

Statement from Danish Korean Rights Group

Since DKRG submitted the initial 53 applications on August 23, I have received many inquiries from adoptees from all over the world. I don't have exact numbers on how many messages I have received, but it is well over 200 messages, and counting, from Korean adoptees from all over the world.

DKRG has decided that adoptees from outside Denmark should be given the opportunity to apply as well.

That is why I stand here today, September 13.

Today I have handed in 232 new application to the Commission. 163 from Denmark and 69 from countries other than Denmark, from adoptees placed around the world, including the USA, Norway, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium.

To summarize, DKRG has submitted a total of 283 applications with requests for investigation from adoptees from South Korea.

We add to this declarations of support from adoptees placed by adoption agencies other than Holt and KSS, and adoptive parents...

I have received many inquiries from all over the world, and most adoptees are very worried. They are afraid that this case will mean that the adoption agencies will try to get rid of incriminating material.

Let me put it plain and simple, adoptees are afraid that the adoption agencies will destroy and dispose of our original documents to prevent the truth about adoption from South Korea from being known.

DKRG has had reasonable grounds to suspect that falsification of adoptees' documents has occurred to enable overseas adoption. This is what is stated in DKRG's request to the Commission, and this is what appears again and again from statements from adoptees in Denmark and the rest of the world. An example:

The adoptee Ms. Stephens from the US writes to me: " I was told by the social worker, Mrs. Kim (KSS), that most likely the name provided as my mother's was a false name, probably changed **by a KSS employee**. In making me an "orphan," KSS erased my mother's identity from my records, making it impossible for me to find her. It is my belief that my mother wants me to find her as she wrote letters to my father and sent him photos of me. My father died before I could meet him"

In addition we have received several emails with the exact same wording: "We have found that the story for your adoption at KSS is different from the real story" - quote Ms. Kim, head of KSS.

I am standing here with a letter from one of the adoption agencies, and this letter proves that this is precisely what happened. Let me read it out loud to you. This is a letter to an adopted person:

"First of all, I would like to apologize for the mistake in your adoption file written in English. It says you were transferred from Namkwang Children's Home in Pusan to KSS for international adoption. In fact, it was made up just for adoption procedure, and now I would like to share your adoption background as written in the original paper", quote Ms. Lee, KSS

Ladies and Gentlemen! This cannot be seen as anything other than a pure and unequivocal confession!

Please note the concluding remark: "In fact, it was made up just for adoption procedure...".

For years, adoption agencies have told adoptees that the secrecy of adoption papers has been to protect the identities of the biological parents, citing privacy rules.

But no! The letter from KSS states: "In fact, it was made up just for adoption procedure...", with no mention at all about the privacy of birth parents.

This time we deliver cases from adoptees who can prove that their adoptions were done without the consent of their birth parents. In fact, several adoptees report that they have been stolen by Holt. We have a case from Norway that shows this and this Norwegian adoptee is actually fighting to have the adoption canceled.

I have also received an email from a Korean family who asks DKRG to help find their brother in Denmark. He was taken by Holt and sent to Denmark according to the Korean family. As soon as we receive a picture of the brother, the DKRG and the rest of the Danish Korean community in Denmark will initiate a "man hunt" for the lost brother taken by Holt about 40 years ago.

These cases clearly show that there are victims of adoption both overseas and here in Korea.

Last week I visited the Mapo District Jumin Center to test what my orphan hojuk can actually do. It appears as an official document, but in reality my orphan hojuk is a construction made by the adoption agency and laundered by the Korean state organs at this time.

Most adoptees have an orphan hojuk, regardless of whether they are from Holt or from KSS. The procedure is the same.

I am showing my own private information here as an example, as I cannot show other adoptees' private information.

This is the orphan hojuk that appears in my adoption case. I was given it when I visited Holt during my last visit to Korea. Here I was told that I lost my Korean citizenship September 13th, 1974. I was thorough and asked Holt several times. I also asked them to show me exactly where it says in my hojuk that I lost my Korean citizenship and I was shown it.

The problem is just that it is not true and that Holt has deliberately given me wrong

information.

발표제5호작성

K-4178.

No 1

본지: 서울특별시 마포구 합정동 叁百八拾貳번지의 拾四호

성년 1974년 4월 拾六일 마포 구청장의 조서에 의하여 일가항립 편제

전호주의
의 관계

부

모

호 주

洪 致

전호적

본

남 南陽

입 전
신 호적

출 생

성지壹千九百七拾四
叁월 拾九일

성지壹千九百七拾四년 4월 拾五일 서울지정법원의 허가에 의하여 성을洪 으로 본을南陽으로 창

At Mapo District Jumin Center i got this updated orphan hojuk:

제 적		장 원	
별표제5호서식		2-4-48.	
제 적		No.	1
본 적	서울특별시 마포구 합정동 參百八拾貳번지의 拾四호		
서기壹千九百七拾四년 四 월 拾六일 마포 구청장의 조서에 의하여 일가창립 편제			
1999년 1월 9일 서울지방법원서부지원 직권기재허가 동일 일 무후가 직권합조 (노승환)			
전호주와의 관계		전호적	
부	본	입 적	
모	남 南陽	도 는	
호 주		신 호 적	
張 致		출 생	주 정 서기壹千九百七拾四년 參 월 拾六일
서기壹千九百七拾四년 四 월 拾五일 서울가정법원의 허가에 의하여 성을張 으로 본을南陽으로 창립			
서기壹九二二년 七 월 주일 대 마포국국적취득서기壹九二二년 拾 월 주일 국적취탈허가 서기壹九二二년 拾 월 六일 법무부장관국적상실보고제직			

My updated orphan hojuk shows that I did not lose my Korean citizenship on September 13, 1974 as Holt informed me 3-4 weeks ago. But that my Korean citizenship was revoked in 1984.

I have thus been both a Korean citizen and a Danish citizen for the first 10 years of my life.

From the updated orphan hojuk, it also appears that my hojuk was revoked in the year 1999.

My hojuk bears stamps from the Ministry of Justice of Korea and from the Seoul Western Court, and the changes were made by the Mapo District Jumin Center.

I am asking, now knowing that I have been a Korean citizen for 10 years of my life, I am asking what my Korean ID number was.

The response from the Mapo District Jumin Center is that I have never been birth registered, not by the Bethel Garden Orphanage nor by Holt, and therefore I have no ID number.

I am asking how to register a hojuk and issue official travel certificates for me and other adoptees if we are not birth registered and have no ID number.

The Mapo District Jumin Center cannot answer that, because without a birth registration, there is no official birth certificate on me in the Korean system and without a birth registration, there is no ID number. In other words, I don't exist!

I tell the Mapo District Center that I absolutely exist, because I am standing right here in flesh and blood with my arms full of documents issued by the Korean state with a Korean name and a date of birth, and the Jumin Center has just given me a hojuk full of new stamps from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea and the Western Court of Korea.

The official travel certificate issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea to tens of thousands of adoptees, is clear evidence that we were Korean citizens at that time. Here is one of many identical examples that I have been allowed to show with the permission of Boonyoung Han, who, like me, is adopted.

It says that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with his signature, requests the Korean citizen to enter Denmark. It says "a national of the Republic of Korea"! That means a Korean citizen! This is a verification of our Korean citizenship.

7. 11. 1944

a national of the Republic of Korea,
proceeding to THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK

to pass freely without let or hindrance, and to afford the aforementioned person such assistance and protection as may be necessary.

NOVEMBER 19, 1974

Date: NOVEMBER 19, 1974
HONG KONG

At the Jumin Center I asked when the changes in Hojuk were made and also asked at whose request the changes were required to be inserted. The Mapo District Jumin Center says that they suspect that it happened with correspondence between Holt and the respective authorities: Seoul Western Court, the Ministry of Justice of Korea and the Mapo District Jumin Center.

I am asking if I may have access to this correspondence. The answer is that I have never existed because I am not registered at birth and therefore a record has never been created for me in the Korean system.

We can conclude that a separate system has been made for the adopted, where the ordinary laws of Korea do not apply. The system means that adoptees asking questions about background information are caught in a circle - a loop - where our questions end in the same answer, namely that we are not birth registered and therefore there is no record on us. We do not have any biological family because we are only registered with our orphan hojuks.

And then we are back at the wording of the KSS letter: "In fact, it was made up just for adoption procedure..."

We have found out how the adoption agencies' approach has been. So here comes the recipe for how to make tens of thousands of Korean children disappear - into non-existence. It's not that hard. You just have to possess a sufficient amount of cynicism.

Again, to protect other adoptees' private information, I have used my own adoption documents to illustrate this.

So come along and get an insight into the adoption agencies' "transformation machine":

Date	Event	Remarks
1974-03-16	Birth	The date I was born (?)
1974-03-16	Relinquished by birth mother to Bethel Garden	Same day as I was born (?) Where is documentation of my mother's consent to my relinquishment to Bethel Garden?
1974-03-27	Admission to Holt from Bethel Garden orphanage	
1973-28-03	Placed at foster mother	
1974-04-15	Holt requests Family Court to establish family record, where I, an infant, am the family chief	This happens without Holt's legal guardianship
		This happens without Holt making birth registration
1974-07-16	Hojuk is established on request of Holt	This happens without Holt's legal guardianship
		This happens without Holt making birth registration
1974-07-29	Holt acquires legal guardianship	This happens 4 months after admission to Holt
		How can Holt has acted on my behalf until then without legal guardianship?
		Who is the legal guardian until this date?
		Holt doesn't make any birth registration
1974-08-07	Statement of release for adoption	Has this process been started earlier than 1974-07-29?

1974-09-13	Sent to Denmark	
1974-09-15	Arrive to Denmark	
1975	Danish citizenship acquired	
1984	My Korean citizenship is revoked	Korean Ministry of Justice
1999	Orphan huk is revoked	Seoul Western Court
2010	First request from me to Holt to see original documents	

The exchange of children between orphanages and adoption agencies is where the children's information is laundered. In the material that we present here, it is shown that there are even adoptees who have never been to the orphanage that appears in their documents, and we now know why!

The KSS letter states: "It says you were transferred from Namkwang Children's Home in Pusan to KSS for international adoption. In fact, it was made up just for the adoption procedure, and now I would like to share your adoption background as written in the original paper" quote from KSS.

I began this speech by expressing the fear of many adoptees, that adoption agencies will try to evade the truth by destroying or hiding our original documents. The adoptees fear that by participating in this case they will be met with reprisals from the adoption agencies.

This applies particularly in the many cases of switched identities. Here, the adoptees fear that by participating in this case, they may never learn their true identity.

I have spoken to many identity-switched adoptees who have been told that they are not the person they thought they were. One of the adoptees told me that after the adoption agency told her that she is not who she is, she feels like an empty shell and it is obviously important for her and the others Switched to know who they actually are. Something the adoption agencies choose not to tell them.

The knowledge and insight we have gained over the last few weeks from the documents submitted by adoptees who wish to participate in the TRC case shows that the fears of the thousands of adoptees are well founded. The KSS letter shows that all this was planned and deliberate!

Therefore, DKRG has decided to write a letter to the President of Korea, in which we urgently request the Korean government and authorities to protect the adoptees' original documents and protect the adoptees from reprisals.

I want to thank you all for coming today. This case matters not only to us who have requested the commission to investigate thoroughly, but to all adoptees from South Korea.

Now I will end this press conference and go to the office of the President of South Korea to deliver our letter.