

Securitizing Health: Biosecurity and Postwar Reconstruction in Korea*

Jane Sung Hae KIM[†]

Introduction

In the winter of 1951, while the war was still raging in the Korean peninsula, the Government of Republic of Korea made a formal request to the United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) to dispatch experts to help the war-ridden nation develop long-term plans for recovery and reconstruction.¹ The UNKRA accepted this request and further took up the matter with the United Nations Assembly, which passed the motion to send expert missions in the areas requested by the South Korean government – agriculture, public health and education. To assist the war-damaged South Korea, experts were culled from three United Nations specialized agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The FAO was entrusted with the task of drafting plans for the revival and improvement of the Korean agricultural economy on the verge of massive malnutrition and hunger, and the WHO was given the task of planning for reorganization and reestablishment of the badly damaged public health system. And lastly, the UNESCO was mandated to overhaul and develop plans for a new education system befitting Korea's new status as an independent nation and a member of the Free World. Imbued with the urgencies of war, from spring to winter of 1952, the three

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[†] Korean Research Institute of Science, Technology and Civilization (KRISTaC), Jeonbuk National University, janeshkim@jbnu.ac.kr

¹ “Buheung saeop eul chujin (Pushing ahead revitalization projects),” *Dong Ah Ilbo* (Dong Ah Daily) July 30, 1951; “Hanguk gwa Segye Bogeon Gigu gan hyeopjeong gongpo (Declaration of agreement reached between the ROK and the WHO),” *Dong Ah Ilbo*, April 25, 1952; “Gukje Yeonhap Hanguk Jaegeondan Daehan wonjo gakseo (UNKRA and ROK exchange a memorandum on assistance),” *Dong Ah Ilbo*, June 10, 1952.

missions of the FAO, WHO and UNESCO travelled throughout southern Korea, visiting various facilities and held series of meetings with government officials, experts and volunteers to draft long-term plans for the reconstruction of the country.

This paper will examine these three plans drafted by the FAO, WHO and UNESCO in 1952 to explore how securitization of health or biosecurity was articulated in the planning for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of post-war Korea. The long-term plans of postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction by UNKRA have been cited as experiments in development and modernization. However, by applying the concept of securitization of health or biosecurity, this paper will show how the interpretation of health as a security matter was conceptualized by the international actors involved in the postwar reconstruction of Korea. By so doing, this paper hopes to demonstrate how it was the efforts to securitize the health of the Korean individuals, society and the nation-state that created one of the most compelling examples of biosecurity thinking in the history of global development. By reading the planning for reconstruction efforts of the Korean War as manifestation of biosecurity, this paper hopes to offer a different reading of the UNKRA activities to be more than just an unfulfilled dream of American experimentation in development and modernization. Concentrating on the economic activities of the UNKRA activities, the scholarship on the subject tends to render the Korean postwar development and modernization as synonymous with Americanization. However, by showing the workings of transnational and global forces that were not exclusively American in the postwar reconstruction of Korea, the penultimate aim of this paper is to offer a more transnational and globalized narratives on the workings of international assistance, postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction and global history of health that can go beyond the limited scopes of national development and modernization.

Securitization and Copenhagen School of International Relations

In reading the securitization of health or formation of biosecurity in the post-war reconstruction planning for Korea, this paper owes its theoretical underpinning to the concept of security and securitization as developed by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Japp de Wilde of the Copenhagen School of International Relations. Barry Buzan whose groundbreaking work, *People, States, and Fear – The National Security Problem in International Relations*, first challenged the tendency within international relations and security studies to see security as “a derivative of power.”² He problematized the understanding of security as a given or fixed objective by showing the inherent contradiction within the concept of ‘national security,’ – that national

² Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Brighton, UK: Wheatsheaf Book, 1983), 2.

security threatens the very security of citizens it is intended for. Challenging the readers to rethink of security not as a mere extension of power and by suggesting the application of security beyond the confines of national security, he opened the possibility of expanding security from strictly military and political understanding to other subject areas of international relations such as economics and environment. This challenge was then further taken up by Ole Wæver who deconstructed the very concept of security, as “a speech act with distinct consequences in the context over international politics” and the process of making something into a security issue or ‘securitization’ as “the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics.”³ By postulating security as a speech act, Wæver reconceptualized security as a socially constructed process of turning an issue into a security matter or “securitization,” and this securitization which is socially constructed, also had the potential to move outside the framework of traditional politics or even evade the established rules of politics all together as well.

And this securitization which is socially constructed and one that has the potential to rise above the established rules of the politics, according to Wæver, was in effect, “intersubjective meaning that is neither a question of an objective threat or a subjective perception of a threat,” and that “securitization of a subject depends on an audience accepting a securitization move, undertaken by the securitizing actor.”⁴ Whereas the traditional concept of security had understood the concept as “a derivate of power” whereby security as an extension of power was to be exercised by political authorities upon perception of threat, when understood as a socially constructed process, what Ole Wæver was pointing out was the role of the audience in successfully making an issue as a security matter. That is, securitization, as a socially constructed process, could not be recognized so, unless the audience for which this is intended, accepted as such. By powerfully redefining the concept of securitization as a processual interchange negotiated between various actors – individuals, societies, states, regions and global institutions, the theory of securitization made it possible for issues such as famine, human trafficking, climate change and emerging infectious diseases (EID) such as Ebola and SARS to be viewed not only as matters concerning global health but also shaping global security as well. Hence, the re-articulation of security made it possible for the creation and popularization of concepts such as food security, climate security, health security, biosecurity and human security that are widely used today.⁵

³ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Japp de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO and London, UK: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 25.

⁴ OpenLearn from The Open University, “Securitisation Theory – International Relations (3/7), An Interview with Ole Wæver,” *YouTube* video, 11:25. October 3, 2014.

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Chapter 2: Food security: concepts and measurements,” <https://www.fao.org/3/y4671e/y4671e06.htm> (Accessed Jan. 10, 2022); United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, “What is Human Security,”

Indeed, this possibility of a socially constructed understanding of security that also defies the traditional rules of politics and as a processual interchange negotiated between various actors – individuals, societies, states, regions and global institutions, made it possible for the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to officially adopt the term “biosecurity.”⁶ And in this paper, the concept of securitization of health or biosecurity as outlined above will be applied in the examination of the reconstruction efforts undertaken following the outbreak of the Korean War as the concept of biosecurity best encapsulates the philosophies of the planning by the UN specialized agencies – the FAO, the WHO and the UNESCO in Korea in 1952. Also, in my usage of the word biosecurity, I am choosing to use the word “bio” in its most basic etymological Greek and Latin meaning of life – “*bio*” or “*vita*” and hence, will be used interchangeably and encompassing the term health as well.⁷ This is a strategic choice as the narrow definition of “biosecurity” and “health security” currently used by the WHO, FAO and UNESCO does not convey the understanding of health and security as once did by the original founders of these UN organizations. The shared consensus between the three missions of dispatched to Korea in 1952, was that their assistance to Korea was to achieve health in the highest form of standard as possible and to do would require interrelation and interdependence of all factors such as economic, agriculture, nutrition, medical, education, culture, social and political factors that shape the quality of human life in the warring Korean peninsula.

Also, by applying the concept of securitization in reading the UNKRA’s postwar planning for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Korea as biosecurity, this paper makes a methodological departure from the current literature on securitization of global health and biosecurity. Since the Copenhagen School’s reconceptualization of security and the introduction of theory of securitization, the literature on securitization of health or biosecurity and its relations to global health governance have exploded.⁸ The proliferation occurred from early 2000 to 2010, when diseases such

<https://www.un.org/humansecurity/what-is-human-security/> (Accessed Jan. 10, 2022); United Nations Development Programme, “Climate Security,” <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/areas-of-work/climate-security> (Accessed Jan. 10, 2022); World Health Organization, “Health Security,” https://www.who.int/health-topics/health-security#tab=tab_1 (Accessed Jan. 10, 2022).

⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Biosecurity Toolkit* (Rome, IT: Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, 2007), <https://www.fao.org/3/a1140e/a1140e.pdf> (Accessed Jan. 15, 2022); World Health Organization and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Biosecurity: An integrated approach to manage risk to human, animal and plant life and health,” INFOSAN Information Note No. 1/2010 – Biosecurity, 3 March 2010, https://www.who.int/foodsafety/fs_management/No_01_Biosecurity_Mar10_en.pdf (accessed Jan. 15, 2022).

⁷ “bio-,” Wiktionary, <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/bio-> (Accessed May 8, 2022).

⁸ See for example, Nicholas B. King, “Security, Disease, Commerce: Ideologies of Postcolonial Global Health,” *Social Studies of Science* 32:5–6 (2002), 763–789; Mely Caballero–Anthony,

as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Ebola, which had long been existent in the medical lexicon but reintroduced to the world as emerging infectious diseases (EID). Through the outbreak of these highly contagious diseases the world came to see that epidemics can affect and even disrupt global security and increased calls for better global response and readiness against the next round of biosecurity threats. Yet as much the literature helped to recognize the importance of biosecurity, by limiting the understanding of security to contemporary issues, particularly the highly contagious diseases, the scholarship in general failed to show securitization and biosecurity to be more than an immediate response to a perceived threat. Indeed, the curtailing of the inquiry on securitization and biosecurity to protection against threat revealed lack of awareness of the long history of global health from which the concept of securitization of health emerged from.

I argue that the understanding of security to be more than political and military concepts predates the Copenhagen School and that securitization of health in fact has had a long history of development. To account for the long history of development of securitization of health, this paper will engage in the historical examination of concept. This historiographical practice is particularly relevant in the reading of international assistance in the postwar reconstruction of Korea. Much of the literature on international assistance to postwar Korea see the assistance to Korea as a response to the outbreak of the Korean War. Yet, as this paper will hopefully demonstrate below, much of the theories and philosophies that underpinned international assistance to postwar Korea were not unplanned knee-jerk reactions that came as result of the war, but part of long continuation of ideas and practices that had been building within the international societies and global organizations governing health prior to 1950. It is for this purpose of understanding the postwar rehabilitation and

“Combating Infectious Diseases in East Asia: Securitization and Global Public Goods for Health and Human Security,” *Journal of International Affairs* 59:2 (2006), 105–127; Alexander Kelle, “Securitization of International Public Health: Implications for Global Health Governance and the Biological Weapons Prohibitions Regime,” *Global Governance* 13:2 (2007), 217–235; Sara E. Davies, “Securitizing Infectious Diseases,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1944–)* 84:2 (2008), 295–313; Jeremy Youde, “Who’s Afraid of a Chicken? Securitization and Avian Flu,” *Democracy and Security* 4:2 (2008), 148–169; Sara E. Davies, Adam Kamradt-Scott and Simon Rushton eds., *Disease Diplomacy: International Norms and Global Health Security* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015); Simon Rushton and Jeremy Youde eds., *Routledge Handbook of Global Health Security* (London UK & New York, NY: Routledge, 2015); Adam Kamradt-Scott, *Managing Global Health Security: The World Health Organization and Disease Outbreak Control* (Houndmills, UK & New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015); Christian Enemark, *Biosecurity Dilemmas: Dreaded Diseases, Ethical Responses, and the Health of Nations* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017); Mark Honigsbaum, “Between Securitisation and Neglect: Managing Ebola at the Borders of Global Health,” *Medical History* 61:2 (2017), 270–294.

reconstruction in Korea in a more global historical context that this paper will explore the applicability of the concept of security and securitization of health.

Postwar Korean Development and Modernization – Whither Americanization?

The application of biosecurity in reading the postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction of Korea can also be a useful means for testing the explicatory power of development and modernization, the two themes most widely used to explain the efforts undertaken by UNKRA in postwar Korea.⁹ In the past years, there has been a rise of studies in international assistance, including UNKRA, in postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction of Korea.¹⁰ While such change is long-overdue and most welcome, questions nonetheless needs to be raised for the understanding and usage of these two terms as an exclusive byproduct of American history of development and modernization. This is particularly the case with David Ekbladh's *The Great American Mission – Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* which examines the work of UNKRA to make the case for the export of American modernization or development to underdeveloped nations such as South Korea in the early Cold War. He notes that South Korea became a “proving ground” for testing American modernization ideas. “Even before the announcement of Point Four (the Truman administration’s modernization program), South Korea was a test bed for the broad spectrum of modernization concepts,” which after the breakout of the Korean War, Ekbladh argued that “the United States saw to it that the UN and its new development agencies, and a host of NGOs were inserted in the vast efforts to remake South Korea.”¹¹ With such “sheer size and global profile of efforts” to make South Korea “the most important example of the American style of modernization,”

⁹ See for example, Lisa M. Brady, “Sowing War, Reaping Peace: United Nations Resource Development Programs in the Republic of Korea, 1950–1953,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 77:2 (2018), 351–363.

¹⁰ For recent scholarship on the issue of international assistance to postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction of Korea see, Han, Bong Seok, “1950 nyeondae Miguk eui Daehan gisul wonjo yeongu (A Study on the Technical Assistance of the U.S. for Korea during the 1950s)” (PhD diss., Sungkyunkwan University, 2017); Lim Da-eun, “Yuen Hanguk jaegeondan jojik gwa hwaldong (United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency: Organization and Activities)” (Master’s thesis, Seoul National University, 2019); Yang, Joonseok, “6.25 jeonjaeng ihu, Hanguk gwa Miguk eui Hanguk jaegon peurogaem eun wae gyunyeol haetna? (Why Did the Post-Korean War the Korean Reconstruction Program Between the R.O.K. and the U.S. Fall Apart?),” *Gukje jeongchi nonchong* 59:1 (2019), 49–86.

¹¹ David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission – Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, New Jersey: The Princeton University Press, 2010), loc 329.

UNKRA, therefore, had to be an American representation of development and modernization.¹²

However, as much as Ekbladh would like to convince the readers that UNKRA was an American organization, populated mostly by Americans, carrying out American-styled modernization projects akin to the earlier the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) projects, such was not the case. While the two Agent Directors of UNKRA were American nationals – J. Donald Kingsley and John B. Coulter, the Deputy Agent-General of UNKRA was a former British public servant, Sir Arthur Nevil Rucker (1895–1991) who came from a vastly different background of work experience than either Kingsley or Coulter. Just before coming to work for UNKRA, Rucker worked as the Undersecretary of Ministry of Health of UK and played a critical role in the founding of the National Health Services (NHS), the national healthcare program of UK. Starting his public service career as a medical officer, Rucker worked for the League of Nations Health Organization (LNHO), the predecessor of the WHO, the International Refugee Organization (IRO) and the United Nations Refugee Relief Agency (UNRRA) before taking up his post at UNKRA.¹³ Ekbladh does not pay attention to figures such as Rucker due to his insistence of seeing UNKRA solely as an American operation. However, this is a gross oversight, as he fails to recognize that in the early days of UNKRA, when J. Donald Kingsley, the first Agent-General of UNKRA was tied in New York and who even expressed doubts as to the need for UNKRA, it was Rucker who was on the ground in Korea, putting the agency together and overseeing the day-to-day transactions of the newly found agency.¹⁴ Also, as a veteran public servant who had considerable experience of working for international organizations closely associated with UN, it was Rucker who had the contacts with the personnel of FAO, WHO and UNESCO, the three UN specialized agencies that were involved in the long-term planning for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Korea. After all, if Ekbladh claims UNKRA as an American organization by fault of nationality, the fact that the first Director-General of FAO was a Scottish nutritionist who was well known to the British Ministry of Health, the first head of the WHO, a Canadian psychiatrist who early in his

¹² Ibid., 2528.

¹³ “Sir Arthur Rucker,” *The Times*, July 17, 1991, 18; “Sir Arthur Rucker,” *The Daily Telegraph*, July 20, 1991, 15; Geoffrey Rivett, “Nye and the NHS,” *The History of NHS*, <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/health-and-social-care-explained/the-history-of-the-nhs> (Accessed April 15, 2022).

¹⁴ “Hanguk jaegeon’guk chajang Reokeoh-gyeong naehan (Sir Rucker, the Deputy Agent-Director of UNKRA arrives in Korea).” *Dong Ah Ilbo*, April 27, 1951; “Reokeoh-gyeong ilhaeng jaemu jang’gwan gwa yodam (Sir Rucker and his company holds a meeting with the Minister of Finance),” *Dong Ah Ilbo*, June 10, 1951; David Ekbladh, Loc 2904–2930; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, Korea and China, Volume VII, Part 1, eds. Daniel J. Lawler and Erin R. Mahan (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2010), Document 735, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v07p1/d735> (Accessed May 25, 2022).

career interned in UK and the first Director-General of UNESCO, a British evolutionary biologist, should have given him some thoughts on deriving such simplistic conclusion of UNKRA as an American developmental organization.¹⁵

Moreover, in noting “UNKRA’s 243-person staff included some seventy-three Americans, sixty-one Britons, and the rest were European or Canadian,” Ekbladh brushes off the simple arithmetic that the total number of American employees did not constitute the total majority of UNKRA personnel (71 out of 243) and that Britain, Canada and other allied nations participating in UNKRA work were quite wary of American domination of the agency. Greg Donaghy, in his study of the Canadian involvement in UNKRA, shows how the Canadian government was alarmed at the prospect of “the complete Americanization of UN relief measures,” and when Henry Tasca, the economist commissioned by the Eisenhower administration to review the UN relief work in Korea, recommended that “Washington absorb UNKRA while bolstering US aid to \$1 billion,” it set “alarm bells ringing in New York and Ottawa.”¹⁶ The American attempt to claim UNKRA as their own enraged Jules Legère, the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Canada, as to bluntly express the proposal to be “so incompatible with the whole UN concept of UNKRA that we do not see that member states would feel any inclination to subscribe to or participate in such an organization.” Out of “the fear that the US might simply replace all UN operations in Korea,” Lester B. Pearson, the founder of the UN Forces and the Minister of Foreign Affairs aired his concerns to the US State Department and UN and also, “reinforced Ottawa’s resolve to stop UNKRA from becoming just “a subsidiary organ within the US reconstruction establishment.”¹⁷ Indeed, till the closure of UNKRA activities in 1958, Donaghy shows how the Canadian government attempted to check any overtures that could be construed as an American domination of UNKRA and how at one point, when US and UK stalled in coming up with payments for UNKRA, the organization operated on Canadian contribution.¹⁸ Given such distrust and hostility expressed against the US takeover attempt, Ekbladh’s claim of UNKRA being an American experiment in development and modernization seems to fall short.

Part of Ekbladh’s rendering of UNKRA activities synonymous with American modernization derives from his reliance on “the Nathan Report” as his primary

¹⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, “The Directors – General: John Boyd Orr,” <https://www.fao.org/3/cb1182en/online/directors.html> (Accessed April 15, 2022); World Health Organization, “Former Directors – General: Dr. George Brock Chisholm,” <https://www.who.int/director-general/former-directors-general> (Accessed April 15, 2022); United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization, “UNESCO’s former Directors-General: Julian Huxley (United Kingdom) 1946–1948,” <https://en.unesco.org/director-general/former-dgs> (Accessed, April 15, 2022).

¹⁶ Greg Donaghy, “Diplomacy of Constraint Revisited: Canada and the UN Korean Reconstruction Agency, 1950–1955,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*. 25:2 (2014), 169, 175.

¹⁷ Ibid., 175.

¹⁸ Ibid., 169.

source for assessing UNKRA. In 1954, Robert R. Nathan, an economic consultant based in Washington D.C. was hired to produce a report on the conditions in Korea and the policies to be carried out in Korea by the UN agencies. "Totaling near five-hundred pages," according to Ekbladh, the report was "a fine representative of a genre of twentieth-century development planning document," and as such, "the 'Nathan Report' was the touchstone for all development activities in South Korea, referenced (and criticized) into the 1960s."¹⁹ In providing such glowing assessment of the report, Ekbladh deliberately elides over the fact that much of this "near five-hundred pages" of report consisted of the reports earlier produced by the FAO and UNESCO Mission to Korea in 1952, the two of the three reports for which are the subject for discussion of this paper. He briefly acknowledges that "much in the Nathan group's plans for the Korean economy rested squarely on research performed by the UN's specialized agencies" and that "their studies were the basis of many conclusions that would guide the development in the ROK through the 1950s."²⁰ And yet, what Ekbladh fails to consider is that the FAO and UNESCO reports that Robert Nathan and his group used in 1954 were different from the ones that were produced by these UN specialized agencies in 1952 and that these earlier reports were not quite the American development-oriented plans that either Nathan or Ekbladh assumed. Moreover, the omission of the WHO report in the Nathan Report is telling of the erasure and active re-writing of UN rehabilitation and reconstruction programs in Korea as American developmental efforts. As it will be shown below, the public health planning produced by the WHO in 1952 was very different as to make difficult the claim of UNKRA's long-term planning for Korean public health as uniquely American. Such questionable methodological practice – the overt dependence on a single source of material and the deterministic reading of the complex history of postwar reconstruction of Korea as a byproduct of American history of development and modernization should give us a pause on unreflexively assuming postwar Korean development and modernization as Americanization.

Moreover, in providing a causal reading of the UNKRA activities to explain the emergence of American world order and the eventual American victory in the Cold War, Ekbladh commits the critical error of retrospectively reading the UNKRA and the history of international assistance of the 1950s from the resulting outcome of the Cold War. That is, rather than engage in the immediate historical context from which the UNKRA activities and international developmental assistance came from, by reading back from the time of the end of the Cold War where America became the sole superpower, Ekbladh can only view international developmental assistance as American effort. This is quite unfortunate as such historiographic exercise deprives the author and the readers the opportunity to grasp the history of international assistance, development and modernization from a more nuanced and much pluralized

¹⁹ Ekbladh, Loc 3005–3012.

²⁰ Ibid, Loc 3038.

narratives of history. This problem of retrospective reading and the failure to engage in the immediate historical context of history of global developmental assistance can be seen in the absence of the discussion on the term ‘reconstruction’ in his examination of the UNKRA. The author may have felt that a study on the etymology of the term was not warranted as in the previous chapters he had discussed the Reconstruction following the end of the American Civil War. However, this is a gross oversight and once again, shows his Americentrism. He may have felt it was unnecessary to go into examination of the term ‘reconstruction,’ but in 1951, when the members of the UN named the organization to be in charge of international assistance to Korea as the United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency, this did not indicate making a tribute to American Reconstruction, but a nod to the history of global rural reconstruction movements that had been in existence before the birth of UNKRA, most notably led by James Yen, the pioneer of Rural Reconstruction Movement in China and the League of Nations, the direct predecessor of the UN.²¹

Such ignorance of the long history of global developmental assistance and the failure to recognize the plural and diverse narratives within the history of international assistance to Korea is quite problematic as it also precludes any exploration of agency on the part of Korean actors who were involved in UNKRA and other international assistance programs. For Ekbladh, the examination of Korean agency may have been unnecessary as UNKRA was an American organization run by Americans. However, had he been able to recognize the long historical context from which the Cold War global developmental projects emerged and the diverse narratives of international assistance to post-war Korea, it would have been possible for him to see how Koreans exercised their agency. The history of global development in the early days of the UN was dominated by exploration of multiple possibilities. Certainly, the Korean actors who submitted the South Korean government’s annual report to the FAO in 1949 and the conditions of public health in Korea to the Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) of the WHO in 1951 were quite aware that American assistance was not the only international assistance that they could beget for their country.²² It is out of this knowledge of diversity and pluralities of international

²¹ See for example, C.C. Chen, *Medicine in Rural China: A Personal Account* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989); Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946* (Oxford UK & New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013); Charles Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1990); Kate Merkel-Hess, *The Rural Modern: Reconstructing the Self and State in Republican China* (Chicago, IL and London, UK: The University of Chicago Press, 2016); Leonard S. Hsu, “Rural Reconstruction in China,” *Pacific Affairs* 10:3 (1937), 249–265.

²² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Food and Agriculture Situation in Korea, 1948–1949*, RG 0_1_0_V_2_01011945_31121958. Annual Reports from Governments – KOREA, 1948–1957. FAO, Rome, Italy; Western Pacific Regional Office of the World Health Organization, *Public Health in Korea (Submitted by Delegate of Korea)*, Regional Committee for the Western Pacific, 002 (1951), WHO Western Pacific Regional Office, Manila, Philippines.

assistance that Koreans adroitly exercised agency, as agency most often cannot be exercised in vacuum or in the absence of knowledge of possible choices. Therefore, to ignore the diverse histories of international developmental assistance and limiting the reading of international developmental assistance to American led efforts, which did become prominent with the escalation of the Cold War, not only engages in the faulty retrospective reading of the early UN international assistance but also deprives one of locating the source of agency for the recipients of the developmental programs. And it is this need to find a more nuanced and pluralized narratives of postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction that this paper will engage in the critical examination of the three long-term plans that were commissioned by UNKRA and produced by the FAO, WHO and WHO in 1952.

FAO Mission to Korea – From Food Security to Economic Security

Since its inception in 1945, the FAO functioned as the UN organization in charge of overseeing global hunger and nutrition problems. The first director-general of the FAO, John Boyd Orr was a Scottish nutritionist and medical doctor who was known for his work on nutrition that showed correlations between health of an individual and the income earned. His 1936 report, *Food, Health and Income* revealed at least one third of the UK population to be in poverty as to unable to afford food that would ensure a healthy diet.²³ Also, he was one of the pioneering nutritional scientist who powerfully demonstrated the close connections between low income, malnutrition and underperformance in school and it was largely due to his work on malnutrition and school performance that led the UK to adopt the policy of free milk distribution for school children.²⁴ To Boyd Orr, who was scarred by the poverty and malnutrition he witnessed in the slums of Glasgow, equitable access to and distribution of food or in other words, food security was a crucial cornerstone for building a given society. This thinking of food as the fundamental foundation for rebuilding nations ravaged by the war could be evinced in his 1943 work published by the International Labour Office (ILO). Titled, *The Role of Food in Post-war Reconstruction*, Boyd Orr boldly

²³ John Boyd Orr, *Food, Health and Income: Report on a Survey of Adequacy of Diet in Relation to Income* (London, UK: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1936).

²⁴ Ibid, "Milk Consumption and the Growth of School-Children," *The Lancet*, 211: 5448 (January 28, 1928), 202–203; Roz-Ryan Mills, "World Food Day and Nobel Prize-winning nutritionist John Boyd Orr," University of Glasgow Library Blog (October 16, 2015), <https://universityofglasgowlibrary.wordpress.com/2015/10/16/world-food-day-and-nobel-prize-winning-nutritionist-john-boyd-orr/> (Accessed May 22, 2021); Pete Ritchie, "What would Boyd Orr Do?" *Nourish Scotland*, 6 (January 2017), <https://www.nourishscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Nourish-Magazine-Issue-6-Boyd-Orr.pdf> (Accessed May 22, 2021).

proposed for the adoption of “a food plan as the starting point for reconstruction” based on the very universality of food that could overcome all barriers posed by competing national self-interests. To him, a food plan was “a plan expressed in concrete terms, about which there can be no ambiguity – not even any pretense of misunderstanding.” And as such, the plan can be of “equal interest to all nations,” as it “must deal with something so essential for the welfare of all people that every Government, whatever its political philosophy maybe, will agree to co-operate on a world-wide basis.”

Moreover, a post-war reconstruction starting from a world food plan, will be “so simple in its broad outlines that it will be understood by the common people” and “a practicable plan which we have the physical means to carry to completion.” Confident in the universal applicability of food in “building ‘the new and better world,’” Boyd Orr further stipulated that a food plan “can be applied in its initial stages to in the free countries during the war, and in the occupied countries as soon as they are liberated, so that there will be no need to wait for a peace conference for a decision.” A “food plan based on human needs” meant Boyd Orr envisioned “building a world in which the great advances of can be applied to the development of an organisation of human society which will not only be free from war, but such that mankind rise to a level of well-being and culture higher than that dreamed of by social reformers of past ages.”²⁵ And to show just how adopting a global food plan can materialize into the achievement of higher civilization, Boyd Orr asked readers to “consider what effect a nutrition policy would have on promotion of human welfare...and also what effect it would have upon agriculture, industry, and trade” and proceeded to outline just how securing equitable access to food would affect health, alleviate poverty, “bring about an expanded and prosperous agriculture” and “workers...fully employed, creating the new wealth that would lift them...out of poverty, with a resulting expansion of world trade.”²⁶

Citing statistics gathered from the UK Ministry of Health and US Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Boyd Orr proceeded to narrate how “this improvement in the national diet” would lead to “a corresponding improvement in national health.” Noting the case in Britain, where an improvement of diet and health led to a decrease of infant mortality by “over 100 to 52 per 1000,” and tuberculosis by 50 percent, he argued that “if a diet adequate for health were made available within the purchasing power of the poorest, there would be a rise in the standard of living.” And to meet this rise of food and health standards, Boyd Orr foresaw that “a great expansion of agriculture” would be demanded for and “increased production of the protective foods would be accompanied by increased imports of wheat, sugar, beef and concentrated feedingstuff such as maize and oil seeds.” The increase in food production

²⁵ John Boyd Orr, *The Role of Food in Post-War Reconstruction* (Montreal, CA: The International Labour Office, 1943), 1–2.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6–12.

and import would then require reconditioning of farms, more equipment, better water supplies and electrification, and added to this, an improvement of housing and living conditions of the farming workers. All this would in turn propel a great rise in industrialization to process the surplus food produced, and ultimately reduce unemployment and thereby eliminate world poverty and malnutrition.²⁷ In articulating the progressive steps to be taken for securitization of food and health which would yield in the securitization of global economy, Boyd Orr sought for concrete materialization of world peace through food.

Boyd Orr's vision of food security as means for begetting economic security could also be found in the FAO Mission to Korea in 1952 as well. Entrusted with the task of developing a long-term plan for the revitalization of Korean agriculture, from 1951 to 1952, the FAO Mission to Korea carried out its mission in two stages. In the first stage, R.H. du Pasquier, an agronomist was dispatched to Korea in 1951 and submitted his report to the FAO and UNKRA in June of 1952.²⁸ This preliminary report was to serve as a backbone for the second mission that was to follow du Pasquier's visit. The second FAO mission arrived in August of 1952 and was headed by Mark B. Williamson, the former chief of the agricultural division of the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP), Japan. In contrast to the 1951 FAO mission, where du Pasquier was its sole member, the second FAO mission was comprised of twelve members from US, UK, Canada, Mexico, India and Philippines. This team completed their work in December of 1952 and their final report was published in 1954.²⁹ And of these two reports, the first report written by R.H. du Pasquier upon his tour of Korea in 1951 best encapsulated Boyd Orr's argument of the correlation between food security and economic security.

The intimate connection between food security and economic security or the problem of economic insecurity causing poverty and malnutrition can be evinced in Pasquier's discussion of the land reform in South Korea and the inclusion of the English translation of the Land Reform Act of 1949. Citing Hoon Ku Lee's 1936 work, *Land Utilization and Rural Economy in Korea* at length, du Pasquier found that "the tenancy system was one of the worst in the world...(and) the rent was one of the highest in the world, averaging 45% to 55% of the crop, and often rising to 70% or even

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ R.H. du Pasquier, *Report on Recovery and Development of Korean Agricultural Production*, 0_71_86_G_2 Mission to Korea 1952, Reports by Experts. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy; Lisa M. Brady, "Sowing War, Reaping Peace: United Nations Resource Development Programs in the Republic of Korea, 1950–1953," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 77:2 (2018), 351–363.

²⁹ Mark B. Williamson et al., *Rehabilitation and Development of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishers in South Korea* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1954); Mark B. Williamson, "Land Reform in Japan," *Journal of Farm Economics* 33:2 (May, 1951), 167–176; Takamae Eiji, *The Allied Occupation of Japan* (New York, NY & London, UK: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2002), 49.

80%.”³⁰ And more disturbingly, he found that whereas “in North Korea, a land reform was rapidly performed in the simple manner of communist action” and “the landlords were dispossessed and the land was distributed to the farmers...in South Korea the land reform was not so simple to perform...since the rights of the owners had to be preserved by legal compensation.”³¹ And as if to further highlight this difficulty of carrying out the much needed land reform, at the end of his report, du Pasquier included an English translation of the Land Reform Act – Law No.31 passed in the Korean National Assembly on 21st of June, 1949. When read together, du Pasquier’s discussion on the land tenure and the 1949 Land Reform Act convey a stark contrast between the exploitative reality faced by the South Korean tenant farmers and the lofty ambitions of the Land Reform Act, which proclaimed its purpose “to secure the independence of the farmers: economy by appropriate distribution of farmlands among farmers, and thus to improve the farmer’s living conditions, keep the balance of, and develop, the national economy by increasing agricultural productivity.”³²

In giving a comparison of the success and failure of land reforms in North and South Korea and by attaching the translation of the Land Reform Act of 1949, without explicitly saying so, du Pasquier brought up the controversial subject of systemic inequality that caused poverty for majority of the Korean population. This was in line with Boyd Orr’s lifelong work on the correlation between malnutrition, health and economic poverty. By singling out the exploitative land tenure system that produced poverty and malnutrition for the greater majority of Korean population, du Pasquier seemed to suggest that the FAO/UNKRA assistance to Korea had little chance of success, unless the very economic system that perpetuated the vicious cycle of malnutrition – poor health – poverty was overhauled. This discussion on the economic insecurities facing majority of Korean population is even more remarkable given the absence of the subject in the second 1954 report. Aside from the cursory acknowledgement that “theoretically, the implementation of the Land Reform Law in 1950 abolished tenancy in South Korea,” there is no further discussions on the land tenure and the effects the land reforms might have had on the South Korean agricultural system. Stating that “no records are available to show whether it still exists,” the authors of the 1954 report quickly move the discussion to the problems of “Kademin” in Japanese or “*hwajeonmin*” in Korean, the landless farmers who slash and burn forests to till land for living.³³ The absence of discussion on land reform in the 1954 report is puzzling as Williamson was known for his role in the SCAP’s successful land reform in Japan. Of the thirteen experts commissioned by

³⁰ R.H. du Pasquier, *Report on Recovery and Development of Korean Agricultural Production*, 7.

³¹ Ibid, 8.

³² Ibid, 51.

³³ Mark B. Williamson et.al., *Rehabilitation and Development of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishers in South Korea*, 76.

the FAO, it was Williamson who had the most expertise and authority to discuss the state of land tenure and land reform in Korea and yet, there was no such discussion in the 1954 report.³⁴

One possible explanation for the difference between the two reports could be attributed to the change in the leadership of the FAO at the time. In 1948, Boyd Orr resigned as the Director-General of the FAO following a two-year battle to get the World Food Board (WFB) founded.³⁵ The WFB was part of Boyd Orr's plan for achieving global food security. From early on in his career, Boyd Orr recognized the close connection between access to food and the capitalist economic system. After all, malnutrition was caused by poverty which made people unable to afford food that would ensure a healthy diet. To make food affordable, he proposed the establishment of a global regulatory body that would oversee and act as a stabilizing force for world food commodity prices. The US and UK governments fiercely opposed such proposal as any international organization encroaching on national economy and disrupting free trade was tantamount to betrayal of American belief in capitalism and free market. For Britain, which was on the brink of bankruptcy after the Second World War, Boyd Orr's proposal meant having to come up with more money for their contribution to the UN and having to pay higher prices for food commodities as UK was one of the biggest food importing nations in the world.³⁶ After Boyd Orr's departure, he was succeeded by Norris E. Dodd, the former Under Secretary of Agriculture of U.S. whose prior experience include serving on various regional and state agricultural boards and committees in Oregon. Randall Packard notes that contrary to Boyd Orr, who was "a strong advocate for social approaches to nutrition," Dodd "turned the FAO attention away from global regulation strategies, which linked food and nutrition to the global economy, and concentrated on providing technical assistance that was aimed at increasing agricultural production in developing countries."³⁷

Dodd's repudiation of Boyd Orr's activist approach of using food to solve world inequalities could be seen in his 1951 radio interview, where he expressed doubts of adopting a global commodity price control, the central tenet of Boyd Orr's proposal

³⁴ For more on land reform in Korea, see, Kim Seong Ho, Jeon Gyeong Shik, Jang Sang Hwan and Park Seok Du, *Nongji gaehyeoksa yeon'gu* (A Study of Land Reform History) (Seoul: Korea Rural Economic Institute, 1989).

³⁵ The Nobel Foundation, "Lord Boyd Orr – Biographical," *NobelPrize.org. Nobel Prize Outreach*, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1949/orr/lecture/> (Accessed, April 5, 2022).

³⁶ Amy L. Staples, "To Win the Peace: The Food and Agriculture Organization, Sir John Boyd Orr, and the World Food Board Proposals," *Peace and Change* 28:4 (October 2003), 495–523.

³⁷ Randall M. Packard, *A History of Global Health: Interventions into the Lives of Other People* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), loc 2463, 2481.

for the World Food Board.³⁸ A believer in the ability of the free market to correct any imperfections in agricultural productivity, by concentrating on the provision of technical assistance to countries such as Korea, Dodd neatly sidestepped the political wrangling that had cut short his predecessor's tenure.³⁹ And this might perhaps explain the extensively technical nature of the 1954 report as well. By focusing on the technicalities of assistance, the second report obfuscated and glided over the uncomfortable subjects of food insecurity and economic insecurity in Korea and the limited nature of FAO's assistance to the war-torn country.

The second possible reason for Williamson's silence on the land reform in Korea might have derived from Wolf Ladejinsky, Williamson's assistant in SCAP, Japan. When the second FAO report was finally published in 1954, Ladejinsky was charged with suspicion of communism. Born in Katerynopil, Ukraine in 1899, Ladejinsky fled the Soviet Union in 1921. A lifelong anti-communist and a committed New Deal Democrat who earned accolades for his successful land reform campaigns in Japan and Taiwan, on December 15th, 1954, after months of rumours and speculations of possible entanglement with communism, he was fired by Ezra Taft Benson, the Security of Agriculture under Eisenhower for posing "a security risk."⁴⁰ His firing and charges of un-American activities became one of the well-known cases of McCarthy witch hunt of the 1950s.⁴¹ Although there are no direct relations between the Ladejinsky affair and Williamson's silence on the problems of land tenure and the failure of land reform in South Korea, the Ladejinsky case nonetheless illustrated the danger of the subject of land reform in early Cold War American politics. The purpose of land reform, which aimed for the obtainment of economic security through appropriation of land rang alarm bells for the hard-line conservatives and the Eisenhower administration, which had long viewed the internationalism of the FDR – Truman administrations with much suspicion of consorting with Soviet communists. And for this reason, a New Deal Democrat such as Ladejinsky could be

³⁸ Norris E. Dodd, interviewed by Keith Morrow, *CBC Radio Broadcasts*, January 1st, 1951, https://www.fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-audio/en/c/8438/?no_cache=1&uid=8438 (Accessed May 23, 2022).

³⁹ Amy L. Staples, "Norris E. Dodd and the Connections between Domestic and International Agricultural Policy," *Agricultural History* 74:2 (Spring, 2000), 393–403.

⁴⁰ James Rorty, "The Dossier of Wolf Ladejinsky: The Fair Rewards of Distinguished Service," *Commentary* (April, 1955), <https://www.commentary.org/articles/james-rorty/the-dossier-of-wolf-ladejinsky-the-fair-rewards-of-distinguished-civil-service/> (Accessed July 12, 2022); Allen Drury, "Benson Concedes Ladejinsky Error; Tells Senators There was No Necessity to Label Ex-Aide as a Security Risk," *The New York Times* (September 28, 1955), 1, <https://www.nytimes.com/1955/09/28/archives/benson-concedes-ladejinsky-error-tells-senators-there-was-no.html> (Accessed July 12, 2022); Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, "Eisenhower and Ezra Taft Benson: Farm Policy in the 1950s," *Agricultural History* 44:4 (October 1970), 369–378.

⁴¹ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 1998.), 293–294.

suspected as a communist and fired for posing a security risk. Williamson who was witness to all this, could have felt prudent to not to discuss the issue and as the chief of the FAO mission to Korea, may have felt obliged to follow the new direction of the FAO under Norris Dodd outlined above.

How the change at the helm of the FAO and the anti-communism of the Eisenhower administration shaped the FAO Mission to Korea remain unclear. And yet, Boyd Orr's vision of food acting as the instrument for solving global malnutrition, hunger and poverty could be evinced in R.H. du Pasquier's discussion of the difficulties of the land reform and the critical problems of land tenure in South Korea. By highlighting the systemic inequality that perpetuated the cycle of poverty, hunger and malnutrition for majority of the Korean population, du Pasquier implicitly pointed to the need for a systemic overhaul that needed to be in place prior to undertaking any reconstruction of the war-damaged Korean agriculture. The escalation of the Cold War politics and the concordant changes in the direction taken by the new leadership of the FAO certainly checked Boyd Orr's activist vision of solving world malnutrition, hunger and poverty and yet, even in the limited scope of the ambition shown in the second FAO report, the belief in the role of food as instrument for obtaining economic security did not waver. Williamson and eleven other members of the 1952 Mission to Korea may have elaborated the technical assistance needed for the increase of agricultural productivity and yet, there was no outright opposition to the ultimate end goal of boosting agricultural productivity – provision of adequate supply of food, which would then lead to the alleviation of hunger and improving the health of a war-torn nation.



Figure 1. A picture of the 1952 FAO Mission visiting a market in Seoul to inspect the different grades of rice on sale.⁴²

WHO Mission to Korea – From Health Security to Human Security

When the WHO was founded in 1949, the Constitution of the WHO outlined an ambitious goal of achieving health security as means of realizing universal human security. The first three preambles of the Constitution of the WHO illustrate how the writers of the Constitution of the WHO envisioned health security as serving the purpose of attaining world peace and security or in other words, human security:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

⁴² UN Photo Digital Asset Management System, “Joint UNKRA–FAO Mission in Korea,” September 2, 1952. UN7659270–188530. United Nations Archives and Records Management System, New York, U.S.A.

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social conditions.

The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States.

from the preamble of the Constitution of the World Health Organization.⁴³

The Constitution of the WHO was mainly written by two health experts, Andrija Štampar (1888–1958) and Brock Chisholm (1896–1971). Andrija Štampar was a renowned public health and rural health expert from Zagreb, Croatia who had previously worked as an expert consultant for the League of Nations Health Organization (LNHO, 1923–1946).⁴⁴ Brock Chisholm was a Canadian psychiatrist who served as the Deputy Minister of Health of Canada prior to becoming the first Director-General of the WHO in 1949.⁴⁵ At the time of the writing of the Constitution of the WHO, Štampar and Chisholm were members of The Preparatory Committee (TPC, 1946–1948), an interim committee organized to prepare for the founding of a new UN organization of health upon the dissolution of the LNHO in 1946. With the founding of the new world order brought by the conclusion of the Second World War and the creation of the UN, the members of the TPC imbued the Constitution of the WHO with the broadest and most far-reaching vision of health they could possibly imagine. As all the members of the TPC had undergone the two world wars and the Great Depression in between, they had come to unanimously agree that health should not simply be “the absence of disease or infirmity,” but that health should broadly encompass “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.” That is, the state of health was connected to and interdependent on economic, social, cultural and political factors that shape and affect all human life.⁴⁶

As the Constitution of the WHO was written in 1948, it would be easy to assume the short history of the concepts of human security and health security. In fact, health as means for achieving human security has had long development within the history

⁴³ World Health Organization of the United Nations, “The Constitution of the World Health Organization,” <https://apps.who.int/gb/bd/PDF/bd47/EN/constitution-en.pdf> (Accessed August 4, 2022).

⁴⁴ “Štampar, Andrija,” *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Croatian Encyclopedia online edition) Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2021, <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=59892> (Accessed, May 15, 2021); Andrija Štampar, “On Health Politics,” Excerpted from Grmek MD, ed., *Serving the Cause of Public Health: Selected Papers of Andrija Štampar* (1966: 58–78) Reprinted in *American Journal of Public Health* 96:8 (2006), 1382–1385; Andrija Štampar MD., “Observations of a Rural Health Worker,” *The New England Journal of Medicine* 218: 24 (June 16, 1938), 991–997.

⁴⁵ John Farley, *Brock Chisholm and the World Health Organization* (Vancouver, CA: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 48–56.

of global health. Andrija Štampar, the writer of the WHO Constitution mentioned earlier, certainly thought that health as a security matter had a long history within the history of human civilization. In his 1946 article titled, “A New World Health Organization,” Štampar summarized the history of international health from the time of ancient civilization to the present day where he as the member of the TPC was overseeing the dissolution of the old LNHO and was about to embark on the preparation for the founding of a new UN health organization.⁴⁷ In giving a summary of the long development of international health from the time immemorial to the modern era, Štampar’s purpose was to highlight the new world health organization that was about to come to be anything but new. That is, the new world health organization that was to emerge was not a radical departure from the old international health works, but continuation of the mandates and agendas of its predecessors like the now defunct LNHO. Therefore, despite titling his piece as “A New World Health Organization,” in effect, Štampar was celebrating the long history of international health that was now culminating into the birth of the new WHO.

That the WHO sought to achieve health security as means for realizing human security has been mentioned above. The Constitution of the WHO clearly illustrate this ambition, but the global health organization that first articulated health security as part of human security was the LNHO, the direct predecessor of the WHO. This is most evident in the LNHO’s *Report of the Intergovernmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene* published in 1937. In August of the same year, at the invitation of the Dutch colonial government in the East Indies (present day Indonesia), the LNHO hosted a regional conference on rural health in Bandoeng (Bandung), Java. Beginning in 1930, the LNHO began to hold series of meetings with European member nations and other international agencies such as ILO and L’Office International d’Hygiène Publique (OIHP) to further develop and promote the agenda of rural health. This was partly in response to the Great Depression, where the plunging agricultural commodity prices had driven much of farming communities around the world into bankruptcy and thereby, affecting global production and distribution of food supplies.

Also, many of the European nations, which had undergone intense industrialization since the 19th centuries had come to the realization that much of their rural communities were left out of the progress of modernization and in fact, the conditions in rural communities had worsened as result of industrialization and modern progress. Countries with large agricultural sectors such as Spain and Hungary approached the LNHO to organize meetings to address the problems of rural health and the LNHO responded by holding the very first conference on rural health in 1931. Successive conferences followed and in 1932, the governments of China and India also made a request to hold a similar conference on rural health in Asia. In 1936, the colonial

⁴⁷ Andrija Štampar, “A New World Health Organization,” *Free World* 12:2 (1946), 11–15.

government of Dutch East Indies invited the LNHO to host a rural health conference and from August 3rd to 18th of 1937, delegates from Borneo, Burma, Ceylon, China, Japan, Indo-China, Hong Kong, India, Dutch East Indies, British Malaya and other various colonial and protectorate states in the Asia-Pacific region attended the conference.⁴⁸

Known as the Bandoeng Conference on Rural Health, from the introduction of the report, the organizers stated quite clearly their intention to view the problems of rural health to be an universal problem found worldwide and that the problem to be connected to and interdependent of factors such as agriculture, economics, social, education and much more.

It is noticeable that the people of many countries and their Governments realise more strongly than ever that that part of the population living on the land and producing the essential foodstuffs for all has been too often neglected. Governments are realising more and more their obligations in this matter, and programmes working towards the bettering of the social, economic, health and cultural conditions of the country-dwellers are becoming more general and more comprehensive.⁴⁹

To address this issue, the writers of the report stated that the Bandoeng Conference “had brought together Governmental representatives from the important countries of the East” that were heavily involved in rural health problems. Adding to this, the writers also noted that the conference included the following groups:

Medical men concerned with curative and preventive medical services, educators, agronomists, specialists in rural reconstruction, sanitary engineers, expert in nutrition, and investigators who are devoting their attention to specific diseases. Statesmen and members of the legal profession who are concerned primarily with administrative duties are also to be found in the group.⁵⁰

The reason for hosting a conference on rural health consisting of such variety of attendants with “such diversified interest,” had to do with the fact that “those responsible for the medical services and health protection of the rural populations in the East (have come to) realise that their work is made difficult, if not impossible, unless activities in the fields of economics, sociology, agriculture and education are carried on at the same time.” The writers of the report asserted that for the development of

⁴⁸ Iris Borowy, *Coming to Terms with World Health: The League of Nations Health Organisation 1921–1946* (Frankfurt am Main, DE & New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2009), 325–360.

⁴⁹ League of Nations Health Organization, *Report of the Intergovernmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene* (Geneva, CH: League of Nations Health Organization, 1937), 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

rural programs, “that the best results are to be obtained when the different welfare activities are planned and executed simultaneously by a trained staff.” This simultaneity of executing different programs all at once or “*the inter-relations of the work of the various groups* have become more patent,” as “success in its broad lines rests on a realisation of *the interdependence of the work of all concerned*.”⁵¹

Declaring a lofty ambition to address all aspects of rural health as one possibly can, the subjects that were covered in the conference were extensive: The collection of vital statistics, development of village organizations, the role of women, lack of education, land reform, experimental rural welfare centres, environment, problems of flies, nutrition, rice-milling, malaria, housing, public works, tuberculosis, pneumonia, leprosy, plague, mental health, training of health professionals, and medical education were some of the subjects that were mentioned in the introduction of the report. The detailed discussions of these subjects were then dispersed among the five large chapters of the report – health and medical services, rural reconstruction and collaboration of the population, sanitation and sanitary engineering, nutrition and measures for combating certain diseases in rural areas.

The *Report of the WHO/UNKRA Health Planning Mission* in Korea produced by the WHO Mission to Korea in November of 1952 bears much similarity to the LNHO’s *Report of the Intergovernmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene*.⁵² This similarity could be seen in the subject matters chosen for the WHO Mission’s report. Much like the 1937 report, the writers of the 1952 report discussed topics such as the organization of health services for rural areas, cooperation of women, the collection of vital statistics, inspection of housing conditions, supply of clean water, insects, flies and rodent problems, tuberculosis, leprosy, venereal diseases, parasites and helminthic control and training of medical professionals and auxiliary staff. Yet the clearest example of the similarity and continuity between the two reports could be found in the discussion on the establishment of the health unit program in Korea. The health units were organization of primary healthcare service that was first pioneered in Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka) in 1926.⁵³

The program first began as part of the Rockefeller Foundation’s hookworm eradication campaign in the region, but with repeated reinfection cases of the disease, the government of Ceylon with support from the Foundation changed its approaches from elimination of the disease to provision of basic health and medical services. As hookworm diseases was caused by poor sanitary conditions, including the absence

⁵¹ Ibid, 23–24. The italics is mine.

⁵² Socrates Litsios, “Rural hygiene in the early years of the World Health Organization: another casualty of the Cold War?,” *Anais do Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical* 15:1 (2016), 125–132.

⁵³ Soma Hewa, “Sri Lanka’s Health Unit Program: A Model of “Selective” Primary Health Care,” *Hygiea Internationalis* 10:2 (2011), 7–33.

of waste disposal management, access to clean water and provision of good housing, the Ceylonese government came to realize that provision of basic health services and preventing illness was more effective than focusing on costly disease eradication programs.⁵⁴ According to Soma Hewa, a health unit was the division of a nation into units, with each unit comprising up to 80,000 to 100,000 of the population. A single unit would be comprised of network of hospitals, clinics and dispensaries that provided basic healthcare services, with focus on preventive rather than curative programs. Also, to each unit, medical officer of health, public health nurses, sanitary inspector and clerks would be assigned to carry out various works including, collection of vital statistics, mass immunization, treatments of malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, venereal diseases, maternal and child welfare, and sanitation inspection.⁵⁵ The 1937 Bandoeng Conference acknowledged Ceylon's successful provision of primary healthcare through the health unit program and made recommendation for the creation of "a health centre or unit" for "every village" involved in rural reconstruction.⁵⁶

And in the 1952 report, the WHO Mission also proposed the establishment of health unit program in Korea and brought in Walter G. Wickeremesinghe, the director of health services of Sri Lanka who had years of experience in running the health unit program to oversee the implementation of the same program in Korea.⁵⁷ The importance attributed to the health unit program can be seen in Part I, Chapter II of the report. Titled, "The Public Health Dispensary – The Future Health Unit," the WHO Mission laid out an outline of the health unit program that was very similar to the health unit program being run in Sri Lanka. According to the writers of the report, Health Units were to be established in all Korean provinces under the following guidelines.

The Health Units in a province would come under the direct control of the Provincial Health Officer and would be linked to the provincial hospitals, the whole organism constituting the normal health service of the province. They would undertake some curative work but this would be secondary to the main preventive function. The dispensaries were developed primarily for emergency curative

⁵⁴ Randall Packard, *A History of Global Health: Intervention into the Lives of Other People* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), Loc 1579–1623.

⁵⁵ Soma Hewa, "Sri Lanka's Health Unit Program," 17–19.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Intergovernmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene (Geneva, CH: League of Nations Health Organization, 1937)*, 55.

⁵⁷ G. Macdonald, W.G. Wickeremesinghe and W.P. Forrest, *Report of the WHO/UNKRA Health Planning Mission in Korea*, 33–35, RG59 150/71/13/03–04 Box 9, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.; United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency, "Inter-Office Memorandum." October 1, 1952. S-0526-0337-0001-00001. United Nations Archives and Records Management System, New York, U.S.A.

work, but constitute such a good potential nucleus for health work that they merit maintenance and elaboration to this end.⁵⁸

The authors then explained what the proposed Health Unit would look like;

A Health Unit should serve a population of approximately 50,000 to 70,000 in a carefully defined area. Wherever possible the boundaries should coincide with those of existing administrative divisions...As Health Units are intended to cover the rural and semi-urban areas of the country...total number of Health Units that will be needed for rural and semi-urban areas will be about 370, less than the present number of Public Health Dispensaries, as the total of such population to be served is about 22 million.⁵⁹

And once created, the Health Units would carry out the following functions:

The public health functions which a Health Unit undertakes consist of an initial detailed survey of the area; the analysis, study and improvement of morbidity, mortality and other records of vital statistics of the area; improvement of the sanitary environment; all the activities associated with epidemic prevention, including immunisation work; maternity and child welfare, including school health work; and health education and training.⁶⁰

The striking similarity and continuity between the 1937 Bandoeng Conference report and the 1952 WHO Mission report could be attributed to Pierre Marie Dorolle (1899–1980), the former Chief Deputy Director-General of the WHO (1950–1973). Prior to his appointment as the Chief Deputy Director-General of the WHO in 1950, Dorolle served as the former director of health service in Hanoi, Vietnam and as the chief medical officer of Hanoi, he participated in the 1937 LNHO Bandoeng Conference.⁶¹ For the 1937 Bandoeng Conference, he was appointed as rapporteur and submitted report on state of health and medical services in Asia.⁶² And in 1951, just one year before the dispatch of the Mission to Korea, the WHO established two health demonstration centers in the world, much like the health centers discussed in the 1937 Bandoeng Conference – one in Sri Lanka and the other in El Salvador to explore the possibilities of provision of primary healthcare services in rural regions. As the highest authority within the WHO, next to the Director-General and with his previous work for the LNHO Bandoeng Conference and with his extensive knowledge of health in Asia, it would have been Dorolle who would have had the

⁵⁸ Ibid., 30. The italics is mine.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 34.

⁶¹ *Report of the Intergovernmental Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene*, 13.

⁶² Socrates Litsios, “Revisiting Bandoeng,” *Social Medicine* 8:3 (2014), 113–128.

authority to establish the health demonstration center in Sri Lanka and appoint Walter G. Wickremesinghe, the director of health service of Sri Lanka as part of the Mission to Korea, thus ensuring the continuity of pursuit of health security for the attainment of human security by the LNHO and the WHO.

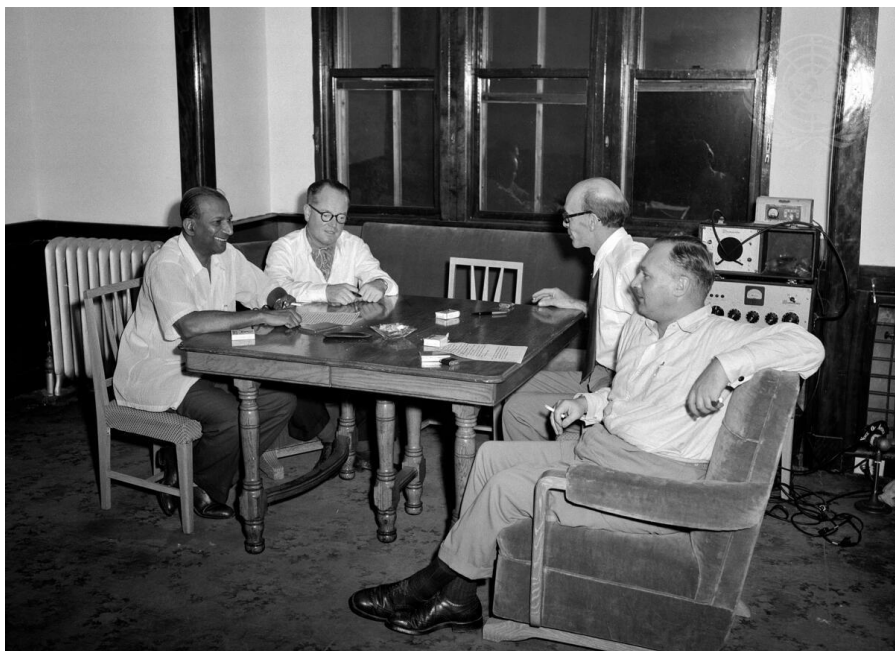


Figure 2. A photo of the 1952 WHO Mission to Korea taken at the UNKRA office in Pusan on August 1, 1952. From left to right – Dr. Walter G. Wickremesinghe, Director of Health Services of Ceylon, Dr. William P. Forrest, Director of the Division of Coordination and Liaison of WHO, Prof. George MacDonald of London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the leader of the mission and Dr. Louis Findlay, health consultant for UNCACK.⁶³

⁶³ UN Photo Digital Asset System, “WHO Makes Survey of Health Conditions in Korea.” August 1, 1952. UN7659274–188534. United Nations Archives and Records Management System, New York, U.S.A.

UNESCO Mission to Korea – From Social Security to Political Security

In its simplest definition, ‘social security’ is defined as “freedom from want” and political security is defined as “freedom from fear.” The two definitions date back to FDR’s 1941 State of the Union speech on Four Freedoms given on Jan 6, 1941, eleven months before the Pearl Harbor Attack took place. Better known as the Four Freedoms speech, in this speech FDR proposed four fundamental freedoms – freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom of want and freedom from fear that all humankind should enjoy. FDR gave the speech to persuade the American public to end the isolationist policy, which the US had maintained since the end of the First World War and called for the embrace of a new world order. Of these four freedoms, the two freedoms – “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” are particularly applicable to this section’s discussion on reading social security and political security in the 1952 UNESCO Mission to Korea. In his speech, FDR translated “freedom of want” to “...in a world term means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.” And as for “freedom from fear” FDR further elucidated as “...a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.” This speech has been widely acknowledged as the guiding principles that shaped the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of UN and the constitutions of UN specialized agencies such as FAO, WHO and UNESCO.⁶⁴

Donald P. Cottrell, the Dean of College of Education of Ohio State University (1946–1967) and the chief of the 1952 UNESCO Mission to Korea was an ardent supporter of this vision of a new world introduced in the Four Freedoms Speech.⁶⁵ That Cottrell enthusiastically supported FDR’s vision of a world freed from “want”

⁶⁴Franklin D. Roosevelt, “January 6, 1941: State of the Union (Four Freedoms),” <https://miller-center.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-6-1941-state-union-four-freedoms> (Accessed August 4, 2022); United Nations, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights> (Accessed August 4, 2022); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Constitution,” in, FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*, Vol.I & II (Rome, IT: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2017). <https://www.fao.org/3/mp046e/mp046e.pdf> (Accessed December 12, 2018); World Health Organization, “The Constitution of the WHO,” <https://apps.who.int/gb/bd/PDF/bd47/EN/constitution-en.pdf> (Accessed December 12, 2018); UNESCO, “Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,” <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution> (Accessed, December 12, 2018).

⁶⁵ “Donald P. Cottrell, 88, Education Dean, Dies,” *The New York Times*, Obituary. January 26, 1991, <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/26/obituaries/donald-p-cottrell-88-education-dean-dies.html> (Accessed February 8, 2022).

and “fear” could be seen in the speech he gave in 1943. At the All-College Conference on Education held at Teacher’s College, Columbia University, the New Deal educator proposed the establishment of curricula on democratic education for the new world to come. Asking how much Americans have “all had to learn about the Chinese people, the Russian people, the people of India, the peoples of Latin America and of Africa?” he proceeded to point out that “an understanding of the major cultures of the world has become a virtual necessity for the intelligent reading of the daily newspaper.” In this emerging new world, Americans no longer could live in the isolationist ways of the prewar years as the American way of living “may depend not alone upon the economic policies of our government but also upon the attitudes toward America that are taken by peoples abroad who have been essentially foreign to us before.” This open and interconnected attitude towards the world, Cottrell warned was vital as America “cannot again risk the upsurge of shortsighted isolationist sentiment” which led to two world wars and to prevent yet another world war, the American public education needed to provide “a real understanding of life in other parts of the world.” To prepare Americans for a radically different world than they had previously known, Cottrell suggested that “school curricula should provide for adequate consideration of the great problem of establishing social security in the world today.”⁶⁶ Social security or “the use of the insurance principle” was needed as the end of the war and the transition back to civilian life was expected to create mass dislocation and unemployment, which left unattended could also become fodder for yet another war as the fallout from the First World War did so for the Second World War.

To underscore his point, he cited the example of Europe and the role expected of the new UN. Cottrell predicted that with the end of the war, America would emerge as the world leader and “the peace in Europe will be a test of our integrity and statesmanship.” He pointed out that “there is no solution to the problem of national boundaries and traditional local rivalries in Europe,” and the only way to ensure that the problems in Europe will not escalate into another conflict “unless a comprehensive economic organization can be affected providing for actual social security of all the people of Europe.” And “with such a provision,” Cottrell insisted that “it can readily be seen that there is really not much difference for the individual citizen and his family whether they happen to live, for example, in Hungary or Rumania.” As social security work to equalize and reduce the gap between the varying living conditions among European nations, Cottrell predicted that the border line will become “a mere matter of convenience.” Comparing such social security scheme for Europe to the “Beveridge Plan,” a comprehensive social welfare reform bill recently passed in the British parliament, such securitization of Europe “would have to be underwritten by

⁶⁶ Donald P. Cottrell, “Curricula for Democratic Education,” (1943) *Teachers’ College Record*, 2000, 32–42, <https://www.tcrecord.org/books/Content.asp?ContentID=9303> (Accessed February 10, 2022).

the United Nations powers.” Rhetorically asking whether “the United States be willing to participate in such a controlling guarantee?” Cottrell then proposed that democratic education be implemented as school curricula to help “children, youth, and adults to gain some understanding of the issues involved.”⁶⁷

By implementing curricula of democratic education with all “the necessary deliberative and communicative techniques that are properly associated with democratic decisions,” Cottrell asserted that how the socially securitized world would then be ready for “freedom from fear” or political security. Using classrooms as a microcosm of the world at large, he argued that “in the larger scene where nations and peoples will after this war have to learn similar techniques of deliberation and decision in an atmosphere of good will, the same type of problem will be confronted on a larger scale.” Warning that “hatred and evil intent and action are all too real among the nations today,” he reminded the audience that the purpose of the current ongoing war was not only “to eradicate them (hatred and evil intent) and their infectious causative centers, but also to establish an order of nations that will prevent them gaining headway again in such a way as genuinely to threaten the very foundations of the civilization which condemns them.” The new world order that would be freed from fear of wars was to beget from “the processes of political democracy,” or more specifically, “the necessary deliberative and communicative techniques (that) are properly associated with democratic decisions,” he outlined earlier.

When Cottrell and the UNESCO Mission arrived in the fall of 1952, they first noticed the lack of social securities or the prevalence of social insecurities in Korea. In the preliminary report to the UNESCO, Cottrell and the members of the mission explained in detail, the conditions that fostered social and economic instabilities – the poor housing conditions, the shortage of fuel, lack of recreational facilities for children, lack of variety in diet, especially the lack of availability of meat protein, poor health and sanitary conditions fueled by lack of potable water and widespread malnutrition due to food shortage and lack of industries which contributed to the poor income earning as well.⁶⁸ Yet, in the final report submitted to the UNESCO in February of 1953, the attention to problems of social insecurities was de-emphasized and in its place, Cottrell leveled a withering criticism of the South Korean politics for its intrusion into Korean education.⁶⁹ In chapter one on the subject of educational

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Donald P. Cottrell et.al., *Educational Conditions in the Republic of Korea – A Preliminary and Factual report by the UNESCO/UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea* (Paris, FR: United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization, 1952), 8–9. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000179162?posInSet=7&queryId=e63792c3-76aa-497b-ae75-ddd0140f5643> (Accessed Sep 23, 2015).

⁶⁹ United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization, *Rebuilding Education in the Republic of Korea: The Final Report of the UNESCO/UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea* (Paris, FR: United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization, 1953),

situation and the political and economic basis of education in Korea, foregoing his usual cautious style, Cottrell blasted the use of education for political ends in Korea. He noted that “while education is not perceived as instrument of politics in any democratic country, it is sensitive to political developments and in the broadest sense, depends upon the political fortunes of the country.” He then pointed out the toll this abuse of political power had on Korean education:

Many Koreans regard the present political situation as precarious, even apart from the war and the future of North Korea. This is reflected in vociferous protestations of unity and democratic intentions in the schools and at the same time in a verbalism and vagueness of the programme with respect to just what kind of performance on the part of will lead to the salvation of the country. It is not easy to say what the schools and colleges can do about this situation. Clearly they should not enter into arena of political controversy or permit themselves to be used as instruments for the promotion of any particular programme for Korea.⁷⁰

Perturbed by this blatant misuse of education for political gains, he proceeded to exhort for the positive effect education can have in promoting democratic politics: “...education can and must illuminate political questions by helping people to get to the facts and to consider the significance of the facts in relation to all forms of political action. This is one of the main principles of democratic education.” He then concluded by recommending “the functions of public discussion and dissemination of general information by all available means of communication should be sponsored by educational institutions and authorities.”

This withering comment on South Korean politics showed Cottrell’s deep abiding belief in the vision of a new world freed from “want” and “fear.” To this New Deal educator, who went so far as to outline in specific the educational curricula that would enable the creation of this new world, what he encountered in Korea upon arrival could have greatly disturbed and even abhorred him. He saw a country where politics of fear governed all aspect of civilian life and he witnessed the flagrant abuse of public education for political ends. The exploitation of education for political purposes could be seen in the case of Ahn Ho Sang, the first Minister of Education who was well known for his extreme nationalism and went so far as to express open admiration for Nazism even well after its defeat.⁷¹ Five years earlier in 1948, Cottrell served as educational consultant in Germany and assisted in the overhaul of the former Nazi education system. To Cottrell, the rise of Nazism in Germany could be

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000179163?posInSet=6&queryId=a6f5e91f-f74a-4625-bde8-2472ce66b7b5> (Accessed, November 10, 2021).

⁷⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁷¹ Ahn Ho Sang, *Uri eui bureujijeum* (Our Cries) (Seoul, KR: Munhwadang, 1947), 39–40; Kim Jong Jun, “Haebang ihu Pasijeumjeok yeoksa insik jeonglip gwajeong (The Process of Establishing Fascist Historical Cognition after 1945),” *Immunhak yeongu* 50 (2022), 251–289.

attributed to the German educational system that promoted nationalism and discouraged democratic thinking.⁷² The young Korean republic would have seemed much like the former Nazi Germany, where they may have been liberated from political tyranny but still governed by politics of fear that prevented the enjoyment of “four essential freedoms.” And it was out of this deep commitment towards “the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy” that Cottrell broke from his usual circumspection and openly criticized the South Korean politics for its intervention in public education.⁷³



Figure 3. UNESCO Mission education planning included printing and distribution of textbooks. Benjamin E. Rothwell (Canada, second from left), the UNKRA printing consultant examines the first four-colour books printed from the plant.⁷⁴

⁷² Donald P. Cottrell, “Higher Education and the Problem of Germany Today,” *The Educational Forum* 12:3 (1948), 267–275.

⁷³ Franklin D. Roosevelt, “January 6, 1941: State of the Union (Four Freedoms),” <https://miller-center.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-6-1941-state-union-four-freedoms> (Accessed August 4, 2022).

⁷⁴ UN Photo Digital Asset Management System, “Korea’s New Textbook Printing Plant.” UN7659423–188685. November 1, 1954. United Nations Archives and Records Management System, New York, U.S.A.

Conclusion

Five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, in 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published a study on human security. Titled, *The Human Development Report 1994*, the agency introduced the concept of human security as part of the agency's effort to review and recast the role of UN in addressing global underdevelopment amidst the new changing world order. Eloquently decrying that "for too long the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states," and that "for too long security has been equated with the threats to a country's borders," the writers of the report argued that "for most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event." It was matters such as "job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime," that deeply affected and critically shaped human lives. Given that these securities or insecurities had the most critical impact in all human lives, the writers proposed the use of concept of "human security" to better capture the new goal of global human development. The authors then further broke down human security into seven sub-categories: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.⁷⁵

Forty-two years before the UNDP introduced the concept of human security, in the 1952 Missions to Korea, the three UN specialized agencies of FAO, WHO and UNESCO sought to articulate securitization of all things concerning human life in their planning for long-term reconstruction of Korea. The FAO in its two reports highlighted the intimate relations between food security and economic security necessary for the improvement of agriculture and economy of war-damaged Korea. By introducing the Health Unit program pioneered in Sri Lanka to Korea, the WHO Mission to Korea showed their public health planning to be a continuation of health security as means for realizing human security extant in the long history of development of global health. And through the introduction of curricula of democratic education, the UNESCO Mission sought to appeal the importance of social security and political security for rebuilding a former colonial nation. And in so doing, these three UN specialized agencies showed one of the most compelling examples of securitization of health. By reading the reconstruction efforts carried out by the three UN specialized agencies as articulation of biosecurity, this paper sought to offer a more nuanced and pluralized reading of the UNKRA activities and global postwar reconstruction efforts in Korea.

⁷⁵ United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 1994* (New York, NY & Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), 24–25.

Abstract

In the winter of 1951, while the war was still raging in the Korean peninsula, the Government of Republic of Korea made a formal request to the United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) to dispatch experts to help the war-ridden nation develop long-term plans for recovery and reconstruction. The UNKRA accepted this request and further took up the matter with the United Nations Assembly, which passed the motion to send expert missions in the areas requested by the South Korean government – agriculture, public health and education. To assist the war-damaged South Korea, experts were culled from three United Nations specialized agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This paper will examine these three plans drafted by the FAO, WHO and UNESCO in 1952 to explore how securitization of health or biosecurity was articulated in the planning for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of post-war Korea. The long-term plans of postwar rehabilitation and reconstruction by UNKRA have been cited as experiments in development and modernization. However, by applying the concept of securitization of health or biosecurity, this paper will show how the interpretation of health as a security matter was conceptualized by the international actors involved in the postwar reconstruction of Korea.

Keywords: securitization, biosecurity, UNKRA, FAO, WHO, UNESCO