female politicians wanted to work in *Saemaul* activities such as going inspection tours and assessing several *Saemaul* model villages like other male politicians. In April 1973, the government dispatched the four *Saemaul* inspection groups consisted of *Yujunghoe* congressmen.<sup>340</sup> Three female *Yujunghoe* congresswomen, Park Jung-ja, Gu Im-hoe, and Jung Bok-hyang, expressed their dissatisfaction about their exclusion from the inspection tours. Although they kept asking to be included to the groups, Lee Do-sun, the vice president of the *Yujunghoe*, refused their request. Lee told them, "We will make a separate plan for you [female congresswomen] to assess model *Saemaul* villages where female *Saemaul* leaders work [in the future]." The male politicians and bureaucrats made a clear line for the gender segregation in the *Saemaul* movement. Women politicians were only allowed to work with other women under the directions set by male elites.<sup>341</sup>

Female congresswomen were encouraged to educate the wives of 293 lawmakers when the National Assembly for Unification hosted a *Saemaul* seminar in 1976.<sup>342</sup> Their assigned task

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<sup>339</sup> "Commitment to the *Saemaul* Movement," *Maeil Kyungje*, July 5, 1972. The KHA decided to lend their aid to this end, particularly in the policies such as new family ritual rules that the government simplified and consumer projects.

<sup>340</sup> The *Yujunghoe*, quasi-political party, had been consisted of members chosen by Park Chung-Hee. According to the Yushin Constitution, 73 politicians became members of the National Assembly mainly depending on the recommendation of President Park Chung-Hee and influence of the National Council for Unification, not through general election.

<sup>341</sup> "Inspecting According to Types of *Saemaul* New Community," *Trend News*, April 17, 1973; "*Yujunghoe* members only follow the calling of the state," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 17, 1973.

<sup>342</sup> (NAU) was an indirect democratic organization formed under the Yushin Constitution. Representatives of this organization were elected by direct election of the people. The main functions were to elect the president, to elect one-third of the parliament's constituents among candidates recommended by Park Chung-Hee, and to finalize the constitution's amendment.

was to make politicians' wives understand about why the *Saemaul* movement was needed for the country and how the wives could assist their husband and pursue the movement's goal, the national modernization. At the opening ceremony of the seminar, the Secretary-General of the Korean Unification Organization stated that, "Women's power can make the movement succeed by promoting *Saemaul*'s spirit." The wives of congressmen were motivated in taking part in women's spheres for the country.<sup>343</sup> The participants in the seminar also learned about how to carry out the necessary and supportive roles as wives of the congressmen who dedicated to the country and the *Saemaul* movement. The idea of division of labor between women at home and men at work was still obvious. Lee Bum-joon, previously mentioned the female professor in the symposium, was a leading educator in the seminar.<sup>344</sup>

### **First Lady as an Exemplary *Saemaul* Woman**

One of the most noticeable features in promoting women's participation in the *Saemaul* movement is to utilize the first lady's image. Park Chung-Hee's wife was described as a wise mother and supportive wife in the mass media. The media instigated that Korean woman must follow behaviors and advice of the first lady, the exemplary woman. The first lady often became a keynote speaker in several *Saemaul* events where she attended. Sometimes she invited and treated leaders of women's groups and ordinary people including children, soldiers, and female factory workers to the Blue House where the president and his family members had lived.<sup>345</sup> On June 7, 1973, when she invited the 178 *Saemaul* leaders, she addressed, "The leadership training can help develop women's potential. Therefore, I hope [the participants] to work hard and to

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<sup>343</sup> "Wives of Legislators in Seoul District, resolution in Urban *Saemaul* Movement," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 13, 1976.

<sup>344</sup> "Education for Essential Knowledge Needed for Being a Good Wife of a Politician," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, July 19, 1973.

<sup>345</sup> Korean married women do not change their last after their marriage. The first lady's name was Yuk Yeong-Su.

become good leaders who are able to foster other potential leaders,” “The fact that more and more women leaders are coming out means that women’s abilities are recognized much [by the Korean society]. Thus, we should try harder to develop more women’s capacities and try it more often than you are doing now.”<sup>346</sup>

Park Chung-Hee also appeared on the mass-media. He often encouraged women to practice frugality in their lives. The mass-media reported that Park praised women’s frugality and efforts to help the country improve the living conditions. At the end of February 1974, Park Chung-Hee met female *Saemaul* leaders as well as male representatives of the National Assembly. A newspaper described the scene in detail where Park Chung-Hee praised frugality of Kim Hwa-jeong, one of the female *Saemaul* leaders. The president stated that her old, humble clothing and her rough hands showed her devotion to the *Saemaul* movement.<sup>347</sup>

It was a simple and efficient strategy for the president and the first lady to expose on the mass media for the promotion of the *Saemaul* movement. Yet, there was a more efficient means to promote the movement. It was to create a trendy popular culture attracting the public. It was an indirect but powerful way to influence and change an individual’s attitudes. In 1972, the film *Mrs. Rattie* was released. The movie introduced a regular Korean wife who succeeded in changing her lazy husband and parents in law. The heroine Jum-rye simplified extravagant traditional family rituals. The story originally came from a radio drama series that had a million listeners. The popularity of the radio drama also led to the success of the film. In 1972, the film won the Honorary President’s Award at the *Daejong* Awards Ceremony, hosted by the Ministry

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<sup>346</sup> “Interview with Female Leaders,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 8, 1973; “Given to Six Female *Saemaul* Leader,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 8, 1973.

<sup>347</sup> Lee Dae-mok, Cho Kyu-ha, “We need to clear land for cultivation but should leave the forest,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, February 27, 1974.



of Education and the Korean Film Council.<sup>348</sup> The government considered the film helpful as an educational video to housewives as well as soldiers in the military.<sup>349</sup> In 1973, the government, which witnessed the influence of the *Mrs. Rattie*, revised the Film Act in 1973. They explained that the revision of the film law could stimulate the Korean film industry to be prosperous. For the same reason, the Korean Film Corporation was launched. The Korean Film Corporation publicly aimed to help the government produce movies directly with the aim of leading the Korean film industry. To this end, the film corporation planned to invest 195 million won that had been the most substantial amount of money that the government invested in the Korean film industry. The film title “The wind blows towards my hometown” was produced during the time. However, the government’s attempt had not produced any dramatic outcomes in 1973.<sup>350</sup> In the same year, the KBS Korea Broadcasting produced a short radio episode, “*Saemaul* movement and Women’s Participation,” and a TV documentary, “The Story of a Young Female Fisherman.”<sup>351</sup>

### **Women’s Green Association and Planting Women**

Female politicians’ public activities for the *Saemul* movement appeared in the media. In some cases, female politicians published newspaper columns. The media reported the female politicians’ activities or interviewed them to reveal their thoughts and opinions on the *Saemul* movement. On 1973 Korea’s Liberation Day, Park Jung-ja, the female congresswoman, put an emphasis on women’s femininity and encouraged women to do their best as mothers and support their husband in the *Saemul* movement:

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<sup>348</sup> “The 11th Daejong Awards,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, October 28, 1972.

<sup>349</sup> “For Soldiers at the Front, Six Films,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 19, 1972.

<sup>350</sup> Jang Yun-hwan, “Trying a New Strategy for Filmmaking,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 2, 1973.

<sup>351</sup> “The Korean Film, An honorable prize for a Young Female fisherman in the ABU contest,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, December 06, 1973.

“Korean women must get out of absurdity and convention and to adjust to Korean reality. In other words, we [Women] should strive to show off women's unique capabilities by developing women's features. We must raise our intelligent, healthy, and creative children for our future. Our husbands and we must work together in the *Saemaul* movement.”<sup>352</sup>

Female participants in the *Saemaul* movement were described as ardent patriots in the media, who were ready to protect and develop the country and its economy. The media portrayed the women expanding their social boundary from the limited domestic arena to public spheres where they were invited for their public activities in landscaping, frugal-savings, and a birth control. Women's landscaping was described as women's social work in voluntary sector extending from a woman's domestic works such as cleaning, tidying, and caring for a home to landscaping public places such as national parks, public cemeteries, and devastated mountains due to the Korean War. The Women's Green Association (WGA) was at the heart of leading women's landscaping under the slogan of making the country green. The women's group was established in 1971. It aimed at building a new womanhood through participating various activities such as landscaping and relief work. A female educator, Bae Sang-myung—dean of the College of Education at Sangmyung Women's University—established the organization and became the first chairwoman of the organization. The organization could be run at her great sacrifice. Unlike other women's organizations, which often confronted financial difficulties in operating the group, the organization was operated without any significant economic challenges due to financial support of the chairwoman. Because she financed the organization's operating expenses using her personal funds. She even paid the rent for the building the organization rented.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> Park Jung-ja, “August Fifteenth and the Status of Women,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 13, 1973.

<sup>353</sup> “Make Greener, Newer, and More fruitful, the birth of Women's Green Association,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 14, 1971; Prominent female educators, including Hwang Shin-deok, Lee Mae-ri, Song Geum-sun, Ju Wol-young, and Park Yong-kyung, joined here.

The project to make “a green nation” started in the early 1970s, when the *Saemaul* campaign began. In 1972, pro-government women’s groups started to make plans implanting trees and flowers as well as cleaning clean parks, national cemeteries, and national mountains. In the 1972 National Conference of Women Leaders, 300 female leaders of women’s groups attended. The WGA officially hosted the conference with the central theme, “Making Green Homeland through Planting Trees.” The female leaders in the conference discussed how to plant trees in the bare mountains after the Korean War.<sup>354</sup>

In April of the same year, Seoul Mayor, Yang Tak-sik, proclaimed the “Green Seoul *Saemaul* movement.” More than 500 people gathered and took part in the national planting activities as an annual Arbor Day event. The participants of the event were members of women’s groups, female high-school students as well as the first lady and government officials. The majority of the participants were members of the WGA, the Korean Women’s Association, Broadcasters’ Association, several other women’s charity groups, and Girl Scouts. They planted more than ten thousand of spring and summer flowers on the sides of highway. Addition to the planting of flowers, five thousand people consisted of Seoul city officials and students planted hundred-thousand trees in national parks and cemeteries like the *Sajik* Park, the *Jangchung* Park, the *Hyochang* Park, the National Cemetery, the National *Mok-dong* Unification Garden, the *Myeonmok* Children’s Park, and several residential areas of public apartments.<sup>355</sup> The mass media reported the first lady’s involvement in the event with her photo planting pansy flowers around the Armed Forces General Hospital on the Arbor Day. The *Dong-A Ilbo* published a newspaper article with a picture of the first lady wearing in a work uniform and planting flowers

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<sup>354</sup> “Making Green Homeland through Planting Trees,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, March 16, 1972.

<sup>355</sup> “Ceremony for Arbor Day, Green and Clean Seoul,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 5, 1972; “Seoul also planted hundred-thousand trees,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, April 5, 1972.

with fifty wives of the Seoul City officials. The news media praised the women's patriotism, restoring urban nature and making bare forests green through the planting of the female volunteers. Its intention appeared on the places in which female volunteers cleaned and planted: the national cemeteries where soldiers who died in the Korean War were buried and the military hospital reminding Koreans of soldiers protecting the country and fighting against North Korea.<sup>356</sup>

Female professors were also great supporters of the national green project. They educated housewives, particularly who were members of women's groups. Professors at agricultural colleges gave lectures to female leaders about information and knowledge related to tree planting and the national green project at the 1973 WGA National Women's Leadership Conference. At this conference, the main discussion topic was about how to plant and grow fruiting trees such as chestnut, hawthorn, and persimmon. The lecturers encouraged the female participants to initiate planting fruit trees as possible as they could. They explained that their planting activities would reward them to add extra household income in the harvest time.<sup>357</sup> In the WGA 1975 National Women's Leadership Conference, the WGA kept providing the lectures. Dr. Lim Kyung, an agricultural expert, gave a detailed lecture on the farming of ginkgo and paulownia. Approximately over 500 participants gathered in the lecture hall, listening to the lecturer lecturing about how to start cultivating fruit trees.<sup>358</sup>

The WGA publicized the importance of personal gardening at the individual level. This is the interesting part of the WGA. The group seemed to have more room in deciding and carrying out their plans and projects presumably because it did not receive any financial aid from

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<sup>356</sup> "Mrs. Park Chung-Hee joined in planting flowers," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 5, 1972.

<sup>357</sup> "Lecture about Planting Fruit Trees at the Women's Green Association," *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 16, 1973.

<sup>358</sup> "The 4th Women's Leadership Conference is held with over 500 green members from all over the country," *Dong-A Ilbo*, April 03, 1975.

the government. The WGA conducted telephone consultations every Thursday and Saturday from 10 am to 11 am and Tuesday and Thursday from 3 pm to 4 pm. Two specialists volunteered to help citizens. The WGA started a telephone counseling service. They helped citizens who had difficulties when planting trees and planting flowers. Particularly, they consulted from simply how to plant trees and flowers to how to find good fertilizers and proper cycles of fertilizers.<sup>359</sup> The 1974 WGA National Women's Leaders Conference was "Human and Environment." The lectures stressed the significance of planting in personal spaces, delivering the information about personal gardening and good selections for garden trees.<sup>360</sup> In the same year, the group held a symposium on "Improving the Living Environment through Landscaping." The symposium aimed to help shape a suitable garden, depending on the number of family members or personal preferences.<sup>361</sup> The 1976 WGA Conference continuously dealt with personal gardening issue. The authoritarian regime enormously mobilized this group at the beginning of the early 1970s. Yet, the group gradually separated from the government's strict control.<sup>362</sup>

The WGA seemed to have kept some distance from the government since the late 1970s. The name of the WGA had been gradually invisible in the mass media since 1976. The desirable woman the WGA pursued was the woman who was not only economically independent but also progressive and creative woman. The active and progressive type of women was not the perfect type of women Park Chung-Hee regime expected. The establishment of a new desirable female model of Korean women was one of main aims of the WGA. In May 1971, Chung Hee-kyung, the WGA president insisted that Korean women should become "more progressive and

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<sup>359</sup> "The Women's Green Association, Tree planting consultation, *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 16, 1972.

<sup>360</sup> "Improvement of the living environment, Women's Leadership Conference," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 27, 1974.

<sup>361</sup> — "Spring flower gardening," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, March 30, 1974.

<sup>362</sup> "National Women's Leaders Conference," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 31, 1976.

creative.” The desirable woman was a type of a woman who was free from the passive role of reproducing children and actively engaged in meaningful and productive activities. In the WGA president’s lecture with the title “The Desirable Woman,” she suggested the quality list as the desirable woman: the first, a civically responsible woman; the second, a highly educated and intelligent woman; and the third, a diligent woman. She stated that Korean women’s lives had been deeply tied to the reproduction and rearing of their children for a long time. She claimed that women’s lives should be more meaningful than just reproducing and fostering next generations. She suggested, for example, women could write books and cultivate vegetables. According to her philosophy, if Korean women thought none of these works belonging to them. According to her, that is evidence something wrong in their lives, and they must start on any project planning.<sup>363</sup>

### **Intensified Frugal Campaigns in the *Saemaul* Movement**

The government during the 1970s *Saemaul* movement emphasized women’s important role to be frugal in saving national resources. The government set a new structure of male president and the female vice-president, hoping that the *Saemaul* female leaders could exercise their power properly in promoting more women to engage in several frugal campaigns as well as assisting male presidents. In March 1973, the *Gangwon* local government adopted the system to its regions. The next month, 2,595 women, who were mainly educated middle-class housewives, were appointed as vice-presidents in the four cities, such as *Chuncheon*, *Wonju*, *Gangneung*, and *Sokcho*. A main role of the female vice-presidents was assisting male-presidents: the female

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<sup>363</sup> “A Model Korean Woman with a productive set of Values: The Path of Korean Women Chung Hee-kyung suggested,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 14, 1971.

leaders informed the government's policies, and they encouraged locals to follow government guidelines and several *Saemaul* projects. Another role as the *Saemaul* female vice-president was to promote frugal campaigns focusing on why and how the locals could prevent the locals from consuming luxury items and reduce rice consumption in the rice crisis after a series of poor harvest in the country. To this end, the *Gangwon* local government trained the *Saemaul* female vice-presidents gathering in the *Saemaul* promotion conference. The female *Saemaul* vice-presidents learned how to consume less rice and substitute it with other cheaper grains, or eating meals mixed rice and cheaper minor grains to save rice. The female *Saemaul* vice-presidents' efforts resulted in a 30% reduction in rice consumption in 1973 compared to 1972.<sup>364</sup>

Women's groups were also engaged in the frugal campaign. Frugality was the principal virtue that the Park Chung-Hee government asked the Korean housewives to follow all the time. The pro-government women's organizations viewed the participation in the movement as their obligation. The Korean Housewives' Association (KHA) declared to awaken and cultivate the self-reliant *Saemaul* mind set in managing households more rationally and economically. The leaders of the KHA claimed that all married women should pursue a frugal family life.<sup>365</sup>

By 1973, the government planned to lead an achievable and visible frugal campaign. A bank savings campaign swept the country, particularly rural areas. The Ministry of Finance promoted April of 1973 as a month for depositing money in a bank. The Ministry set the savings target of 1973 as 400 billion won. The government forced working women and bank employees to save certain amount of money every month in achieving the goal.<sup>366</sup> In the case of Busan, the 1973 savings goal of the city was 100 billion Korean won. Busan, the second-largest city,

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<sup>364</sup> Kim Jun-su, "Excellent Performance of the vice-leader system," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 13, 1973.

<sup>365</sup> Lee, Bo-hye, "We should Reform our Lives with New Insight," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 24, 1972.

<sup>366</sup> "The Ministry of Finance Promoted April for the Month for Savings," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, March 29, 1973.

mobilized large populations of women, civil servants, and employees of financial institutions to achieve the target figure as fast as possible. In this campaign, Busan city officials became panicked about some possibilities of failure. Thus, they had to convince Busan city hall visitors to sign on the contract promising to open a new *Saemaul* savings account and deposit a certain amount of money every month.<sup>367</sup> Several financial institutions such as the *Chohung* Bank aggressively participated in the *Saemaul* Savings campaign. The bank supported to hold the 1973 *Saemaul* Savings Conference as well as facilitated several savings events.<sup>368</sup>

### **Mobilizing Women for Savings Promotion**

The Central Committee for Savings Promotion (CCSP) was created in 1969 as part of promotion plan in the late 1960s savings movement. The committee consisted of financial groups, insurance groups, economic industry groups, and several private organizations.<sup>369</sup> The CCSP utilized its female members as assistants who would visit each household and convince housewives to open a savings account and deposit money in 1974. The CCSP female members were not paid. They worked as unpaid “volunteers.” The government only gave the female assistants a small amount of stipend only covering public transportation fares and the cost of phone calls. The female assistants were praised their hard work and sacrifice to the country. Yet, the Park Chung-Hee regime mobilized women’s workforce as a subsidiary and cheap being by using the nationalistic sentiment.”<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> “The Target figure of *Saemaul* Savings in Busan, 10 Billion Korean won,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, April 24, 1973.

<sup>368</sup> “*Saemaul* Savings Presentation Hosted by the Women's Savings Conference,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, October 12, 1973; “Gold Medal Lady Kim, Young-ran,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, October 13, 1973.

<sup>369</sup> “Establishment of the Central Committee on Savings Promotion,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, April 21, 1969.

<sup>370</sup> “Savings Promoters to the *Li* and *Dong* (smallest administrative unit, *Li* in rural areas, *Dong* in urban areas),” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, February 27, 1974.



In the media that leaders of the Women's Association of Savings and Lifestyle (WASL) showed their excitement in playing a role of savings promoters. They seemed to view it as an honorary chance for women to work for the country. They expected that the campaign for women's savings would boost the nation's total savings. Joint activities of the Savings Promotion Association (SPA) and the Women's Association of Savings and Lifestyle (WASL) were sporadic in the past. By 1974, their joint activities were conducted on a national level. Female promoters in the savings promotion campaign were assigned a *dong*, the smallest administrative unit in urban areas. Their main task was exactly same as the CCSP female members did. They visited each household and convinced housewives to deposit money in a new savings account<sup>371</sup>

Housewives who did not have any extra income to deposit were advised to take a part-time job. The government led a campaign under the slogan with "Let's learn an industrial skill." Those female savings promoters also encouraged the housewives to earn money by learning skills such as hand-knitting, handcrafting, or dressmaking. Then, they stressed the role of good homemakers who would deposit the extra household income in a bank without spending. The government provided educational programs to groups of mothers whose children were primary schoolers and groups of housewives who lived in a same residential area. In the early 1970s, the Seoul City planned to conduct an ideal woman making project by providing technical training programs to housewives. The capital city government described the ideal Korean woman was an "ideal mother" who "serves, learns, and works for the community and the country." The city

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<sup>371</sup> "Each Family member should own their own bank account, the Model Savings Village," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, April 19, 1974.

government convinced women that their commitment to public activities and social volunteering works would enhance not only their lives but also their community and the country.<sup>372</sup>

The government particularly strongly encouraged rural housewives to do on the side jobs. Knitting was one of the most recommended side jobs to rural housewives. Women who graduated from at least a primary school were allowed to learn how to knit a five-day training and to make knitting products. Rural housewives usually had knitted summer clothes during the farming season from November to March. From April to October, they wove thick sweaters. they made wool sweaters for winter with two needles. Their handmade sweaters were popular in Japan, the United States, and Europe. Because their hand-made sweaters were as comparably cheap as machine-woven sweaters. The rural housewives in working hand-made sweaters had to satisfy such low-wage. The government and the Korean businessmen benefited women's such low income.<sup>373</sup>

In 1973, the Korean Culture Broadcasting announced the 1st National *Saemaul* Women's Contest to find talented women with the best handicraft skill. Women from all over the country were encouraged to participate in the contest if they could produce any handicrafts or needlecrafts.<sup>374</sup> In 1975, the 3rd National *Saemaul* Women's Contest was held in commemorating the death of the first lady, Park Chung-Hee's wife. At the 1975 contest, newspapers and big companies such as *Kyunghyang Shinmun* and the Haetae baking company co-hosts the contest with the Korean cultural broadcasting. Limited number of women participated in the contest. Only 54 participants from 11 cities attended the contest although there

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<sup>372</sup> "Strengthening the Guidance of Women," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 30, 1973.

<sup>373</sup> Yoon Dae-jong, "In rural areas, there is no time to rest the working hands. (11) Knitting," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 20, 1976.

<sup>374</sup> "Participation in the National *Saemaul* Women's Knitting Contest," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, September 21, 1973.

was big prize money to 3 million won in total. The contest provided an arena where women could show off their talents. Several women who were good at handcrafting, including woodcarving, sculptural stone carving, making ceramics, knitting, and doll-making.<sup>375</sup> The winner in the contest was a 33-year-old housewife who submitted a weaving handicraft using horsethair. The judges of the contest praised that her horse-hair caps and bags would be good exporting products in the future. The winner showed her excitement by sharing her future plan. She said that she would invest the prize money, one million won, for the development of the horsethair handicraft industry in the Jeju island. She expected a rosy future for the expansion of horsethair handicraft industry in South Korea. She believed that she could achieve her dream since she had already found 40 neighbors who were interested in learning her horsethair handicraft skills. She also proudly shared her dream to contribute to the national economic growth with her horsethair handicrafts.<sup>376</sup>

Another role of the savings promoters was to collect several frugal housewives' stories and to report them through newspapers and other mass media. Lee Ok-ran firstly appeared on the media as an exemplary *Saemaul* housewife. She was a sixty-one-year-old lady, serving as a president of the Housewives Club Association for 15 years and having 20-year volunteering experiences. One of her volunteering works was to work as the savings promoter. Mrs. Lee visited more than 300 households in *Gyebu dong* and encouraged the housewives to deposit money a new bank account from the beginning of the government's savings promotion movement as a member the Seoul Women's Savings in Seoul Branch. The *Maeil Kyungje* praised her contribution to the national economic security, indicating that the total savings of

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<sup>375</sup> "Saemaul Women's Contest in memory of the first lady's death, 54 participants in total," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 17, 1975.

<sup>376</sup> "Lee Choon-ja, Special Prize for the Saemaul Women's Competition," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 20, 1975.

*Chebu dong* bank reached up to 30 million Korean won in 1970 due to her and her peer volunteers. The newspaper introduced her anecdote. Once she found a household who could not afford to deposit any money in a bank, she even lent her own money to them. In the newspaper article, she was described as a strong-willed woman who overcame all kinds of hardships with her patience, a will, and a passion. In her interview, she said that she would “dedicate herself for Korean people’s happiness until the last day of her life.”<sup>377</sup>

In 1975, the newspaper, *Kyunghyang Shinmun* also introduced several other female *Saemaul* leaders in a series of articles with the title, heroines of modernization. Hong Young-mae and Jeong Moon-ja were *Saemaul* women leaders who were chosen as the heroines of modernization. Hong Young-mae had introduced a young woman with a strong will to serve for the community. She started participating in the frugal movement, particularly rice savings campaign, since 1968 before the *Saemaul* Movement began. Her first project was to organize a local group of mothers with her 32 village housewives. She carried out a successful village development campaign. Her extraordinary efforts persuaded not only the village women but also village men. Ignoring Mrs. Jeong, the male villagers began to listen to her ideas and projects. Many of the activities led by women had increased the village’s income: women’s planting, barley cutting as a community joint project. She and her female neighbors accumulated village funds of 2.76 million won. The male villagers also joined her project with respect later.<sup>378</sup>

Hong Young-mae had a unique family background. At age 23, she decided to marry a poor war veteran widower with five young children. What she did was to quit her job and to become the wife of the war veteran. Not only did she pay off the veteran’s hospital debt with her

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<sup>377</sup> “In Search for the foundation of creation (6) *Chebu-dong, Jongno-gu, Saemaul* Family,” *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, June 06, 1974.

<sup>378</sup> “The Heros/Heroines of Modernization (5) Her Outcomes of Love, Blood, Sweat, and Tears – Memoir of A Female *Saemaul* Leader,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, September 27, 1975.

retirement allowance, but she also worked as a tenant farmer to farm 800 pyeong (0.54 acre) of grain to feed the veteran's family. Her projects not only established the infrastructure of the village, but also helped generate additional income for the households in the village. In 1972 she decided to be a female *Saemaul* leader, mobilizing mothers of her village to conduct several village projects such as constructing waterworks and growing fruit trees per household.<sup>379</sup>

Another female *Saemaul* leader was Jeong Moon-ja. She was described as a devoted woman to the rice-savings and the money-savings campaigns. In her village, there was no bank before the *Saemaul* movement, but a village bank was established under her lead of the frugal campaign. Her achievements drew attention not only from inside of the village but also outside the village. Her villagers showed a great gratitude toward her in being chosen as a model *Saemaul* village. Recognizing her efforts for the community, many male villagers began to participate in her village development project. The villagers worked together to improve the village's circumstances, such as widening rice fields, cleaning village roads, and building fences. In addition, her four female villagers donated to buy cement by selling their engaging rings or wedding rings. The female villagers also built a village factory, connecting the electricity from a neighboring village to their village where there was no electricity. Then, the female villagers purchased ten Japanese machines for making Japanese kimono. Forty-five unmarried women learned about how to make belts by operating the machines by themselves. Mrs. Jeong's village eventually became the richest village around the areas. Her success story was circulated through the mass media.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> "The Heros/Heroines of Modernization (Last), The Determined Woman who drove out poverty and laziness," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 29, 1975.

Women's Association of Savings and Lifestyle (WASL), in cooperation with other women's groups, conducted recycling projects in order to raise funds as part of the savings movement.<sup>381</sup> The WASL was housewives' recycling exhibitions. In 1974, the WASL held recycling exhibitions in major cities such as Seoul, Gwangju, Daegu, Cheongju, and Busan. Kim Gi-jung, the general secretary of the WASL, said that she met housewives who were dedicated to the community and country.<sup>382</sup> Then, by 1975, the WASL recruited housewives' recycled works. Most collected works were exhibited at the National Archives Hall with the assistance of the government. At that time, three hundred forty works were submitted, and three hundred two works were chosen to display at the exhibition. The vinyl mat that a local women's group submitted won the best prize. The second prize went to a housewife who made a bag, using rice sacks.<sup>383</sup>

In addition, the government mobilized women's groups, *Saemaul* groups, public schools, and an association of restaurants, bars, and hotels for the savings campaign. In 1975, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries planned to curb rice consumption per capita to 123kg, 8kg less than the case of 1974. Through this, the Park Chung-Hee regime planned to achieve the self-sufficiency of rice in 1975. According to the government's explanation, if the individual consumption of rice could be reduced to 123 kg, the government concluded that imported foreign rice would be no longer needed. The government considered importing foreign rice for rice consumption as the dissipation of valuable foreign currency. In addition to economic reason, there was also a military reason. At the time, South Korea's relationship with Japan and North

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<sup>381</sup> The government was desperate to utilize domestic savings for the source to pay off the government's short-term debts it borrowed from foreign banks.

<sup>382</sup> "Report on Local Women's Groups' Activities: Housewives' Increasing Participation," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, August 12, 1974.

<sup>383</sup> "Best Recycled Material, Mat," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 04, 1975.

Korea was extremely deteriorating. The situation made alert the government to war that could occur at any time. The 1974 assassination of Park Chung-Hee and the death of the first lady for the consequence drove the government to advance the pace of the plan rapidly. The assassin was a Korean who was born, raised, educated in Japan. The diplomatic relations between the two governments incredibly worsen. The Korean government held the Japanese government for the incident since the assassin entered Korea with a pistol and a fake Japanese passport acquired in Japan. The South Korean government raised the level of military vigilance against the invasion from North Korea because they found circumstantial evidence, predicting that North Korea instructed the assassin to kill Park Chung-Hee. Therefore, the self-sufficiency of rice seemed to serve the purpose of national security. To this end, South Korean women were increasingly engaged in frugal campaigns such as eating flour and barley instead of rice.<sup>384</sup>

In 1976, the government ran a “365 Days of Rice Savings” campaign by operating a training program for *Saemaul* women in six provinces, including the *Gyeonggi* province. In 1976, the government's target figure for savings through the rice savings was 800 won. In 1978, the goal was to collect 7.4million lb of rice worth 800 million won from 295,000 Korean households, 70% of Korean households. The government concluded that this could be achieved by savings rice by two spoons a day. In 1978 the authorities announced that people could save 5.4 billion won If Adults over the age of 18 save one spoonful (16.3g) of rice a day for a five-year plan. At that time when a person visited a household that participated in this “365 Day Rice Savings” campaign, he or she would find a “rice savings jar” in the kitchen. The money and

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<sup>384</sup> “This year, Rice Consumption should be largely Suppressed to 123kg per person,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 29, 1975.

grains were saved in this way and deposited in the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF).<sup>385</sup>

Maternal associations were a critical channel to expand frugal ideas and to infuse strong anti-communist sentiments. Seoul opened hundreds of maternal groups, using housewives' alumni relations as part of the Maternal Guiding Project to enlighten mothers' lifestyles since early 1973.<sup>386</sup> In the mid-1970s, committees of class mothers in major primary schools, placed on large cities, educated their mothers on policies and urged the mothers to practice savings in their daily lives. In 1975, Seoul Metropolitan Government ran a hundred of *Saemaul* committees of class mothers in Seoul. In the *Saemaul* committees, the mothers were mainly provided lessons on savings life and anticommunism as well as children's education issues and family health care.<sup>387</sup>

At the end of 1975, the Women's Association of Korea (WAK) and *Saemaul* Women's groups went off on lecture tours across the country. The WAK organized two groups of three members for the guidance of women. The housewives who participated in these lectures distributed leaflets to the citizens on the streets with a placard or picket for encouraging them to join in the frugal campaign. The WAK also hosted a consumer rally, which gathered more than 800 housewives and encouraged them to practice in their lives by adopting energy-savings, rice savings. Then, the WAK created housewives' codes of conduct and resolutions. In the rally, housewives watched the propaganda movies "Mrs. Rattie," "Secret Jar." Then, they went on a street campaign.<sup>388</sup> Two hundred women coming from *Saemaul* women's groups and women's

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<sup>385</sup> "Women's Activities in My Town (the first), Each Province was Checked," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, August 25, 1976.

<sup>386</sup> "Strengthening the Guidance for Women," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 30, 1973.

<sup>387</sup> "News of Municipal Administration," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 9, 1975.

<sup>388</sup> "A Campaign for the Rationalization of Consumer's Lifestyle," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, November 21, 1975.



organizations attended the guiding lecture about the rational consumption in the city hall of Incheon. After the guiding lecture, the housewives went out the street to begin street demonstration, holding pickets for encouraging citizens to save resources and to simplify family rituals.<sup>389</sup> The mainstream media praised the women's activities, "They are innovating with new lifestyle and ethos. Women are now rationalizing their own lives through volunteering social works and participating in the savings movements."<sup>390</sup> The Seoul Metropolitan Government also encouraged housewives to participate in the resource-savings campaign actively. The deputy mayor of Seoul delivered a speech in a lecture attended by more than 500 housewives. He emphasized that savings and recycling materials are equally important to producing products in a factory.<sup>391</sup>

The third area of women in the Saemaul movement was related to the reproduction of the people. Population policy was about women's bodies and their families, but they didn't decide as they wanted. Traditionally the issues of their bodies were determined by men, their fathers, or husbands. Under the Park Chung-Hee regime, their situation did not change much. Men of the state had an enormous impact on their bodies until the liberal regime took over power. The government officially informed the family planning of women's mobilization at the Women's National Women's Congress in 1970, before the start of the Saemaul movement. In the 1970 national women's conference, leaders of women's organizations discussed "the 1970s and demographic issues,' the theme of the meeting. Not surprisingly, this rally was a rally-oriented gathering, not for gathering women's opinions, but for educating women about policies and decisions made by the government. Instructors, pro-government personnel, trained women to

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<sup>389</sup> "Resource-Savings Guiding Lecture at the Saemaul Women's Class," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, December 10, 1975.

<sup>390</sup> "The Progress of the *Saemaul Movement* - Five Years," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, December 10, 1975.

<sup>391</sup> "The Lecture of Home-centered savings," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, December 24, 1975.

follow the government's family plan, largely about women's contraception. The instructor pointed out that South Korea's population resulted in increased financial burdens, low productivity, poor health, and poor populations, including high support costs, food, clothing, housing, education, and other social welfare projects. She persuaded women not only for these reasons, but also for a variety of other reasons such as the problem of overcrowding, the emergence of a polluted environment, and the deterioration of the maternal and child environment. She insisted that women must voluntarily take part in reducing fertility rates. She called it an “epochal mission” to Korean women.<sup>392</sup>

The Park Chung-Hee administration announced in April 1972 that the family planning policy would be implemented as part of the *Saemaul* movement. In 1972 Secretary-General Lee Kyung-ho reported the family plan of the third five-year plan (1972-1976) to the Blue House (the executive office and official residence of the South Korean head of state) and the ruling party's meeting. The primary demographic policy of the Korean government was to reduce the population. The secretary-general delivered the plan to reduce Korea's population. Its target figure for population growth rate was 1.5 percent in 1976, from 1.9 percent in 1972. In order to reduce the population, he announced decisions to legalize abortion and to set up a population policy deliberation committee under the Prime Minister's office. The report included 1.84 million women, or 45% of 4.1 million women of childbearing age, managed under this family plan. It was planned to instruct all public institutions in the region, including health centers and hospitals, to participate. Moreover, it included the plan to publish school textbooks, including population issues, promote. He also mentioned that the government must pay particular attention to low-income urban dwellers. According to the plan, the government decided to supply 1.7

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<sup>392</sup> “The Opening of National Women's Conference.” *Dong-A Daily*, September 25, 1970.

million loops and 120,000 infertility procedures, and 170,000 people each month for contraceptive devices and 282,000 contraceptives by 1976.<sup>393</sup> Besides, the government planned to foster primarily nursing staff and to provide assistance in expanding infertility treatment and hormonally controlling menstruation. They also planned to actively promote South Korean to join foreign immigration projects in long-term planning as another way to reduce the population.<sup>394</sup>

When the *Saemaul* movement became full-fledged, the government's family planning to reduce the population attracted women of childbearing age into divination centering around the "mother's club" in the region in which local branches were active rather than mainstream women's groups. The Yushin regime mobilized local mother's groups for implementing family planning. The mass media considerably reported the activities of local mother groups. The actions of the local small-sized mothers' groups were found to be more effective in managing women of childbearing age in the region than the major women's groups working in large cities, especially in Seoul. In Yangju-gun, the Gyeonggi province, there were 24,760 women of childbearing potential. Among them, 98% of childbearing women were using contraceptives or loops according to the statistics. Yangju County had 205 *Li* (smallest administrative division in rural areas). Each *li* organized a mothers' group in 1966. Three thousand four hundred eighty members of mothers' groups in Yangju County made up 14% of women of childbearing women in the region as of 1973. It was reported that they actively participated in other *Saemaul* projects as well as the family planning project. The *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that this "encouraging" result aroused the envy of 139 leaders who came from other mothers' groups from across the country.

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<sup>393</sup> "A target population growth rate of 1.5% by 1976," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, April 21, 1972; "Increased by 1.5% by 76," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, April 21, 1972.

<sup>394</sup> "Arduous Demographic and Family Planning, Researcher's analysis released," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, March 20, 1975.

Kim Young-young, the leader of the mothers' group in Yangju, was the heroine who produced the outcome. She took her large endeavors to bring young housewives' attention to contraception.<sup>395</sup> However, the responsibility for contraception had been added to women. Contraceptive subjects for the government's population reduction plan were mostly women, not men. According to the results of the family planning project in 1972, the number of women who performed contraception such as loop procedure was six thousand one hundred women, whereas less than one-third of contraceptive women, one thousand seven hundred men, underwent the process.<sup>396</sup>

In 1974, however, there was a backlash from Korean Christians over the Park's national family planning project, especially for artificial abortion. In June 1974, the Korean Christian Church Council (KNCC) held a Christian Leaders' Conference on the theme of "artificial abortion and Christianity" and issued a declaration stating the official attitude of the church council. The Declaration asserted that parents should have the freedom to control the number of their children under the responsibility of parenting. Married couples should devote the church freely to all possible methods of fertility control, including drugs and other medical treatments. The state should actively inform mothers of the risk of artificial abortion, for example, the statistics of maternal mortality.<sup>397</sup>

The government seemed to care little about the criticism from the Christian community. Instead, the government strived to find various ways to reduce the population as well as contraception since they did not acquire satisfactory results despite the government's enormous

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<sup>395</sup> "Frugal Life achieved by all hands on deck, The Mothers' Association of Yangju County in Gyeonggi Province," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 18, 1973.

<sup>396</sup> "Three female lawmakers, including Kim Yun-duk,," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 14, 1972.

<sup>397</sup> "The Korean Council of Christian Churches stated Parents must determine the number of their children." *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, June 21, 1974.

subsidies. In 1976, the government decided to more tightly enforce population policy by establishing a population policy review board. The Economic Planning Board (EPB) predicted that the population growth rate would increase from 1979 due to the sudden rise of the number of childbearing women following the baby boom in the late 1950s. The population growth rate was expected to decrease from 1.59% in 1976 to 1.57% in 1978. However, the rate in 1981 was assumed at 1.61% due to the increasing number of women of childbearing age. As a result, the total population was estimated to increase 2,599,000 people for five years, from 35,875,000 in 1976 to 38,834,000 in 1981. For fifteen years from 1960 to 1975, the government halved the fertility of women of childbearing age from 15 to 49, from 6% to 3.5%. They estimated a decrease of 2.9% in 1980. The number of the female population born between 1953 and 1958 reached childbearing age during the fourth planning period. In addition, mortality rates had been lowered, and the population growth rate was higher than the government had expected. It was not only difficult for the EPB to lower the fertility rate of women of childbearing potential to 2% per year, which was the policy goal, but also to increase the productivity of the population aged 14 or older and to accelerate the urban concentration of the population.<sup>398</sup>

The Korean government decided to operate a population reduction policy focusing on rural areas where the majority of the population lived. To support this, the government put rural mothers' groups at the forefront of the government's family planning project. At that time, Saemaul Women's Associations were organized nationwide, and they worked together with the Family Planning Association to organize the Family Planning Mothers' Association (FPMA). The FPMA consisted of mothers from 20 to 44 years of age as its members. The association was

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<sup>398</sup> "Established Democratic Policy Deliberation Committee during the Fourth Five-Year Plan," *Dong-A Ilbo*, March 02, 1976; "Population Policy in the 4th Economic Plan Period, Focusing on Resolving Overcrowding," *Maeil Kyungje Shinmun*, March 02, 1976.

instructed by a public health officer in the county or town. In 1968, the Korean government established a nationwide supply chain of birth control pills. In 1976, the government used this supply chain as a platform to monitor and encourage members of the FPMA to help each other remember the date of the pill. In 1976, members of FPMA provided a nationwide distribution of 3.25 million cycles of contraceptive pills. Here, one cycle means one month cycle per person. This figure represents the number of contraceptives available for 27,833 women of childbearing age for a year. In addition, they actively led in the distribution of condoms, infertility operations, including tubal surgery and vas deferent surgery, and looping device procedures.<sup>399</sup>

The authorities planned to use the FPMA more in order to revitalize the 1977 slowing population growth policy. The first reason is the lack of workforce to manage and carry out government policies at person-to-person level. Secondly, it turned out that the result of the mothers' activities was lucrative. According to the government's plan in the newspaper, the creation of "Women's Health Register" was the biggest project of the 1977 family plan. In particular, the government decided to intensively track neglected childbearing women who were in need of contraception but who did not practice anything for contraception. To this end, it planned to grasp the detailed status of 2.5 million poor women in reproductive women with 4.80 million spouses nationwide. The government planned that the FPMA would hold a charge of the preparation work of this women's health registry. Although not mentioned in the newspaper article, it is speculated that wages would not have been provided because the mothers joining in this FPMA were not employed but "served" for the community, as in the case of female savings proponents.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Lee Seung-Ja, "Population Policy Focusing on Rural Areas," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 13, 1976.

<sup>400</sup> Lee Seung-Ja, "Population Policy Focusing on Rural Areas," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 13, 1976.

During the *Saemaul* movement, the Korean government actively discussed ways to utilize the workforce of housewives as handicraft workers. In 1973, the government promoted the scientific management of the nation that encouraged Korean to master at least any one of helpful skills as a national goal. In the case of housewives, the recommended skill was hand embroidery. At the time, orders for embroidered clothes and belts from Japan were increasing. Not only from Japan, but also from multiple European countries and the United States, the sales request of Korean photo frames and scrolls had been increasing. The Korean government was promoting the project to mobilize women's labor force since it was apparent that exports of manufactured goods made using women's labor as cheap workforce achieved export results of \$ 1.5 million in 1972. During this period, some businessmen initiated establishing *Saemaul* Factories, including seven hand embroidery plants, with a government subsidy. In the 1970s, the handicraft skill was considered one of skill-tested occupation, and skills certificates of grades 1-4 were issued by the labor administration, and practical and academic examinations were held 2-3 times a year at the local job security offices under the labor administration. Within the Korean education system, female students learned embroidery techniques in home economics classes in middle school, high school, and college home.<sup>401</sup>

During the 1970s *Saemaul* movement, the military government was dominant and fastidious in the women's mobilization. The various women's roles in the movement help us understand the ideal women for the military elites. The military elite viewed women as second class-citizens and used them in their policies as tools to achieve their goals. The government expanded women's traditional duties of cleaning and tidying a home as well as taking care of

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<sup>401</sup> Jeong Sunhwa, "Scientification of All People, One person Learns one Industrial Skill (9) Hand Embroidery," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, May 7, 1973.

children, the old, and the needed to public areas as well as social and medical facilities, including national parks, national mountains, orphanages, and hospitals.



## CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined women's mobilization under the Park Chung-Hee regime and women's social and economic activities in public sphere in the hope of describing and analyzing the significance of not only elite women but also ordinary housewives to both Korea's economic development and their household improvement. Due to the limited and biased nature of the primary source base, this research intrinsically considers Korean women as objects of state mobilization. Korean middle-class women had agency under the Park Chung-Hee regime. Yet the agency was vulnerable to repressive social and institutional pressure.

Lucia Hanmer and Jeni Klugman introduce two definitions of an agency in their work exploring women's agency and empowerment. The first definition concerns "what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals and values she regards as important. Agency invokes an ability to overcome barriers, to question or confront situations of oppression and deprivation, and, as individuals or together with others, to have influence and be heard in society."<sup>402</sup> Even if the 1948 Korean Constitution officially prohibited all gender discrimination, the South Korean government was not equipped to uphold women's rights with women's protection institutions against widespread social gender discrimination and men's abusive behaviors toward women. The first written civil code enacted in 1958 codified and consolidated existing gender discriminative customs. Korean middle-class women as well as lower class women had to overcome the high social pressure towards women's sacrifice and regressive patriarchy.

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<sup>402</sup> Lucia Hanmer and Jeni Klugman, "Exploring Women's Agency and Empowerment in Developing Countries: Where do we stand?" *Feminist Economics* 22, no.1 (January 2016), 237-238.

Hanner and Klugman is characterized the second definition of agency as an ability to “lead to empowerment when its exercise questions, challenges, or changes regressive norms and institutions that perpetuate the subordination of women.”<sup>403</sup> The journey to family law revision demonstrates Korean women’s agency. Even though Korean women’s agency suffered the most during the Park Chung-Hee regime, women’s accomplishment and endeavors for the family law reform led them closer to power and independence. The outstanding legal female activist, Lee Tae-young, for instance, questioned and confronted Korean women’s suppressed status.

### **The 1958 First Written Civil Code**

Family law was enacted in 1958 as part of the first written civil code, ten years after the Korean Constitution was ratified at the 1948 constituent assembly. The decision to create civil law initiated intense debate among legal experts in the 1950s. The main issue was how laws would define the boundaries of kinship and inheritance, which enormously affected the daily lives of men and women, particularly with regard to women’s social protection. Lee Tae-young, the first female attorney who founded a non-profit legal service center for women in 1956, insisted on eliminating gender-discriminated provisions from the family law draft. She claimed that the abusive Korean patriarchal system manifested its abuse and neglect of women as the family-head system. Lee’s claim was not accepted, and then the draft was passed as written in the National Assembly and enacted in 1958.<sup>404</sup>

National Assembly members ignored the request for the family law revision. Instead, they consolidated the discriminatory law on the grounds that “reasonable discrimination does not

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<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Lee Tae-young, *37-year History of the Family Law Reform Movement* (Seoul: Publisher of Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations (KLACFR), 1992), 25.

violate equality.” Therefore, the core question of the discrimination law was about whether the treatment of gender discrimination was “reasonable” discrimination or not. Lee Tae-young and feminist activists advocating for the revision of the family law claimed it as unreasonable and unacceptable discrimination. However, male politicians in the Parliament viewed gender and age discriminations as “reasonable” and acceptable discrimination. Unfortunately, a large number of women also agreed with this position.<sup>405</sup>

### **Family Law Revision Movement before 1961**

Family Law revision became a long-standing goal for Lee Tae-young and feminist activists. She founded the Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations (KLACFR) as an affiliated legal service to the Research Institution of Women’s Issues (RIWI) in 1956.<sup>406</sup> The Korea YWCA also helped her lead a campaign to promote revising the civil law draft. Lee Tae-young’s first legal project was to eliminate gender discrimination provisions of a family law draft in the process of establishing South Korea’s first civil code. Due to her connection to YWCA, she was able to collaborate with YWCA leaders such as Park Esther, the executive secretary of the Korea YWCA. Park Esther accepted the proposal suggesting the establishment of a committee dealing with social issues as an affiliated group to the Korea YWCA. Lee Tae-young was in charge of the committee chair position. Lee Tae-young and the YWCA executives agreed to publish an informative booklet titled “Civil Law and Family Life” and distributing it to women’s organizations. She tried to utilize any accessible methods to inform and educate people not only through publications of booklets and writing for periodicals but also through her media

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<sup>405</sup> Choi Byung-wook, “Gajogbeob gaejeong undongui jeongaebanghyang,” [The Direction of the Family Act Revision Movement], *Yeoseong*, May 1973, 2-3.

<sup>406</sup> Huh Moon-soon, *Loving Mother, Lee Tae-young*, Seoul: Korean Family Legal Counselling Center, 1985, 177-181

exposure. Lee Tae-young was openly interviewed with various types of mass media and talked to women about family law related to inheritance and divorce. She educated people about how negatively it would affect women's lives so that they must revise some provisions of the family law draft. Regardless of their efforts, the Family Law draft was enacted in 1958 without much change and consolidated the oppressive situation towards women.<sup>407</sup>

Lee Tae-young promoted campaigns for revising the draft of family law with assistance of the RIWI leaders, Hwang Shin-deok and Dr. Jung Kwang-hyun. With their help, she submitted letters petitioning the government for reconsidering a revision of gender discrimination provisions. What they confronted, however, was intense humiliation. Kim Byung-ro, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and drafter of the family law, exposed his irritation, anger, and uncomfortable feeling toward Lee's petition. Judge Kim called her an "inexperienced" and young female lawyer when they met after her submission of the petition. He told her that he would not change even a letter from his draft, particularly the inheritance law. He admonished her, saying that 15 million Korean women had lived well without any complaints.<sup>408</sup>

Despite the opposition and backlash, Lee continued to educate Korean women about their legal conditions. She wrote newspaper columns and published her articles while working to convince judges and government officials. She informed them of the need to amend the family law. As a female lawyer, Lee Tae-young addressed her opinion in her newspaper column, pointing out that Korean law would maintain women's subordination to men if women would not change the family law draft.

"Our Women knew that the law has nothing to care about our lives of housekeeping and child-fostering. We have been ignored but have not complained about our reality. We did not pay much attention to how laws had treated us. But from the

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<sup>407</sup> Yang Hyun-A, "Enactment of Family Law and Engraving of Tradition" in *Understanding Korean Family Law: Crossroads of Gender, Tradition, and Coloniality* (Paju: Changbi, 2011), 254-255.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

moment when we are aware of the fact that women are also human beings, we come to realize that the law has regarded women as subordinate to house and men. Since then, we have begun to ask questions about how the law as a social system treats women. ... Even though the 1948 Korean Constitution was proclaimed, the civil law draft violates the principle of gender equality. The enactment of the civil law is proceeding without any changes. Among provisions of the law, inheritance articles will have an enormous impact on our family life, relating to not only inheritance, but also marriage and divorce. This kinship inheritance law is based on a large family system, centered on the patrilineal family headship system. A family head controls all decisions, pertinent to family issues such as marriage, adoption, or family separation. The family-head system defines that only men can take the family head position. According to the system, in the case of no son, a male child in the male-line inherits the family's property. The daughter is excluded from property inheritance. ... In addition, a wife does not have any rights to manage her property at will. She must take permission from her husband to utilize and dispose of her wealth. On the other hand, her husband can take his wife's assets. Legally, he is allowed to manage any possession of his wife under his control.”<sup>409</sup>

The 1958 family law defined the legal rights of adult females as not equivalent to those of adult males. The family law incorporated gender-based and anti-human rights norms into modern legislation. The law strengthened gender inequality through the practice of laws of inheritance, parental rights, and kinship. For example, the family law included the provision defining that wives do not have a legal right to file a divorce in the case of a husband's adultery. Only husbands could file a divorce due to their wife's adultery. Laws and authorities tried to keep the superior position of men rather than to balance the conflicting interests between men and women. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Kim Byung-ro who humiliated Lee, played a pivotal role in supporting the civil law draft. Judge Kim claimed that gender equality could only apply to societal, cultural, and educational arenas but not to the Korean family system.<sup>410</sup> He asserted that vertical relationships were necessary to maintaining a family as a community rather than an equal relationship in the home.<sup>411</sup> The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court emphasized

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<sup>409</sup>Lee Tae-young, “Law and Women's Rights/Interest,” *Kyunghyang Shimnun*, July 17, 1957.

<sup>410</sup> Lee Tae-young, *37-year History of the Family Law Reform Movement*, Seoul: Publisher of KLACFR, 1992, 32.

<sup>411</sup> So Hyun-sook, “The Family Headship System, the Collaboration of Colonialism and patriarchy,” in *20th Century Women's History – From the Beginning of Modern Women's Education to Cyber Feminism* edited by Women's History Research Group, Seoul: Women's Newspaper, 2001, 160-161.

that Koreans must not deny the family system even though individualism currently penetrated the Korean society. He insisted that Korean kinship law should be based on the inherent value, traditions, and culture of its own people.<sup>412</sup>

Lee Tae-young attempted to change the draft of the gender-discriminatory family law with leaders of women's groups, but she failed to convince influential male politicians and officials to revise the family law draft. Feminist activists and women in the general population read Lee's publications and learned that the kinship and inheritance laws weakened women's economic capacity in the home. Several women's organizations took the issue seriously. Leading Feminist activists such as Park Hyun-sook and Hwang Shin-deok hosted a public hearing about law revision issues, political and educational female leaders also attended and positively responded to it. In the second public hearing, the RIWI, led by Hwang Shin-duk, Hwa-soon Jang, and Lee Tae-young, hosted the meeting. The third public hearing was co-hosted by the most influential three women's leaders in South Korea, Kim Hwal-ran of Female Bachelor's Holder Society, Park Maria of the YWCA, and Lee Tae-young of the RIWI.<sup>413</sup>

Lee and other female activists had no choice but to acknowledge that the civil law draft was passed and enacted without any notable changes. During the 1960 presidential campaigns, Lee Tae-young tried to educate women and inform them about legal questions and their voting right. Her efforts and those of other female leaders during the political campaigns did not have a major impact on the legal revision. Male politicians believed that their voters did not want to have strong-minded women at home. The male elites stated that the Korean society would become less peaceful and harmonious if the civil law would be revised as the "aggressive"

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<sup>412</sup> "Emphasis on National Tradition, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Kim Explains the Purpose of the Civil Code," *Dong-A Ilbo*, November 7, 1957.

<sup>413</sup> Lee Ju-geol, "Women's Claims on Kinship Inheritance Law- A Report on Attending the Discussion Meeting," *Beobjeong [Court of Law]* 11, no. 8 (November 1956).

women requested. The congressmen in the ruling party passed the civil law draft after they slightly modified but did not reflect what Lee Tae-young and the feminists claimed. In March 1960, the Rhee Syngman regime collapsed with protests of citizens and a large number of students. Shortly afterward, President Syngman Rhee was expelled from the presidency. Then, after a short-lived democratic government, an ambitious military man came in the government.

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### **The 1962 Family Law Revision**

Park Chung-Hee and his associates announced a plan to improve women's rights soon after seizing power. The young military men carried out several administrative attempts to improve women's legal status. One of them was family law revision. The mass media reported this as a sign of the improvement of Korean women's rights.<sup>415</sup> Against the expectations of Lee Tae-young and several women's group leaders, however, the 1962 amendment of the family law under the provisional government had little progress. The military government instructed to organize the Korean Civil Law Research Group (KCLRG) to revise the 1958 civil law. The KCLRG was consisted of law professors, judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, who drafted civil law in 1957. The newspaper described the revision of the civil code as a "bold reform to the family-head system and marriage." However, there was no meaningful revision submitted through this study group. The 1962 civil law revision included the provision that the second son could become a family head automatically after his marriage. Another revision included a definition of kinship in vague civil code. The members of the KCKRG clarified the kinship boundary,

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<sup>414</sup> "Rapidly Improving Women's Rights," *Dong-A Ilbo*, October 9, 1962.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.

according to custom. The 1962 family law revision publicly showcased the military government's acknowledgement on the importance of women's rights to the people.<sup>416</sup>

### **The 1977 Family Law Revision**

After the 1962 family law revision, Lee Tae-young continued seeking to revise the family law, but she did not achieve as much as she had hoped. The KLACFR and the Korea YWCA agreed to work together to achieve the revision of the family law. However, there was a long period of inaction in terms of the family law revision movement. In 1973, Lee Tae-young succeeded in encouraging over 60 women's organizations to take part in a nationwide family law campaign. Even though Lee was centered in the movement, she and other female leaders agreed to choose Lee Sook-jong, the president of CKWO, as the president of Pan Women's Committee for Promoting Family Law Revision (PWC). Ten congresswomen also supported submitting a resolution for the revision. However, the majority of congressmen were reluctant even to show supportive gestures. The male politicians complained about seeing women activists mobilizing women to promote family law revision campaigns. It took more than four years for requests to be accepted in the National Assembly. Lee Tae-young and other women's activists asked male politicians to help revise the family law, attempting to convince them that the revised family law could support the government's birth-control policy more effectively. After a long persuasion for lobbying male politicians and serious conflicts between the two female leaders, Lee Tae-young and Lee Sook-jong, the 1977 family law revision proposal was passed. They achieved revision of family laws regarding inheritance, property, and judicial divorce rights; it was a half victory

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<sup>416</sup> "Second Son Can be a family head after his marriage without his parents' permission," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, July 28, 1962.



because Lee Sook-jong largely changed the original family law revision proposal, based on her individual decision.<sup>417</sup>

The agency of women under the Park Chung-Hee regime was dominated by military and political authorities. Particularly, the agency of middle-class women in the Park Chung-Hee period was more vulnerable and limited because the military government very tightly controlled and censored not only the people but also media and publications. Most media and publications were utilized by the state. The national ideology prioritizing rapid economic growth and military security overwhelmed other values and goals. Since Korean women were aware of women's rights before the military regime, they were able to continue defining goals and acting on them. The agency of Korean women finally led to self-determination and empowerment after experiencing the two military regimes.

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<sup>417</sup> Ki-young Shin, "The Politics of the Family Law Reform Movement in Contemporary Korea: A Contentious Space for Gender and the Nation," *The Journal of Korean Studies* 11, no.1 (Fall 2006), 106.

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## VITA

### Education

Ph.D. East Asian Studies-History	Purdue University	2021
M.A. East Asian Studies-History	Kyungbook National University (South Korea)	2008
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**Dissertation:** “The Making of Modern Women in Post-War Korea: Women’s Mobilization in the Gendered Nation-Building, 1961-1979”

This dissertation explores how the authoritarian regime of Park Chung-Hee (1963-1979) mobilized women as individuals and groups in transforming the agricultural state to an industrialized and modernized one. Although much has been written about the significance of Korean male elites in economic and democratic achievements, we can only find limited scholarship on women’s mobilization by the state as well as the roles of ordinary women and female elites in the national development process. My work is different in that I highlight the Park Chung-Hee regime’s colonial legacy and its broader application to women’s social and public mobilization for the national economic growth. I argue that Korean women were mobilized by the Park Chung-Hee regime as individuals and groups considered a great source to consolidate diplomatic relations with allies as well as “voluntary” social workers and as cheaper laborers.

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“Forming a Sisterhood of Korean Nightingales under the Park Chung-hee Regime,” May 28, 2021, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Korea University Graduate Student Conference: Marginalized Voices in Korean History, Korea University, Seoul, South Korea.

“From a National Social Activist to a Housewife Democracy Activist under the Park Chung Hee Regime: The Case of Lee Hee-Ho,” Oct. 4-6, 2019, Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs (MCAA), Michigan State University.

“The YWCA and Women Workers under the Park Chung-Hee Regime: The 1977 Namyong Nylon Company Strikes,” Oct. 19-20, 2018, Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs (MCAA), Metropolitan State University, St Paul, Minnesota.

“Challenges of Korean Female Workers (1961-1979),” Oct. 12, 2018, Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences (IASS), Louisville, Kentucky.

“Sacrificing for the sake of the Nation and the Family: South Korean Prostitutes, Kisaeng Tourism in the 1970s,” Oct. 4-6, 2018, Annual International Gender and Sexuality Studies Conference (IGSS), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

“Sino-South Korean Economic Relationship in the late War Period (1971-1987),” October 23-25, 2018, Organization of the Purdue Nanjing Joint Center for China Studies, Nanjing Agricultural University, Nanjing, China.

“Healing an Urbanizing Nation: The Case of Yuk Yeongsu (1925-1974),” Sep. 15–16, 2017, Organization of the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs (MCAA), University of Notre Dame.

“Conceptualization and Applications of Socialist Industrialization Policy in China, 1950s-1960,” Oct. 16-19, 2016. Organization of the Purdue-Nanjing Joint Center for China Studies, Purdue University.

## **Publications**

“Socialist Industrialization Policy in China, 1949-1965: The Baotou Steel and Iron Company (BSIC),” *The United States and China: Agricultural Economic, and Political Affairs*, Zhongguonongyekeshuejishuchufanshe: Beijing, 2017.