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U.S. SECURITY POLICY FOR THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA IN THE 1990'S

BY

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As we approach the decade of the 1990's and the next century, which many are already calling the "Pacific Century", the United States must assess the many issues facing the U.S. presence in the Republic of Korea and determine what America's future role on the peninsula will be. This paper will attempt to contribute to that assessment.

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Working Papers in International Studies



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**THE HOOVER INSTITUTION
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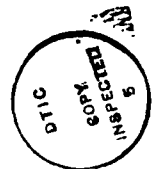
ABSTRACT

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Keywords: Military Forces United States; Overseas Employment; Mission Difficulties.



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PREFACE

Nearly one hundred years ago, the then United States Secretary of State, Elihu Root, stated: "The Mediterranean is the ocean of the past, the Atlantic is the ocean of the present and the Pacific is the ocean of the future."¹ At that time, little could he imagine the dimensions his prophecy would someday take. Today, the Pacific Basin is the most dynamic and rapidly growing economic area of the world. The region now possesses roughly 50 percent of the earth's gross national product (GNP).² By the year 2000, economic analysts estimate that 50 percent of all world trade will occur in the Pacific arena.³ Since 1978, United States (U.S.) trade with the Asian-Pacific has surpassed trade with Western Europe.⁴ In 1987, American trade with the Pacific Rim nations totaled \$241 billion; that with Western Europe amounted to \$170 billion.⁵ By the end of this century, U.S. trade with the Pacific countries will likely double that with Europe.⁶ In light of the phenomenal growth of many Western Pacific economies, it is no wonder that economic forecasters are already calling the next century the "Pacific Century."

Clearly, the economic balance of the world is shifting from the Atlantic to the Pacific.⁷ Along with that shift in economics is a distinct shift in influence in world affairs. Increasingly so, the Pacific region impacts significantly on

world security, and the countries of the Asian-Pacific are more and more critical to international political stability.⁸ A new order is emerging in the Western Pacific; it is an international system built on economic pragmatism and based on cooperation and mutual economic interests.⁹ It is, perhaps, a signal that the bipolar world we used to know is giving way to a dynamic, multipolar world where trade and economics rule king over sheer military might and geographical size.

Within the vast Pacific, Northeast Asia has emerged as the critical locale. It has been called a region of superlatives. It is home to the two most rapidly developing economies in the world, Taiwan and the Republic of Korea (ROK); home to the world's second largest economy and largest foreign aid spender, Japan; home to the most populated nation and the world's greatest potential market, the People's Republic of China (PRC); and home to one of the world's most isolated and intransigent societies, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

In light of Northeast Asia's strategic location and tremendous economic capacity and potential, the United States has a strong vested interest in remaining an active participant in the politics and economics of the region. Admiral Huntington Hardisty, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, emphasized the criticality of the area in a recent speech at the National Defense University Pacific Symposium: "The economic future of the United States is inextricably

tied to the prosperity of the Pacific and is dependent on our ability to successfully maintain our economic and security leadership roles in the Pacific."¹⁰ However, because of the dynamism and diversity inherent in Northeast Asia, Washington can expect the economic and security interests of the region's other major powers (China, Japan and the Soviet Union) to confront the United States with both new opportunities and serious challenges well into the 21st Century. In particular, the area will become a critical arena for U.S./Soviet competition. Thus, as Professor Stephen Gibert of Georgetown University notes: "Northeast Asia will play an increasingly important role in international affairs, affecting the security and prosperity of the United States to a degree not imagined a generation ago."¹¹ To safeguard its interests there, the United States retains both formal and informal security relationships with the friendly nations of the area, and nearly 90,000 American military personnel (at an annual price of \$42 billion, or 14 percent of the U.S. defense budget) are routinely stationed in Japan, South Korea and the waters of the Northwest Pacific.¹² In sum, the American strategy in the region is based on the deterrent value of superior maritime capability, forward deployed forces which are able to be reinforced quickly, strong alliances and good relations with our nonallied friends.¹³

Washington's most important ally and trading partner in

Northeast Asia is Japan. Japan is the cornerstone of U.S. Asian policy and is vital to America's security and economic interests in the region. Consequently, the maintenance of Japan's security and economic vitality is the United States' priority security objective in Northeast Asia.¹⁴ Because of the nation's geostrategic location vis-a-vis the Russian port of Vladivostok, headquarters for the Soviet Pacific Fleet, Japan is key to U.S. efforts to deter Moscow's adventurism in the Western Pacific, a policy better known as "strategic denial." The Russian fleet simply cannot reach open seas without passing through Japanese waters. As one American naval analyst stated: "Japan stands like bars on the bear's cage, blocking free Soviet access to the Pacific."¹⁵

Japan is also America's second largest trading partner next to Canada; the United States is Japan's largest market. Together, the two countries account for the largest economies on earth (gross domestic products of \$4.5 trillion for the U.S. and \$2.1 trillion for Japan),¹⁶ and between them they conduct the world's largest volume of transoceanic trade and investment.¹⁷ Japan's exports to the United States in 1988 amounted to \$93.2 billion, while American exports to Japan totalled \$37.7 billion.¹⁸ In sum the U.S. and Japanese economies are inextricably intertwined. To depict that relationship, there is a saying that if the "United States sneezes, the Japanese catch cold." Many

Japanese businessmen will alter that diagnosis to "pneumonia."

To further demonstrate the magnitude of the two economies, the following figures are cited: Japan and the United States "account for one-third of the world's total production; are the two largest sources of investment capital in the world; consume about one-half of the oil imported by industrialized nations; have the largest communities of scientists and engineers; use one-third of the world's production of raw materials; with only 8 percent of the world's population, are the largest producers of semiconductors, computers, steel, automobiles, and many other kinds of machinery and heavy industrial products; and share the leadership in many areas of emerging technology."¹⁹

Critical to the defense of Japan and the maintenance of peace and stability throughout Northeast Asia is the Korean peninsula. Because of its important geopolitical and strategic location in the region, Korea is where the national interests and rivalries of the four major powers in East Asia (China, Japan, the U.S. and the Soviet Union) intersect. Stanford University Professor Kyongsoo Lho notes that "if one subscribes to the simple imagery of the Cold War," Korea is "an area where the interests of the free world and those of the Communists confront each other across the 38th parallel."²⁰ One United Nations (UN) delegate described Korea as "the most durable area of East-West tensions" in

the world today.²¹

As a result of the partisan mix of security arrangements involving the four major powers and the two Koreas, another conflict on the peninsula would likely escalate into at least a regional fray in which the major powers would all become involved. Consequently, renewed fighting in Korea would pose a potentially grave threat to the security of Japan and the stability of the entire region.²² Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger probably best sums up the stakes involved when he said that the security of Korea is "pivotal to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia, which, in turn, is vital to the security of the United States."²³ Clearly, then, Washington's interest in Korea is derived from more regional concerns; i.e., it is not based solely on the North Korean threat but, to a larger extent, vital national interests in the region as a whole.²⁴ This is not to say that the U.S. has no interest in Korea. Quite the opposite is true. Americans have deep emotional ties with the peninsula as the result of substantial personal sacrifice there and feel a strong obligation to sustain the freedom of the South Korean people, and economic interest in the Republic of Korea continues to expand as that nation emerges as a world economic power. However, Korea is not vital to United States interests. The peninsula could go the way of Vietnam and yet not unduly jeopardize U.S. national interests.

Because of the economic and security reasons mentioned earlier, the same could not be said if Japan was to fall or if the United States was pushed out of Northeast Asia entirely.

Today, the Korean peninsula remains as one of the world's most militarized areas as nearly one and a half million combatants square off along a narrow, 150-mile long demilitarized zone (DMZ). General Louis Menetrey, the current UN commander in Korea, describes the peninsula as "an environment of turbulence and uncertainty."²⁵ Because of the tensions in Korea and the wide-ranging consequences of renewed hostilities there, the Republic of Korea is the focus of the U.S. security effort in Northeast Asia. It is in South Korea that the United States has "dug in" and sent the message that the American commitment to the defense of the ROK and the other non-Communist nations of the region is firm. With nearly 43,000 service men and women stationed in Korea, to include the 2nd Infantry Division positioned close to the DMZ, the U.S. has essentially established a "trip wire" to guarantee almost immediate and automatic involvement in another Korean conflict.

America's "forward deployed" posture in Korea has been a tremendous success story. It ensured peace on the peninsula for the past thirty-six years, a peace which contributed immensely to the stability of the entire Northeast Asia region. The United States security commitment to

South Korea and the other non-Communist nations of the area essentially provided a "security umbrella" which allowed those countries the "breathing space" they needed to launch their economies and respective brands of democracy.

However, dramatic changes have taken place in Korea and the other countries of the region as a result of the area's relative tranquility since the Korean War. The fledging economies the U.S. once nurtured have matured and now offer stiff competition to American enterprise. A greater nationalistic spirit is permeating the area, and America's friends there are becoming more self-assured and confident in their ability to manage their own destinies. They are becoming increasingly irritated over foreign influence in their internal affairs. In some areas of the region, particularly in South Korea, there is growing anti-Americanism and heightened resistance to a U.S. military presence. Trade frictions between the United States and its Northeast Asia allies now occur with much greater frequency than before, and each day, it seems, there are new doubts raised over Washington's defense commitment in the area and America's ability to sustain the prominence the U.S. once held in Northeast Asia.

In spite of the many changes which have taken place in Korea, the growing complexity of the region and the new challenges from friends and adversaries there, United States security policy in the Republic of Korea has remained

virtually unchanged for the past decade. There has been no serious rethinking of the U.S. role in Korea since President Carter proposed the removal of American forces from the peninsula in 1977.

With a new administration in Washington, the prospects of reduced U.S. defense spending, and a host of fresh opportunities and challenges confronting American interests in Korea and all of Northeast Asia, **now** is the time to assess the many issues facing the U.S. military presence in the Republic of Korea, **now** as we approach the decade of the 1990's and the "Pacific Century."

This paper will attempt to contribute to that assessment.

BACKGROUND

With the end of the Korean War in 1953, the economies of both North and South Korea were left in a state of ruin. Thousands of people on both sides of the 38th parallel were homeless and destitute, and hundreds of families were divided as travel across the border separating the two countries was denied. The DPRK paid a heavy price for its act of aggression, but the nation soon showed signs of reviving as the Soviets and Chinese quickly took on the task of rebuilding the war-torn country. Moscow's contribution of economic assistance amounted to millions of dollars, while China substituted manpower for money and equipment. However, Pyongyang's economic recovery was short-lived as emphasis on military spending rapidly sapped the government's coffers.

In the years since, North Korea has become a heavily armed, pugnacious and isolated society under the cult-like rule of Kim Il Sung. With a GDP of only \$22.5 billion, an annual growth rate of 2 percent, and mounting foreign debt problems, the North's economy has been virtually stagnant for the past two decades.²⁶ Problems facing the North Korean economy seem to stem from a variety of sources: a shortage of labor and poor quality workmanship; an inadequate transportation system; lagging energy production; old equipment; heavy defense burden; outdated technology and

a poor credit rating.²⁷ Out of a survey of 112 nations, the DPRK had the worst credit rating.²⁸ Though the North Koreans must realize that they need to reduce their outrageous defense spending and focus more attention on domestic affairs, there has been little evidence that they are willing to do that. Instead, Pyongyang continues to arm the country at an alarming rate.²⁹

In the South, economic recovery following the Korean War was slow to happen. Despite generous economic assistance from the U.S., the ROK economy could not get off the ground primarily because of serious internal problems: a scant economic infrastructure, a small natural resources base, faction ridden leadership, and wide spread corruption within the government. Only after Park Chung Hee seized power in 1960 and focused the nation's energy on development did the economy begin to show signs of progress.

As the two Koreas struggled with their recovery efforts, tensions began to again mount between Seoul and Pyongyang. However, in 1971, following a decade of extreme belligerency toward the South, Kim Il Sung shifted to a program of "peaceful" reunification and sought to portray North Korea as a peace-loving nation. While propagating this charade, Kim attempted to further his militant ambitions by means of economic competition with the South, through propaganda and political agitation aimed at undermining the stability of the Seoul government, and by

seeking world support for his cause, especially Third World support.

In 1972, the two Koreas attempted to work for the reduction of tensions and eventual reunification without outside interference, but those efforts failed within a year's time. Beginning in the fall of 1984, the two sides resumed discussions on economic cooperation, family reunions, sports participation and government exchanges. The most visible benefit of the talks were visits across the DMZ by some of the families separated by the Korean War. Talks broke off again in January 1986 as a result of Pyongyang's objection to the annual ROK-U.S. Team Spirit field training exercise which was ongoing in the South. In July 1987, North Korea offered a proposal for mutual force reductions, but the proposal was rejected by Seoul as a ploy to remove American forces from the peninsula.³⁰ The two Koreas made renewed contact in August 1988 to prepare the way for future joint sessions of the two national assemblies. Since then, there have been several meetings involving the two sides, as well as additional calls for high-level political and military talks. A proposal was even made for the two countries' prime ministers to meet. In spite of what appeared to be some headway in the negotiation process, there has been no substantial progress made on any issue. It seems that every time a breakthrough is about to occur, one side or the other raises an objection to some point

which effectively stalls ongoing dialogue.

Though there have been limited signs of a North Korean willingness to open up, the two Korean governments still view each other with a great deal of deep seated distrust and open hostility, which is compounded by explosive military tensions.³¹ Seemingly immovable obstacles remain in the path to the resolution of even the most basic differences. The widest gap of disagreement exists in the theoretical framework for reunification. The North wants a dramatic "first-step" solution--a unified nation of two autonomous states with a "supreme committee" to iron out conflicts in policies and viewpoints. The South wants a gradual approach of confidence building; i.e., cultural exchanges, trade, reunification of separated families, etc.³²

In response to Kim Il Sung's efforts to outdo the Republic of Korea and throw doubt on the legitimacy of the Seoul government, the South Koreans turned their attention to industrializing their economy while simultaneously seeking to expand their diplomatic relations with rest of the world. At the same time, they emphasized the development of their armed forces to counter the military machine established in the North.

The South Korean economy today is nearly five times that of the North's. With a GNP of approximately \$150 billion, a current growth rate hovering around 11 percent (12 percent the previous two years), and exports amounting

to \$59 billion (up 25 percent from the previous year), the Republic of Korea is emerging as an economic power in the Asian-Pacific and is already the world's seventeenth largest free market economy.³³ South Korea is America's seventh largest trading partner with exports to the U.S. last year totaling to \$31.5 billion, which resulted in a \$8.9 billion trade surplus for Seoul.³⁴

The South Koreans seek to expand their economic influence throughout the world and are constantly looking for new markets, to include Communist markets. The South's trade with the Soviet Bloc nations exceeded \$3 billion in 1988, and expectations for this year look even brighter.³⁵ Seoul established a formal trade office in Hungary last year, and plans for trade offices in the Soviet Union, Poland and Yugoslavia are in the offing. Trade with China, though a little meager in past years, topped the \$3 billion mark last year, as well.³⁶

The Republic of Korea has also been extremely successful in establishing diplomatic relations over a wide area of the world. Though not formally recognized by China or the Soviet Union, the South's relations with the two Communist giants have expanded and improved considerably in the past few years. Both countries sent teams to the Seoul Olympics in 1988, to Pyongyang's great displeasure. Additionally, ties with several of the Eastern European nations have shown significant improvement of late. This

year, full diplomatic relations were established with Hungary, the first Communist nation to formally recognize the Republic of Korea. As of the last count, Seoul maintains diplomatic relations with 129 countries, twenty-seven more than Pyongyang can boast.³⁷ Clearly, South Korea's international influence has expanded beyond the predictions of ten to fifteen years ago.

Militarily, the Republic of Korea continues its efforts to close the gap with North Korea. Military spending accounts for nearly 6 percent of the South's GNP, compared to 15-20 percent in the North. Dollarwise, however, Seoul spends roughly \$1.5 billion more a year on defense than does Pyongyang (\$5.73 billion compared to \$4.22 billion in 1987).³⁸ South Korea's active military presently numbers 629,000 strong (see Table 1), while the North's active strength totals almost one million.³⁹ Though North Korea has a decisive advantage in terms of numbers of men and weapons (in some cases a 2:1 or 3:1 advantage), the South has the qualitative edge; however, that edge has diminished somewhat during the recent past as a result of Pyongyang's acquisition of more sophisticated weapons from the Soviets in return for overflight and port privileges in the DPRK (notable additions to the North's inventory include MIG-23, MIG-25 and SU-25 combat aircraft; SA-3 and SA-5 surface-to-air missiles and ZSU-24 air defense guns).⁴⁰

With North Korea receiving most of its modern military

hardware from the Soviet Union, the Republic of Korea has had to rely primarily on U.S. military assistance for the past thirty-five years. However, the South Koreans are now producing much of their military equipment with their own heavy industry. American military assistance today is mainly limited to IMET (international military education and training) and FMS (foreign military sales); Washington no longer offers Seoul FMS credit. The ROK army just received 200 M-88 main battle tanks, a locally manufactured, substantially modified version of the U.S. M-1 Abrams tank. Additionally, the South Koreans recently purchased Javelin surface-to-air missiles and AH-1 antitank, guided weapon helicopters. In light of the South's progress in expanding and modernizing its military, parity with the North should be achieved in the late 1990's or early 2000's (the ROK is at about 65 percent parity now).⁴¹

On the political home front in the Republic of Korea, tremendous changes have occurred in the last few years. Probably most significant was the December 1987 popular election of Roh Tae Woo as president of the republic. Such a transition of power is unprecedented in South Korea's forty-year constitutional history.⁴² The event was an important milestone in the nation's struggle for a lasting democracy. Today, that democracy is still maturing under President Roh's leadership, though he is being severely challenged by growing numbers of leftist opposition groups,

radical students and clergy, and increasingly more militant labor organizations.

The presidential election was closely followed by the Republic of Korea's tremendously successful hosting of the 24th Summer Olympics. The event was Seoul's "coming of age" in the international community as the South Koreans used the games to show off their economic "miracle" and to demonstrate their social and political maturity.

Since the Olympics, there has been a ground swell of national pride and self-confidence throughout the South. Accompanying that has been rising anti-American sentiment, greater determination by the South Korean people to manage their own future, and increased resistance to the American military presence in Korea and the present ROK-U.S. security arrangement. Though the South Korean leadership has repeatedly stated the necessity for a continued United States military presence in the South (a view still shared by the majority of South Koreans), the growing national pride in the country will likely result in heightened demands for the Seoul government to assert greater control over the defense of the country.⁴³ Along with those demands will probably be increased pressure by the people for reunification and improved North-South relations.

It is within the context of South Korea's ongoing economic and political revolution that the United States must evaluate the Communist threat to the Republic of Korea

and the entire Northeast Asia region, assess America's national interests in the area and rethink the future U.S. military role in Korea.

THE THREAT

THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

With nearly one million people under arms (out of a population of 21.9 million), the DPRK has the fifth largest fighting force in the world (see Table 2 for a full accounting of the North's military strength). Sixty-five percent of Pyongyang's ground forces are within fifty miles of the DMZ and are structured in such a way and in such numbers that they clearly exceed reasonable defense requirements.⁴⁴ Armed with increasingly sophisticated Soviet-made weapons and abundant stocks of parts, ammunition and fuel, the North Korean military is able to launch a lightning attack across the DMZ and execute sustained combat for two months without outside assistance from the Soviets or Chinese.⁴⁵ Additionally, the North continues to dig invasion tunnels under the DMZ and persists in periodic displays of violence along the border.⁴⁶ Complicating the security issue are disturbing reports of stockpiled poisonous gas munitions and the development of a nuclear processing plant near a nuclear reactor, which could represent a first step in nuclear weapons production.⁴⁷ General Menetrey sums up the situation by saying: "The North Koreans have shown no signs of abandoning their threatening posture. We must treat the enemy strength and proximity as a real and immediate threat."⁴⁸

As for the possibility of a North Korean attack against the South, there are mainly two schools of thought on the subject. One school argues that the DPRK has never given up its goal of reunifying the peninsula by force, that the country's continuous military buildup is a true sign of Kim Il Sung's intentions.⁴⁹ The advocates of this philosophy feel that in light of the South's growing economic and military strength, the next four or five years will be the most dangerous as Kim will view that period as his last opportunity to fulfill his lifelong ambition--bringing the entire peninsula under his domination.

The other school probably provides a more realistic appraisal of the likelihood of renewed aggression. This school of thought believes that external influence, and Kim's own realization of what the outcome of an attack across the DMZ would be, are sufficient deterrents to further North Korean adventurism. According to this reasoning, Kim must be painfully aware of the risks involved in another engagement against the South. He knows that any such move would certainly draw a response from the Nuclear-backed U.S. forces in Korea and perhaps, the rest of the region, a response which could lead to mass destruction of the DPRK's economy and population. Surely, memories of the devastation caused by the Korean War must still linger in the back of Kim's mind.

The advocates of the second school further argue that

Kim realizes that neither the Soviets nor the Chinese want another war on the Korean peninsula, especially now as they seek reduced world tensions to allow them the "breathing space" they need for political reform and to repair their own broken economies. Clearly, Kim understands that a solo trip is too dangerous, and he does not want to do anything to jeopardize his relations with his two Communist benefactors while he still desperately relies on them for economic aid, military assistance and political support for his reunification agenda.

Though the chances of another Korean conflict appear slim, the United States must never overlook or miscalculate the dangerous and unpredictable nature of Kim Il Sung. He is not crazy, as many suspect, but is a deft politician who is one of the world's longest surviving national leaders. Despite rumors of his ill health and pending death, he is still firmly in control of the North. Even if he tones down his reunification rhetoric and presents a more convincing image of a peace-loving leader, he is unlikely to change his basic outlook and ambitions before he dies. If he is ever to feel that a reasonable chance of success exists--the so-called "decisive moment"--the possibility of another armed attack would be greatly increased. One or more of the following conditions might constitute such a moment:

-A weakening of the U.S. commitment to defend

South Korea, or any general impression that the United States is backing away from its Asian security obligations.

-A military conflict in another part of the world, especially if it draws away a significant number of U.S. forces from Korea or the region.

-A sharp increase in Soviet military and logistics support to North Korea and closer DPRK-Soviet strategic cooperation in Asia.

-An escalation of internal chaos in the Republic of Korea. ⁵⁰

As to what happens when Kim Il Sung dies, there is only speculation. Some predict (or hope) that more moderate forces will prevail following an expected power struggle. Others are convinced that the hard line will continue under Kims's son, Kim Chong Il, who already appears well entrenched in his position as heir apparent. There is concern that if the younger Kim is challenged following his father's death, he might try to forcibly reunite the peninsula as a means to assert his authority and strengthen his power base.

The United States must expect that the Korean peninsula will remain a highly volatile area of the world for some time to come, at least until Kim Il Sung dies and probably beyond. Tension along the DMZ will persist well into the 1990's and will continue to threaten peace and stability in

South Korea, as well as U.S. interests throughout the entire Northeast Asia region.

THE SOVIET UNION

Until quite recently, the Soviet Union has not been an Asian power per se.⁵¹ Though showing some interest in the region following World War II, the focus of Soviet attention in the twenty years following the war was on the security and development of Eastern Europe and European Russia. However, in the 1970's the Russians began to take note of the growing economic vitality of the Asian-Pacific, as well as the burgeoning U.S. relationship with China and Japan. Eager to benefit from the Asian prosperity and leery of the increasing collaboration among China, Japan and the United States, the Soviets rekindled their interest in the area. Since the late 1970's, Moscow has greatly expanded its military presence in the Soviet Far Eastern TVD (strategic theater) and has sought new political initiatives throughout the area. The Soviet Union's military strength in the region today consists of fifty-six ground combat divisions (though 60 percent are probably category three divisions composed primarily of cadre),⁵² over 900 ballistic missiles, 2500 aircraft, innumerable tactical nuclear weapons, and the largest of the Russian naval fleets (112 submarines, 73 surface combatants and over 400 other types of ships).⁵³ All total, nearly 1.7 million military personnel are stationed in the Soviet Far East (see Table 3 for a breakdown of forces).⁵⁴

In his 1986 Vladivostok speech, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev reaffirmed that the Soviet Union is an Asian-Pacific power with vital national interests in the area.⁵⁵ He acknowledged the importance of Japan and China in influencing the Soviet's "new look" in Asia and emphasized the necessity of good relations with those two countries.⁵⁶ He also addressed the restructuring of an admittedly ailing Soviet economy and stressed the need to increase trade and other "progressive forms of economic links with foreign countries (implicitly and for the most part, the dynamic non-Communist economies of the Western Pacific), including production cooperation and joint enterprise, and the construction of a specialized export base."⁵⁷

In the three years since the Vladivostok speech, Soviet foreign policy in the Asian-Pacific has undergone significant changes. The heavy-handed practices of the past have given way to "charm diplomacy," open negotiation of differences and peaceful overtures.⁵⁸ Among other offerings, the Russians have proposed confidence-building measures, nuclear-free zones, mutual U.S.-Soviet drawdown of forward deployed bases, and the formation of new multilateral organizations to address a wide range of issues.⁵⁹ Moscow's pullout from Afghanistan and its influence on Vietnam to withdraw troops from Cambodia did much to bolster Gorbachev's popularity and Soviet prestige

in the region. Clearly, the Russians hope to establish themselves as an Asian-Pacific power of the first order by achieving a transformation of the regional system of political, military and economic relations that have blocked Soviet acceptance in Asia for the past twenty years.⁶⁰ Central to Moscow's scheme will be efforts to:⁶¹

-Undermine U.S. influence in the area and breakdown American alliances there.

-Diminish the number of forces arrayed against them in the region (both along the Sino-Soviet border and offshore) and somehow nullify the current blockage of the Soviet Pacific Fleet's access to open waters. They especially want to eliminate the possibility of an allied "second front" in the Pacific.

-Intensify trade and economic relations with nations of the area in hopes of acquiring technology and funding to develop Siberia and the Soviet Far East, areas of great untapped natural resources which are seen as vital to the restructuring of the Soviet economy.⁶²

Clearly, then, Soviet strategy in the Asian-Pacific is no different than it is in other parts of the world. Through the maintenance of credible military capability and economic penetration in the region, Moscow hopes to obtain the basis for broad political influence and exploitation.⁶³

In spite of a considerable degree of lingering mistrust of the Soviets throughout the Asian-Pacific, the Russians have made impressive diplomatic and political gains in Asia.⁶⁴ In the economic arena, Soviet headway has been less remarkable. Though there has been a slight increase in trade with Japan, the most notable gains have been in economic relations with China. Since 1986, bilateral trade between the two countries increased by roughly 50 percent, and a further increase to approximately \$6 billion is expected by 1990.⁶⁵ Additionally, Moscow has agreed to refurbish seventeen Chinese industrial enterprises built with Soviet assistance in the 1950's and is helping with the construction of seven more such facilities.⁶⁶

Much improved relations with Japan have alluded the Soviet Union, however. The Japanese just do not appear eager to engage in any wide-ranging economic undertakings with Moscow. The Kurile Islands controversy, the Russian military presence in the Northwest Pacific and long harbored suspicions of Soviet intentions seem to be the most troublesome issues blocking any meaningful dialogue between the two nations.⁶⁷

Complicating Moscow's inroads into the Asian market place are factors inherent in the Soviet economic system which inhibit the competitiveness of Russian trade. Thomas Robinson of the American Enterprise Institute seems to have identified the fundamental reasons why the Soviets are

having a hard time breaking into the Asia markets:

"Moscow is incapable of participating in this economic system because of the nature of the closed Soviet economic system, which stresses autarky, currency inconvertibility, and a refusal to engage in reciprocally beneficial trade practices. Since the Asian economy is dominated by free market economies and processes--with even China moving cautiously into the broader, interdependent system--Moscow has only a small degree of economic maneuver in the region. The Soviets simply cannot appeal to the region on the basis of their comparatively inferior technology, non-participation in regional development institutions like the Asian Development Bank, unwillingness to open Soviet industry to at least partial foreign ownership, largely non-existent agricultural surpluses, and their poorly developed consumer goods sector. The Kremlin is thus forced to reduce the Soviet economic appeal to the three areas where it performs reasonably well: arms production, raw materials, and the lower end of the producer goods sector."⁶⁸

As for Soviet policies toward the Korean peninsula, Moscow views the two Koreas in the context of its larger ambitions in the Asian-Pacific. In the long term, the

Soviet objective is to expel the U.S. from South Korea and create a unified Korea controlled by a pro-Moscow Communist government, as happened in Vietnam.⁶⁹ Such an eventuality would significantly strengthen the Soviet foothold and influence in the region. In the interim, the Russians favor the status quo on the peninsula.⁷⁰ The absence of open conflict provides Moscow the "breathing space" it needs to implement internal reform and restructuring (perestroika), and it enhances Soviet opportunities to acquire technological and economic assistance from the industrial non-Communist nations of the Asian-Pacific. Additionally, the status quo keeps alive just enough tension on the peninsula to sustain Moscow's leverage over Pyongyang since the Soviet Union is North Korea's primary supplier of weapons and economic aid. Because of the North's geostrategic location, the Soviet Union will continue to woo Pyongyang through the provision of more advanced weaponry in exchange for strategic access to North Korea's airspace and warm water ports.⁷¹ The Pentagon describes this improved North Korea-Soviet military cooperation as the "most dramatic change in Pyongyang's foreign policy since the early 1970's."⁷²

Moscow probably will not establish full diplomatic relations with Seoul anytime in the near future out of regard for the relationship with Pyongyang, but the Russians can be expected to expand cultural and economic ties with

the South. As mentioned previously, trade between the two countries has shown steady increases. Last year, Soviet trade with South Korea amounted to \$215 million.⁷³ Additionally, the Soviets would like to establish a number of joint ventures with the South Koreans to develop Siberia and the Soviet Far East. The Russians simply do not have the technology and capital to undertake such an adventure alone. In light of Japan's hesitancy to engage in large-scale economic cooperation with the Soviets, the Republic of Korea may just become the Soviet Union's number one prospect for assistance. This realization has prompted some elements within the United States to urge Seoul to exercise caution in dealing with Moscow so as not to compromise long-term national interests of South Korea or its allies.⁷⁴

In spite of Soviet overtures of peace and good will and promises of military cutbacks, Moscow persists in spending heavily on defense,⁷⁵ and the Kremlin continues to expand and modernize its military forces in the Far Eastern TVD.⁷⁶ As Admiral Hardisty reports: "Soviet Pacific Forces have improved qualitatively and quantitatively across the board."⁷⁷ He goes on to say:

"The Soviets continue to upgrade their air and naval forces in the Far East military district. Reorganized air units, revitalized air defenses, the addition of front-line fourth-generation fighters and the addition

of Mainstay command and control aircraft are some of the qualitative upgrades designed to modernize Soviet air forces in this theater. The Soviet Pacific Fleet remains the largest of the Soviet fleets in terms of surface ships and craft, submarines and aircraft. The recent addition of Udaloy and Sovremenny destroyers and Akula and Delta III submarines demonstrates Soviet resolve to improve the Soviet Pacific Fleet's capabilities."⁷⁸

To date, plans for the promised removal of Soviet forces from the Far Eastern TVD have not been finalized,⁷⁹ though there has been some movement of troops and equipment from the Mongolian border with China.⁸⁰ These force reductions in Mongolia are certainly welcomed for China's sake, but they do not impact in the primary power projection threats the United States faces in the Western Pacific; i.e., naval and air forces such as aircraft carriers, amphibious ships, submarines, cruise missile-equipped ships and long-range bombers, none of which are included in Gorbachev's promised cuts.⁸¹

In light of the Soviet's continued military buildup and the expansion of Moscow's diplomatic initiatives in the region, the Soviet Union now poses the greatest threat to U.S. national interests in Northeast Asia.⁸² Though Soviet offensive action in the Asian-Pacific is not likely in the

near future, the expanded Russian presence in the area will present new and serious challenges to America's long-term security interests in the region, a locale where trade and security are inextricably linked.⁸³

Luckily, the United States already has extensive trade and military ties with many of the nations of the Asian-Pacific. Washington's friends there, the so-called anti-Soviet "camp", regardless of how loose the alliances and alignments are, still hold the preponderance of power, territory and other assets in Asia.⁸⁴ To date, these affiliations have served to severely limit Soviet maneuverability in Asia.⁸⁵ Fortunately, this arrangement will probably continue for the foreseeable future, but only if the United States and its friends in the region resolve to maintain and strengthen those links which have served their mutual interests so well in the past.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Though possessing the largest army in the world (three million troops) and the third largest navy, China is not viewed as a threat to South Korea or the Northeast Asia region for the foreseeable future. In fact, Washington considers the PRC as a critical buffer and deterrent against the expansion of Soviet military power and political influence in East Asia; consequently, the U.S. supports Chinese force modernization even though American arms shipments to China have been curtailed in the wake of student killings there.⁸⁶

For the decade of the 1990's, China will concentrate on its "Four Modernizations" program to improve the country's (in order of priority) agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense.⁸⁷ To achieve the level of development Beijing wants, several decades of a conflict-free environment and intensive trade linkages with the U.S., Japan and other industrialized nations will be required. This is not to say that the Chinese will not try to expand their influence in the Asian-Pacific. They will certainly want a more active role in the region, and although military modernization is last on the list of national priorities, the upgrade of its armed forces will be an essential element of China's reassertion of its power and prestige in Asia.⁸⁸ Mostly, however, China, like the Soviet Union, wants

"breathing space" to focus on internal affairs. China's position was aptly stated during the 13th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in October of 1987:

"China will carry peaceful and independent foreign policy and establish relations of peace and cooperation with all countries of the world based on five principles of peaceful coexistence. Together with all peace-loving nations and peoples of the world we shall apply our effort so that the international situation will develop along the direction favorable for all peoples and peace in the world." ⁸⁹

The Chinese can be expected to improve their relations with the Soviets as an effort to reduce tensions along their shared border, but any significant level of Sino-Soviet cooperation should not be anticipated. ⁹⁰ On commenting about the present thaw in Beijing's relations with Moscow, Chinese Premier Li Peng announced: "We hope that China and the Soviet Union will become good neighbors, but they will not become allies." ⁹¹ China will continue to view the Soviets as their chief adversary as visions of Soviet "encirclement" still remain deeply engrained in the Chinese psychic. ⁹² Though claiming a policy of "equidistance" between the Soviet Union and the United States, the PRC can be expected to continue to lean toward

the U.S. in spite of the current friction between the two governments. America's trade and cultural relations with China are growing and becoming increasingly more important to both countries--a relationship which contributes greatly to the stability of the region.⁹³

As for China's position regarding the two Koreas, Beijing obviously does not want another conflict on the peninsula.⁹⁴ Though the PRC openly endorses Kim Il Sung's reunification themes, China has no desire to support a North Korean excursion across the DMZ. Renewed fighting would severely stress the Chinese economy and would jeopardize Sino-American relations. Additionally, Sino-Japan relations would likely plunge, and North Korea would undoubtedly be driven even deeper into the Soviet camp in quest of modern weapons. The outcome of another war, regardless of the winner, would probably not be satisfactory to China. A victorious and more pro-Soviet North Korea might be too powerful and independent minded to suit Beijing, whereas an armed non-Communist nation across the Yalu River from China's industrial heartland would be even less tolerable. Instead, China appears satisfied with the status quo on the Korean peninsula.⁹⁵ Privately, the Chinese probably view the presence of U.S. combat forces in Korea as a stabilizing factor on the peninsula and a valuable check to Soviet expansionism in Northeast Asia.⁹⁶

For fear of pushing Pyongyang even closer to the

Soviets, China will likely avoid full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea in the foreseeable future. However, Beijing will continue to cultivate informal relations with Seoul and seek to benefit from South Korea's economic success. The two nations have already exchanged trade offices on a "semiofficial" basis and are involved in ten joint-venture projects as South Korea seeks new markets and the PRC searches for foreign technology.⁹⁷ With the South's trade to China amounting to nearly \$3 billion last year, the PRC is Seoul's third largest trading partner.⁹⁸

THE UNITED STATES RESPONSE

Considering the growing prosperity of Northeast Asia and the region's increasing influence on world affairs, the dynamic changes occurring within South Korea, and the expanding Communist threat in North Korea and the entire Asian-Pacific, what should Washington's response be in terms of addressing the major issues confronting the U.S. military presence in Korea? This portion of the paper will analyze that response.

Any response must be predicated on U.S. national interests in Northeast Asia, long-term security objectives there and general assumptions regarding the threat, and America's future involvement in the region. For the purposes of this paper, it is safe to say that Washington's primary interests in the area are national security and trade. The minimum long-term security objectives are the prevention of any nation or nations from achieving hegemony over any of America's friends in the region and the prevention of any action which would exclude the United States from economic and political participation in the area; i.e., to contain communism and restrain Soviet influence. On a narrower front, Washington's long-term security objective in Korea is to help the South Koreans attain the capability to defend themselves against a purely North Korean attack without direct participation by U.S. forces.⁹⁹

As for general assumptions, six are appropriate:

-U.S. security strategy will remain primarily global. In Northeast Asia, the American focus will be regional rather than Korea-specific.

-The U.S. military budget will undergo zero or negative growth in the foreseeable future.

-The importance of Northeast Asia to U.S. national interests will increase in the decade of the 1990's and probably beyond.

-The DPRK will remain the primary threat to the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula in the 1990's.

-The principal threat to U.S. national interests in Northeast Asia will continue to be the Soviet Union well into the next century.

-The basic pattern of Soviet foreign policy and military strategy in the Asian-Pacific will not fundamentally change in the coming decade.

THE U.S. FORCES IN KOREA ISSUE

The two most common arguments for not maintaining U.S. forces in Korea are: (1) they are not numerically sufficient to be effective, and they are not needed anyway since the Republic of Korea is strong enough to defend itself; and (2) their presence impedes North-South peace and reunification dialogue.

In response to the first argument, it is true that the number of American forces in Korea is not, in itself, enough to significantly alter the combat ratio between the two Koreas. However, those forces do fill some critical voids in the ROK defense, especially the U.S. air forces and those ground troops with intelligence and logistical functions. The American armor units also offset somewhat the North's decisive (2:1) advantage in tanks. The fact of the matter is that the South Koreans alone are not yet fully capable of defending themselves against the numerically superior North Korean forces. The ROK military leadership acknowledges the realities of this imbalance, as do the senior U.S. commanders on the peninsula.¹⁰⁰ The Republic of Korea's armed forces have made tremendous headway in the past few years in terms of overall readiness, and they are quickly reaching parity with Pyongyang's vast military might, but there are still some significant gaps in the South's defense which, for the time being, can only be filled by the United

States forces in Korea.

The primary importance of the forward deployed U.S. forces in Korea is their psychological deterrence--the signal they send to Kim Il Sung.¹⁰¹ Those forces represent the American Government's will to uphold its treaty responsibilities to the South Korean people. The ground troops especially, because they reflect more permanence than air and naval forces, communicate a firm and long-standing commitment to help defend the Republic of Korea from North Korean aggression.

The United States has been the guarantor of peace and stability on the Korean peninsula for the past thirty-six years. Kim Il Sung knows that any incursion on his part across the DMZ will almost immediately solicit a U.S. response, not only from the 2nd Infantry Division in its "tripwire" positions along the DMZ, but, as necessary, from the entire contingent of nuclear backed American forces in the Western Pacific. Additionally, the Korea-based U.S. forces, as an integral part of a larger United States security network, also communicate Washington's resolve to safeguard the peace and stability of the entire Asian-Pacific region. When one stops to consider the impact those 43,000 American service men and women in South Korea have on the security of Korea and the remainder of Northeast Asia, it is easy to conclude that Washington is paying a small price for some rather substantial dividends (it certainly

costs far less to keep those troops in South Korea than it would to keep them in the U.S.).

Some critics contend that the U.S. security commitment to South Korea could be maintained just as well by forces stationed in Japan, the Philippines or elsewhere. This contention might have merit sometime in the future when the ROK armed forces are better prepared to fully defend themselves, or when tensions on the peninsula are significantly reduced. However, given the number of North Korean forces deployed in close proximity to the DMZ and the short distances they would have to travel, response time is of the essence. The short response time needed by the U.S. to assist the ROK military counter a North Korean onslaught can only be achieved through forward posturing. Without the ability to quickly meet a Communist offensive, America's defense commitment in Korea has little credibility and offers little deterrence.

Those who support the second argument mentioned above have failed to remember a basic tenet in negotiating with the Communists--always deal from a position of strength. We Americans have learned this lesson time and time again. Strength is what the Communists understand best. To remove U.S. forces from Korea now would seriously undermine Seoul's hand in dealing with Pyongyang. Simply stated, the North Koreans cannot use their superior military power to gain any political leverage over South Korea as long as American

forces remain on the peninsula as a counterbalance.¹⁰² Only the U.S. presence infuses the confidence and sense of security needed to promote North-South dialogue.

As for the future of U.S. forces in Korea, they must remain as long as they are needed to fulfill Washington's treaty obligations to the Republic of Korea, and as long as necessary to safeguard American interests in Northeast Asia (economic interests must not be the sole motivator, however). Since military parity between the two Koreas is not expected until the late 1990's at the earliest, and since no change in Soviet ambitions in the Asian-Pacific are anticipated in the near future, U.S. forces, in some configuration, will likely be required to remain in Korea at least through the decade of the 1990's.

Ultimately, however, the outcome of the U.S. forces issue rests with the ROK Government, and there will be no solution unless it is politically acceptable to the South Korean people. Consequently, some formula must be developed which is palatable to the South Koreans but which still represents the best interests of the United States. A likely contender is a regional role for U.S. forces in Korea with the Republic of Korea as a security partner. The prevailing thinking regarding the regional concept favors giving the South Koreans primary responsibility for the defense of the South, thus freeing the U.S. forces to focus on more regionally

oriented security matters in addition to Korea. Under the regional configuration, some ROK forces would have a contingency mission to support a combined ROK-U.S. effort elsewhere should both American and South Korean security and economic interests be in jeopardy. Conceivably, this could include someplace like the Persian Gulf where both countries' oil supplies were at stake. In a global war, this contingency could even include attacks on Soviet territory to open a "second front." Of course, Japan would also figure into this regional concept as, at least, a security partner of the United States (this would still be short of a Northeast Asia alliance involving the U.S., Japan and South Korea). In addition to protecting air and sea lanes out to a thousand miles from its shores, Japan would be expected to contribute to a combined effort where Japanese interests were at stake, as well.

This regional idea would necessitate the requirement to precisely define missions and each nation's specific role under such an arrangement. Once this is accomplished, force structures would have to be determined to accommodate the new orientation. As for U.S. forces in Korea, the thinking is toward greater mobility and responsiveness. One suggestion has been to reduce the ground maneuver forces to a brigade of light infantry supported by greater numbers of air and sea transport assets. The remaining ground combat forces would either stand down or be stationed elsewhere (perhaps

in Hawaii, The Philippines or Alaska). Such a proposal is certainly in keeping with the view that the Army is a strategic force--a mobile and versatile force which can deter aggression by its ability to respond rapidly and discriminatingly to a wide range of contingencies.¹⁰³

Understandably, the sensitivities Japan and South Korea have toward one another would require careful consideration when formulating a regional doctrine. Hopefully, such a structure, with the U.S. as a conduit between Tokyo and Seoul, would engender greater cooperation between the two nations and increased sharing of the responsibility for the defense of Northeast Asia. After all, they have as great a stake in the security of the region as the United States; and if you consider the fact that they live in the region, an even greater stake. That point, along with the partnership theme, needs to be constantly reinforced with both partners. In summary, the benefits of the proposed regional concept would hopefully make the U.S. presence in Korea more tolerable to the South Koreans, would encourage greater participation in the security of Northeast Asia by America's allies there, and it would result in better utilization of limited U.S. resources in the Asian-Pacific.

There are other measures Washington can take to make the U.S. presence in the Republic of Korea more acceptable. The movement of the American headquarters from Seoul to a

less conspicuous location and the closing of the controversial Eighth Army golf course are already being considered, along with changes to the current status of forces (SOFA) agreement and the limiting of AFKN TV broadcasts to Americans only. Other considerations include adjustments to the scope and frequency of U.S. field exercises (to include the annual ROK-U.S. Team Spirit exercise) and the removal of U.S. combat forces from the Joint Security Area (JSA) portion of the DMZ, a step which would probably bolster the South's prestige and signal Washington's growing confidence in the ROK's defensive capabilities.

Additionally, thought is being given to replacing the American admiral who serves as the chief UN military armistice commission negotiator at the JSA with a South Korean general, another gesture which would probably do much for Seoul's world image of self-reliance. There has also been discussion regarding the repositioning of the 2nd Infantry Division to positions well south of Seoul; however, there is merit to leaving them where they are since administrative/logistics facilities and training sites are already in place and are, for the most part, located in less densely populated areas. The cost of moving the division, though primarily borne by the South Koreans, would be considerable.

Many Northeast Asia analysts believe that the total removal of U.S. forces from Korea at some point in the future

is an eventuality which Washington should plan for now. That may be a true assessment; however, a word of caution is in order. Any reduction of United States forces in the Republic of Korea must be decided in concert with America's allies in the region, accomplished over a period of time and executed by defense experts (not politicians) only after a realistic assessment of comparative combat capabilities (North vs. South) is concluded. A unilateral decision followed by a rapid pullout would be a grave mistake for the United States. Such action could have several undesirable consequences:

-A regional arms race could ensue which would likely upset the balance of power in Northeast Asia and could result in nuclear armament by Japan and the two Koreas. Furthermore, an arms race could seriously upset the stability of the region. It is no secret that Japan would not like to see South Korea become too strong militarily, and none of Tokyo's neighbors would care to see Japan again become a military power. A nuclear armed North Korea would be equally alarming.

-America's opponents in the region could interpret a U.S. withdrawal as an abandonment of Washington's security commitments in Northeast Asia, a condition which could spark increased Communist adventurism in the area. It is even possible that Pyongyang could perceive the occasion as

the "decisive moment."

-The fledging democracy in South Korea could be jeopardized if the ROK military felt the nation was unduly threatened and decided to force a return to military rule. Though President Rho has taken gallant measures to separate the military from the civilian government, another military coup is not outside the realm of possibility if the generals were to perceive a heightened North Korean threat as a result of an American pullout.

In the event of any United States force withdrawal, there must be no misinterpretation by America's allies of what Washington's true intentions are, and America's adversaries must understand full well what the U.S. response will be should renewed aggression occur. Furthermore, any explanation of a force reduction must be couched in terms of Washington's confidence in its allies to defend themselves.

Finally, there should be no withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea until some desired response is seen from the North Koreans and, possibly, the Soviets. Some argue that a withdrawal should be considered as part of an overall disarmament package involving all the major powers in the region. In a sense, the American presence is a powerful bargaining chip to be given up only in return for significant concessions from the opposing side. For a starter, Pyongyang should agree to peaceful coexistence with

the South and a willingness to enter into sincere negotiations with the Seoul Government.

As for a bottom line to the issue of the American military presence in Korea, the United States is the only major power strong enough to ensure some level of deterrence in Korea and throughout the region. Consequently, the U.S. presence must remain the cornerstone of defense in Northeast Asia for at least the decade of the 1990's and probably for some time thereafter.

THE MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE ISSUE

The military command structure in the Republic of Korea is a very complicated arrangement which is an increasing irritant to the South Korean people. Under the current structure, a U.S. Army four-star general serves as Commander in Chief (CINC) of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command. As such, he has operational control (OPCON) over most South Korean armed forces. In addition to several other titles (or hats), he is also the Commander, Eighth United States Army and Commander, United States Forces Korea. So, besides having OPCON over most ROK soldiers, he commands all American forces on the peninsula.

Though most South Koreans favor a continued U.S. military presence in Korea and generally accept the importance of the Combined Forces Command, there are growing numbers of people in the South who see the current command structure as a detriment to the international prestige of the Republic of Korea and consider it an easy target for Pyongyang's propaganda, which often portrays the South as an American puppet. It is also viewed by many as a slap to ROK nationalism and an infringement on the nation's sovereignty, even though sovereignty is never really lost since South Korea retains command of its forces under the OPCON arrangement. This point is often not fully understood by the general public. Additionally, some Americans view the

present command structure with alarm because it seems to drag the U.S. into ROK domestic politics and appears to condone the sometimes repressive nature of the South Korean Government, the Kwangju incident being a prime example.¹⁰⁴ Others agree that the existing arrangement fosters psychological dependence on the United States and delays the balanced development of South Korea's military capabilities.

In spite of the concerns registered above, most senior ROK officials and ranking military officers appear to be in agreement that the Combined Forces Command with a U.S. general as the CINC should remain in tact until the Republic of Korea is fully capable of defending itself or until some realistic peace accord is reached with the North.¹⁰⁵ A partial motivation for this consensus may be that the South Korean Government does not want to be faced with increased defense spending necessitated by a pullout of U.S. forces from Korea. There is fear that opposition to the present command arrangement might signal the American Congress to begin thinking about troop withdrawals.

Since the Combined Forces Command will likely remain a viable war-fighting organization through the 1990's, the United States should review measures to make the command structure less offensive to the South Korean people. A plausible suggestion is to leave the American general in command but give greater decision making responsibility and authority to the South Koreans, particularly on ground

component matters. This could be facilitated by reducing the numbers of American officers in the combined headquarters, thus giving the ROK military more visibility and say in planning the defense of the country. There is also a strong argument which says that reform of the command structure should start with the appointment of a South Korean four-star general as commander of the ground component. The CINC currently wears that "hat."

The regional concept, once implemented, would contribute greatly to easing the dissatisfaction over the current command structure. An American flag officer would command all U.S. forces charged with regional security, and would either command or have OPCON over only those ROK forces with a regional mission, which would probably be a relatively small number. The South Korean military would maintain total command and control over the brunt of the ROK armed forces, those responsible for the defense of the South. From a Korean perspective, this arrangement would greatly clarify command lines and would portray the South Koreans as being clearly in charge of their own national security. If the U.S. regional command headquarters was located outside of Korea, objections to the existing command structure would likely be even less.

Of course, the relationship between a U.S. regional command and the ROK armed forces during another war raises some interesting questions. Would the American regional

commander assume command or OPCON of ROK forces, or would two separate headquarters (one ROK and one US) coordinate the war effort? The answer probably depends on the scope of U.S. involvement and the degree of participation by other UN member countries. Should a large American contingent be employed, or a multinational force under the auspices of the UN be assembled, an American flag officer would likely be designated as the "supreme" commander, much the way the command structure appeared during the Korean War. Otherwise, the ROK military would manage the war with support from the U.S. regional commander.

In sum, the basic outline of the present command structure should remain in tact for the foreseeable future, but some adaptation is needed to allow the South Koreans to assume greater responsibility for their own defense and to quell growing public dissatisfaction with the current command arrangement. This change will be increasingly more important in the 1990's as the ROK continues to expand and modernize its armed forces while the American military faces continued cutbacks and is forced to redefine its role worldwide.

THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS ISSUE

United States policy is to neither acknowledge nor deny the presence of American nuclear weapons in the Republic of Korea. However, it is accepted that at least a small stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons does exist in country.

Though the first-strike use of nuclear weapons on the peninsula by U.S. forces has some merit from a tactical viewpoint, there is little likelihood that they would ever be used because of a multitude of political, economic, emotional and even tactical reasons. Most salient among those reasons are: nuclear retaliation by the Soviets (or the Chinese), negative world reaction, destruction of future industrial and agricultural potential, and restrictions on future maneuverability. Additionally, the South Koreans are not particularly warm to the idea of using nuclear weapons on their soil and against their fellow Koreans.

Nonetheless, the perceived threat of a nuclear response by the United States has been the backbone of the American deterrent in Korea.¹⁰⁶ It is not the presence of nuclear weapons in the Republic of Korea that bothers Kim Il Sung, but the uncertainty of whether or not the U.S. will use them. North Korea media strongly suggests that nuclear retaliation is Pyongyang's biggest fear.¹⁰⁷

The aura of U.S. nuclear weapons in Korea also contributes to the strategic balance of power in the region.

The removal of those weapons could escalate nation risk taking by America's adversaries in the Asian-Pacific, or it could stimulate Washington's friends there to fill the void by producing nuclear weapons of their own.¹⁰⁸ Both Japan and South Korea have the technology to do so. Of course, such a development would likely drive North Korea to seek nuclear weapons. As mentioned previously, there is some evidence to suggest that the North may be on the threshold of having nuclear weapons technology. As an alternative, Pyongyang could solicit a Soviet nuclear presence on North Korean soil.

For the time being, then, the storage of American tactical nuclear weapons in Korea contributes to the peace and stability of the region. Those weapons not only deter Communist aggression but also curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons by the nonnuclear nations of the area. Furthermore, they dramatically symbolize Washington's commitment to the defense of the Republic of Korea, and they serve as a potentially valuable bargaining chip in future negotiations with the Communists.

ARMISTICE ISSUE

Today, nearly thirty-six years since the end of the Korean War, there is still no peace treaty between Pyongyang and Seoul. Instead, an armistice agreement exists which was signed in 1953 by North Korea and China, representing the Communist alliance, and the United States as the United Nations representative. The Republic of Korea was not signatory to the document. The United Nations Command, in executing its peace keeping mission in Korea, monitors North-South compliance with the terms of the armistice agreement and arbitrates alleged violations of those terms by either side. Dialogue with the DPRK over armistice issues normally occurs in the Joint Security Area (often called Panmunjom) where a U.S. Navy admiral serves as spokesman for the UN Command.

Technically speaking, then, the two Koreas remain in a state of war. Consequently, a critical first step in the process to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula and improve North-South relations is the conclusion of a peace treaty or nonaggression pact. This should be one of Washington's leading foreign policy objectives in Northeast Asia. Without a foundation based on a commitment to peace, future relations between the two Koreas will remain on shaky ground.

Though the United States and the other major powers of

the region can do much to foster a climate conducive to the nurturing of the peace process, the Korean governments on both sides of the DMZ must be the active participants. Ultimately, there can be no lasting peace on the Korean peninsula, or any hope of reunification, if the two sides do not openly communicate with one another and forge bonds of mutual trust and commitment to a common goal. The first barriers to fall must be the deep-seated distrust each Korea has for the other and the prevailing mindset on both sides to automatically reject any proposal offered by the other party.

To facilitate peace negotiations between Pyongyang and Seoul, the major powers should discuss ways to strengthen peace, security and cooperation in the area.¹⁰⁹ Together, they should encourage their respective Korean ally to approach negotiations with open-mindedness, candor and a reasonable expectation of the other side's position. The two Koreas should be urged to downplay their open hatred of one another and seek more amiable relations. The major powers should also be attuned to the emergence of loggerheads in the negotiation process. Their influence and persuasion can sometimes clear paths around obstacles and provide nudges to stubborn participants. The United States and Japan, especially, have the wherewithal to provide incentives to the negotiating parties. Aside from a large array of economic and political incentives both Tokyo and

Washington can offer the two Koreas, the United States has some substantial bargaining chips at its disposal--the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea and the removal of nuclear weapons from the peninsula being the two most significant.

A notable achievement in the effort to promote North-South dialogue would be cross recognition of the two Koreas by the major powers. Since the Soviets and Chinese appear hesitant to formally recognize South Korea for fear of upsetting Kim Il Sung and contradicting Pyongyang's propaganda theme of being the only legitimate government in Korea, the United States and Japan could take the first step by recognizing the North with the hope that Moscow and Beijing would follow suit. Of course, there are some potential dangers in such unilateral action since it could play into North Korea's international propaganda (again, the legitimacy theme). The United States did take a partial first step in March 1987 when Washington announced that its diplomats could have contacts with their North Korean counterparts on an informal basis.¹¹⁰ Some analysts suggest that Tokyo should make the first move since Japan is in a position to take such a bold step without prejudicing the future of the U.S. security commitment to Seoul.¹¹¹

The U.S. military in Korea can also contribute to the peace process through a number of tension-reducing measures. Possibilities include:

- Renunciation of armed aggression against North Korea.
- Advance notification of military exercises.
- Forecasting of military activities.
- Invitations to North Korean military leaders to view ROK-U.S. combined exercises.
- Exchange of information regarding size and location of major units.
- Withdrawal of U.S. forces from the DMZ.
- Reductions in the scope and duration of combined military operations.
- Staging of combined exercises further from the DMZ.
- Negotiations with the North to establish fixed monitoring stations, the implementation of cross inspections and the establishment of agreed limitations on numbers and types of weapons (followed by an agreement on verification procedures).¹¹²

Once a sincere, formal peace accord is reached between the two Koreas, the United Nations Command should be dismantled, and all dialogue with North Korea under UN auspices should be concluded, thus eliminating one more external influence affecting reunification negotiations. Additionally, the removal the UN spokesman (the American admiral) would be one less irritant to the South Korean

people and would further dissipate the "little bother" image of South Korea in terms of the nation's relationship with the United States.

In conclusion, only the two Koreas, working together, can shape the ultimate future of Korea. The major powers in the region can contribute to the negotiating process through efforts to reduce tensions on the peninsula and the persuasion of sincere dialogue between the two ideologically different parties; however, the major powers must let the Korean people be the primary participants in the drafting of their destiny. The United States, especially, must continue to exercise caution to avoid becoming a third party in the negotiating arena. Again, a peace accord to replace the tattered armistice agreement should be the essential prerequisite to future reunification negotiations. It is to that end--a lasting peace treaty--Washington and U.S. forces in Korea should dedicate their energy and resources in the 1990s.

THE COST SHARING ISSUE

Currently, the United States spends about three billion dollars annually to maintain troops and equipment in South Korea. Seoul augments that sum with 1.9 billion dollars annually in cash and kind, to include rent and tax-free land.¹¹³

As the Republic of Korea becomes economically stronger, the nation will be expected to assume more responsibility for its defense. Additionally, the United States will likely request greater financial assistance from the South Koreans in the 1990s for base operating costs, construction, local hire salaries and benefits, and living supplements for U.S. military personnel.

The South Koreans do not argue the point that they should contribute more financially for the defense of their country. Actually, Seoul has been quite accommodating to recent cost sharing proposals. In June 1988, the South agreed to a new cost sharing arrangement for combined defense improvement projects (CDIP) whereby the government will increase its spending from 34 million dollars annually to 40 million dollars a year during the period 1989 to 1991.¹¹⁴ An additional five million dollars a year will be spent on U.S. naval aircraft maintenance costs during that same period.¹¹⁵ However, the South Koreans feel that now is not the time for a significant increase in defense spending. They argue that

a large jump in the nation's defense budget would exacerbate the country's ongoing political struggle and would stymie the South's still developing economic systems.

Ultimately, the United States and the Republic of Korea, as "equal" security partners, will have to decide on an equitable cost sharing formula based on ability to pay, force size, scope of security commitments, etc. Though the U.S. must be sensitive to South Korea's internal problems, Washington should continue to press Seoul to assume a greater share of the combined defense costs in Korea. Additionally, the Republic of Korea should continue to be encouraged to contribute financially to the stability of the Asian-Pacific through foreign aid and military assistance packages to those less developed nations which contribute to the security and economic vitality of the Western Pacific.

Finally, the United States must work hard to convince its allies in Northeast Asia that the U.S. security commitment there is firm, but that the American military is stretched very thinly and strapped financially, and that Washington needs the help of its friends to ensure the continued security of the region. Those friends must recognize that a sustained U.S. presence is in their best interest, but the United States cannot continue to carry the brunt of the load by itself. Nor should the U.S. tolerate unresponsiveness or threatening political reprisals from those nations America seeks to defend. Where that happens, Washington must apply

appropriate political-economic leverage or seek other security alternatives.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Korean peninsula will remain a volatile area of the world in the decade of the 1990's, and tensions there will continue to threaten peace and stability in Northeast Asia for the foreseeable future. Consequently, the United States must "stay the course" in Korea. As the old saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Washington's security arrangement with the Republic of Korea is not broken, it just needs some fine tuning to bring it in line with the ongoing changes both internal and external to the Korean peninsula. Primarily, adjustments are needed in the orientation of U.S. forces in Korea and in the military command structure there in order for America to better fulfill its security commitments in the region. The regional concept discussed in this paper offers the most promising alternative. One fact remains certain, though, the United States forward deployed posture in Korea will continue to serve the national interests of the U.S. and its Northeast Asia allies well into the beginning of the "Pacific Century."

However, in light of the growing prosperity and influence of Washington's friends in Northeast Asia, balanced against the effect anticipated cuts in the U.S. defense budget will have on American security commitments worldwide, the United States must demand from South Korea

and Japan greater participation in their own defense. Washington should also continue to push for increased security cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo. Cultural sensitivities aside, there is much the Republic of Korea and Japan can do for one another in terms of mutual defense and regional security. Professor Edward Olsen of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School probably best sums up the United States position: "How much better if the U.S.--without diminishing its nuclear umbrella--could signal a desire to do slightly less for each ally in conventional terms, providing incentives for them to do slightly more for themselves and each other."¹¹⁶ With each ally assuming more of the defensive burden, the United States could focus increased attention on security issues that concern all three nations, but which only the U.S. as a superpower has the means to address."¹¹⁷

Today, there appears to be little unity of thought within the U.S. Government or the military regarding the course of future relations with Northeast Asia and the complexion of America's long-term policy there. Washington's signals to its allies in the area are often confusing and contradictory, even with regard to current policy within the region. This disunity is even more discernible in terms of a future game plan for U.S. military involvement in Korea. This is especially true within the American defense establish where divergent views are as

common as the numbers of headquarters. To rectify this problem, the United States must assess what its national interests in Northeast Asia (and the entire Asian-Pacific) will be in the 21st century, and must also look out twenty years and decide what American security arrangements in the region should look like and what U.S. security objectives should be. Once accomplished, those national interests and security objectives must be communicated in clear and concise terms so that Americans understand what they are, as do America's friends and adversaries in the region. The United States must then chart its course, one which reflects unity of thought and purpose by those who will steer United States foreign policy in the future.

As for how Washington handles its relations with the Republic of Korea in the decade ahead, it is clear that Americans will be dealing with a nation of significantly increased importance to U.S. national interests. No longer can Americans afford to think of South Korea as merely an afterthought. Though the Republic of Korea may never be of "vital" interest to Washington, the country's growing economic importance and crucial geostrategic location will certainly play louder in the formulation of U.S. Asian policy in the decade of the 1990's and beyond.¹¹⁸ South Korea's future economic dynamism and political influence will surpass even the wildest expectations of thirty years ago. The Republic of Korea will continue to be a trusted

and valued ally, as well as a key factor in the maintenance of peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Though another full-scale North Korean attack against South Korea is not likely, that possibility cannot be totally ruled out, particularly if the "decisive moment" should present itself. Instead, the DPRK can be expected to perpetuate its belligerent and threatening posture toward the South in the decade to come, and Pyongyang will likely continue a combination of moderate and hard-line policies to promote the strengthening of its military capabilities and economic development. In spite of some opening up by the North and signs that Pyongyang may be realizing that the hard ideological line of the past can be costly (especially in terms of Third World support), one should not expect to witness any near-term changes in the basic patterns of North Korea's foreign relations, or any evidence the North is prepared to make the ideological concessions necessary to firm up its sagging economy.¹¹⁹

Eventually, but probably not while Kim Il Sung is alive, the North will come to realize the futility of its current position in the world as an isolated, renegade nation. The North Koreans have failed miserably in their quest to be the dynamic leader of the Third World, and they have failed in every endeavor to discredit the legitimacy of the Seoul government or to outdo the South economically. At some point in time, Pyongyang will have to start putting

more emphasis on internal reform and less focus on military spending. When that time comes, the North will seek more participation in the international community by opening up further channels with non-Communist countries in an attempt to receive economic and technological cooperation.

Pyongyang will also seek greater diplomatic recognition throughout the world and, ultimately, entry into the United Nations.

It is certainly in the best interests of the United States and the democratic nations of Northeast Asia to continue to encourage greater openness by the North Koreans and a relaxation in their relationship with the Republic of Korea. To drive the North further into isolation, particularly now that Pyongyang's leverage on Moscow and Beijing will likely be diminished as a result of improved Sino-Soviet ties, would be a dangerous move which could result in desperate acts as Pyongyang's only perceived recourse.

In sum, Washington's objective should be to change North Korean policies, not reinforce them. The U.S. should not write off the North as a lost cause, but work toward eliminating barriers, reducing tensions and building mutual confidence between the two nations. The attainment of a sincere and enduring North-South peace treaty must continue to be one of America's leading foreign policy goals in Northeast Asia. A word of caution is needed, however. The

United States and its allies must be careful not to become too conciliatory to the North. Pyongyang is notorious for asking for much while prepared to give little in return. The allies must bargain from a position of strength, giving concessions only in return for equivalent responses. Though there must be some flexibility in their approach to North Korea, they must hold Pyongyang to its word and the tasks at hand. There can be no double standard or lax enforcement of agreed terms.

Turning now to the Soviets, no fundamental changes in their Asian game plan is expected in the decade of the 1990's. Moscow will continue to push for reduced tension in the area to secure some "breathing space" for internal reforms. The Soviets will persist in their attempt to diminish U.S. influence in Northeast Asia and the entire Asian-Pacific while trying to expand their own. As retired Army general Jack Merritt notes:

"Whatever Gorbachev's interests, they are certainly not related to the advancement of American democracy, but rather to the continued pursuit of great power status--economic as well as military. With that in mind, there is every likelihood that internal tensions and external coercion will continue to characterize Soviet affairs for many years." ¹²⁰

Therefore, the United States should continue to nurture close relations with its friends in the region to offset Soviet advances. In fact, Washington should intensify consultations with those friends to develop a coordinated approach to meeting the expanded Soviet presence in the area.¹²¹ This dialogue should promote political democracy and free market economics while also addressing the futility of economic bashing and trade wars. "Economic cooperation," Admiral Hardisty emphasizes, "will be the key to our success" in the Asian-Pacific.¹²² Richard Armitage, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, carries that emphasis even further by stating that democracy and free trade in the Pacific will be the "best guarantor of peace, prosperity, human fulfillment and human rights in the 1990's."¹²³

The American approach to the Russians should be one of "guarded optimism." No one knows how long Gorbachev will last in power or whether glasnost and perestroika will work. Certainly, there is no turning back to the "old Russia", and the "new Russia" is not yet clearly in focus. Are the current affairs in the USSR just an attempt to regroup and catch up with the West so the Soviets can continue their worldwide intimidation with more vigor in the future, or have they seen the light and sincerely want a "kinder and gentler" world? The U.S. should wish Gorbachev well, but should sleep with one eye open until tangible signs of

positive change are seen within the Soviet sphere and in Moscow's foreign policy, and until Gorbachev's deeds truly match his words. Americans should continue to view with alarm the rapid rate of Soviet military modernization and question Moscow's true intentions in spite of perestroika and Gorbachev's "peace" initiatives. Why was Soviet tank production for the first quarter of this year the highest since World War II?¹²⁴

General Carl Vuono, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, has repeatedly warned that the United States must deal with the Communists in terms of capabilities, not words and promises. That should continue to be the philosophy which guides America's Northeast Asia security policy in the future. That philosophy **must** be the foundation for a strong and credible U.S. military presence in the Republic of Korea during the decade of the 1990's.

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TABLE 1: Republic of Korea Military Forces

Total armed forces:

Active: 629,000. *Terms of service:* all services, 30-36 months.
Reserves: 4,500,000; being re-organised.

Army: 542,000.

HQ: 2 Army, 7 Corps.
2 mech inf divs (each 3 bdes: 3 mech inf, 3 mot, 3 tk, 1 recce bns; 1 fd arty bde).
19 inf divs (each 3 inf regts, 1 recce, 1 tk, 1 engr bn; 1 arty regt).
1 indep inf bde.
7 Special Warfare bdes.
2 AA arty bdes.
2 SSM bns with *Honest John*.
2 SAM bdes: 3 *HAWK* bns (24 sites), 2 *Nike Hercules* bns (10 sites).
1 avn bde.

Reserves: 1 Army HQ, 23 inf divs.

Equipment:

MBT: 1,500:200 + Type 88, 350 M-47, 950 M-48A5.
MICV: some 200 (KIFV).
APC: 450 M-113, 400 Fiat 6614/KM-900/-901.
Towed arty: some 3,100: 105mm: M-101, KH-178; 155mm: M-53, M-114, KH-179; 203mm: M-115.
SP arty: 155mm: 100 M-109A2; 175mm: M-107; 203mm: M-110.
MRL: 140 *Kooryong* (36 x 130mm).
SSM: 12 *Honest John*.
Mor: 107mm.
ATGW: TOW.
RCL: 57mm, 75mm, 90mm, 106mm.
ATK guns: 76mm: 8 M-18; 90mm: 50 M-36 SP.
AD guns: 600: 20mm: incl. 60 *Vulcan*; 35mm: 20 GDF-0C3; 40mm: 80.
SAM: some *Javelin*, 110 *HAWK*, 200 *Nike Hercules*.
Aviation:
ac: 60 *Cessna* O-1A.
hel: 120+ Bell UH-1 B/H, 194 Hughes 500MD (50 with TOW); AH-1S due in 1988.

Navy: 54,000 (19,000 conscripts) incl. 25,000 marines.

Bases: Chinhae (HQ), Cheju, Incheon, Mokpo, Mukho, Pukpyong, Pohang, Pusan.
3 Fleet Commands.

Subs: 3 KSS-1 *Tolgorae* SSI (175 tonnes) with 2 x 406mm TT.

Principal surface combatants: 29:

Destroyers: 11:

7 *Chung Buk* (US *Gearing*) with 2 or 3 x 2 127mm guns; plus 2 x 3 ASTT; 5 with 2 x 4 *Harpoon* SSM, 1 *Alouette III* hel (OTHT), 2 with 1 x 8 *ASROC*.
2 *Daeg Gu* (US *Sumner*) with 3 x 2 127mm guns; plus 2 x 3 ASTT.
2 *Chung Mu* (US *Fletcher*) with 5 x 127mm guns; plus 2 x 3 ASTT.

Frigates: 18:

5 *Ulsan* with 2 x 3 ASTT (Mk 46 LWT); plus 2 x 4 *Harpoon* SSM.
1 *Kyong Nam* (US *Crosley*) with 1 127mm gun.
12 *Donghae* with 2 x 3 ASTT; plus 2 x 1 MM-38 *Exocet* (weapons fit not confirmed).

Patrol and coastal combatants: 105:

Missile craft: 11:

8 *Pae Ku-52*, 3 with 4 *Standard* (boxed) SSM, 5 with 2 x 2 *Harpoon* SSM.
1 *Pae Ku-51* (US *Asheville*), with 2 x 2 *Harpoon*.
2 PKM-271 with 2 x MM-38 *Exocet* SSM.

Patrol, inshore: 94:

32 37m PFI.
32 *Sea Dolphin* 32m PFI.
30 *Sea Hawk* 26m PFI.

Mine warfare: 9:

1 *'Swallow'* (mod It *Lerici*) MHC.
8 *Kun San* (US MSC-268/289) MSC.

Amph: 15:

8 *Un Bong* (US LST-511) LST, capacity 16 tk, 200 tps.
7 *Ko Mun* (US LSM-1) LSM, capacity about 4 tk.
Plus about 37 craft; 6 LCT, 10 LCM, 1 LCU about 20 LCVP.

Support and miscellaneous: 9:

3 spt tankers, 2 ocean tugs, about 4 survey (civil manned, Ministry of Transport funded).

NAVAL AIR:

17 cbt acs; 21 armed hel.
ASW: 2 sqns:
1 ac with 17 S-2A/E;
1 hel with 10 Hughes 500MD (ASW);
11 flts with 11 *Alouette III* hel (ASW), 2 Bell 206.

MARINES: 25,000.

2 divs, 1 bde.
Spt units.

Equipment:

MBT: 40 M-47.
APC: 60 LVTP-7.
Towed arty: 105mm, 155mm.
SSM: *Harpoon* (truck-mounted).

Air Force: 33,000;

473 cbt ac, no armed hel.
7 cbt, 2 tpt wings.
FGA: 18 sqns:
2 with 24 F-16, (18 -C, 6 -D), 16 with 260 F-5A/B/E/F.
Fighters: 4 sqns with 68 F-4 (34 -D, 34 -E).
COIN: 1 sqn with 23 A-37B.
Recce: 1 sqn with 10 RF-5A.
SAR: 1 hel sqn with 26 Bell UH-1B/H.
Tpt: 2 wings, 5 sqns:
10 C-54, 16 C-123J/K, 3 *Aero Commander*, 2 HS-748 (VIP), 8 C-130H.
Trg: incl. 20 T-28D, 33 T-33A, 59 *Cessna* (39 T-37C, 20 T-41D), 35 F-5B, 63 F-5F.
AAM: *Sidewinder*, *Sparrow*.

Paramilitary:

Civilian Defence Corps (to age 50) 3,500,000.
Coastguard (€3,500).

Patrol craft, offshore: 15:

12 *Ma-San-Ho* (HDP-1000).
3 *Sea Dragon/Whale* (HDP-600).

Inshore: 32:

12 *Sea Wolf/Shark*.
20+, plus numerous boats.
Hel: 9 Hughes 500D.

Foreign Forces:

US: 40,300. Army (29,100): 1 army HQ, 1 inf div, 1 SSM bty with Lance. Air Force (11,200): 1 div: 2 wings: 168 cbt ac.

Source: "Asia Yearbook 1989." Far Eastern Economic Review

TABLE 2: Democratic People's Republic of Korea Military Forces

Total armed forces:
 * **Active:** 842,000. *Terms of service:* Army 5-8 years, Navy 5-10 years; Air Force 3-4 years.
Reserves: Army 500,000, Navy 40,000.
 Mobilisation claimed in 12 hours; up to 5,000,000 have some Reserve/Militia commitment. See Paramilitary.

Army: 750,000.
 1 armd, 3 mech, 8 all-arms corps HQ:
 1 mot inf div.
 25 inf divs (3 infs, 1 arty, 1 mor regt, 1 ATK, 1 AA, 1 engr bn).
 15 armd bde.
 20 mot inf bde.
 4 indep inf bde.
 1 Special Purpose corps: 80,000; 25 bdes incl. 3 cdo, 4 recce, 1 river crossing regts, 3 amph, 3 AB bns, 22 lt inf bns. 'Bureau of Reconnaissance Special Forces.'
Arty comd:
 Army tps: 2 hy arty, 2 mor regts; 6 SSM bns.
 Corps tps: 4 bdes incl. 122mm, 152mm SP, MRL.
 AD: 2 AA divs; 7 AA regts.
 Reserve: 2 inf divs; 18 indep bdes.
Equipment:
MBT: some 3,000 T-34/-54/-55/-62, 175 Type-59.
Tks: lt: 300 Type-63, Type-62, M-1985.
Recce: 140 BA-64.
MICV: 150 BMP-1.
APC: 1,400 BTR-40/-50/-60/-152, Ch Type-831, N. Korean, type unknown.
Towed arty: 1,600: 100mm: M-1944; 122mm: M-1931/-37, D-74, Type-54, Type-60, D-30; 130mm: M-46, Type-69; 152mm: M-1937, M-1938, D-20, ML-20.
SP arty: Some 2,300: 122mm: M-1977, M-1981, M-1985; 130mm: M-1975; 152mm: M-1974; 180mm: M-1978.
MRL: 2,500: 107mm: Type-63; 122mm: BM-21, BM-11 (30 tubes); 130mm: Type-63; 140mm: RPU-14, BM-14-16; 200mm: BMD-20; 240mm: BM-24.
SSM: 54 FROG-3/-3/-7; (some 15 Scud B-type rumoured).
Mor: 120mm.
ATGW: AT-1 Snapper, AT-3 Sagger.
RCL: 82mm: 1,500 B-10; 107mm: 1,000 B-11.
ATK guns: 37mm: M-1939; 57mm: M-1943; 75mm: Type-52; 85mm: D-48 towed; 800 SU-76 and SU-100 SP.
AD guns: 8,000: 14.5mm: ZPU 2/4 SP; 23mm: ZSU-23-4 SP 37mm: Type-55, M-1939; 57mm: ZSU-57-2 SP 8-80, Type-59; 85mm: KS-12; 100mm: KS-19. N. Korean SP AA, type unknown.
SAM: SA-7.
Navy: 39,000.
Bases: East Coast: Wonsan (HQ), Cha-cha, Songjin Toejo.

West Coast: Nampo (HQ), Haeju, Pipaqa, Sagwon-ri. 2 Fleet HQ.
Subs: 21:
 17 Ch Type-031/Sov Romeo with 533mm TT.
 4 Sov Whiskey with 533mm and 406mm TT.
Frigates: 2 Nejin with 2 x 5 ASW RL, 1 with 3 x 533mm TT; plus 2 x 100mm guns. 1 possibly with 1 x 2 SS-N-2 Styr SSM.
Patrol and coastal combatants: 365:
Corvettes: 4 Sariwon with 1 100mm gun.
Missile craft: 30:
 4 Soju, 10 Sov Osa PFM with 4 x SS-N-2 Styr.
 6 Sohung, 10 Sov Komar PFM with 2 x SS-N-2.
Torpedo craft: 173:
 3 Shershen with 4 x 533mm TT.
 Some 170 with 2 x 533mm TT.
Patrol: 158:
Coastal: 6 Hainan PFC with 4 x ASW RL.
Inshore: 152:
 18 SO-1, 10 Taechong, 11 Shanghai II, 2 Chedo, 1 K-48, some 110.
Mine warfare: About 40 MSI.
Amph: craft only: 14 LCM, 12 LCU, about 100 LCI.
Support and miscellaneous: 2 ocean tugs.
Coast defence: SSM: 2 regts: Samlet in 6 sites; guns: 122mm: M-1931/-37; 130mm: SM-4-1; 152mm: M-1937.
Air Force: 53,000; some 800 cbt ac, 80 armed hel.
Bbns: 3 lt regts with 80 B-28.
FGA: 9 regts:
 1 with 20 Su-7, 10 Su-25;
 5 with some 280 Ch J-2/-4;
 3 with some 100 J-6/Q-5.
Fighters: 12 regt with 160 MiG-21, 60 J-6, 46 MiG-23.
Tpt: perhaps 10 regts:
 250 An-2, 10 An-24, 5 Il-14, 4 Il-18, 2 Tu-154, 1 Il-62.
Hel: 170 incl. 40 Mi-4, 20 Mi-8/-17, 80 Hughes -300/-500 (some 60 reported to be armed).
Try: incl. 100 MiG-19UTI/-19UTI/-21U, Il-28, 30 CJ-4, 120 Yak-18.
AAM: AA-2 Atoll.
SAM: 4 bdes (12 bns, 40 btys) with 500 SA-2 in 45 sites, SA-3, SA-5.
Forces Abroad: Iran (300); reported; 10 African countries incl. Madagascar (100), Mozambique (50-100), Polisario (Algeria) (50), Seychelles (50).
Paramilitary: Security troops (Ministry of Public Security): 38,000 incl. Border guards. Workers-Peasants Red Militia (WPRM): some 3 m up to age 50. Organised on a provincial/town/village basis. Comd structure is Corps-bde-bn-platoon. Small arms with some mor and arty.

*Note: Recently revised estimates indicate that the DPRK's active strength is nearly one million forces.

Source: "Asia Yearbook 1989," Far Eastern Economic Review

TABLE 3: Soviet Military Strength in the Far Eastern TVD

FAR EASTERN STRATEGIC

THEATRE (HQ Irkutsk) (with Pacific, Indian Ocean OTVD):

FAR EASTERN TVD (HQ Irkutsk):

Central Asian, Siberian, Transbaykal, Far Eastern MD, Mongolia.

STRATEGIC FORCES (under central command):

SLBM: 366: Pacific Fleet: 30 submarines (msl in parentheses): 9 *D-I* (108), 7 *D-III* (112), 8 *Y-I* (128), 6 *G-II* (18).

ICBM: (440): SS-11 (4 fields, c 260 msl, could have theatre role), SS-17 (c 38 msl), SS-18 (4 fields, c 120 msl).

IRBM: 132: SS-20 (deployed launchers).

BOMBERS: 160: 1 Air Army (HQ Irkutsk): 40 Tu-95 *Bear G*, 40 Tu-26, 80 Tu-16.

RECCE/ECM: c 60 Tu-16 *Badger F/H/J/K*.

TANKERS: some 9 Tu-16 *Badger A*.

AIR DEFENCE FORCES:

FIGHTERS: 540: 12 regt with MiG-21, MiG-23, MiG-25, MiG-31, Su-15, Su-27, Tu-28.

SAM: 215 SA-2/-3/-5, 10 SA-10 complexes and sites.

GROUND FORCES:

4 MD: 1 Unified Army Corps, 56 div (7 tk, 48 motor rifle, 1 coastal defence) plus 5 arty div; 2 air aslt bde.

CENTRAL ASIAN MD (HQ Alma Ata):

1 tk, 7 motor rifle, 1 arty div; 1 air aslt, 1 SS-23 bde, 145 hel incl 70 Mi-8, Mi-24.

SIBERIAN MD (HQ Novosibirsk):

6 motor rifle, 1 arty div; 1 SS-12 (mod) bn.

TRANSBAYKAL MD (HQ Chita):

1 Unified Army Corps, 2 tk, 11 motor rifle, 1 arty div; 1 SS-12 (mod) bde; 225 hel incl Mi-8, Mi-24.

FAR EASTERN MD (HQ Khabarovsk):

2 tk, 22 motor rifle, 1 coastal defence, 2 arty div; 1 air aslt, 1 SS-12 (mod) bde; some 670 hel.

MONGOLIA (HQ Ulan Bator):

1 Army HQ, 2 tk, 2 motor rifle div. All are at Cat A. (See also Forces Abroad, below.)

Mob could put 4 Fronts, perhaps 12 Armies (4 tk), into the field.

EQUIPMENT: perhaps 13,900 MBT; 13,500 arty, MRL, mor larger than 120mm; 220 *FROG*, 100+

Scud, 12 SS-23, 32 SS-12 (mod) SSM; 1,000 SAM, some 1,100 hel.

TACTICAL AVIATION (HQ Irkutsk): some 1,100 cbt ac.

CENTRAL ASIAN MD AIR FORCE (HQ Novosibirsk).

FGA: 90: 2 regt MiG-27 *Flogger D/J*, Su-24.

FIGHTERS: 90: 2 regt MiG-21, MiG-23.

RECCE: 50: MiG-25 *Foxbat B/D*, Su-17 *Fitter H*, Yak-28.

TRANSBAYKAL MD AIR FORCE (HQ Chita, incl Mongolia).

FGA: 180: 4 regt MiG-27 *Flogger D/J*, Su-17 *Fitter C*, Su-24.

FIGHTERS: 135: 3 regt MiG-21, MiG-23.

RECCE: 30: Su-17 *Fitter H*, Su-24, MiG-25.

FAR-EASTERN MD AIR FORCE (HQ

Khabarovsk): control centres: Petropavlovsk, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

FGA: 360: 8 regt MiG-27 *Flogger D/J*, Su-17 *Fitter D/H/K*, Su-24, Su-25.

FIGHTERS: 225: 5 regt MiG-23, MiG-25 *Foxbat A*, MiG-29, MiG-31.

RECCE: 40: Yak-28 *Brewer D*, MiG-21 *Fishbed H*, MiG-25 *Foxbat B/D*.

ECM: 10 Yak-28 *Brewer E*.

NAVY (Pacific Fleet) (HQ Vladivostok): (160,000).

BASES: Vladivostok, Petropavlovsk, Sovyetskaya Gavan; abroad: Cam Ranh Bay (Vietnam), Aden (South Yemen).

SUBMARINES: 112: strategic 24 SSBN, 6 SSB; tactical: 82: 22 SSGN, 28 SSN, 4 SSG, 28 SS.

PRINCIPAL SURFACE COMBATANTS: 73: 2 carriers, 12 cruisers incl 1 *Kirov*, 12 destroyers incl 2 *Sovremennyy*, 1 *Udaloy*, 47 frigates.

OTHER SURFACE SHIPS: 100 patrol and coastal combatants, 95 mine warfare, 19 amph, some 210 spt and misc.

Regular deployments:

To the Indian Ocean and South Yemen (Aden, Socotra, Persian Gulf) and Ethiopia (Dahlak Is, Mits'iwa): average 0-1 submarines, 2-3 principal surface combatants, 3-4 mine warfare, 1 amph, 6-8 spt ships.

To Vietnam (Cam Ranh Bay) and the South China Sea: average 2-4 submarines, 3-4 principal surface combatants, 3-4 mine warfare, 0-1 amph, 9-12 spt vessels.

NAVAL AIR (Pacific Fleet Air Force) (HQ Sovetskaya Gavan): some 320 cbt ac, some 110 hel.

BOMBERS: 100: 2 regt with 50 Tu-26, 2 with 50 Tu-16 *Badger A/C/G*.

FGA: some 80: afloat: Yak-38 *Forger A/B*; (ashore): Su-17 *Fitter C*.

ASW:

AIRCRAFT: 80: 30 Tu-142 *Bear F*, 20 Il-38; 30 Be-12.

HELICOPTERS: 90: (afloat): Ka-25, Ka-27; (ashore): Mi-14.

MR/EW:

AIRCRAFT: 65: 10 Tu-95, 50 Tu-16, 5 An-12 *Cub B*;

HELICOPTERS: 10 Ka-25.

MCM: 5 Mi-14 hel.

OTHRT HELICOPTERS: 10 Ka-27.

COMMUNICATION: Tu-142 *Bear J*.

TANKERS: 20 Tu-16.

NAVAL INFANTRY:

1 Div HQ, 3 inf, 1 tk and 1 arty regt: 7,000.

Source: The Military Balance 1988-1989
The International Institute
for Strategic Studies