(2)

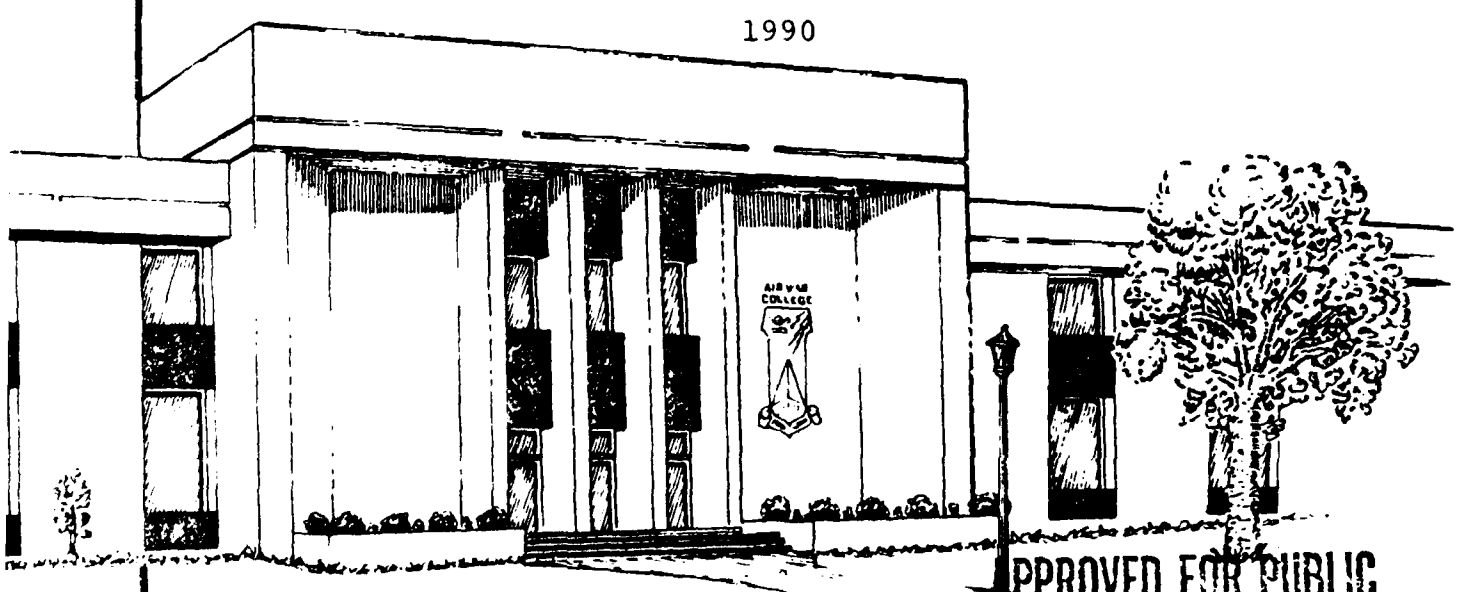
AIR WAR COLLEGE

RESEARCH REPORT

ISN'T IT TIME FOR U.S. TROOPS TO LEAVE KOREA?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL TOMMY F. BAILEY

1990



AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

90

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

ISN'T IT TIME FOR U.S. TROOPS TO LEAVE KOREA?

.

by

Tommy F. Bailey
Lieutenant Colonel, USA

A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM

REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Mr. Bruce T. Morland Jr.

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

April 1990

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCLAIMER

This study represents the view of the author and does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Air War College or the Department of the Air Force. In accordance with Air Force Regulation 110-8, it is not copyrighted but is the property of the United States Government.

Loan copies of this document may be obtained through the interlibrary loan desk of the Air University Library, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112-5564 (telephone (205)293-7223 or AUTOVON 875-7223).

Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	☑
DTIC TAB	☐
Unannounced	☐
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Isn't It Time For U.S. Troops To Leave Korea?

AUTHOR: Tommy F. Bailey, Lieutenant Colonel, USA.

The U.S. has maintained a strong security relationship with the Republic of Korea since the end of the Korean War. Recommendations found in this article are based on the U.S. invoking the implicit "sunset clause" in its security treaty regarding the military need for American forces in Korea to protect against North Korean aggression. The United States now has a unique challenge to continue serving its national security interests by adjusting its defense commitments to the Republic of Korea (ROK). A reduced U.S. troop presence in South Korea, if pursued in conjunction with arms control, confidence-building measures and command restructuring, could stabilize the Korean peninsula and preserve strong U.S.-ROK relations. The adjustments are warranted in view of the significant military, political and economic advancements the ROK has achieved since the end of the Korean War.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Tommy F. Bailey (M.S.E., Appalachian State University) has been interested in the combined U.S./ROK security relationship since the late seventies. In 1978 he served twelve months as a company commander in the Second Infantry Division, which supports the DMZ mission, and later commanded a battalion in the Second Infantry Division from November 87-April 89. With over thirty months in-country, participation in numerous combined operations between U.S./ROK military forces, and extensive travel through the South Korean peninsula, LTC Bailey has a genuine appreciation for the current Korean situation. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and is a graduate of the Air War College class of 1990.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the 1980s, the Asian-Pacific strategic environment has become extraordinarily fluid. Shifts in the regional distribution of power, coupled with reduced military tensions, dynamic market-based economic growth, and expanding democracy challenge the United States to rethink its policies. (1-1)

As we enter a new decade, the foreign policy challenges confronting the United States in the region clearly are growing. The western media are focused on the dramatic Soviet strategic initiatives in East and West Europe; the more important initiatives affecting long-range U.S. security may be taking shape on the other side of the Eurasian land mass. What happens on the Korean peninsula will be very important in future strategic equations. (1-2)

The purpose of this article is to analyze and answer the following important question. Why are over 40,000 U.S. men and women still stationed in Korea thirty-five years after the war there came to an end--and isn't it time to finally bring them home?

This article's thesis is based on the U.S. invoking the implicit "sunset clause" in its security treaty regarding

the military need for American forces in Korea to protect against North Korean aggression. The United States now has a unique challenge to continue serving its national security interests by adjusting its defense commitment to the Republic of Korea (ROK). A reduced U.S. troop presence in South Korea, if pursued in conjunction with arms control, confidence-building measures, and command restructuring, could stabilize the Korean peninsula and preserve strong U.S.-ROK relations. (1-2)

It is now time for the U.S. to adjust its forces to a more regionally focused role in which burdens would be more equitably shared with South Korea. In many of its alliance relationships, the U.S. now has allies who are capable of doing far more for themselves than they presently do. Despite South Korea's relatively good record as a responsible defense partner, it nonetheless enjoys a substantial U.S. strategic subsidy. If the U.S. were to pull its forces out of Korea, Seoul would face enormous increases in its security costs. Retention of U.S. forces enable South Korea to use the defense funds it avoids spending for other purposes, including enhancing its ability to compete economically with the U.S. When South Korea was a poor, developing country, these security arrangements made sense; but now that Korea is one of the East Asian group challenging the U.S. economically, these security arrangements no longer make sense. (2-63)

Consequently, it makes eminent economic and strategic sense for the U.S. to share the burdens of common security with all allies who are capable of upholding a fairer share of such burdens. Many post-World War II commitments by the U.S. to allies were supposed to protect allies until they could protect themselves. Implicit in these arrangements was a defacto "sunset clause." A long-term U.S. objective in these alliances was to work itself out of the job of providing security for allies. When they were capable of taking care of themselves, these allies were supposed to do so. South Korea is such an ally and should be pressed to undertake a fair distribution of military roles. The U.S. and ROK can do much more to pool military resources, do what each does best, share power, and foster more equitable and interdependent security arrangements. (2-64)

CHAPTER II

VIEWPOINTS

The Bush Administration appears to have no plans to alter U.S.-ROK security relations. During his visit to South Korea in early 1989, President Bush reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening cooperative security ties. The administration argues that unilateral reductions of U.S. forces in Korea are untenable without the consent of South Korea and other Asian allies. (1-3) The following is an excerpt from the address by President Bush before the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea, February 27, 1989.

> I stand in your assembly as Presidents Eisenhower, Johnson, and Reagan have stood before me, and I reaffirm, as they did, America's support, friendship, and respect for the Republic of Korea and its people. I've come here today as the leader of a faithful friend and a dependable ally. And I'm here today to ensure that we work together in all things. Our most important mission together is to maintain the freedom of democracy that you fought so hard to win. As President, I am committed to maintaining American forces in Korea, and I am committed to support our mutual defense treaty. (3-2)
>
> There are no plans to reduce U.S. forces in Korea. Our soldiers and airmen are here at the request of the Republic of Korea to deter aggression from the North, and their presence contributes to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. They will remain in the Republic of Korea as long as they are needed and as long as we believe it is in the interest of peace to keep them there. (3-2)

President Roh Tae Woo, the President of South Korea, opposes U.S. troop reductions. He feels a U.S. pullout would

imperil the peninsula. The following is a synopsis of a New York Times September 7, 1987 article, which expresses Roh's current viewpoint.

When President Roh Tae Woo, cautioning against troop reduction sentiment in the U.S. Congress, recently said, "If it ain't broke don't fix it," he was warning against the poor timing of the proposal and against several key misperceptions on which the argument for withdrawal is based. (4-A27)

First, it has been suggested that South Koreans popularly oppose the U.S. military presence and that there is concern over growing anti-American sentiment. In fact, the occasional expression of views harshly critical of the U.S. can be traced to a few extremist political groups and a small number of radical university students. The U.S. remains South Korea's most important and trusted ally, and will continue to be considered as such by the vast majority of South Koreans. Reliable polls repeatedly show that 75 percent to 94.1 percent oppose withdrawal or a significant reduction of American troops. (4-A27)

Second, charges have been made that South Korea spends less than its fair share on its own defense. The facts disagree. Last year, the U.S. and South Korea spent about the same percentage of the GNP on the military: 5.9 percent and 5.4 percent respectively. South Korea has been sharing the

cost of the U.S. military presence and is willing to do the same in the future. (4-A27)

Third, some argue that South Koreans accept the stationing of the U.S. troops as a way of avoiding an increase in defense spending. However, it is hardly a secret that the American's presence serves U.S. and South Korean interests, as well as those of other nations in the region. (3-A27)

Lastly, South Korea has emerged as a budding democracy despite ups and downs. One vital element in this success has been the presence of the U.S. troops for 36 years. Despite complaints here and there, the security arrangement is neither "broke" nor needs "fixing". (4-A27)

Similarly, emphasizing the possibility of North Korean miscalculations and aggression, the DOD viewpoint warns against any weakened U.S. presence on the peninsula. (1-3) On 19 March 1989, General Louis C. Menetrey, CINCUSFK, in a Stars and Strips article said,

> We are well into our 39th year in Korea and our commander in chief, visiting a few weeks ago, made something very clear. We are staying. We will be here as long as we are needed and as long as the Korean people and government want us to stay. And we will be needed as long as North Korea shows an aggressive, force-of-arms attitude and refuses to meaningfully discuss peace and unity for this tragic, divided land." (5-11)

Last summer, Admiral Huntington Hardistry, CINC, PACOM, testified before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate. He said,

> The economic strength of Korea and its improved defense posture is an important regional development. In spite of some encouraging efforts concerning North South talks, the security situation remains uncertain. In concert with our ROK allies, we are examining ways the South Koreans can assume even greater responsibilities for their own defense, but the threat has not diminished. Our force presence will continue to be required as a proven deterrent to North Korean adventurism. We should not consider reduction of this presence until such time as we see visible and measurable tension reductions and a diminished threat. Voices of anti-Americanism notwithstanding, this position is supported by most of our Korean friends. (6-54)

The viewpoint of the U.S. Congress stands in sharp contrast to the viewpoints already discussed in this chapter. Congress displays a much different attitude toward American troops in Korea. Last summer, Senators Bumpers, Levin, and Johnston called for the withdrawal of 10,000 U.S. troops from Korea by 1992. Althoug' demands for immediate force reductions failed, Congress added to the 1990 defense budget an amendment co-sponsored by Senators Nunn and Warner which reflects growing Congressional uneasiness over the status of U.S.-ROK security relations. A section of the amendment entitled the "Sense of Congress" contends that the United States should reassess its military role in South Korea, and that the ROK should assume increased responsibility for its own security, including a greater share of the financial cost of stationing U.S. troops on Korean soil. Congress also feels that the United States and the ROK should consult with one another regarding the possibility of reducing U.S. force levels on the Peninsula. (1-4)

The Nunn/Warner amendment requires that President Bush report to Congress by April 1, 1990 regarding the status and results of these consultations. Under the new legislation, the President must also develop a strategic plan for the future of U.S. troops in Korea. Specifically, President Bush must suggest ways in which the United States can transfer defense responsibilities and costs to South Korea, and must discuss the feasibility of reductions in U.S. military personnel in the ROK. (1-4)

Given current Congressional sentiments, it is highly probable that the United States will remove at lease some of its 43,000 military personnel from the ROK in the near future. Saddled with an enormous budget deficit, the United States must cut $200-$300 billion from its defense budget over the next five years. Glasnost has dulled once-popular American fears of the "Evil Empire." To many Americans, domestic social and environmental priorities are more important than U.S. commitments to the security of its allies worldwide. Lacking strong constituencies, forward-deployed American forces will be a favorite political target in the years ahead. (1-5)

South Korea is particularly vulnerable to these presumably draconian measures. President Bush proposed conventional arms reductions in Western Europe, but opposition to unilateral cuts there may force reductions in East Asia

instead. Economic tensions between the United States and the ROK are eroding the consensus for continued American military support. Pointing to the ROK's $10 billion trade surplus with the United States, many Americans fear that U.S. aid to Korea may be helping to create a "new Japan." In the context of a widening U.S. current-account deficit and continued South Korean economic protectionism, the pressure for cuts in U.S. military assistance may become insurmountable. Already, 61 percent of Americans surveyed by the Roosevelt Center favored the withdrawal of all American forces from South Korea, leaving only selected U.S. air units as a tripwire. (1-5)

CHAPTER III

NORTH, SOUTH KOREA--THE CONTRAST AND THREAT

Since 1948, the two Korean states have remained a symbol of mutual distrust, have experienced high levels of conflict and tension, and a lack of empathy. The two Koreas continue to confront each other along the 155-mile demilitarized zone (DMZ) with more than a million well-armed men, thereby, keeping a precarious peace system through mutual deterrence. (7-251)

This chapter will outline the contrasting elements of two countries, as well as detail the threat North Korea presents to South Korea. This chapter is an important foundation building step to understand the rationale used in the final chapter's recommendation for a reduced U.S. troop presence in South Korea.

In almost every practical aspect--ideological, political, economic, and military, the two Koreas are worlds apart from each other. At first, the divergence mostly stemmed from membership in the two opposing camps of the Cold War international order. Later, the variance assumed a certain inertia of its own based on internal necessity. This difference becomes more crystallized and refined as years pass. (8-359)

The chief features of ideological reality on the Korean peninsula have been the North's extreme Stalinesque communism and the South's extreme anticommunism. Both phenomena are linked intimately to the question of political legitimacy at home. So, any changes in ideology portend dire consequences for the continued maintenance of political control for both regimes, though they would probably be much more serious for North Korea. (8-359)

The official ideology of juche (self-reliance) along with Kim Il Sung's personality cult are the glues that hold North Korea together. However bizarre, the dual instrument of juche and the Kim Il Sung cult has succeeded in perpetuating political stability in North Korea. By insuring uniformity of belief, discouraging independent thought, and generating passionate devotion for a superman-like leader, the regime maximizes the tightly sealed society's human and material resources with minimum resistance. And, the obvious nationalistic streak embodied in juche can be vigorously employed as "a weapon against the government of South Korea, which (Kim) condemns as totally dependent on the United States, and therefore a puppet." (8-360)

If North Korea is a country where Stalinism was perfected, then South Korea is a land where McCarthyism was never vanquished. South Korea was founded on anti-communism. Nothing made the South Korean leadership more anti-communist

than the Korean War. For South Koreans, the North Korean attack spectacularly confirmed their already deep-seated suspicions about Kim Il Sung's intentions. At the same time, the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China came to be firmly regarded as hostile and aggressive powers, while the prestige of the United States soared. Most importantly, the war created a huge, powerful, and staunchly anti-communist military establishment in South Korea. (8-361)

National security assumed top priority for the South Korean leadership and anti-communism became its gospel. Criticism of the regime was considered traitorous, and critics were branded communists and dealt with accordingly. Even current trends towards more tolerant governance have not fully uprooted this tradition, as hundreds of political prisoners continue to be detained under national security laws. In other words, the existence of a hostile North Korea is at most a fundamental source of legitimacy for South Korean regimes and at least a convenient cover for quieting dissent. (8-361)

In North Korea, the Koreans Workers' Party (KWP) holds a monopoly on political power. Through a complex array of national, provincial, and local organizations, the KWP implements party policies, indoctrinates the populace, and facilitates communication between policy makers and citizens. Membership is highly exclusive, only about 10 percent of the population, or about 2 million people, are members. Selection

is based primarily on mastery of the official ideology and absolute loyalty to the party. The party provides the sole avenue for attaining upward mobility and power in North Korean society. At the apex of the party is the thirty-three member politburo. Its core members are first-generation communists who fought the Japanese in Manchuria alongside Kim II Sung himself. The politburo makes all policy decisions and directly oversees the party bureaucracy; the politburo, in turn, ultimately answers to Kim. As in other communist countries, North Korean elites receive preferential treatment despite egalitarian ideology. They have better access to food and other consumer goods. They live in bigger houses. Their children get the best education and the best jobs. In short, the system is good to them and they know it. (8-362)

Bureaucratic elites in South Korea have an equally high stake in maintaining its political system. About three out of every 200 South Koreans, or almost 650,000 people, work for the government. Civil servants enjoy fairly high status and considerable public respect, a lingering effect of the Confucian view of the scholar-bureaucrat. Of further significance is the fact that ex-officers have been represented prominently in the upper levels of the South Korean bureaucracy since the military took power in 1961. This military presence inevitably has given the bureaucracy a strong anti-communist bias. Equally important, with the

military leaders emphasis on rapid economic development, the bureaucracy has become one of the most ardent proponents of export-oriented capitalism. Indeed, the record shows that the South Korean bureaucracy has sided consistently with the government in limiting the democratic process in the name of national security and economic growth. (8-362)

Perhaps in no other area does the fundamental difference between the two Koreas manifest itself more clearly than in their economies. Consistent with their respective ideologies, the means of production and resource distribution are controlled by the government in communist North Korea, while they are largely controlled through market mechanisms in capitalist South Korea. Whereas the North Korean economic system tends to be driven by broader ideological and political imperatives of the governing elites, the South Korean economic operation tends to confine itself to purely economic considerations of the general population. (8-362)

As in most areas of North Korean life, the ideology of juche dictates the nation's economic reality. North Korea sees industrialization and mechanization as the cornerstone of a self-reliant economy and defense. To this end, North Korean leaders resort to incessant exhortation of the virtues of juche and centralization to mobilize the masses. There is a limit to this form of motivation, however. When growth inevitably slows down (as was the case after 1960) due to

growing complexity of the economy and depletion of surplus resources, and no marked improvement in people's lives seems evident, morale sinks, and productivity suffers. Popular demand for more bread and butter (or rice and kimchi) no longer can be ignored. Leaders must choose between pursuing essentially the same plan, with a minimum allowance of decentralization and material incentives, or changing their strategy entirely by diverting more resources to the consumer-oriented sector. So far, the North Korean leadership seems to have chosen the first alternative. Why? Because economic liberalization most likely would expose the populace to more foreign influence and would challenge the credibility of juche and the Kim Il Sung cult. Since this credibility is absolutely critical to North Korea's political stability, an economic opening risks political disaster. In North Korea, economic concerns have never preceded political imperatives. (8-363)

South Korea, on the other hand, has been held up as a model of an export-oriented capitalist development strategy. Under the military's firm helmsmanship, the nation plunged into a program of rapid industrialization and economic growth. In successive five-year plans, the government adopted monetary, fiscal, and trade policies to promote exports of manufactured goods ranging from clothes in the 1960s to computers in the 1980s. It devalued the won, gave

preferential loans and tax benefits to export manufacturers, and exempted tariffs for raw materials used in export production. Although the government plays a large and crucial role in the South Korean "economic miracle", most industrial production is by private firms. Competition between small, family-owned companies is fierce and contributes to efficiency. The meteoric rise in national wealth also has created a growing class of entrepreneurs and giant conglomerates known as chaebol (e.g., Hyundai and Samsung). Business is now not only a very profitable field, but also a respectable profession. (8-364)

As in the North, increased economic self-reliance was one of the South's primary economic development goals. Granted that South Korea remains more vulnerable to external circumstances, its economy surpasses that of the North in may ways. Unlike Pyongyang, the streets of Seoul are awash with Reebok shoes and Goldstar stereos. Unlike the North Korean worker, the assembly line worker in the Hyundai auto plants in Ulsan can expect substantial pay raises on a semi-regular basis. Unlike North Korea, considered one of the least creditworthy countries in the world, South Korea is considered one of the most creditworthy. In sum, South Koreans more than ever can be sure of the higher merits of their economic system vis-a-vis North Korea's. Many South Koreans increasingly may

not mind holding out and watching the North Korean system collapse under its own weight. (8-364)

Militarily, the two Koreas are as hostile to each other as any two adversaries in the world. Inevitably, in both countries, the military has become "the largest, cohesive vested-interest in their states." This preponderant influence creatings own organizational dynamics,seeks to enhance, enlarge, and expand itself. The only way to justify such action, though, is by continuing to stress the perceived threat and hostility from one another. (8-364)

North Korea is one of the most highly militarized societies in the world. Probably no other industry is as large as defense. Every year, up to 20 percent of GNP is spent on defense. Consequently, North Korea has built up a largely self-sufficient arms industry which is also active in weapons exports to Third World countries. Finally, the whole nation has virtually become a giant fortress, with many important factories and military bases built underground. The military is an inseparable part of North Korean reality. As some observers have pointed out, the military in North Korea is essential to reinforce the legitimacy of the regime. Through mass mobilization, it helps to inculcate the values of "loyalty, absolute obedience to the party and the leader, the willingness to sacrifice and revolutionary brotherhood" in the minds of the people. And since a large military establishment

requires a menacing enemy, the threat of aggression by an imperial United States and its "puppet" regime in South Korea is constantly played up: the ultimate mission of the military is said to lie in completing national liberation of all Korea by driving out American imperialists from the South and freeing the people from class oppression. (8-365)

South Korea is no pacifist either. It spends six percent of GNP on defense which means, in absolute terms, more total expenditure than the North because of the South's much larger GNP. Like North Korea, South Korea has sought to increase self-reliance in the defense sector. By the early 1980s, it was meeting about half of its own armament needs, especially in the light weapons category. Most significantly, this vast military establishment plays a pivotal role in South Korean politics. Perhaps more importantly, ex-officers continue to occupy senior- and middle-level government positions. Because their chief duty was the defense of the nation against the North Korean military threat, these policy-makers in general "give a high priority to internal security, tend toward worst-case analyses of North Korea's military capabilities and intentions, and react with suspicion toward views of North Korea less hard-line than theirs." (8-366)

The threat represented by North Korea is significant. Even by the standards of the rest of the communist world, North Korea is a highly militarized society, but South Korea

is no push-over and continues to outdistance the North. The following is a comparison of the Army, Air Force, and Navy of both countries.

The regular North Korean Army (KPA) is only slightly larger than the South Korean Army, while the South's reserve and para-military forces are much larger than those of the North. The core of the KPA comprises 38 infantry divisions, only three of which are motorized. These exceed the 23 infantry divisions of the South Korean army, which has two mechanized divisions. Since the military strategy of North Korea is offensive in nature, the lack of mechanized infantry is a serious problem. Following standard Soviet practice, KPA army forces are sizeable. Though large, relative to South Korea's, KPA tank forces are in need of modernization, but the economic and political possibilities of obtaining large numbers of Soviet main battle tanks are rather slim at the present time. KPA anti-tank capabilities are also reasonably impressive. Despite the large number of such weapons, the South Korean army's anti-tank capabilities are considered to be far superior to those of the KPA and would appreciably reduce the KPA tank superiority in the event of war. Like the Soviet army, the KPA clearly believes that artillery is the "Red God of War." Such massive firepower is matched by that of the South Korean army, whose large artillery forces have the advantage of greater mobility. Lastly, KPA army air

defense forces are numerous. The South Korean army's anti-aircraft capabilities, though inferior to those of the KPA as regards to numbers, are considered to be more modern. (9-262)

Though large in absolute terms, 740 to South Korea's 450 combat aircraft, the KPA air force urgently needs updating. The 13 fighter ground attack squadrons contain rapidly aging and increasingly obsolete aircraft. With no MIG-27s supplied by the Soviet Union to strengthen KPA air force offensive ground attack capabilities, a KPA invasion of the South is a risky enterprise. The problem of obsolescence also centers on the 12 interceptor squadrons. The KPA air force is keen to replace current aircraft with MIG-23 aircraft in order to counter the U.S. F-16 aircraft currently deployed by the South Korean air force. The Soviet Union has only agreed to supply 50 MIG-23s. This does not give the KPA air force the edge in the air, given the fact that the South Korean air force has 36 F-16s. In contrast to the growing modern combat helicopter capabilities of the South Korean air force, the KPA air force helicopter forces are both weak and obsolete. Lastly, KPA air force anti-aircraft SAM capabilities are quite impressive, with 250 SAM SA-2/SA-3 systems in 40 sites, and pitched in the air by AA-2 'Atoll' AAMs. However, as with so much else in the KPA air force, these SAM and AAM capabilities need to be replaced by more modern Soviet systems. (9-263)

It is with the KPA air force that North Korea faces its most serious obsolescence problems, due to increasing South Korean air force superiority in the air, and Soviet unwillingness, to date, to supply all what the KPA air force thinks it needs. The KPA air force, in common with the KPA as a whole, will only get what the Soviet Union thinks it should have. (9-263)

When compared to the South Korean navy, the KPA navy is probably the weakest part of the KPA as a whole, with 21 elderly submarines. They would stand little chance against the highly developed anti-submarine capabilities of the South Korean navy. The KPA navy's largest vessels, four locally made 'Najin' frigates, count for little in relation to the South Korean navy's 11 US destroyers, eight frigates, and three corvettes. Fast attack craft capabilities are impressive, but rely--more than other equipment type in the entire KPA--on obsolete Chinese vessels, as well as a smaller number of Soviet vessels. Unlike the South Korean navy, which has 11 fast attack craft, the KPA navy has no naval SSM capability, thus greatly weakening its ability to deal with large South Korean naval vessels. The KPA navy, then, is only really a coastal defence force, with some pretensions towards an offensive capability. It is made up of a relatively large number of landing craft and relatively strong amphibious commando special forces. But it is totally inadequate to

properly deal with the far more powerful South Korean forces in the area in the event of war. (9-363)

This chapter provided a contrast in North and South Korean ideology, politics, economics, and military forces. The anti-communist South is an economic miracle in Asia and has clearly outdistanced the North in that important area. Numbers don't lie. South Korea militarily is rapidly closing or has already closed the advantage the North held in the past. With the conformation of more democratic politics as evidenced by the 1987 free presidential elections, South Korea is now proving to the world she is capable of caring for herself more than ever before.

CHAPTER IV

U.S. FORCES IN KOREA

The level of involvement and integration of U.S. and foreign military forces is higher in Korea than anywhere else with the exception of a few NATO nations. This is evident in the large number of U.S. troops in Korea (more than in any other foreign nation except West Germany and Japan), the stationing of U.S. nuclear weapons, the combined command structure, the extensive joint training and planning for war, the prepositioning of war supplies on the peninsula, the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty, and many other factors. (10-3)

To support our mission in the Republic of Korea, we have just over 43,000 military personnel assigned. 31,950 of this total are Army forces assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division and to combat support and combat service support units stationed throughout the country. (11-16)

The 2nd Infantry Division is the only Army combat unit west of Hawaii and is an integral part of the combined defense force. The remaining US Army strength in the Republic of Korea provides essential peace and wartime functions such as aviation, signal, and intelligence assets for command, control, communication, and intelligence (C3I) services and the infrastructure for the logistics functions required to

maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula. Many of the units are manned below their war time authorizations but provide the essential transition to war capability necessary for our "right now" limited warning situation. (11-16)

The nearly 12,000 Air Force personnel assigned serve much the same purpose. Airpower is an indispensable asset for successful defense of the Republic of Korea. US Air Forces are essential to deter the DRPK and, should open hostilities again flare, for the execution of successful defensive and counteroffensive operations. (11-16)

To complete the remainder of our military forces, we have almost 500 Navy and Marine Corps personnel assigned to critical command, staff, and liaison positions throughout USFK. (11-16)

Of the forty U.S. military installations in Korea, the most notable are the Army bases at Camp Casey and Yongsan and the air force bases at Osan, Kunsan, Suwon, and Taegu. As stated above, the majority of U.S. forces are members of the 8th U.S. Army, the major element of which is the 2nd Infantry Division. West Germany is the only other foreign country in which a full U.S. Army division is stationed. The 2nd Infantry Division joins 13 South Korean Army divisions to form the Combined ROK/U.S. Field Army. It is mostly deployed between Seoul and the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea, in such a way that U.S. combat

involvement in any Korean war would be automatic. U.S. air power in Korea is organized under the U.S. 7th Air Force, headquartered at Osan, and includes nearly 100 high-performance aircraft, most notably F-16 and F-4 fighter aircraft, A-10 "tank-buster" aircraft, OV-10 counterinsurgency planes, and U-2 reconnaissance planes. (10-3)

An emotional issue with many Koreans is the continued military command relationship whereby a U.S. general officer, serving as CINC, Combined Forces Command (CINCCFC), has operational control over virtually all of the Republic of Korea's combat forces. Although some Koreans still argue in favor of the current system, an increasing number cite this command arrangement as a sore point in US-ROK relations. Korean students consider such American dominance over Korean affairs an affront to Korean nationalism. (12-78)

The Combined Forces Command, established in 1978, has an extremely complex command and control arrangement. Command relationships are established through a combination of strategic guidance, coordination authority, operational control, and command less operational control lines of authority. The CINCCFC also serves as the Commander, United Nations Command, an awkward arrangement in which he must respond both to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff and to the ROK Minister of National Defense. Although during peacetime the CONCCFC has operational control over major ROK combat units,

he has no peacetime operational control over U.S. forces--with the exception of a few air-defense assets. (12-78)

Intertwined with this complex organization is the Combined Field Army--another combined ROK/U.S. command. The Combined Field Army is commanded by a U.S. lieutenant general. It operates with a combined staff and has two ROK corps under its control in both peace and war. As with the Combined Forces Command, no U.S. Army element is directly under the control of the Combined Field Army during peacetime. Once again, command arrangements require a U.S. general officer to exercise control over South Korean military units--a relationship many Koreans feel is blatantly unfair. Consequently, anti-U.S. sentiments have spread widely. In a poll conducted among Korean high school students at the end of 1988, the students listed the United States as the country they dislike second only to Japan, the traditional aggressor against Korea. (12-78)

General Richard Stilwell, former commander of U.S. Forces, Korea, reportedly once called the command arrangement in Korea the most remarkable concession of sovereignty in the entire world. It is clearly a relic of the past. The South Koreans are a proud and independent people with a strong, highly organized armed force. The absurdity of a U.S. general with 43,000 troops commanding more than 600,000 South Korean troops is increasingly evident. Indeed, prior to his

election, Roh told Washington Post reporters, "Eventually the command structure will be changed.... It is natural for any sovereign country to exercise operational control over its own military forces." (10-12)

As mentioned in Chapter One, the 1990 defense budget had an amendment sponsored by Senators Nunn and Warner which requires the United States to reassess its military role in South Korea and that the ROK should assume increased responsibility for its own security, including a greater share of the financial costs of stationing U.S. troops on Korean soil. The amendment requires that President Bush report to Congress by April 1, 1990 regarding the status and results of the consultations.

During February, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney completed a two-week tour to reassess the U.S. military posture in Asia and the Pacific. The following information was published in numerous national newspapers and appears to mark a major shift in the four decade long security tie between the U.S. and the ROK. Talks between Cheney and various ROK officials were reported to include withdrawal of some U.S. troops, and shifting operational control of ROK forces to South Korea. While we must remember these were only initial talks, the seed has now been laid for future dialogue in this important area.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS

This article was written to analyze and answer a very important U.S. national security question. Why are over 40,000 U.S. men and women still stationed in Korea 35 years after the war came to an end and isn't it time to finally bring them home? In Chapter Two, opposing viewpoints were discussed and it was revealed the current administration had a mandate from Congress to reassess its military role in South Korea. In Chapter Three the sharp contrast between North and South Korean ideology, politics, economy, and lastly military showed a significant advantage in favor of the Republic of Korea. Chapter Four discussed the current U.S. troop strength and command structure between the U.S. and the ROK.

The April first mandate for the Bush Administration to reassess the U.S. military role in South Korea is here, but is not making headline news. What I want to do in the final chapter is to scoop the newsmen and give my recommendations on what should be included in the administration's reassessment.

Before we continue to the recommendations, it is important to answer the overriding questions. Why do we still have 40,000 plus service people in the ROK and isn't it time we bring them home? In respond to the first part of the

question there are many answers: servicing our treaty obligations; geopolitical importance; strong Korean lobby; economic ties; fear of Communist expansion; or perhaps it is better said, "all of the above". In response to the second part of the question, "isn't it time we bring the troops home," guess what, it has already started to happen. On 16 February 1990, the New York Times reported that last month the United States announced it would cease operations at three of its five South Korean air bases and withdraw about 2,000 Air Force support personnel from the country.

Now on to the recommendations. A rapid, wholesale American withdrawal could destabilize the Korean peninsula, weaken U.S.-ROK relations, and undermine American interests in Northeast Asia. However, a carefully planned and enunciated, gradual reduction in U.S. ground forces, accomplished after consultation with ROK authorities and in conjunction with various arms control and confidence-building measures, can constitute a positive response to internal South Korean politics, regional dynamics, and the rapidly evolving demands of international security in the fluid Asian environment. (1-6)

What policies should the United States adopt to facilitate troop reductions and enhance its interests in Northeast Asia? First, any policy should be based upon a bipartisan consensus in the Congress and should be the result

of a NSDM (National Security Defense Memorandum). A troop reduction effort should be underpinned by a "war game" or crisis simulation focused on the Korean Peninsula--a war game managed by a bipartisan, nongovernmental institution, and not by the OSD, JCS, PACOM, or CINC-CFC, each of which may have normal predispositions affecting objectivity of war game conclusions. The result of these efforts should be shared with South Korean authorities and could (not necessarily would) lead to formal notification of the U.S. intention to withdraw and deactivate selected tactical air units and up to one brigade of the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division. U.S. interests in further cuts should be expressed pending North Korean reciprocation and simultaneous progress towards arms control on the peninsula. Finally, the United States should state its willingness to withdraw all American ground forces when sufficient progress toward reunification takes place, to the satisfaction of both North and South Korea, and the U.S. military presence on the ground is no longer necessary. (1-13)

A reduction in American ground forces in South Korea will necessitate changes in existing command and control structures. Since the late 1970s, an American general has served as Commander-In-Chief of the CFC. This arrangement is now the target of increasing Korean criticism. As ROK forces have grown more capable and professional in recent years, Koreans have expressed dissatisfaction over what they perceive

as their "junior" role in the security relationship. The current command structure also agitates nationalist sentiments. Koreans feel that American dominance is an anachronistic legacy of the 1950s, and the U.S. officers should no longer give orders to ROK troops. Given "historical revisionism" at work in ROK universities, increasing numbers of Koreans mistakenly believe, despite convincing evidence to the contrary, that a U.S. general allowed South Korean forces under his command to suppress the 1980 Kwangju rebellion. Rebutting this claim, the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations and the Asia Society contends:

> None of the ROK forces involved in the large number of casualties early in the incident were under U.N. command, and the United States was *not* aware of their deployment. Subsequently, different ROK forces experienced in civil control were withdrawn from the CFC and sent to Kwangju to restore governmental authority and did so with a minimum of casualties. The ROK used proper notification procedures in withdrawing these forces. Nonetheless, because of the emotion surrounding the incident, the misperception of U.S. responsibility has never been successfully corrected. (1-28)

A short-term alternative that should be implemented is the establishment of a ground component command for the Combined Forces Command. This ground component would be commanded by a ROK army general officer, thus removing ROK army forces from under the direct command of a US general (CINCCFC). Placing ROK army ground forces under command of a national commander would give South Korea greater direct control over its own forces and help diffuse anti-American

sentiment. Some argue that this alternative does not go far enough, since the overall commander would still be American (i.e. CINCCFC), but it is a progressive and logical first step. (12-77)

Simultaneous with the establishment of a ground component command under a ROK commander, the Combined Field Army should be disestablished. The current US Army lieutenant general commanding the Combined Field Army would become the ground component deputy commander, and key US officers assigned to CFA would be reassigned to the ground component command to form a combined staff. This would alleviate the current situation wherein the Combined Forces Command staff finds itself immersed in a large number of issues that are specific to the ground component. Further, it would allow the Combined Forces Command staff to better concentrate on the integrative nature of their combined role. The ground component command staff would thereby be in a posture allowing it to concentrate its efforts toward fighting the land battle throughout the peninsula. (12-77)

The long-term solution for the Korean command dilemma requires a truly visionary perspective, with a much broader regional focus. US strategists need to look down the road 10 to 30 years to determine the most effective long-range options for our forces in the Pacific. For example, as a minimum the US Army should redesign its headquarters elements in the

Pacific into a more efficient organizational structure, perhaps by combining Eighth United States Army in Korea, United States Army Japan, and Western Command into a single major command. In order to further streamline and simplify command and control arrangements within the theater, United States Forces Korea and United States Forces Japan could be combined into a single sub-unified command. This new command could be structured to serve under the US unified Pacific Command and be forward-deployed in Japan. The elimination of superfluous headquarters elements would allow for a reduction of both military and civilian personnel spaces and thus make Congress happy. In addition, it would allow the Eighth Army Headquarters to vacate Yongsan garrison in Seoul, thereby making Korea happy, providing the US Pacific COmmand a single point of contact for the Army forces in the Pacific, and insuring that a US Army headquarters remains in the Pacific to coordinate joint/combined operations when the Combined Forces Command in Korea is eventually disestablished. (12-78)

Concurrently, the US Army should restructure the Second Infantry Division in Korea into a more mobile and self-sustaining force; thus, in addition to serving as a strategic reserve for Korea, it could respond to a variety of contingencies in the entire area. Although the Pacific will continue to be predominately an air/sea theater, it will be important to maintain a credible US Army ground force in Asia

as a symbol of American commitment to the Asian-Pacific region. (12-78)

LIST OF REFERENCES

1. Taylor, William J., The Korean Complex: National Strategy and Improved Implementation of National Security Policies. Washington, National Defense University, October 1989.

2. Olsen, Edward A., "Conclusion," U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas, Boulder CO, Westview Press, 1988, pp. 101-109.

3. Bush, George, "Continuity and Change in U.S.-Korean Relations," Current Policy, No. 1115, U.S. Department of State, 27 February 1989.

4. Hyum Hong-Choo, "Why Seoul Says Don't Fix What Isn't Broke," New York Times, 7 September 89, pg A-27.

5. Menetrey, Gen Louis C., "Menetrey: America is in South Korea to Stay," Stars and Stripes, 19 March 89, pg 11.

6. Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations U.S. Senate, H.R. 3072, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1989, pg 55.

7. Tae-Hwan Kwak, "Peace-Making Process on the Korean Peninsula," World Affairs, Vol. 150, No 4 Spring 1988 pp. 251-262.

8. Lee, Charles s., "Korean Reunification: The Dream and the Reality," The Fletcher Forum, Summer 1989 pp. 358-369.

9. Milivojevie, Marko, "The Korean People's Army" Armed Forces Vol 6 No 6, June 1987, pp. 259-263.

10. Goose, Stephen D., "U.S. Forces in Korea: Assessing a Reduction," Collective Defense or Strategic Independence?, Lexington MA, Lexington Books, 1989, pp. 85-102.

11. Menetry, Gen Louis C., "The U.S. Military Posture on the Korean Peninsula," Asian Defence Journal, August 88 pp. 13-20.

12. Raho, Steven A., "Korea and American National Security," Parameters, September 1989 pp. 69-80.