

Political Perception of Bureaucratic Elite in South Korea

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It is generally accepted that the senior bureaucrats play a critical role in the political processes of developing countries. The instrumental, implementative, and unifunctional view of their role is no longer tenable for they are deeply and actively engaged in determining the direction and substance of political development and in formulating public policies directly relevant to the whole political system. As Almond and Powell suggest, they are bound to affect both the output gates and the input functions of the political conversion process.⁽¹⁾ Moreover, Harris attributes a widerange of possible role sets to the senior bureaucrats—namely, policy maker, policy adviser, program formulator, program manager, program

implementor, interest aggregator, interest articulator, agent of political communication, adjudicator, and agent of political socialization.⁽²⁾

The senior civilian bureaucrats in South Korea, too, seem to enjoy a variety of role sets in the political process. Historically, Korea had the long Confucian tradition of "strong, centralized, uncontested bureaucratic rule."⁽³⁾ Even if the Confucian-inspired Yi Dynasty collapsed in 1910, the central role of the bureaucracy in Korean politics persisted during the Japanese colonial administration and thereafter. Especially since the military leaders seized South Korea's governing power in 1961 and adopted the ambitious five-year economic development plans, the bureaucracy has substantially expanded both in its size and in its control over national resource allocation. The degree of structural differentiation and functional specialization has increased in government agencies.⁽⁴⁾ Hence the bureaucracy has developed as a mature, complex, efficient, and powerful organization,

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- (1) Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1966), p.158.
 - (2) Richard L. Harris, "The Effects of Political Change on the Role Set of the Senior Bureaucrats in Ghana and Nigeria," *Administrative Science Quarterly*(December 1968), pp.386-401.
 - (3) See Gregory Henderson, *Korea: The Politics of a Vortex* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p.3.
 - (4) For the general description of South Korea's bureaucratic development, see Hahn-Been Lee, *Korea Time, Change, and Administration* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1968), and Dong-Suh Bark, *The Study of Korean Administration* (Seoul: Pobmunsa, 1972).

while other political and social institutions remain in a state of underdevelopment. As the bureaucracy addresses itself to the input and output dimensions of the political conversion process, its senior members assume a complex pattern of growing interactions with some salient elements of the political system—such as legislature, political parties, interest groups, and the general public. There is a distinct possibility, however, that they may inhibit the normal growth of political institutions.⁽⁵⁾

A variety of factors must determine the pattern of interactions between the senior bureaucrats and political elements, but one likely determinant is what they perceive to be an ideal role of these elements in South Korea's political development and how they view the main functional weaknesses of these elements. On the assumption that the civilian bureaucracy, like a school or a church, inculcates some inherent values and attitudes, we hypothesized that the senior bureaucrats have a high degree of "peer cohesion" in their political perceptions.⁽⁶⁾ It was further hypothesized that in view of their elitist self-confidence and corporate self-interest, they are not willing to assign any significant role to other elements of the political system, but rather ready to direct a harsh criticism against the functional deficiencies of these political elements.

In order to study these two hypotheses about the senior bureaucrats' political perceptions and their implications in South Korea, we interviewed a large number of higher civil servants who, as of January 1972, held Grade II-A which corresponds to the levels of central government bureau chief and provincial lieutenant-governor.⁽⁷⁾ As an indispensable linkage between political executives and the vast administrative machinery, they constitute the most strategic and influential bureaucratic elite. After pursuing the frequency and consistency of their responses to our interviews, we chose for our analysis 116 persons who answered a majority of the interview items concerning their political perceptions. We attempted not only to examine the nature and variation of their responses, but also to see whether a few selected social and administrative attributes can account for the cohesiveness or cleavage of their political perceptions. The attributes selected for our correlational analysis were: (1) Age Levels, (2) College Majors, (3) Military Experience, (4) Speed of Promotion, and (5) Length of Bureaucratic Service.

National Assembly

Although the South Korean Constitution as of early 1972 contained the provisions of a strong

(5) For the discussion of this possibility, see Fred W. Riggs, "Bureaucrats and Political Development: A Paradoxical View," in Joseph Lapalombara (ed.), *Bureaucracy and Political Development* (Princeton: University Press, 1963), pp.120-167; for a counter-argument, see Lee Sigelman, "Do Modern Bureaucracies Dominate Underdeveloped Polities? A Test of the Imbalance Thesis," *American Political Science Review* (June 1972), pp.525-528.

(6) For an elaboration of this assumption, see Robert Presthus, *The Organizational Society: An Analysis and a Theory* (New York: Random House, 1962), especially, p.7. The term "peer cohesion" came from Amitai Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations: O. Power, Involvement, and Their Correlates* (New York: Free Press, 1961), p.177.

(7) The interview was conducted in December 1971 and January 1972 under the auspices of the Institute for Comparative and Foreign Area Studies, University of Washington. We interviewed 176 out of the total number of 203 senior bureaucrats who, as of our study, held Grade II-A. For a full examination of our data, see Dong-Suh Bark and Chae-Jin Lee, "Development Orientations of Bureaucratic Elite," in Dae-Sook Suh and Chae-Jin Lee (eds.), *Political Leadership in Korea* (forthcoming).

presidential government system, it spelled out a basic principle of separation of power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government. As a popularly elected parliamentary institution, the National Assembly was supposed to exercise a wide range of statutory and budgetary controls over the executive branch. It enjoyed a constitutional authority to interpellate the members of the Cabinet and pass a vote of nonconfidence against them. Moreover, the Assemblymen had a sufficient power to investigate, supervise, and regulate the bureaucrats' activities. At the same time, however, the legislators relied upon the bureaucrats to obtain administrative decisions favorable to their political interests. Hence the legislative-bureaucratic relationship was both intimate and competitive. While the National Assembly was said to be subservient to and jealous of the powerful executive branch, the senior bureaucrats often expressed a concern

about the legislators' excessive interference into their administrative operations.

Asked what they regarded as the National Assembly's principal functions in South Korea's political development, the senior bureaucrats most frequently answered that it represents and articulates public opinions. 51 out of 112 persons (45.5%) who responded to the question picked this answer among nine multiple choices, and 27 of them considered it the National Assembly's most important function. It was closely followed by three other answers—namely, the National Assembly makes laws and policies (39.3%), checks and balances the administrative branch (34.8%), and exercises popular, democratic sovereignty (34.8%). The Assembly as an institution promoting inter-party cooperation was also cited by 27.7% of the respondents. All of these frequently mentioned functions are usually expected of the legislature in a democratic political system.

Table 1. National Assembly: Functions (N=121)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Represent public opinions	51	45.5	27
Make laws and policies	44	39.3	38
Check the Administration	39	34.8	11
Exercise democratic sovereignty	39	34.8	6
Promote inter-party cooperation	31	27.7	30
Utilize specialized knowledge	2	1.8	0
Protect the constitutional order	1	0.9	0

Although they accepted the National Assembly's law and policy-making role, they were obviously reluctant to suggest that the legislators utilize a high level of specialized knowledge on legal and policy matters; indeed, all but two interviewees failed to give any attention to this aspect of the question. The difference between these two tendencies (answers, attitudes) seems to reflect the fact that most of the successful legislative bills and other public policies adopted by the National Assembly are originated in the executive branch

which has established expertise and sufficient experience. Only one person regarded the National Assembly's function as protecting the constitutional order. If our data are a true indicator of the bureaucratic elite's political perception, they were unlikely to suffer any serious value conflict in carrying out President Chung Hee Park's declaration of martial law which dissolved the National Assembly in October 1972. He regarded a partisan, incremental approach toward parliamentary bargains as detrimental to the undisturbed pursuit

Table 2. National Assembly: Weakness (N=97)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Indulge in partisan interest	52	53.6	52
Lack knowledge	29	29.9	18
Pursue selfish individual interest	19	19.6	6
Suffer from immature political parties	27	27.8	1
Confront undemocratic conditions	26	26.8	6
Have factional struggles	22	22.7	8
Lack autonomy and self-determination	20	20.6	4

of his own vision of all-embracing national goals.⁽⁸⁾

Many of the senior bureaucrats, too, attributed the National Assembly's functional weakness to its members' indulgence in partisan interests (53.6%). Other reasons most often cited for its weakness ranged from the lack of legislative knowledge (29.9%) and the prevalence of factional strife (22.7%) to the immaturity of political parties (27.8%) and of democratic traditions (26.8%). Some also pointed out the legislators' search for selfish individual interests (19.6%) and their lack of political autonomy (20.6%). Only a few persons referred to the law-makers' excessive attempts to recover the campaign expenses or to stress public relations.

The notion that the National Assembly suffers from the dominance of its members' partisan, factional, and personal interests is a popular, effective way of discrediting the legislature's contribution to South Korea's political development (national goals). It also implies that since the senior bureaucrats are less concerned with partisan and factional maneuvers than the National Assemblymen, they are more qualified to take care of the governing responsibilities. The bu-

reaucrats' self-confidence is further enhanced by their perception of the legislators' limited knowledge and ability.

On the basis of theoretical importance, frequent choice, and comparability with other questions, we selected three answers each for the National Assembly's expected functions and criticized weaknesses, and examined them in the context of the senior bureaucrats' social and administrative backgrounds.

The most frequent answer they chose for the National Assembly's functions—"Represent public opinions"—was significantly related to the difference of their age groups and pre-bureaucratic functional specialization. Compared with those who were older than 45 years, the younger bureaucrats were far more readily inclined to agree with the answer ($G=.38$; $C=.19^{***}$).⁽⁹⁾ The bureaucrats who had college majors in natural sciences showed a stronger tendency to choose the answer than did social scientists, but only a small number of those with humanistic majors accepted it ($G=-.32$; $C=.27^{***}$). Other social and administrative variables—military experience, bureaucratic seniority, and promotion speed—did not manifest any significant statistical relationship

(8) See Chae-Jin Lee, "South Korea: The Politics of Domestic-Foreign Linkage," *Asian Survey* (January 1973), pp.94-101.

(9) Statistical notations are as follows: G=Goodman and Kruskal's Gamma, C=Contingency Coefficient, *=significant at .20, **=significant at .10, ***=significant at .05. When the requirements for chi-square tests are not met, they are used for exploratory purposes only. See G. David Garson, *Handbook of Political Science Methods* (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1971).

with the way our interviewees reacted to the given answer about the National Assembly's functions.

Different educational backgrounds were similarly related to the second answer—"Make laws and policies"; it was accepted by 43.9% of natural scientists, but by a smaller proportion of social scientists (37.1%) and humanists (39.1%) ($G = -.09$; $C = .18^*$). Contrary to the earlier finding, the older bureaucrats chose this answer more frequently than did their younger colleagues ($G = -.25$; $C = .1^*$). Likewise, the persons who spent more than 15 years in civilian bureaucracy were more agreeable to the choice than those with lower bureaucratic seniority ($G = -.17$; $C = .19^{***}$). Again, the military experience or its absence, as well as the slow or fast speed of vertical mobility, did not have an appreciable impact upon their perceptions of the National Assembly's law-making responsibility.

As to the National Assembly's anticipated function in checking and balancing the executive power, the younger bureau chiefs were considerably more positive than the older ones ($G = .35$; $C = .19^{***}$). The favorable response to this answer was also associated with their college majors; unlike the previous two answers, however, the natural scientists were far less agreeable to the answer than social scientists and humanists ($G = .38$; $C = .19^{***}$). The bureaucrats who had the record of military service tended to accept the legislature's checking power over the Administration less frequently than did career civil servants ($G = .37$; $C = .17^{**}$). Those who were promptly promoted to their present rank in less than 9 years of administrative service were more positive toward the answer than their peers whose speed of vertical mobility was slower ($G = .30$; $C = .16^{**}$). Similarly, the bureaucrats with shorter administrative service were more favorable than their senior counterparts ($G = .09$; $C = .18^{***}$).

The younger bureaucrats were a little more critical of the legislators' partisan preoccupation than the older ones ($G = .08$; $C = .21^{***}$). The result is perhaps indicative of the younger persons' impatience with legislative compromises; as they get older, they become more tolerant of the legislators' partisan inclinations. The critical remark was most pronounced among the natural scientists, but the humanists were more tolerant of the Assemblymen's partisan activities; the social scientists fell somewhere between these two groups ($G = -.26$; $C = .23^{***}$). The ex-military bureaucrats were slightly less negative toward the National Assembly's partisan indulgence than career civil servants ($G = .10$; $C = .13^*$). The longer they served in the civilian administration, the more tolerant they were about this issue ($G = .06$; $C = .18^{***}$).

As to the Assemblymen's lack of legislative competence, too, the younger bureaucrats were more critical than the rest ($G = .02$; $C = .21^{***}$). Other social and administrative variables did not account for the variance of the interviewees' reaction to the question. Likewise, only one variable—administrative seniority—bore a strong association with the answer that the National Assembly suffers from its members' pursuit of selfish individual interest. The criticism was voiced by 27.1% of those bureaucrats with more than 15 years of administrative experience, but only by 12.2% of their junior colleagues ($G = -.45$; $C = .24^{***}$).

Governing Party

It is often claimed that there has been a persistent tension and friction between the Administration and the governing party; the executive side is said to assume the "independent leadership" in setting national priorities and carrying them out. "On the executive's part," assert Cole and Lyman, "bending to party influence was

Table 3. Governing Party: Functions (N=115)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Represent public opinions	35	30.4	14
Formulate public policies	39	33.9	10
Check the Administration	12	10.4	3
Promote constitutional process	48	41.7	48
Present national vision	41	35.7	23
Achieve political stability	20	17.4	8
Protect development plans	16	13.9	4

seen as leading to a diversion of government attention from its priority tasks and a diffusion of both spoils and power over a wide area of individual and narrowly partisan interests."⁽¹⁰⁾

As the expected functions of the governing political party—the Democratic Republican Party (DRP)—in South Korea's political development, the senior bureaucrats most frequently responded that it should facilitate constitutional process (41.7%) or present a clear national vision (35.7%). While the first answer recognized the party's instrumental utility for constitutional process such as elections, its goal-setting role was emphasized in the second answer.

Some of our interviewees answered that the DRP represents public opinions, formulates public policies, and/or political stability. About one out of ten respondents accepted the party's legitimate function of checking and balancing the Administration, but a negligible percentage of them saw its contribution to arranging local public works or realizing territorial reunification. All these answers demonstrate that while the senior bureaucrats are apt to recognize the governing party's constitutional, representative, and aggregative roles, they are reluctant to welcome its supervision over or interference into their administrative activities.

As the principal reasons for the DRP's failure to perform its presumed functions, the senior

bureaucrats were quick to point out that its members pursued selfish individual interests or lacked desired insight and competence. Some found its weakness in the lack of popular support, the abuse of political power, or the advocacy (sponsorship) of short-sighted policies. A small number of them even suggested that the governing party was weakened by internal corruption and arbitrary propensity. The senior bureaucrats, in general, expected more from the National Assembly than from the DRP in articulating public opinions and making public policies; a similar tendency was evident in their perception of these institutions' role for checking the executive power. This may mean that they considered the popularly elected legislature more legitimate than the DRP in performing representative and policy-making functions or that they had a greater sense of institutional jealousy toward the hierarchically structured governing party than toward the National Assembly. They were also more critical of the DRP than the National Assembly in regard to the pursuit of selfish individual interests and the lack of competence and knowledge. It is thus clear that they were favorably predisposed toward the legislators than toward the members of the DRP.

A little more than two out of five younger bureaucrats accepted the governing political par-

(10) David C. Cole and Princeton N. Lyman, *Korean Development: The Interplay of Politics and Economics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p.243.

ty's function or representing public opinions, but the same answer was given by only one out of five older bureaucrats ($G = .49$; $C = .26^{***}$). Regardless of generational cleavage, however, the senior civil servants, (both young and old), were more willing to recognize the National Assembly's linkage with public opinions than the DRP's. Contrary to their earlier response to the National Assembly's representative function, those with humanistic educational backgrounds expected the party's such function more readily than did the social scientists and natural scientists (33.3%, 29.8%, and 28.6%, respectively). The former military officers, compared with career civil servants, showed a greater degree of positive expectation (39.1% vs. 22.6%) toward the party-opinion linkage ($G = -.39$; $C = .20^{***}$).

Just as the older bureaucrats were more favorably disposed to the National Assembly's law-making role than were their younger associates, the difference of generational groups seemed to exert a similar impact upon the bureaucrats' perception of the DRP's policy-formulating role. The older they were, the more positive answers they assigned to the party's such function; 24 out of 39 persons (61.5%) who picked the answer were older than 45 years ($G = -.34$; $C = .21^{***}$). The findings may imply that in view of their competitive relations with the National Assembly and the DRP, the younger bureaucrats were more interested in preserving (enhancing) their own policy-making power *vis-a-vis* these two political institutions than the older ones. If this interpretation is correct, then, they are likely to be more self-righteous and arrogant in asserting their authority. The humanists recognized the governing party's policy-formulating role more readily than the National Assembly's, but the exact reverse was found among the natural scientists and, to a lesser extent, among the social scientists. The ex-military bureaucrats were less agreeable

to the DRP's policy role than their civilian peers ($G = .32$; $C = .19^{***}$). The longer they served in the public administration, the more favorable attitude they displayed toward the DRP ($G = -.19$; $C = .15^{**}$). The tendency was therefore similar to (identical with) the relationship between the bureaucrats' seniority and their perception of the National Assembly's law-making function. It is likely that as they accumulate more experience in the Administration's dealing with the National Assembly and the DRP on policy matters, they are more prepared to share the responsibilities for making public policies with these two institutions.

Even if only one out of ten senior bureaucrats accepted the DRP's role in checking the Administration, the answer attracted twice as many older ones as younger ones ($G = -.33$; $C = .14^*$). More natural scientists than either humanists or social scientists accepted the answer ($G = -.34$; $C = .23^{***}$). The differences in promotion speed, administrative seniority, and military experience had no apparent influence on the bureaucrats' attitude toward the party-executive relationship.

The criticism that the ruling political party pursues its members' selfish individual interests was most frequently found among those who majored in natural sciences during their college education; the social scientists were more critical than the humanists ($G = -.08$; $C = .17^*$). The bureaucrats who had military experience were a little more critical of the DRP's selfish individualism than the non-military personnel ($G = -.11$; $C = .16^{**}$).

Likewise, 43.1% of ex-military officers pointed out the DRP's lack of vision and competence, but the same response was given by 30.9% of career civil servants ($G = -.26$; $C = .20^{***}$). Just as we saw in their criticism (perception) of the National Assembly's functional weakness, our data demonstrate that compared with the older ones,

Table 4. Governing Party: Weakness (N=106)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Pursue selfish individual interest	47	44.3	39
Lack vision and competence	39	36.8	39
Advocate short-sighted policies	21	19.8	3
Lack popular support	23	21.7	7
Abuse political power	22	20.8	7
Have arbitrary propensity	12	11.3	4
Suffer from corruption	10	9.4	3

their younger associates were more critical of the ruling party's incompetence ($G=.22$; $C=.13^*$). Contrary to the preceding answer, the humanists were most critical, and they were followed by the social scientists and then by the natural scientists ($G=.22$; $C=.20^{**}$). The longer they spent their adult years in the civilian administration, the more lenient attitude they exhibited toward the DRP's incompetence ($G=.41$; $C=.22^{***}$). Those who took more than 10 years to climb up to Grade II-A were more tolerant than the promptly promoted ones ($G=.28$; $C=.14^*$). The findings suggest that the bureaucrats who had limited administrative experience, but enjoyed successful career measured by rapid promotion were more impatient with the DRP's lack of competence (and thus perhaps more arrogant) than their colleagues.

On the DRP's advocacy of short-sighted policies, too, the former military officers were considerably more critical than their purely civilian colleagues ($G=-.22$; $C=.18^{**}$). The frequency of this criticism was strongly associated with the variation of pre-bureaucratic functional specialization; again, the humanists were more critical, and the natural scientists were most tolerant ($G=.45$; $C=.28^{***}$). Other variables—age groups, promotion speed, and administrative seniority—were not significantly associated with the given answer.

Opposition Party

The history of political opposition in postwar Korea is full of tragedies and frustrations. Under-financed and under-staffed, the political parties opposed to the prevailing system or the ruling elite received a heavy-handed suppression or persecution from the Administration. Even if the Park Government allowed the operations of nonstructural opposition parties, it was less than willing to nurture the conditions for open, free, and competitive party system. When our interview was conducted in late 1971 and early 1972, the New Democratic Party (NDP) which held 89 seats in the 204-member National Assembly constituted the only visible sign of parliamentary opposition. It is well-known that the senior civilian bureaucrats do not wish to be closely associated with or bothered by the members of the opposition political parties; politically astute bureaucrats follow a general dictum—avoid the troublesome opposition members if possible, but do not directly antagonize them.

How did the bureaucratic elite view the opposition political party in the context of South Korea's political development? They assigned to the opposition party a function of representing public opinions as much as they did to the ruling party. On the other hand, they expected more from the NDP than from the DRP in articulating

public policies (41.4% vs. 33.9%) and checking the Administration (36.2% vs. 10.4%). Moreover, many of them considered a main function of the opposition party to counterbalance the DRP's power. Only a tiny minority of them said that the opposition party was preparing itself for assuming governing responsibilities. Evi-

dently, the senior bureaucrats had a positive conception of the opposition party as an institution aimed at transmitting public opinions and public policies and at checking the executive branch and the DRP, but they were not willing to accept the likelihood of political turnover from the DRP to the opposition party.

Table 5. Opposition Party: Functions (N=116)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Present public policies	48	41.4	18
Check the Administration	42	36.2	42
Represent public opinions	36	31.0	16
Provide constructive cooperation	24	20.7	11
Counterbalance the governing party	44	37.9	22
Foster democratic conditions	22	19.0	5
Prepare for governing role	9	7.8	2

The criticism made by them toward the opposition party's functional weakness was strong and pervasive. Most often, they assailed its members' preoccupation with selfish individual interests, but the criticism was a little less frequent than their similar attack against the

governing party. They were also critical of the NDP's propensity to oppose for the sake of opposition; it was closely related to their contention that the opposition party presents wrong policy alternatives.

Although the senior bureaucrats recognized the

Table 6. Opposition Party: Weakness (N=107)

Answer	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Pursue selfish individual interest	39	36.4	26
Oppose for the sake of opposition	36	33.6	36
Present wrong policy alternatives	32	29.9	1
Perpetuate factional strife	30	28.0	20
Have low level of knowledge	14	13.1	6
Lack popular support	13	12.1	7
Lack effective leaders	12	11.2	6

opposition party's legitimate role in articulating public policies, they were not to value its actual policy-making role highly because they felt the policy alternatives presented by the opposition party were misdirected and/or based on inadequate knowledge. As to the opposition party's intrinsic weakness, they often referred to the perpetuation

of factional strife, the scarcity of competent leaders, and the fragility of popular support basis.

Unlike their responses to the DRP's policy role, we found that the younger our interviewees were, the more positive attitude they manifested toward the opposition party's policy-recommending role ($G=.16$; $C=.14^*$). The youthful bureaucrats

may have a better appreciation of the opposition party's courage and efforts. The ex-military persons outnumbered their civilian counterparts in recognizing the opposition-policy relations (connections) ($G = -.28$; $C = .14^*$). Other attributes were statistically insignificant to account for their different responses.

The answer that the opposition party checks the Administration was most often endorsed by the humanists and then by the natural scientists; the social scientists were inclined to de-emphasize the answer ($G = .08$; $C = .17^*$). Otherwise, it was accepted by one-third of senior bureaucrats irrespective of the differences in their generational groups, military experience, and administrative backgrounds. Compared with those who were less than 45 years old, the older ones were more easily agreeable to the answer that the opposition political party represents public opinions ($G = -.29$; $C = .14^*$). Yet, the longer they served in civilian bureaucracy, the less positive attitude they showed ($G = .26$; $C = .12^*$).

Among 39 higher civil servants who criticized the NDP's selfish individual pursuit, 20 (51.3%) were less than 45 years old (although those under 45 constituted 46.6% of all the samples) ($G = .22^{***}$). The frequency of such criticism was in the order of natural scientists, social scientists, and humanists ($G = -.24$; $C = .18^*$); we discovered the same pattern in their criticism of the DRP's selfish tendencies. The longer they accumulated their experience in the public administration, the less critical remarks they made at the opposition party ($G = .24$; $C = .18^{**}$).

Again, 21 out of 36 persons (58.3%) who condemned the opposition party's opposition for no other reason but opposition were younger than 45 years; the older ones were far less critical ($G = .28$; $C = .21^{***}$). The criticism is higher among

those who had military experience than among others who did not ($G = -.21$; $C = .22^{***}$). Emphasis upon discipline and loyalty in military life may have fostered or led to the considerable cleavage between military and nonmilitary persons. Moreover, the bureaucrats with less than 15 years spent in civilian administration were more critical than their more experienced peers ($G = .37$; $C = .22^{***}$). Contrary to the previous response, career civil servants were slightly more willing than former military officers to contend that the opposition party's weakness lies in presenting wrong policy alternatives ($G = .14$; $C = .21^{***}$). The same answer was most frequently given by the social scientists, but the humanists were less critical than the natural scientists ($G = .10$; $C = .20^{**}$).

Interest Groups

Henderson characterized South Korea as a mass society which lacked in the formation of strong institutions and voluntary groups between the masses and the governing elite; for the Koreans have a political culture in which the general public disfavors the articulation of specialized group interests in politics and "groups are perceived by the participants as unworthy of loyalty and continuity."⁽¹¹⁾ Indeed, the function of interest articulation is still in an embryonic stage in South Korea; the institutions and channels for interest manifestation are not fully developed. The practice of pluralistic, bargaining tactics in administrative and legislative matters is far from accepted.

However, a growing number of interest groups have emerged in recent years as a result of rapid economic and social change. They, collectively or individually, begin to articulate their

(11) Henderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 271.

interests and positions and attempt to exert pressures and demands upon the political system.⁽¹²⁾ Since interest groups want to obtain favorable policy decisions or administrative dispositions, Eckstein argues, "they must adjust their activities to the processes by which decisions and dispositions are made."⁽¹³⁾ As interest groups in South Korea unmistakably consider the Administration the most powerful institution for making decisions and dispositions on their problems, they wish to get access to the administrative decision-makers. On the other hand, some interest groups have what Etzioni calls the "renumerative power"—control over material rewards or payoffs—toward senior civil servants.⁽¹⁴⁾ Thus the ties between interest

groups and senior bureaucrats are in a mutually reinforcing relationship.

Many of our interviewees felt that special interest groups had legitimate functions to play in South Korea's political development, but the most important functions mentioned by them were of general and ambiguous nature. They answered that these groups achieve important tasks, make public contribution, and promote national interest and economic development. Only a very limited number of them were prepared to accept the answers that interest groups take part in policy-making process (4.9%), mobilize public opinions (4.9%), or promote social justice (7.8%).

A majority of senior bureaucrats (57.4%) ex-

Table 7. Interest Groups: Functions (N=103)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Achieve important tasks	52	50.5	52
Promote national interest	46	44.7	16
Make public contribution	47	45.6	11
Contribute to economic development	31	30.1	22
Promote social justice	8	7.8	1
Participate in policy-making process	5	4.9	1
Mobilize public opinion	5	4.9	0

pressed the view that interest groups were functionally weak because of pursuing selfish individual interests. The criticism was more frequently made than the similar charge against the governing and opposition political parties. Other reasons cited for interest groups' failure ranged from the lack of public service to the underdevelopment of organizational autonomy and maturity. The effects of political interference and corruption

were also mentioned by some bureaucrats. Almost completely dismissed were the answers that interest groups were weakened by financial insufficiency or by the lack of governmental support. In general, they were less enthusiastic about the expected political functions of interest groups than about those of political parties, especially in regard to policy-making and opinion-articulating areas, but they chose more critical remarks against

(12) As an example of the relationship between interest articulation and political development, see Chae-Jin Lee, "Labor Movement and Political Development in Korea," *Working Paper* (Honolulu: Social Science Research Institute and International Liaison Committee for Research on Korea, 1971).

(13) Harry Eckstein and David E. Apter (eds.), *Comparative Politics: A Reader* (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 409.

(14) Etzioni, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

Table 8. Interest Group: Weakness (N=101)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Pursue selfish interest	58	57.4	58
Lack public service	37	36.6	10
Have immature organizations	32	31.7	15
Lack decisional autonomy	25	24.8	1
Receive political interference	15	14.9	11
Have corruption	10	9.9	1
Suffer from inadequate finance	7	6.9	3

the former.

Unlike their perception of the National Assembly and political parties, the senior bureaucrats' answers to various interest groups' expected functions were more or less evenly distributed across the different groups of social and administrative attributes. No social and administrative variable was capable of accounting for their choice of the answer that interest groups promote national interests. Excepted from this general tendency were the associative patterns which college majors and military experience had with some responses. The natural scientists were most reluctant to accept the answers that interest groups perform important tasks or make public contribution ($G=.07$; $C=.21^*$, and $G=.39$; $C=.25^{***}$, respectively). Those with military experience were less favorably disposed to the links between interest groups and public contribution than career civil servants ($G=.38$; $C=.19^{***}$).

The bureaucrats' perception of interest groups' functional weaknesses, too, was not significantly related to social and administrative variables except generational differences. As to both answers "pursue selfish interest" and "lack public service," the younger civil servants were more critical than the older associates ($G=.39$; $C=.25^{***}$, and $G=.22$; $C=.13^*$). Thirty-three out of 58

bureaucrats (56.9%) who accepted the first answer, and 20 out of 37 persons (54.1%) favorable to the second, did not reach the age of 45 years.

General Public

Even though the higher civil servants are not directly accountable to the general public in a political sense, they are perhaps the most important agents to translate and resolve public demands and aspirations. For all practical purposes, in view of their high positions and accumulated expertise, they influence to a great extent the making of public policies and set specific administrative guidelines for executing these policies at grass-root levels. There has been a considerable amount of public complaints about what V.A. Thompson called the "bureaucratic behavior" in South Korea; the bureaucrats were accused to be arrogant, corrupt, or aloof to the immediate needs of the general public.⁽¹⁵⁾ According to this criticism, they were not adequately inculcated to espouse the notion of "public servants"; consequently, they tended to forget or de-emphasize their responsibility for serving their primary clients—namely, the general public. In fact, the public support or approval was not necessary for the exercise of their bureaucratic influence, and no time or

(15) For the discussion of this question, see Robert L. Peabody and Francis E. Rourke, "Public Bureaucracies," in James G. March (ed.), *Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1965), pp.802-837.

energy were invested in cultivating public support for their operations or in establishing effective communication lines with the general public. The key determinant of their administrative behavior was therefore to follow the directives of their political superiors. In the absence of specific political directives, they were most likely to be guided by their perceptions of changing public needs.

How did the senior bureaucrats view the general public its expected functions and weakness? As the main functions of general populace in South

Korea's political development, a majority of senior bureaucrats expected them to take active part in political process or respect law. At the same time, some answered that ordinary citizens fulfill the obligations assigned to them, increase patriotic spirit, develop cooperative efforts, or exercise critical mind on public matters. The notions of obligation, patriotism, cooperation, and austerity were uppermost in the way the senior bureaucrats articulated their perceptions of the ordinary citizens' expected political functions.

A substantial number of them, however, deplored

Table 9. General Public: Functions (N=108)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Participate in political process	66	61.1	66
Respect law	55	50.9	5
Fulfill obligations	28	25.9	10
Have patriotic spirit	29	26.9	13
Develop cooperative efforts	19	17.6	6
Exercise critical mind	18	16.7	1
Carry on austere life	4	3.7	4

that the general public had a low level of political participation, public concern, and knowledge about public affairs. They also pointed out the weakness of patriotic spirit of self-reliance and the tendency of individualistic or insincere attitudes. Yet, they hesitated to criticize the general public as luxu-

rious and corrupt. The prevailing sentiment that the general public was not well equipped to determine public policies and political direction was likely to constitute a conceptual basis for the senior bureaucrats' superiority complex.

The younger bureaucrats more frequently ex-

Table 10. General Public: Weakness (N=103)

Answers	Numbers	Percent	First Choice
Have low participation and knowledge	61	59.2	20
Lack patriotic spirit	30	29.1	26
Have individualistic tendencies	20	19.4	10
Lack self-reliance	21	20.4	10
Suffer from social inequality	18	17.5	12
Embrace insincere attitude	15	14.6	5
Carry on luxurious and corrupt life	6	5.8	0

pected ordinary citizens' active political participation than did their older colleagues ($G=.18$; $C=.20^{***}$). It is probably indicative of the youthful

persons' higher idealism for active citizen role in political process. The frequency of the same answer rose from the humanists to the social

scientists, and it was the highest among the natural scientists ($G = -.19$; $C = .26^{***}$). The longer administrative service they had, more positive attitudes they showed in regard to the citizens' respect for law ($G = -.36$; $C = .18^{***}$). No other variable was significantly associated with the answer.

As far as the fulfillment of obligations was concerned, the older bureaucrats expected more from the general public than did the younger ones; 11 out of 28 persons (60.7%) who gave this answer were older than 45 years ($G = -.24$; $C = .14$). The humanists expected more than the social scientists, who were in turn a little more positive than the natural scientists ($G = .21$; $C = .23^{**}$). Compared with those who were quickly promoted to their present status, the slowly promoted ones had a greater expectation from the general public in achieving their assigned obligations ($G = .31$; $C = .13^*$). The criticism made against the ordinary citizens' limited participation and knowledge was widely shared by all subsets of senior bureaucrats irrespective of their differences in social and administrative backgrounds. The bureaucrats with long administrative service were slightly more critical than the rest ($G = -.13$; $C = .13^*$).

The general public's weak patriotism was more often voiced by the younger bureaucrats in comparison with the older ones ($G = .16$; $C = .12^*$); the former military officers were more critical than other persons ($G = -.16$; $C = .13^*$). It is not surprising that those who were young and/or had military experience were more easily disappointed by the public's display of weak patriotism. The exactly reverse tendency was found in the bureaucrats' perception of the general public's individual propensities. The younger they were, the less critical comments they made; 15 out of 20 persons who offered that criticism were over the age of 45 ($G = -.63$; $C = .26^{***}$). The career

civil servants were more critical than those who moved from the military establishment to civilian bureaucracy ($G = -.19$; $C = .13^*$). Again, the bureaucrats of long administrative service record were more critical of the citizens' individualistic indulgence than their junior associates ($G = -.21$; $C = .14^*$).

Conclusions and Implications

As the preceding discussions show (indicate), the senior civilian bureaucrats in South Korea had a complex perception of various components—both organized and unorganized of the political system. It is quite clear that there was a considerable degree of intra-bureaucratic cleavage in that perception. Our data failed to corroborate the thesis that the bureaucrats share a common set of political perceptions and attitudes primarily because they are uniformly inculcated in the same organizational setting (milieu). This implies that in order to understand the way the bureaucrats perceive of political institutions, interest articulation, public participation, and the like, we should not only consider the organizational context of their administrative behavior, but also assess a significant impact of other possible determinants such as their pre-bureaucratic socialization experiences and different bureaucratic careers.

The senior bureaucrats assigned a greater degree of representative and aggregative functions to the popularly elected legislative branch than to political parties and interest groups. Further, they were less critical of the National Assemblymen's incompetence and selfishness than those of other political institutions. No significant conceptual divergence was found in their responses to the governing and opposition political parties. They recognized an equally legitimate, positive status of both parties, particularly with respect to party-opinion linkages, but profusely criticized

their functional weaknesses. The opposition party was a little more frequently expected to articulate public policy alternatives and to check the Administration. In general, however, the difference between "ins" and "outs" did not effect the bureaucrats' perceptions of political parties to any great extent. They tended to regard the DRP not as supportive of their activities, but as competitive of their authority.

One possible exception to substantial intra-bureaucratic cleavage took place in regard to interest groups. The bureaucrats had a narrow conception of specific political functions to be assumed by interest groups, and this conception was commonly shared by them irrespective of their divergent social and administrative backgrounds. They were not yet prepared to recognize special interest groups, as an important, legitimate agent of input functions in the political system. Even though they expected a broad range of political activities from ordinary citizens, many bureaucrats readily agreed with the conclusion (criticism) that the general public suffered from the relative absence of concern and knowledge about political matters (public affairs) and thus failed to take active part in political processes. In fact, this criticism attracted the largest number of bureaucratic adherents among all the critical remarks made by our interviewees about all questions. If, indeed, the senior bureaucrats have such a low view of unorganized ordinary citizens' political competence, it is highly unlikely that they regard the general public as an independent source of functionally specific interest articulation or as an important group of clients whom they should constantly heed and serve.

Among the five social and administrative variables we chose to correlate with the bureaucrats' political perceptions, Age levels or generational difference was the most significant and consistent one capable of accounting for the variance of 9

out of 15 items of their criticisms on political matters. The younger they were, the more frequent criticisms they made about the functional weaknesses of the National Assembly, political parties, interest groups, and ordinary citizens. The only example of opposite direction was that the older bureaucrats were more critical of ordinary citizens' selfish tendencies. The findings may suggest that the youthful bureau chiefs are more dissatisfied and impatient with the performance of these constituent elements of the political system and more interested in getting things done; consequently, they are perhaps less likely to interact with other political elements in a mutually beneficial way, but more likely to assert their own elitist, self-righteous roles in translating societal demands and interests into public policies.

College majors, too, was significantly associated with 10 out of 15 items on expected functions, and 5 out of 15 items on criticisms. No consistent pattern emerged in these associations; the only notable pattern was that those with college training in social sciences were more centrist (moderate) and flexible than humanists and natural scientists both in identifying functions and in making criticisms about various elements of the political system. The percentages of the social scientists' answers to most questions fell somewhere between those of the other two groups.

Contrary to our initial expectation that the presence or absence of military experience has a significant influence upon the bureaucrats' political perceptions, we found no coherent pattern of statistical relations between military experience and political perceptions. Excepted from this generalization was a tendency that those who had military service records were more frequently critical of the governing party's three major weaknesses than the rest.

The speed of administrative promotion measur-

ed by the number of years needed by the bureaucrats to reach their present Grade II-A positions was the least significant variable; according to the chi-square test, it was significantly related to only three out of 30 political items discussed in this paper. Compared with their colleagues who were slowly promoted, the rapidly promoted bureaucrats were more frequently inclined to recognize the National Assembly's checks and balances over the Administration and to criticize the governing party's lack of vision and competence, but less frequently disposed to accept the general public's expected achievement of political obligations.

Unlike speed of promotion, the length of administrative service had appreciable relations with some items of political perceptions. The senior bureaucrats who spent more than 15 years were more tolerant of the functional weaknesses of political institutions than their less-experienced associates, but they were more distinctly critical of the general public's deficiencies. On the basis of these findings we can further suggest that as the bureaucrats cultivate more direct experiences of dealing with political institutions, they become more realistic and lenient about these institutions and that as they spend more time in the high

bureaucratic positions, they become more authoritarian toward the unorganized, powerless general public.

Our data demonstrate a wide gap between the senior bureaucrats' normative expectations and explicit criticisms in regard to the roles of the legislature, political parties, interest groups, and ordinary citizens in South Korea's political development. The expectations were positive and high, but the negative comments were strong and pervasive. The senior bureaucrats seem to espouse, consciously or not, what might be called a dualistic conceptual bias. While they set an unrealistically high standard of expected performance about various elements of the political system, they are quick to blame that the performance of these elements falls far short of their standards. This bias is likely to reinforce their propensity that since other elements of the political system fail to fulfill the required political responsibilities, they cannot help but assume the bulk of both input and output functions in the political conversion process. Added to this self-righteousness in the fact that they are indeed better educated, more experienced, and more knowledgeable about political and administrative issues than other elements of South Korea's political system.