

GLOBAL PANCHAYAT TREK REPORT

There is something happening around the globe, around the Movement, and in my own life. During this couple of days, this is my fourth time to report about the Global Panchayat Trek.

I am glad that our colleagues have already mentioned all the details of our trip, for I would like to give some impressions from a different aspect.

I am sure 1975 is a very significant year, for me, for Korea, and for the whole world. As you know, 1975 is the 90th year for the anniversary of the Protestant Church in Korea and the 190th year of the Catholic Church in Korea. So, we are excited to celebrate the near centennial of the Protestant season and near bi-centennial celebration of the Catholic season.

1969 was another great year for us. That was the year, of course, of the ITI in Singapore. I attended that ITI. During this trek Joe mentioned that six years ago we did not know what an ITI was, or what was coming up in the future. Now, six years later, we sense what it is, what we need. In 1971 I was here for special training; in 1972 we had the first ITI in Seoul; and last year, we had a second ITI. We will have an ITI on Jeju Island, August 10.

I had the experience of visiting around this country and Southeast Asia. For a long time now I have wondered why we need this Global Movement. Why is this Movement necessary in the 20th century? I am sure, that this trip to see other parts of the world--Australia, India, Africa and Europe was a deep shifting point for me. When I stopped at Oombulgurri and stayed overnight there, our colleagues mentioned the Aborigines in Oombulgurri. Well, this was my first experience to see those people. They are suffering in their struggle to be human beings. I noticed that. While we were staying in that village, the Anglican priest, visited to conduct his service. I heard the Church had served for a long time, but now it had withdrawn from that village, and come only once every two weeks or once every month. The sun was setting; getting darker, and the priest said, "Well, before it gets dark I must conduct this service," and he rang the bell. The young people did not pay any attention. They just got a ball and played a basketball game. I was much interested, so I attended. There were ten people attending that service. The Church has served for a long time in this village, and in Australia, but still the people are suffering in that situation. This is my deep concern.

I also saw many more poor people deep in the poverty of India. Somebody said that India is an impossibility. We arrived around 11:00 p.m. As we drove to our place, we saw lots of people sleeping on the street. I noticed that! The other night, I gave a lecture on the Yellow Ur, at the Calcutta ITI (fortunately, that session was really well-timed). After that, Marianna and I visited a Hindu temple in Calcutta. It was a very special occasion for celebrating their own religious activities and religious rituals. There were many people gathered around that temple: many beggars, many middle-aged people, many poor people, those whom I have never seen in the world. When I got back I felt horrible.

Well, I suppose religion is not existing for religion itself. When we talk about the Gospel and the Word of God and the Love of Jesus Christ, it is not an abstraction. That is the truth! This morning I am not talking about a kind of theory. The one thing we need in this century is how to demonstrate, how to share the love of God, literally, actually, and practically to the neighbor. In India, I saw that the Methodist church and the Anglican church were two of the largest denominations in that country, but the question is what have they done for a long time for serving that country? When we got back we just reflected and did some talking about that. Sometimes our people who are tourists in that country, when they see the Indian people there, I suppose they sometimes look down on them. I want to say that, this time, I was not a tourist. When I looked at those people, I knew it is not an Indian problem. It is ours. Well, I suppose, my colleagues, we feel we are shameful because we have ignored, for such a long time, this bad condition. I say again, religion does not exist for religion itself. If we are religious all the time, all day long, Daily Office, everything else we do, if we do not serve the world, then it is meaningless. Sharing and serving the world is religious.

We went on to Africa: to Kenya, Nairobi. My first impression was of a well-arranged city. My old impressions were of Africa as an uncivilized and poor country. This was quite different. But, when we went out to the rural side, I saw the poor people all around that city. The gap between poor and rich is like between heaven and earth. Then, we stopped in Ethiopia, and, fortunately, had the great opportunity to see the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. One shocking story is this: The Christian church has a long, long history in that country. But, as we know, the present government has put down the whole thing. I was told there are about 1,800 monks and priests of the Christian church, but now the government has taken the Church's land, and nationalized everything: hotels, businesses, Church buildings and Church land. They said that the government took the land because they wish to develop the future of this country, and the difficulty has been that the Church is very conservative. It does not move at all. It has had services for 2,000 years, yet it has not been interested in its suffering people. It has neglected them for such a long time. That is why the government took their land for the development of the future. This is a shocking story.

We moved to Rome. I had been anxious to see Rome. I visited the gorgeous cathedral: one of the wonders of the world; and the coliseum, also. You know, when I saw that, I cried. 2,000 years ago our ancestors, our forefathers of the Christian church, suffered in that coliseum. I went down to the catacombs and walked along for almost one hour. They lived underground 200 to almost 300 years ago. Bones were found. When I look at the Roman people, I suppose they have a great heritage, but they just lost the meaning of their heritage. When I walked along the street I saw the red color of the posters of the Communist's propaganda. Why, when the Roman Catholic church has been in that country almost 2,000 years, is Communism so alive in Rome, in Italy? And in France, also?

Then we went to England, that great country. I have been there two times. Through this traveling we planned for eight Social Demonstrations. That is great! 24 Social Demonstrations will come up next year. We have to do that; we should do that; there is no excuse, because the time is demanding it of us. When we create that cross we need the four points: one point in Southeast Asia, one in Europe, one in Northeast Asia. At the top is Jeju, way down is Oombulgurri, on the left side is Majuro, and the right side is Taj Gunj. One thing is this: we have been rehearsing, for a long time, the sign of the cross. We have sung and talked about "At the Cross". In this 20th Century we have to actualize, refine, and rediscover the meaning of that cross. So this time, when we remember and recall that cross of Jesus Christ it is like this: Jeju, Oombulgurri, Majuro and Taj Gunj. These are the Social Demonstration. I think rediscovery of the cross of the 20th Century is Social Demonstrations. Without Social Demonstration, I suppose that the happening which happened in Ethiopia will also happen in some other country in the future, I am convinced of that. And in Europe, in Rome, there is Trastevere (that is very hard to pronounce) and there is Kawangware, there is Isle of Dogs (what a strange name!). Well, within this year we have to have eight Social Demonstrations; we have to replicate this cross throughout the whole globe . . . if we have 24 Social Demonstrations we will have six crosses in the world.

Next year is the Bicentennial celebration of your country. I tell you that the celebration of your country is not your own American celebration, because the United States is the liveliest country in the whole world. Well, how to celebrate that together as a globe.

Now, after that, to Korea. In the world, there are several countries divided into two parts. Unfortunately, this is a great tragedy. In Germany, West Berlin; until two months ago there were two more, one in Cambodia and one in Vietnam. Well this is a shocking story to us in Korea. Yesterday, I heard that Mansfield said America must withdraw U.S. troops from Korea. He urged that, but I criticize that -- I clearly tell you that is ridiculous talk! Right after two countries collapsed there was talk in our country that Americans are unreliable people. There is a suffering in India and Australia and Africa. I am sure they are suffering in those countries, but without any warfare at all.

I had war experience. When I was 18 years old, I lost my father. When I look at Calcutta I am reminded of 25 years ago, of 1950, of the Korean war. Well, you would have to remember that presence of war! War! War! That is why we have to have Social Demonstrations in the globe, in other countries, and in Jeju Island of Korea.

In Korea, our people need encouragement. Who will provide the help? You colleagues here, you and I have to provide and encourage, we have to give some hope to our country. Social Demonstration is the sign of hope to our people. This is the great opportunity for the Global Movement to demonstrate how to care. Practically, we have to demonstrate the Love of God, and how to care for those who are suffering and despairing in this 20th Century.

Well, I am sure we need your help; God gave us the opportunity -- how to grasp this opportunity to create new hope in the future.. I am convinced I tell you, that Korea is ready for all the movement for life as a final hope for the globe. We need our efforts. We are ready for your help any time, in Korea -- in the political arena cultural arena, economic arena. I tell you, we are ready! Well, it is not necessary to tell you, I guess, that we are ready in any arena. I hope that you will come soon. You will see, at the end of September who are my people.

I want to mention Development. I have been visiting with four or five foundations and individuals; and one thing I have found is that the Lord is working in this century. They were so pleased to talk with us, and so pleased to give money. "We have got a lot of money, but we don't know how to use that money." They said that in Europe and in the States also.

In Paris I met a man who supported our ITI with \$2,000 last year, but this time we had five hours of talking with him and his wife. Finally, they invited us for a fine dinner in Paris. I did not ask for money at that time. I just gave the story, talking about what we need: we have to contribute to give our lives. "I suppose you Western people are all so wise. You came here to get the money, but you never mentioned the money. That is very curious you know." So finally, he promised within two weeks he would give the money, about 3 or 4 thousand dollars, for the ITI. In London, this was my first visit, and I was so afraid that I could not ask for a lot of money, but Joe Thomas encouraged me. Finally we requested \$200,000 for the Jeju project. He supposed this to be a very small amount of money . . . nothing! Anyway, we requested \$200,000 from three foundations. They promised and said, "Rev. Kang, when you get back you can create that proposal." They even instructed me on how to create that proposal. That means God is working through them. This is the job we have to do in this 20th Century.

All is ready for doing Social Demonstration and getting the money necessary, everything is ready. How to develop this? I will tell you these

things: You people of the U.S.A. are so practical -- you have practical troops and methods in this country, which is really a great gift God gives to us. And European people have a long, long heritage and a gift of a lot of money. What is the gift of the Korean people? Passion for life and human resources -- a lot of troops. There are 35 million people living in the small country of South Korea. God gave us the gift of human resources, and we are ready to provide human resources to other countries. This is why while I am here, we need to send some of our colleagues to the whole cross of Social Demonstration; 24 Korean families for Social Demonstration. It is a Global Demonstration. In Seoul we have to have a global House -- some from India, Japan, Germany, we hope that for the Global Movement of the future.

Well, I have taken a lot of time so I want to close my speech. I want to finish with one story. One of our friends in Korea used to ask me, "Rev. Kang, why are you so foolish?" What do you mean, I am so foolish?" A lot of Koreans leave and do not return to our country, why not you?" This afternoon I plan to go back to Korea. Something has happened there. History is waiting for me!

---Rev. Kang Byoung Hoon

July 31, 1975