

Consideration on the Better Health of the Rural People of Korea

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1. Changes in Rural Korea

The rapid changes taking place in rural Korea are chasing the rapid changes of urban Korea even though the former are slower than the latter. It is obvious that farm incomes have increased and the life style of farmers with regard to food, clothing and shelter have improved. Most roads and paths have been paved with asphalt or concrete ; and refrigerators, televeion sets and other electric household appliances have been distributed to most households in rural areas. It is possible now to reach any city or village from the capital city within a day — unless it is located in a remote island — because transportation is very much developed. Also, from any remote island, it is easy to call any place in the world through DDD or ISD. Nobody can deny the fact that the rural areas have developed remarkably during the past 20 years socially as well as economically. Does this mean that the dark rural village like a hell in the past has been transformed into a heavenly place ? Certainly not.

Generally speaking, the rural areas have been burdened in many ways by the urbanization and industrialization of neighboring cities and towns. For example, frequent accidents have occurred with the use of advanced agriculatural machinery and there have been many poisoning deaths caused by pesticides used in farming. In May 1987, I have visited a remote

island where was located in the South-west Region of Korea in order to implement a new project (About this project I already explained at Pécs last year at the World Congress). Many traffic accidents have also occurred. Other negative aspects of life in rural areas include in increase in both water and air pollution. Certain negative aspects of social life should also not be overlooked in the rural areas. Many capable people, for example, have moved to the cities when they have found the opportunity to do so. Young people especially have moved in order to earn more money, and to pursue a happier life. The result is that mainly older people and teen agers remain in the villages. This in turn, has made it difficult for grandparents to care for their grandchildren. Along the way, the beautiful traditions of showing respect toward seniors and obedience toward parents have been lost.

I would like to point out, in addition, that one of the most important changes taking place in rural arease is in the pattern of life style itself. Of course, many farmers are keeping up their tradition of hard work and maintaining, as well, a positive attitude toward food production. However, following the pattern of urban people, many others feel that they should earn money from the stock market and in other unreasonable ways. Work habits are also suffering because many farmers spend much time watching television.

Lastly, whether the rural village will even be able to sustain itself has become a serious question. The population movement is such that the ratio between urban and rural population has changed. That ratio was 48.4 : 51.6 in 1975 more rural population than urban population. In 1980 it was declined to 57.3 : 42.7 and 62.9 : 37.1 in 1983. One can project that the ratio will be 77.2 : 22.8 by the year 2000. It can be seriously asked whether this is a favorable ratio given the great agricultural needs of the nations.

2. Rural Health Problems in Korea : Past, Present and Future

Frankly speaking, many people have always thought that the rural village was unclean, and that it encouraged ignorance, disease and poverty, the so called triple pains ; and later on it encouraged overpopulation, the fourth pain. For example, acute infectious diseases were common as were intestinal parasites. Since the typical diet in the village was unbalanced, malnutrition was present as well. As to living conditions they were poor too, what with unsatisfactory heating (and cooling) and with high moisture. With these conditions present, it was not surprising that many farmers suffered from neuralgia.

However, today many of these negative conditions have been removed. Because economic development has given farmers relatively high living standards, many of them have developed a strong and favorable attitude toward a maintaining a healthy life, also with hard work by health workers at large.

Still, if we keenly observe such changes in our rural areas, there is no doubt that many of the old health problems are still present and, as I have already pointed out, many new problems have emerged. We find not only accidents and pesticide poisonings, but also suicides, degenerative diseases, heavy drinking and smoking. All of these are serious problems.

What about the future of rural health ? What should we do to prevent disease and promote health among the rural people ? What should our strategy and

methodology be here ? Part of the answers to these questions is in developing a more effective primary health care system, and in distributing that system more widely. Another part is in giving more attention to environmental concerns. Also very important, perhaps as important as anything else, is education. Together, all these steps, and others as well, may make the health of those living in the rural areas of Korea better than it has been in the past. Especially it is strongly requested to have the tight co-operation between health professionals, policy makers and people in the community in order to bring an effective, productive and constructive results.

□ 基 調 演 說 □

韓國農村保健向上을 爲한 考察

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1. 變化하는 農村

都市의 急速한 變遷에는 못따른다고해도 近來 우리農村도 많은 變遷을 가지고 왔다. 눈에 띄게 보이는 것이 農家의 所得이 增大되었으며 衣食住生活이 改善되었다. 農道는 輔裝되었고 冷藏庫, TV等 家電品은 家家戶戶 普及되었고 交通은 發達하여 少數의 落島를 除外하고는 全體 農漁村도 首都 서울로부터 1일 生活圈內에 들어갔고 어느 僻村이나 落島에서나 DDD로 全世界 어디에 있는 親戚과도 通話하게 되었다. 농촌은 지난 20년간 實로 눈부신 發達을 가지고 왔다. 그렇다면 農村은 지난날의 地獄과도 같은 暗黑世界로부터 오늘날은 살기 좋은 光明의 天堂이 되었다는 말인가? 絶對로 그런것만은 임니다.

일반적으로 어느 國家에서나 都市化 또는 産業化하는 過程에서 農村은 여러가지 負擔을 양게 되고 甚至於 被害까지도 보게 된다. 즉 農村技術의 發達로 보는 副産物 또는 副作用의 例를 볼때 農器具의 發達은 많은 事故發生을 가지고 오고 있고 農業의 使用은 적지 않은 中毒者 또는 死亡者를 내고 있다.

道路網의 發達로 頻繁한 交通事故 역시 留意할 事件이 아닐 수 없다.

農村社會는 有能하고 똑똑한 人들은 都市로 모두 進出하고 老年層이나 年少者만 남는 現象이 날로 늘어나 子女教育이 힘든 社會로 變했고 核家族制度는 農村社會서도 漸次普及度가 높아져서 敬老孝誠의 美風이 衰退해 가고 있다. 농촌의 淸水山明 단맛이 날 程度로 맑은 空氣는 여기 저기 세워지는 농촌 또는 農村周邊의 工場設立과 頻繁한 交通으로 因한 挑氣가스로 汚染되어 가고 있다. 더욱이나 걱정스러운 것은 農村住民의 生活相과 生活哲學의 變化이다. 勿論 古代로부터 繼續되어 온 勤勉의 農業經營家, 食糧의 重要性을 인식하여 熱誠을 다하는 農家가 많지만 着實한 農事보다는 證券購入에 趣味를 갖는 가 하면 또 夜間家內工業 또는 作業의 貴重한 時間을 송두리채 TV視聽에 뺏겨버리는 일은 深刻히 생각되어야 한다.

무엇보다도 深刻한 問題는 人口移動이 都市로 流入-一路의 現象이 甚해 가고 都市化 또 産業化傾向은 農村을 完全히 吸收하게 되고 農事 自體가 極도로 機械化되고 自動화될 때 果然 農村은 殘存할 수 있을 것인가하는 생각이 없는 것이 아니다.

이러한 傾向이나 생각은 우리 韓國의 경우도 마찬가지일 것이다. 1975년에는 都市人口 對 農村人口의 比率이 48.4 : 51.6이었던 것이 1980년과 1983년에는 各各 57.3 : 42.7는 62.9 : 37.1로 農村人口는 急激히 줄어들고 있고 2000년에 있어서 推計는 77.2 : 22.8이다. 따라서 都市人口 對 農村人口의 比率이 어느 程度에서 머물 것인가에 대한 長久的인 豫測이 不許한다.

2. 韓國의 農村保健問題 : 어제, 오늘, 내일

過去의 農村이라면 얼핏 原始的인 狀態를 聯想하

는 수가 많았다. 不便하고 文盲, 疾病, 貧困의 三重苦에 呻吟하고 最近에 와서는 過剩된 人口까지 疊친 四重苦의 몸살을 치루고 있는 것이 農村이라고 생각되어 왔다. 急性傳染病은 蔓延하고 腸內寄生虫은 猖獗되며 食生活 즉 不均衡한 食事로 因해서 여러 가지 營養障礙와 營養失調를 일으키고 住生活에서 溫冷房裝置는 허술하고 濕氣찬 住宅으로 神經痛이 多發하는 것이 例事였다.

이와같은 農村에 있어서의 脆弱點과 短點은 過去 20~30年來 改善되었다. 이와같은 改善을 가지고 온 重要한 點은 經濟開發로 因한 生活水準의 向上, 健康意識의 高揚, 人間%게 살아가 하겠다는 農村住民의 生活狀態, 國家施策과 行政의 社會福祉面의 努力等을 헤아릴 수 있을 것이다. 그러나 農村에 있어서는 지난 날의 問題를 完全히 解決하기도 前에 새로운 問題가 連發하고 있는 實情이다. 즉 前述한바 있는 農業技術의 機械化와 農村交通의 發達로 因한 事故, 農業中毒, 비닐하우스病, 農業技術의 發達과 보다 나은 農村醫療로 因한 成人病의 有病率의 增加, 社會風潮와 子女教育의 어려움에서 오는 未婚母와 性病患者의 增加, 끝치지 않은 喫煙과 飲酒等 健康障礙要因은 殘存하고 있을뿐 아니라 새롭게 고개를 들고 있다.

農村保健의 未來는 어떤가? 疾病을 豫防하고 保健을 增進시켜 農村住民의 壽命을 延長시키기 위해서 農村에서는 어떤 일이 施行되어야 할 것인가?

農村의 保健을 爲한 保健學的 接近은 여러가지가 있겠으나 保健教育의 인 接近이 바람직 하다. 一次 診療奉仕를 통한 治療網 즉 醫療傳達體系의 擴充과 徹底化나 農村環境改善을 爲한 施策의 遂行이 保健教育을 重要한 戰略武器로 利用할 때 住民의 自發的인 保健事業에의 參與로 보다 健康한 마을, 보다 健康한 家庭이 이룩될 줄 안다.