

 Interview



Lew, Seok-Choon
Professor of Sociology,
Yonsei Univ.

Q: How do you think 'anti boom' in our society came about?

A: As far as I know few years ago, Kang Jun Man, professor at ChunBuk Univ. claimed that the culture of criticism in Korea is not firmly established and therefore called for a constructive culture of criticism through using real names. And so, by publishing a magazine called, 'People and Ideas', he started to criticize the government's ideas directly. People who led the current economic growth were the conservatives, and criticisms of these people in the magazine were soon on the Internet, then this anti movement enlarged with the start of 'Ddanji Ilbo' together with the emergence of many other anti-sites.

Q: What kind of influences will anti-sites have on society?

A: If the criticisms are not done with real names, then I personally don't think there will be any positive influences. However, if one denounce the other without responsible for his or her statement, then it will bring negative influences to the society just promoting only a degraded culture of criticism. Freedom to criticize in our society must be guaranteed by every means; however, the most important factor is the use of real names, and responsibility.

Q: Anti sites do possess the latent ability and possibility to reform society. To make this movement on-line continue off-line, what kind of efforts are needed?

A: If in Samsung, the president or the person who is responsible is Lee Kun Hee, however, people who are in charge of anti-sites are like ghosts to me. They don't accept

as much as responsibility as they should. Once I wrote an article in defense of the *Chonsun Ilbo*, and a lot of critical messages from unknown people came back to me. They didn't even know who I was and if I wanted to discuss this matter with them further, there would be no way for me to know who they are. I don't object to the freedom of expressing opinions. There was this case few months ago in Dongguk Univ.

where a student and a sociology Professor K had a relationship. However, the student sued the professor in the end, and this incident was publicized at Dongguk Univ's website. However, this message was pasted on the Yonsei Univ. website, without changing the word, 'our school.', and this case was misunderstood to be a Yonsei Univ. matter. This aroused misunderstanding about a professor in our school whose surname also begins with K, and this can be regarded as a 'injury' whether direct or indirect.

Q: In relation to 'anti -movement' there is also an 'anti chapel movement' in our school. How do you view this matter?

A: If they criticize the unjust system of the school and campaign for the right thing, it must be supported and applauded in any way. However, throwing paper airplanes from the auditorium or hindering others and ruining the chapel atmosphere so is not a pleasant sight. If they really want to do a feasible 'anti-chapel' movement they must gather people's signature and submit them to the school authorities, or carefully plan other realistic plans.