A RAND NOTE

U.S. Conventional Arms Control for Korea: A Proposed Approach

James C. Wendt

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Prepared for the
United States Army

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PREFACE

Arroyo Center Study on Korean Arms Control

This Note is an annotated version of the Arroyo Center briefing on the project, "Approaches to Conventional Arms Control on the Korean Peninsula." The purpose of this project was to develop a conceptual approach for integrating arms control into the changing security environment on the Korean peninsula and evaluating the effect of alternative arms control measures on U.S. interests. This study was initiated at the request of Robert W. RisCassi, Commander-in-Chief of the UN Command/Combined Forces Command/U.S. Forces Korea, and Commanding General, Eighth U.S. Army.

This Note first identifies what project personnel believe U.S. objectives should be in any conventional arms control negotiations. Then an approach is developed that helps accomplish those objectives. To be acceptable, any approach must not only help accomplish U.S. objectives but must also be consistent with the Republic of Korea's (ROK's) principal objectives. ROK objectives are identified and the approach analyzed in the light of the objectives.

After identifying the elements of a proposal that could help accomplish U.S./ROK objectives, the Note assesses possible Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) objectives in any conventional arms control negotiations. Given the DPRK objectives, the Note discusses what the United States may have to put on the negotiating table (and perhaps keep off of it as well) to provide sufficient incentives for the North to reach an agreement.

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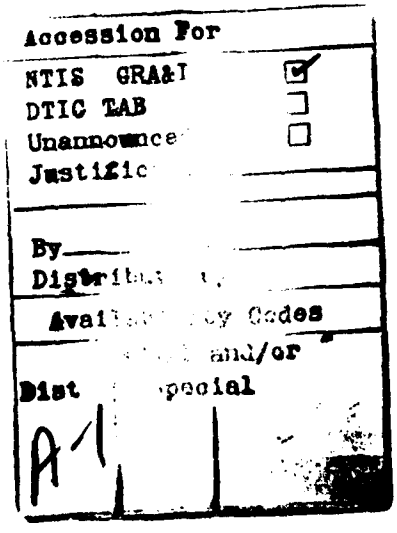
Lynn E. Davis is Vice President for the Army Research Division and Director of the Arroyo Center. Those interested in further information about the Arroyo Center should contact her office directly:

Lynn E. Davis
RAND
1700 Main Street
P.O. Box 2138
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138



SUMMARY

Conventional arms control negotiations should (1) help achieve U.S./Republic of Korea (ROK) military objectives on the peninsula, and (2) produce a verifiable agreement. These are important objectives and we will return to them. However, there is a more important objective not always associated with arms control—how arms control could help the United States achieve its regional security objectives.

In Northeast Asia, the United States has four main security objectives: (1) maintain stability, (2) maintain access and influence, (3) prevent a power vacuum or the rise of any regional hegemon, and (4) prevent nuclear proliferation.

Conventional arms control can indirectly help the United States achieve these regional security objectives. Except for the possibility of nuclear proliferation in the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK), these regional objectives are being achieved by maintaining ROK and Japanese security through bilateral security agreements between the United States and each ally. Because it has no territorial designs, the United States has served as a regional balancer and an "honest broker" in the region. To the extent that the United States can continue in that role, we will probably continue to accomplish American regional objectives.

A U.S. presence in the region has been a key element in this process. A U.S. presence in Korea has not only provided security to the ROK against the threat from the North, but has provided the ROK with some assurance that it will not be unduly influenced by Japan—a larger, richer country with which it has had an unhappy historical relationship.

In the long term, perhaps some new security arrangement can be constructed that does not directly involve the United States. However, in the short to medium term, a U.S. withdrawal from Korea could increase the pressure on the United States to withdraw from Japan as well because Japan would then be the sole Asian country with a significant U.S. presence. A U.S. withdrawal from

both Korea and Japan before some new security structure was in place could lead to an increase in Japanese military capability which, in turn, could create considerable regional instability. Nuclear proliferation might also be a product of this process.

Many take continued U.S. presence in Korea for granted. At present, there is little domestic political pressure in the United States or ROK to precipitously remove U.S. forces. However, the conventional arms control process has within it both a danger and an opportunity. The danger is that the ROK may put a proposal on the table that calls for equal ceilings (of something) between the North and the South. If such a proposal were accepted by the North, we believe that some in the United States could overlook the regional role of U.S. forces and focus only on the narrow issue of South Korean security. Then, they could believe that South Korean security had been attained and the U.S. presence was no longer needed.

To avoid this possibility, we believe that the United States should take the opportunity provided by the arms control process and use arms control as an instrument of U.S. policy in the region. To do this, it is necessary to include U.S. forces explicitly in the negotiations. Doing so will not only make it difficult to precipitously remove them during the negotiations but will provide a continuing role for them at least until unification and perhaps after as well.

Turning to the other objectives of conventional arms control, there are three major U.S./ROK military objectives that arms control should address: (1) minimize the short-warning threat, (2) eliminate the ground force disparity, and (3) maintain a U.S. reinforcement capability.

Finally, of course, any agreement must be verifiable.

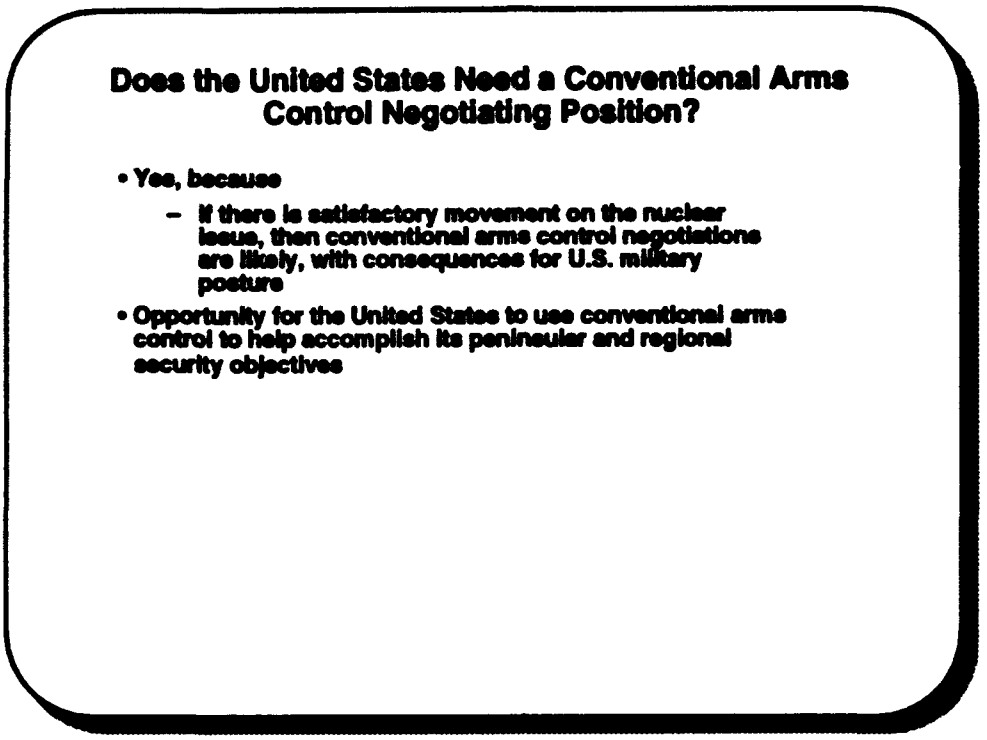
In outline form, we believe that a U.S./ROK conventional arms control approach should concentrate on the following elements: (1) conventional force reductions consisting of equal ceilings of the three critical equipment items (artillery, tanks, and armored personnel carriers (APCs)) at *combined* U.S./ROK levels, (2) some

U.S. and ROK reductions below current levels, and (3) U.S./ROK reductions related to North Korean reductions. In addition, thin-out zones and limitations on and notification of exercises above a certain level could be useful if agreed upon in conjunction with equipment reductions.

Equipment reductions of the type described above would help accomplish all of the main U.S. objectives. This approach should be the centerpiece of a U.S./ROK conventional arms control proposal. In addition, the United States should support movement on the confidence-building measures (CBMs) already agreed upon. However, it is important that CBMs not be the only arms control measure proposed because they do not accomplish the primary goal of helping to maintain a continued U.S. presence in Korea. Furthermore, it is important that any arms reductions proposals explicitly include U.S. forces.

Our approach would help accomplish the main U.S. objectives. In terms of traditional arms control inducements, the United States might be able to make an offer to the North consisting of a reduced U.S./ROK military capability and some security assurances. Such an offer may provide sufficient incentives for the North to reach an agreement. However, although no one knows the North's objectives with any certainty, and no one can predict its behavior, logic suggests that such an offer may be insufficient to reach an agreement.

If such an exchange seems unlikely to be acceptable, an alternative is that no agreement is reached. However, if U.S. objectives are considered sufficiently important, then other incentives are likely to be necessary to persuade the North to reach an agreement. These incentives would not be directly part of the negotiations (i.e., not on the table), but would be clearly part of the incentives for the North to reach an agreement.



Unless the nuclear issue is resolved satisfactorily (probably requiring the implementation of an agreed South/North bilateral inspection regime in addition to International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] inspections), the reconciliation process, including progress on conventional arms control, is likely to be stalled. However, in the Reconciliation Agreement between South and North Korea signed in January 1992, it was agreed in principle that "arms reductions" would occur. If there is a satisfactory resolution of the nuclear issue, then detailed conventional arms control proposals will be required and the United States should be prepared to contribute to these proposals.

Any arms control proposals about conventional forces would have important consequences for U.S. forces in Korea. The disposition of these U.S. forces, in turn, could have a substantial effect on the U.S. ability to accomplish its peninsular and regional security objectives. Thus, any conventional arms control negotiations in Korea should concern the United States. It is now time for the United States to begin to think through its objectives on the peninsula and in the region and to develop an arms control approach to help achieve these objectives.

Outline

- U.S. objectives in negotiations
- Potential approach
- ROK objectives
- DPRK objectives
- Summary

We first seek to identify U.S. peninsular and regional objectives, which, in turn, translate into conventional arms control objectives. Then, we develop an arms control approach that helps accomplish these objectives.

An acceptable arms control approach must not only accomplish U.S. objectives but must also be consistent with the Republic of Korea's (ROK's) principal objectives. We next identify principal ROK objectives and analyze the approach in the light of those objectives.

After identifying the elements of an approach that could help accomplish U.S./ROK security objectives, we assess possible Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) objectives in conventional arms control negotiations. Given these DPRK objectives, we analyze what the U.S./ROK may have to put on the negotiating table (and perhaps keep off of it as well) to provide sufficient incentives for the North to reach an agreement.

What Should Be U.S. Objectives in Conventional Arms Control Negotiations?

- Help achieve U.S. regional security objectives
  - –maintain stability
  - –maintain access/influence
  - –prevent power vacuum/hegemony
  - –prevent nuclear proliferation
- Help achieve U.S./ROK military objectives in Korea
- Produce a verifiable agreement

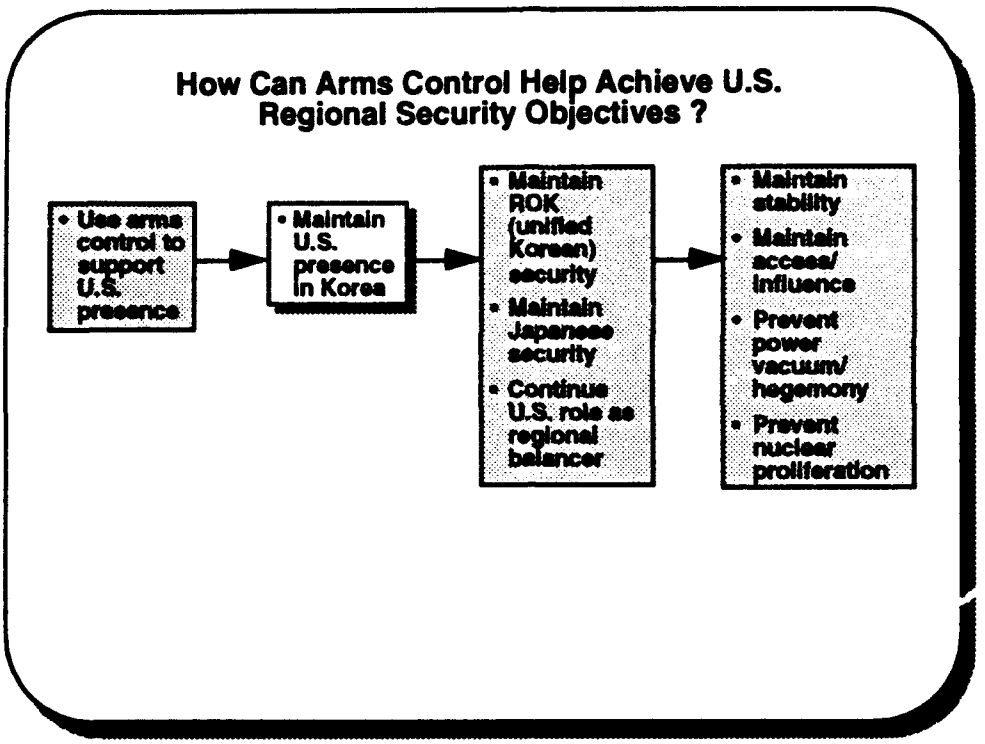
Conventional arms control negotiations should: (1) help achieve U.S./ROK military objectives on the peninsula and (2) produce a verifiable agreement. These are important objectives and we will return to them. However, there is a more important objective not always visibly linked with arms control—how arms control could help the United States achieve its regional security objectives.

In Northeast Asia, the United States has four main security objectives. First, the United States would like to maintain stability. Over the past few years, several countries in East Asia, including South Korea, have prospered and have made progress toward democracy. It is in the interest of most countries of the region to prevent war and turmoil in the region so that these positive trends continue and are extended to more countries.

Second, East Asia is an important U.S. trading partner and the United States would like to continue to have access to regional markets. For this and for security reasons, the United States would like to retain influence and leverage in the region.

The third American regional security objective concerns geopolitics. There are four major powers in Northeast Asia: Japan, China, Russia, and the United States—and three middle ones—North and South Korea and Taiwan. At the moment, no one country dominates the region; it is in the U.S. interest that this situation continues.

Finally, preventing nuclear proliferation in the region is quite important. The United States has guaranteed nuclear protection to South Korea and Japan to convince them that the acquisition of nuclear weapons is unnecessary. All three are trying to prevent North Korea from developing a nuclear capability. Preventing North Korean acquisition of nuclear weapons is a key to preventing South Korea and Japan from going nuclear.



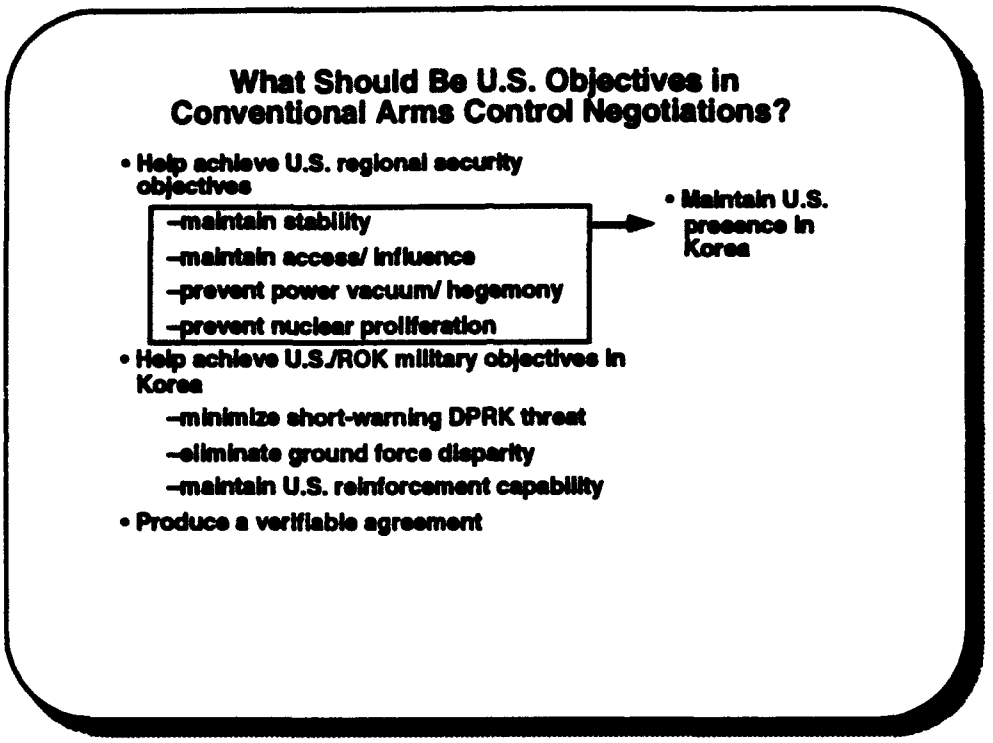
Conventional arms control can indirectly help the United States achieve these regional security objectives. Except for the possibility of DPRK nuclear proliferation, these objectives are being promoted by maintaining ROK and Japanese security through bilateral security agreements between the United States and each ally. Because it has no territorial designs, the United States has served as a regional balancer and an "honest broker" in the region. As long as the United States can continue this role in the future, it will probably continue to accomplish its regional objectives.

A U.S. presence in the region has been a key element in this process. The visible presence of U.S. forces in Asia is an important instrument of policy. Such presence may not necessarily be in the form of permanent installations housing U.S. combat forces on the soil of allies in the region. There are alternatives—exercises, port/basing visits, U.S. training advisors, arms transfer arrangements, and rotational deployments. The strength of these alternatives relative to permanent basing is a matter of unresolved and probably unresolvable debate. However, these alternatives are probably somewhat less effective than a more permanent presence, but their political/military/fiscal cost may be substantially less. The U.S.

presence in Korea has not only provided security to the ROK against the threat from the North, but has provided the ROK with some assurance that it will not be unduly influenced by Japan—a far more powerful neighbor with whom it has had an unhappy historical relationship.

In the long term, some new security arrangement not directly involving the United States might be possible. However, in the short to medium term, a U.S. withdrawal from Korea could increase the pressure on the United States to withdraw from Japan as well because Japan would then be the sole Asian country with a significant U.S. presence. A U.S. withdrawal from both Korea and Japan before some new security structure was in place could increase regional instability as other nations increased their forces in response to the changed security situation. (A consideration for Japan is whether it alone hosts U.S. forces. But it is not the only consideration. Threats from others in the region might lead Japan to continue to welcome U.S. forces.) Nuclear proliferation might also be a product of this process.

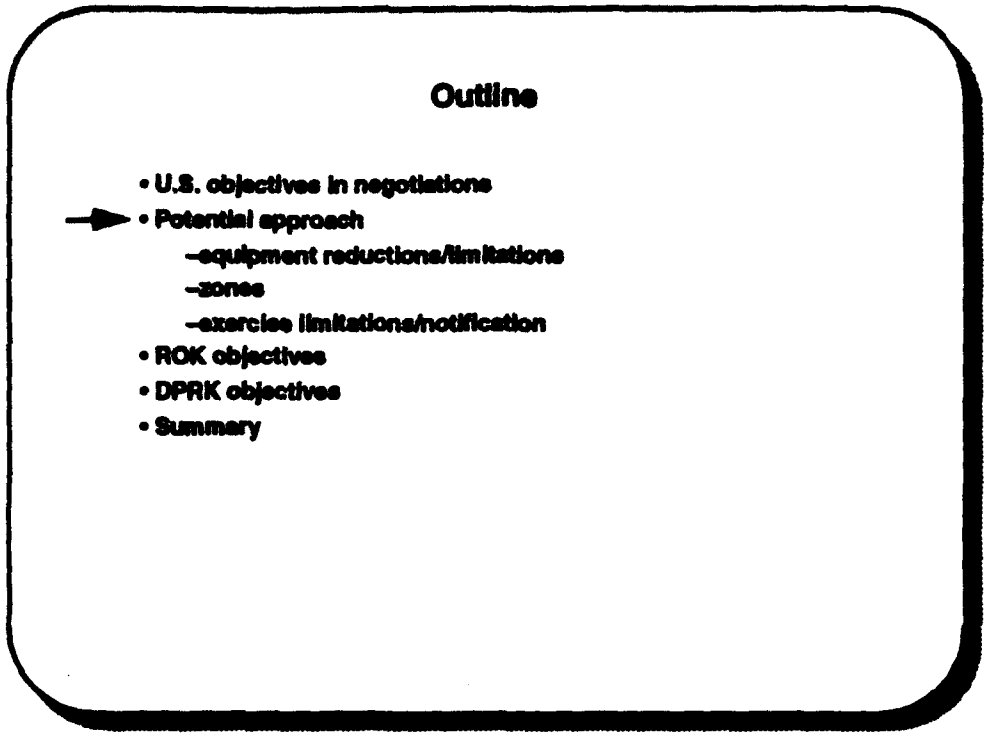
We will next consider how arms control could be used to support a continued U.S. regional presence.



Helping to achieve U.S. regional security objectives can now be condensed into the surrogate objective of maintaining U.S. presence in Korea, at least through the short to medium term.

Turning to the other objectives, we believe that there are three additional U.S./ROK military objectives that arms control should address: (1) minimize the short-warning threat from North Korea; (2) eliminate the ground force disparity between the two sides; and (3) maintain a U.S. reinforcement capability.

Finally any agreement should be verifiable.



With these five objectives in mind, we can develop an arms control approach to accomplish them.

Eliminate Some Types of Measures by Inspection

Arms Control Measure	Maintain U.S. presence	Minimize short-warning threat	Eliminate ground force disparity	Maintain reinforcement capability	Produce verifiable agreement
Equipment reductions	?	?	?	?	?
Zones	?	?	?	?	?
Exercise limitations/ notification	?	?	?	?	?
Manpower limitations					No
Modernization restriction					No
Offensive unit limitations					No

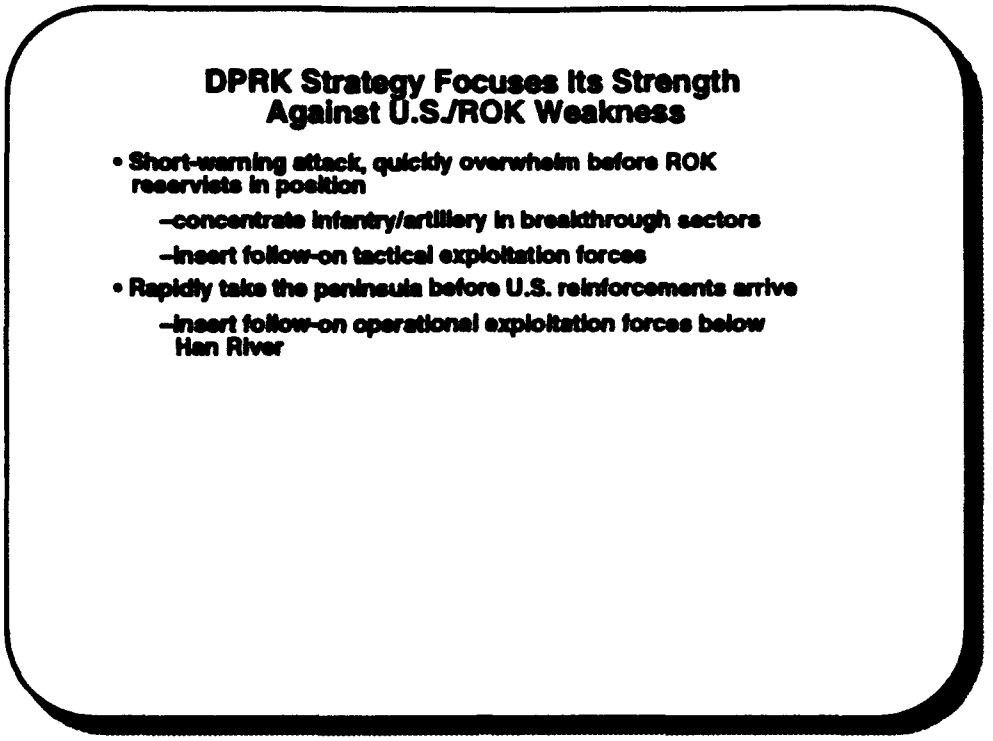
Across the top of the matrix in the chart above, we have listed the five objectives; along the left side are broad categories of arms control measures that various parties have proposed. We will examine these arms control measures to see which types might help accomplish the objectives.

At this level of generality, we cannot determine the effectiveness of different types of arms control measures. However, we can conclude that some types of measures are not likely to serve the stated objectives.

U.S. experience in Mutual Balanced Force Reductions (MBFRs) made clear that any approach focused on manpower limitations creates serious problems about how to count manpower. This, in turn, leads to difficulties in verification. Likewise, the United States has learned in SALT, START, and Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) the difficulty in limiting modernization, because it is difficult to define when a replacement item is sufficiently different to be categorized as a new item. Questions of definition also arise about "offensive" units. A balanced force should have counter-offensive capabilities, but these capabilities can be used offensively . Thus, we can eliminate from

further consideration manpower limitations, modernization restrictions, and offensive unit limitations, because all these approaches are likely to lead to significant verification difficulties. (Because the role of infantry is critical in Korea, it is desirable to eliminate the North Korean advantage. However, we suggest that negotiations focused on manpower occur after an initial agreement is reached.)

We now turn to the other arms control approaches to examine their potential effectiveness in accomplishing the objectives, beginning with equipment reductions.



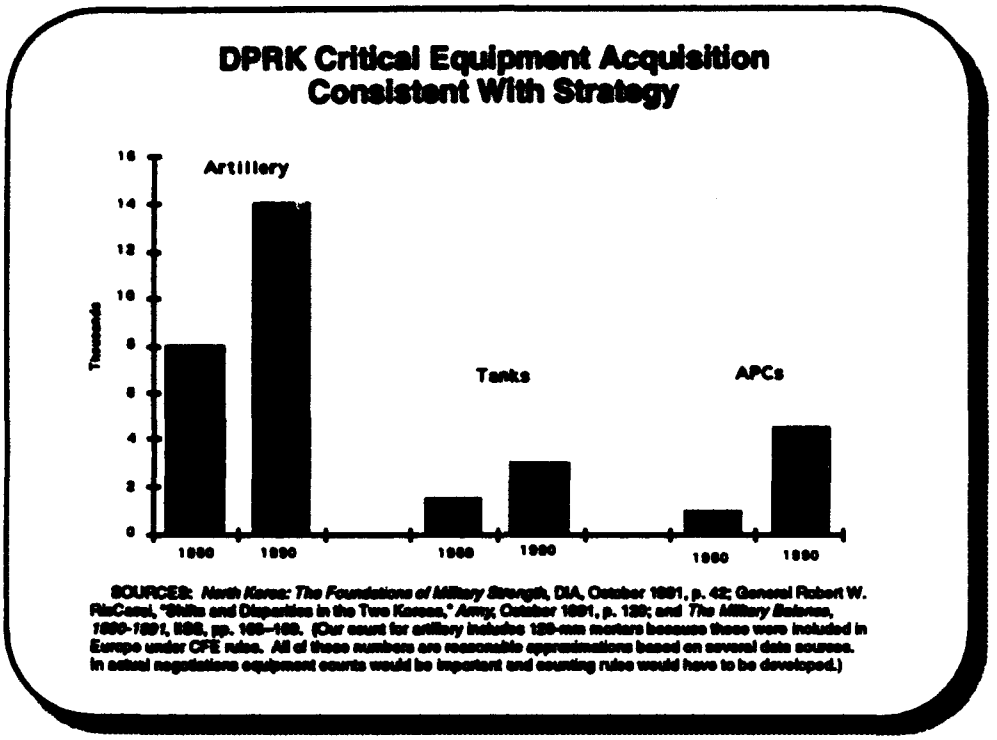
To understand the potential effectiveness of equipment reductions, we need to understand the outlines of the likely conventional threat to South Korea. The North knows it is unlikely to prevail in a war of attrition against the U.S./ROK, which have far more resources. Thus, the North would be likely to attack quickly, seeking victory before those resources could be brought to bear against them.

The ROK defense has two main potential weaknesses. First, its forward-deployed forces manning the forward defense belt could be vulnerable to massive artillery attacks. The DPRK could develop breakthroughs by coordinating artillery attacks with infantry attacks. The ROK defense belt further from the DMZ is manned primarily by reservists. If DPRK exploitation forces (consisting of mechanized brigades) could be inserted through breaks in the forward defenses and if the defenses manned by reservists were attacked before these reservists were activated and in place, the effectiveness of the defense could be considerably reduced.

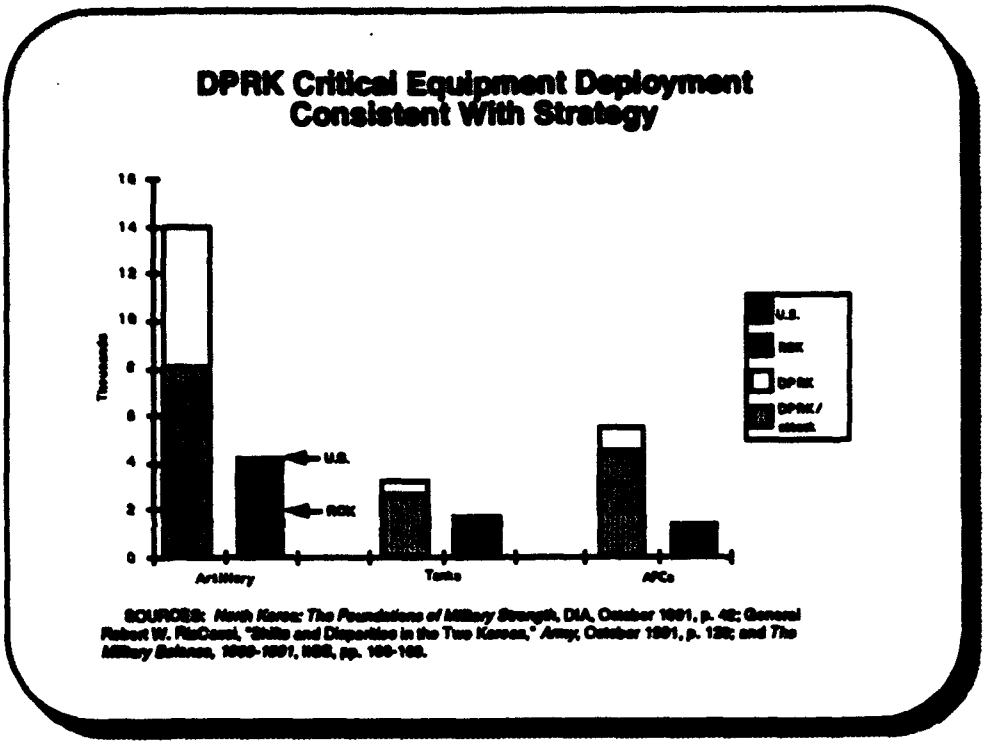
The potential weakness of the American contribution to the defense of South Korea is that very little force is forward-deployed in Korea and most U.S. reinforcements would have to be moved from CONUS.

If the North could capture the aerial ports of debarkation (APODs) and seaports of debarkation (SPOEs) with mechanized exploitation forces before sufficient reinforcements arrived from CONUS, then the U.S. contribution to the early war would be significantly hindered.

This short-warning attack strategy of the North depends on four main elements: artillery, infantry, tanks, and armored personnel carriers (APCs). Of these four elements, three are equipment items: artillery, tanks, and APCs.

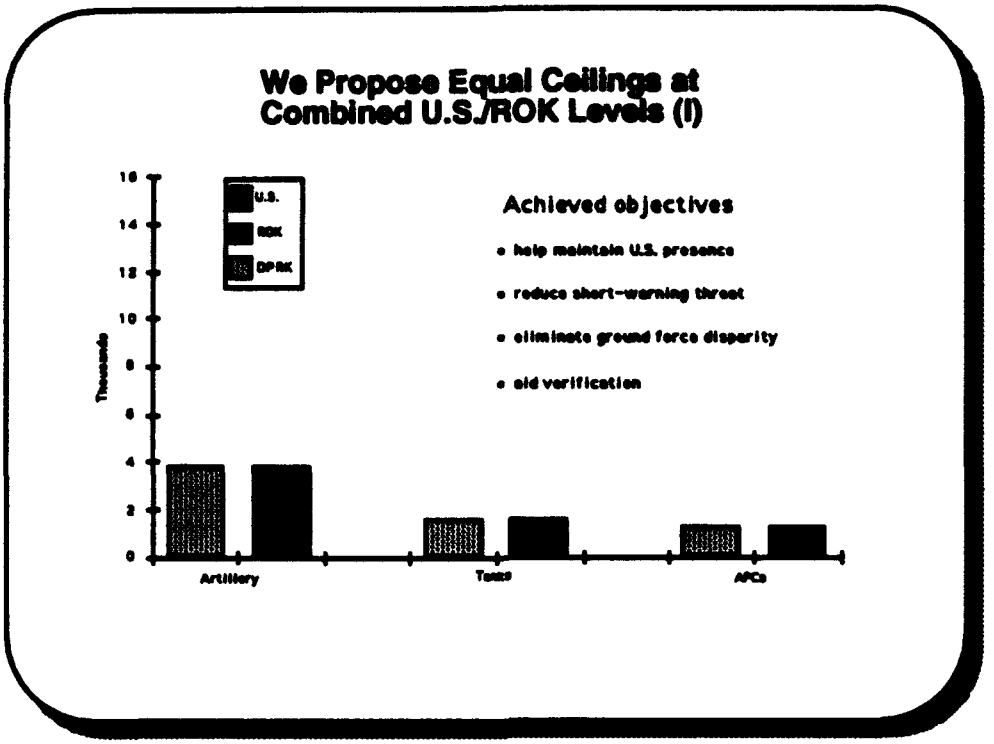


As we can see in the figure above, the DPRK has acquired these three critical equipment items in quantities consistent with the strategy just described. Between 1980 and 1990, they have dramatically increased the numbers of each of these items. Furthermore, almost all their increases in artillery have been self-propelled artillery.



In addition, the DPRK has deployed its equipment in a manner consistent with the strategy described. For each of the critical equipment items, the bar on the left (dotted and white) represents DPRK holdings. The top of the bar (the white part) represents the total holdings. (For example, the North has about 14,000 artillery pieces.) The dotted part of the bar is approximately that portion available in a short-warning attack mode. (For artillery, this amounts to about 8000.) This number was derived by including the tanks and APCs in active units times 0.8, because about 80 percent of the active units are within 100 km of the demilitarized zone (DMZ). (About 65 percent of the North Korean units are within 100 km of the DMZ ,but these units have a disproportionate amount of the equipment holdings ,which we estimate to be about 80 percent. See General Robert W. RisCassi, "Shifting Disparities in the Two Koreas," *Army*, October 1991, p. 120.) The proportion of artillery is somewhat lower.

From this chart, we see that not only is a considerable portion of DPRK equipment in a short-warning attack mode, but that even this short-warning attack portion is considerably greater than combined ROK/U.S. forces available without reinforcement (the cross-hatched/black bars to the right of the DPRK bars).



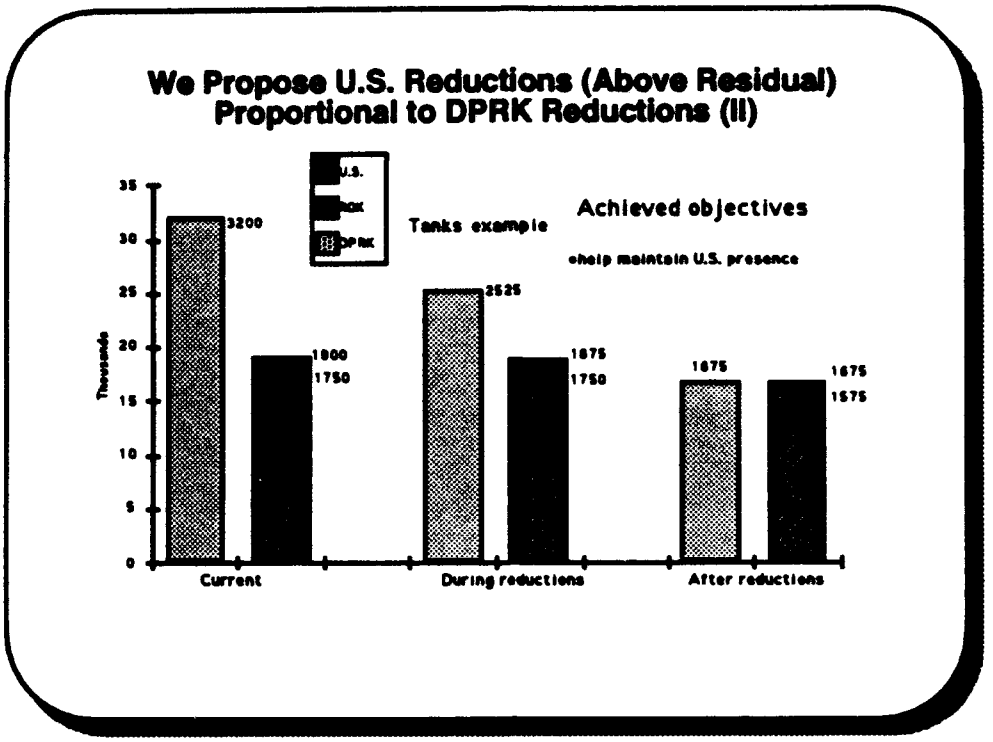
Given the five objectives outlined earlier and given the nature of the threat just described, how can arms control help? We propose two rules. The first is equal ceilings of the three critical equipment items at combined U.S./ROK levels. Under this rule, the North reduces its large force advantage in each equipment category to the same level as combined U.S./ROK forces, with ROK forces reduced by 10 percent. (It is probably necessary for political reasons that the ROK undertake some reductions. Hence the combined U.S./ROK force levels would be those existing after a 10 percent reduction of ROK forces and a U.S. reduction described page 17. Of course, a formula would be required that tied these ROK reductions to DPRK reductions, perhaps specifying that ROK reductions occur only after initial parity is reached. Counting U.S. forces would lead to an outcome in which the North was allowed more forces than the South. But the difference would be small and the United States would, in fact, make up the difference.)

This simple rule would help accomplish four of the five major U.S. objectives. First, it could help to maintain U.S. presence in Korea. If the South and North reach an agreement to reduce their forces to

equal ceilings (of anything) and ignore the U.S. presence (i.e., leave U.S. forces out of any discussion), then the remaining U.S. forces (already quite small) could be seen as unnecessary. However, if U.S. forces are explicitly considered as part of the U.S./ROK total, then U.S. forces would continue to have a role to play in South Korea as part of the South's defense. (It is possible that explicitly tying U.S. forces to the negotiations would have the opposite effect. Such linkage could lead to a North Korean rejection of the process or could raise the visibility of the issue within the United States and lead to a hastening of U.S. force withdrawal. Although possible, it is our judgment that tying U.S. forces to the negotiating process would be likely to help provide a rationale and legitimacy for their continued presence.)

In addition, this rule would reduce the short-warning threat from the North because reductions to equal ceilings would reduce the level of equipment in the North's short-warning attack mode. Further, equal ceilings eliminate disparities, thereby accomplishing another objective

Finally, focusing on the three categories of artillery, tanks, and APCs would aid verification, because considerable effort has been expended in defining these items and in developing verification regimes for them in the CFE process.



Our second rule is best illustrated with an example. Currently, the North has approximately 3200 tanks; the ROK about 1750; and the United States about 150 tanks in Korea. The United States (in conjunction with the ROK) should decide how many tanks it wants in Korea even after an agreement is reached. For example, suppose the United States wanted to have about one mechanized brigade remaining in Korea (about 100 tanks). Then, we would propose that the United States remove 50 tanks (the number above the assumed residual) at the same rate as the North reduces its overall advantage. Thus, when the North has reduced its tank holdings by 50 percent to 2525, the United States would remove half of the tanks above its residual (25), leaving the United States with 125 tanks. In the final step, the North would have eliminated its advantage while the United States reaches its residual force level. At that point, the ROK and DPRK would reduce their holdings 10 percent more to 1675 for the DPRK, 1575 for the ROK, and 100 for the United States.

This rule would tie U.S. force reductions to concrete North Korean actions. Furthermore, it would establish the level of U.S. presence in the short to medium term. (Some believe that the United States cannot reduce its equipment holdings any further and still maintain a

viable force. This leads to the conclusion either that U.S. equipment levels included in negotiations should not entail further reductions or that U.S. forces should not be included in the negotiations. Of course, the best outcome is one that allows complete freedom for the United States to choose its force structure. But, as discussed above, we believe that such an outcome is unlikely. More likely, pressure could grow for withdrawal if U.S. forces are not included in negotiations. If U.S. forces are included in the negotiations, then they probably will have to be reduced.)

Equipment Reductions Achieve Four of Five Objectives

Arms Control Measure	Maintain U.S. presence	Minimize short-warning threat	Eliminate ground force disparity	Maintain reinforcement capability	Produce verifiable agreement
Equipment reductions	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
Zones					
Exercise limitations/ notification					

We conclude that the equipment reductions just described would help accomplish four of the five U.S. objectives in arms control.

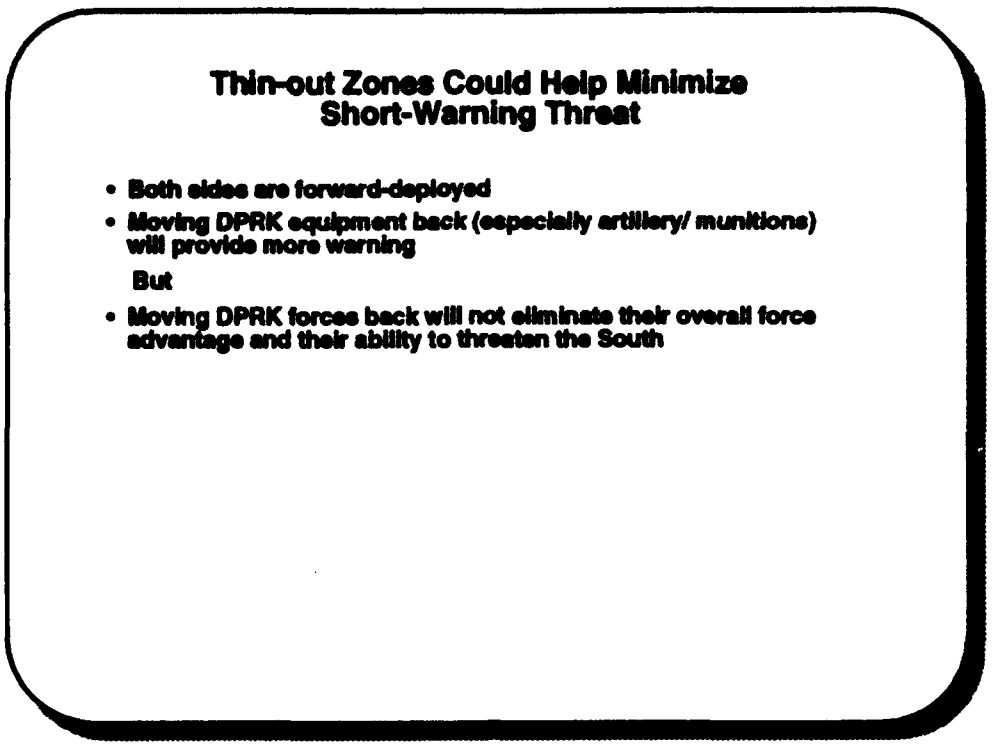
We now turn to an examination of some other approaches.

Some Measures Are Not Intended to Achieve Certain Objectives

Arms Control Measure	Maintain U.S. presence	Minimize short-warning threat	Eliminate ground force disparity	Maintain reinforcement capability	Produce verifiable agreement
Equipment reductions	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
Zones	N/A	?	N/A	N/A	?
Exercise limitations/ notification	N/A	?	N/A	?	?

Two other broad categories of arms control approaches are thin-out zones in which units or equipment would be reduced within particular areas and exercise limitations/notifications. Without examining any details, we can conclude that these two approaches are not intended to accomplish some of the identified U.S. objectives. Neither is likely to help to maintain a continuing U.S. presence or eliminate a ground force disparity. (It may be true that any negotiations involving U.S. forces would help maintain U.S. presence simply because the United States could be reluctant to remove forces during negotiations. However, here we are focusing on the manner in which an agreement could achieve this objective and not the negotiating process.)

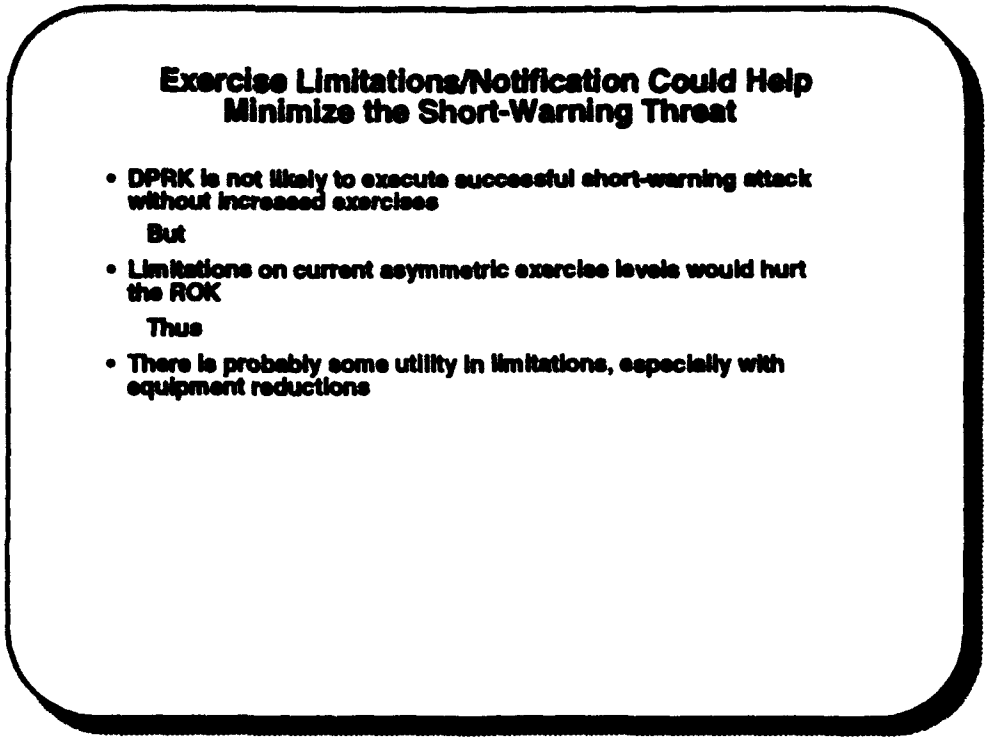
We now turn to each of these and examine how well they might accomplish their intended objectives.



Restrictions on the numbers and types of equipmer or units within certain regions or zones could help reduce the North's short-warning attack potential because much of the North's equipment, especially artillery and ammunition, is forward-deployed. Moving this equipment back would certainly provide considerable warning if the North violated an agreement and moved it forward to attack.

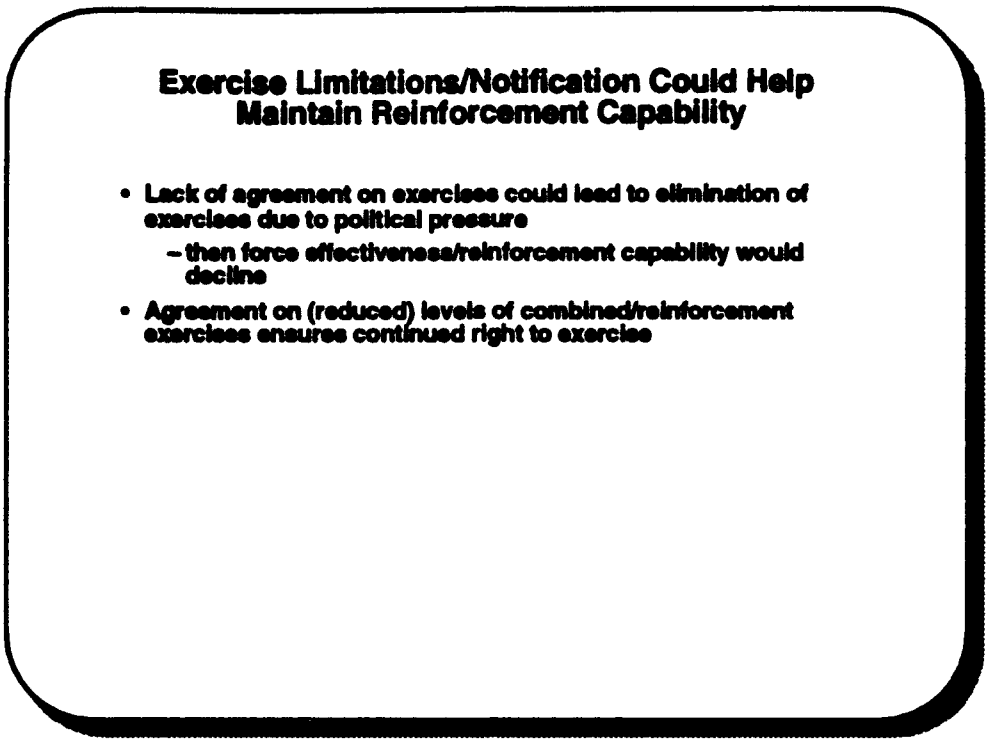
However, thin-out zones would be likely to require the ROK to reduce its defenses at FEBA Alpha and Bravo. Because of the proximity of Seoul, any thinning of ROK forward forces could increase a potential vulnerability to attack.

On balance, thin-out zones could help to reduce the short-warning threat. However, by themselves thin-out zones would not reduce the ground force disparity. Even with the elimination of the short-warning threat, the North would retain an ability to threaten the South with a large ground force advantage. These DPRK forces could be moved forward in violation of an agreement and recreate the current threat. Thus, zones, if implemented, should be implemented in conjunction with equipment reductions that do eliminate the ground force disparity.



In the Reconciliation Agreement, an agreement in principle was reached about several confidence-building measures (CBMs). Included in this list was an agreement to limit exercises and to notify the other side of future exercises. No details have yet been determined.

Such limitations/notifications could be helpful because they could increase the warning time of any potential attack. The North probably could not successfully execute a short-warning attack without more exercises than it currently conducts. However, the ROK exercises more than the DPRK and limitations could undermine the South's readiness and combat capability if a regime was not designed properly. These exercise limitations are probably more valuable because they serve the more general purposes of increasing the level of trust between the two Koreas and opening the North to inspectors. Such an opening can only help undermine the DPRK's closed society.



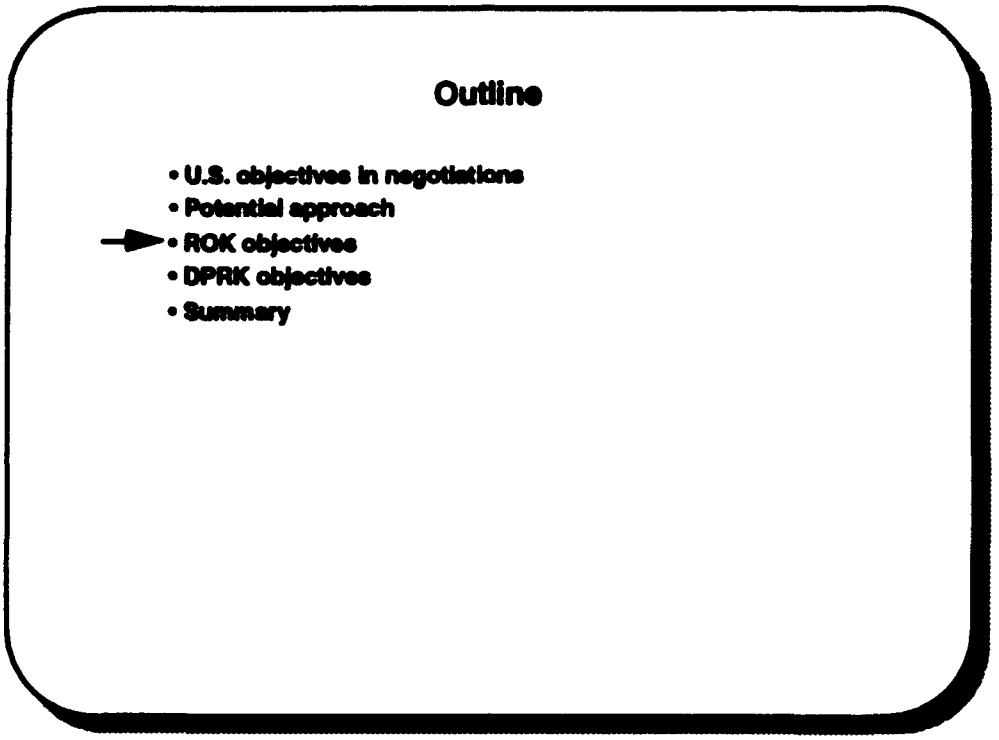
Exercise limitations/notifications are important for another reason. The North objects strenuously to combined U.S./ROK exercises. Team Spirit has been cancelled this year to placate the North. If there is no agreement on exercises, future political pressure in the South could possibly lead to the permanent cancellation of these exercises. Without exercises, force effectiveness and U.S. reinforcement capability will decline.

An agreement to a reduced level of combined exercises would ensure the right to exercises and would reduce the political pressure to eliminate them. Of course, the downside is that putting exercises on the table gives the North a forum to debate and to try to eliminate them.

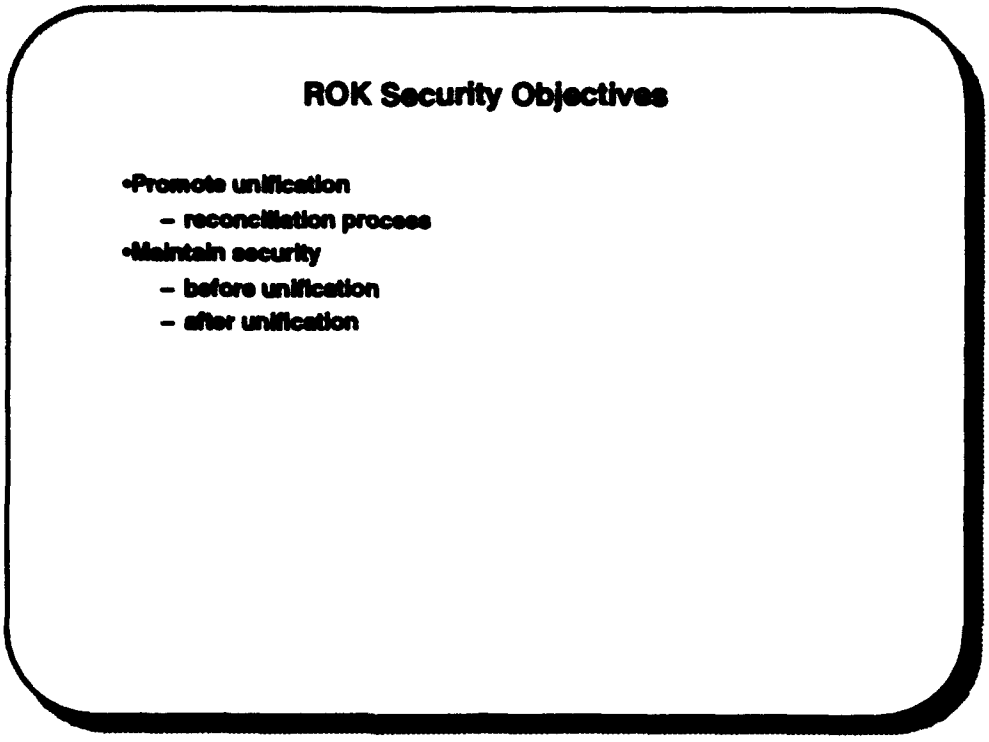
Potential Effectiveness of Measures: Summary

Arms Control Measure	Maintain U.S. presence	Minimize short-warning threat	Eliminate ground force disparity	Maintain reinforcement capability	Produce verifiable agreement
Equipment reductions	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
Plus					
Zones	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes
Exercise limitations/ notification	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes

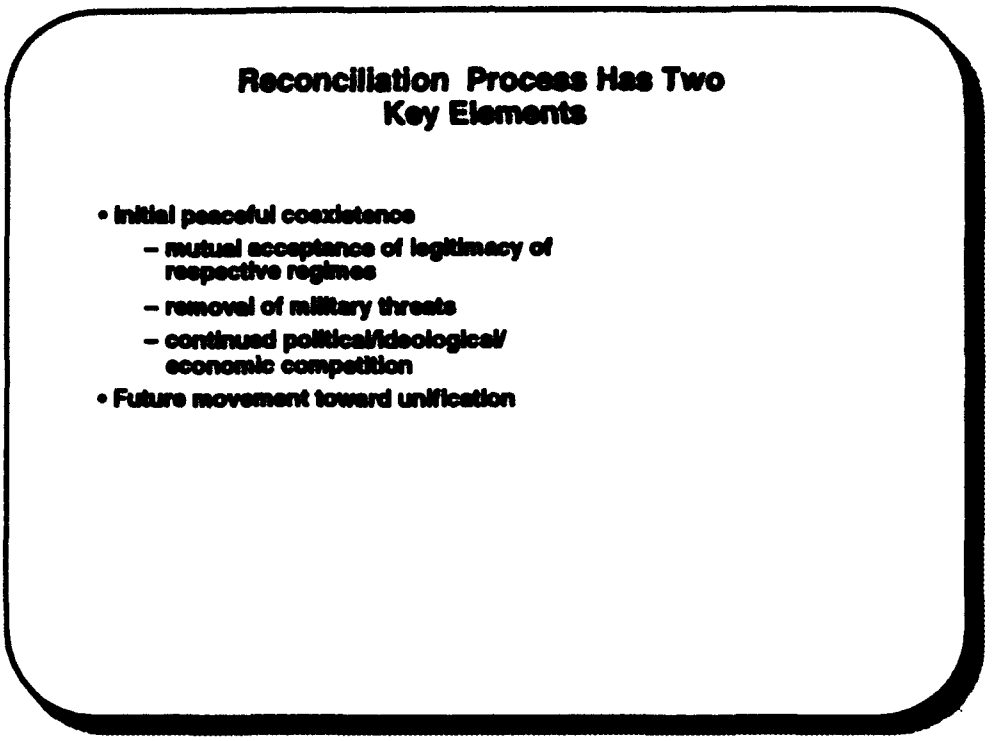
In summary, equipment reductions of the type described above would help accomplish four of the five main U.S. objectives. This approach should be the centerpiece of a U.S./ROK conventional arms control proposal. Thin-out zones and exercise limitations could serve as useful additions if negotiated in conjunction with equipment reductions. In addition, the United States should support implementation on the CBMs already agreed upon. **However, it is important that CBMs are not the only arms control measure proposed because CBMs do not help to maintain a continuing U.S. presence in Korea. Furthermore, it is important that any arms reductions proposals explicitly include U.S. forces.**



We believe that the approach described will help accomplish U.S. objectives. However, our ally, the ROK, has its own objectives for these negotiations. We now examine what those objectives might be and determine if this approach might help accomplish those objectives.

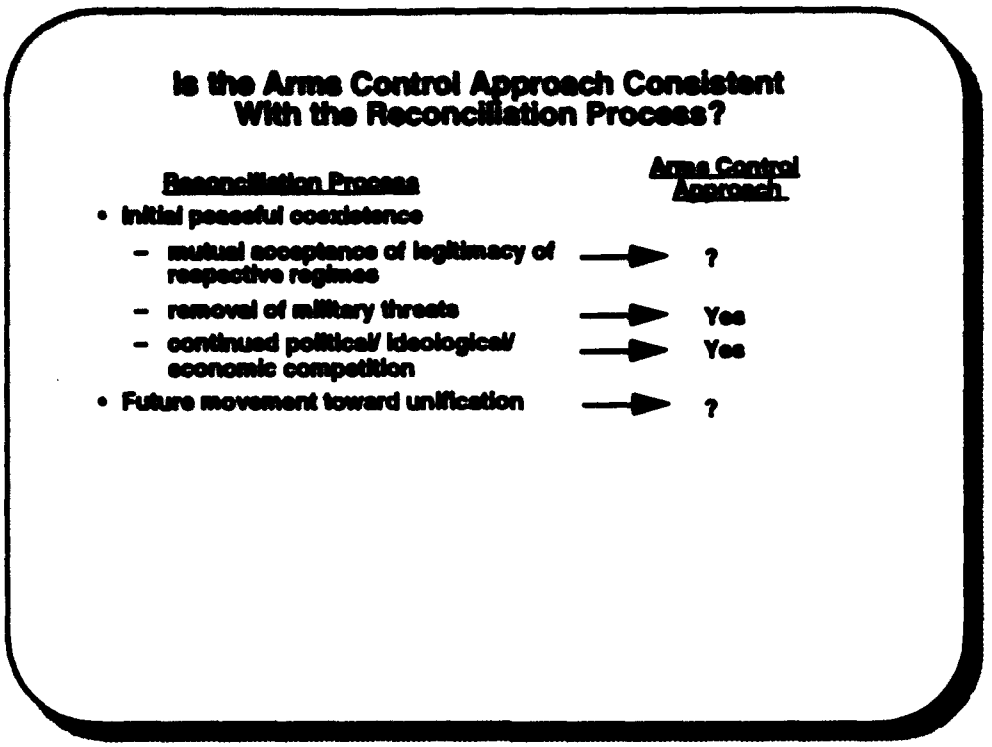


The ROK has two major security objectives: (1) promote unification through the reconciliation process and (2) maintain its security both before and after unification. We examine the reconciliation process first.



The reconciliation process has two key elements. First, the ROK would like to establish a state of peaceful coexistence with the North. This state of peaceful coexistence would assume a continuing adversarial relationship with the North; however, the military dimension of the competition would be removed. For this to happen, each regime must at a minimum accept the legitimacy of the other, at least temporarily.

Subsequent steps in the reconciliation process have not been clearly defined, although some future movement toward unification is assumed. The South believes, with considerable justification, that all trends favor it and that if military conflict can be avoided, unification will eventually occur, more or less on the South's terms.

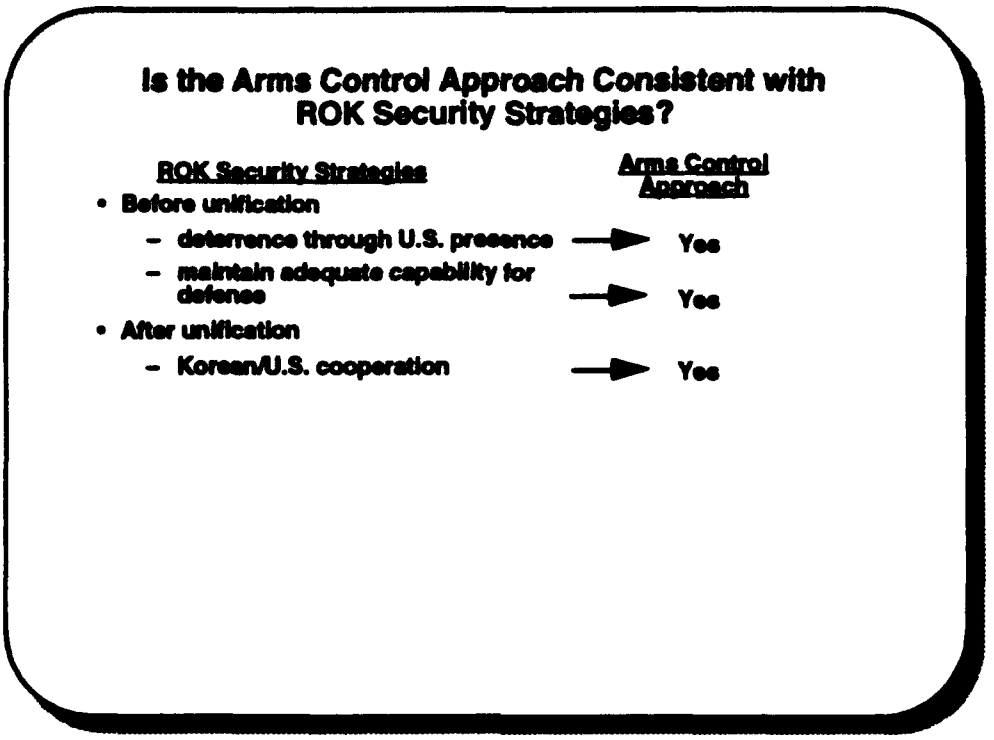


A central element of the arms control approach is to include U.S. forces in Korea in the arms control negotiations, which could help provide legitimacy and a rationale for the forces' continued presence. In the past, a precondition by the North for any further discussions with the South has been the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces. If the North were to continue to insist on this condition, then the suggested approach would be unacceptable on its face. Furthermore, it would provide propaganda ammunition for the North against the South since the North would likely brand their cousins in the South as "lackeys of the American imperialists." Certainly, it would then provide a pretext for disputing the legitimacy of the ROK government.

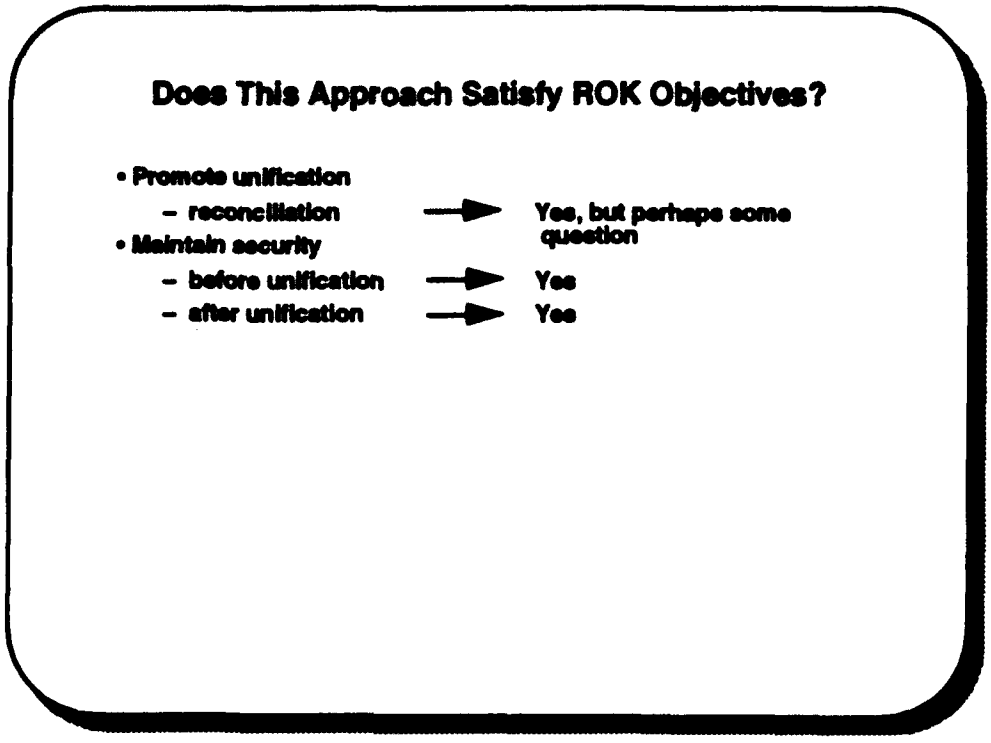
No one knows what the North really thinks about the continued U.S. presence in Korea. There has been much whispering from the North at conferences that it does not mind continued U.S. presence. The North could have reasons to want such presence. It does not trust the Japanese and may recognize that the United States is a balancer in the region against Japanese power, both now and after unification. Furthermore, the North could even worry about the South taking advantage of any turmoil in the North (perhaps from a succession

crisis) and unifying the peninsula by force. The North might believe that the Americans would be likely to inhibit the South from such action.

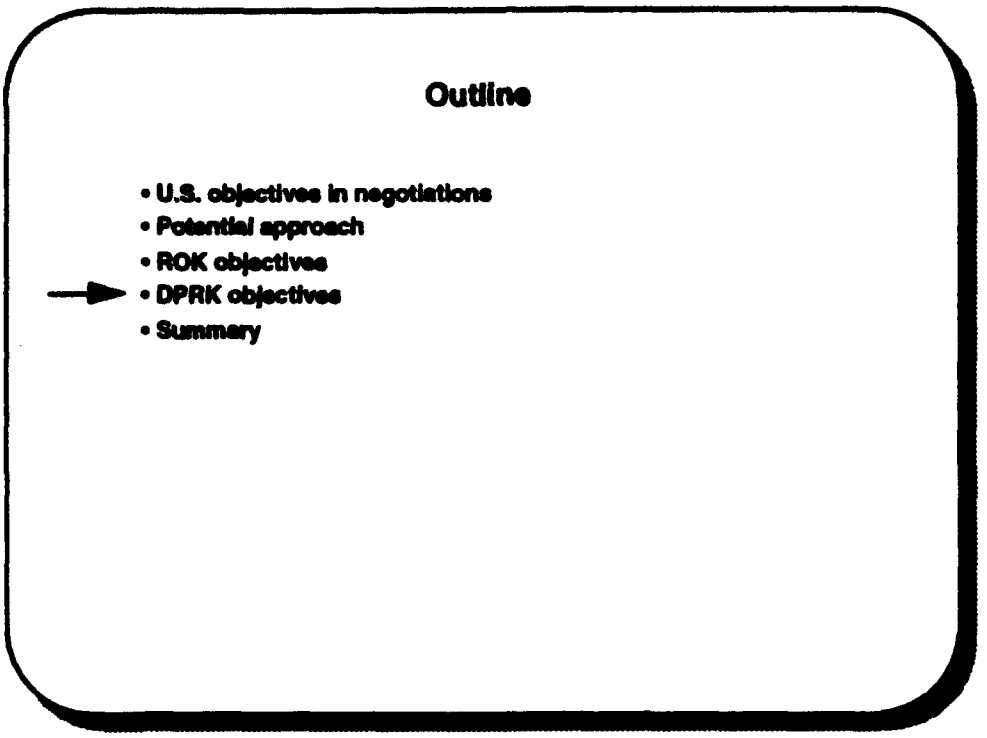
Thus, no one knows whether a continuing U.S. presence would be an issue, but we should be aware that it might be and we should be prepared to address it.



The suggested approach is consistent with ROK security strategies. Before unification, deterrence is maintained by a continuing U.S. presence and by maintaining an adequate defense capability. After unification, Korean security could be maintained through an alliance with the United States.

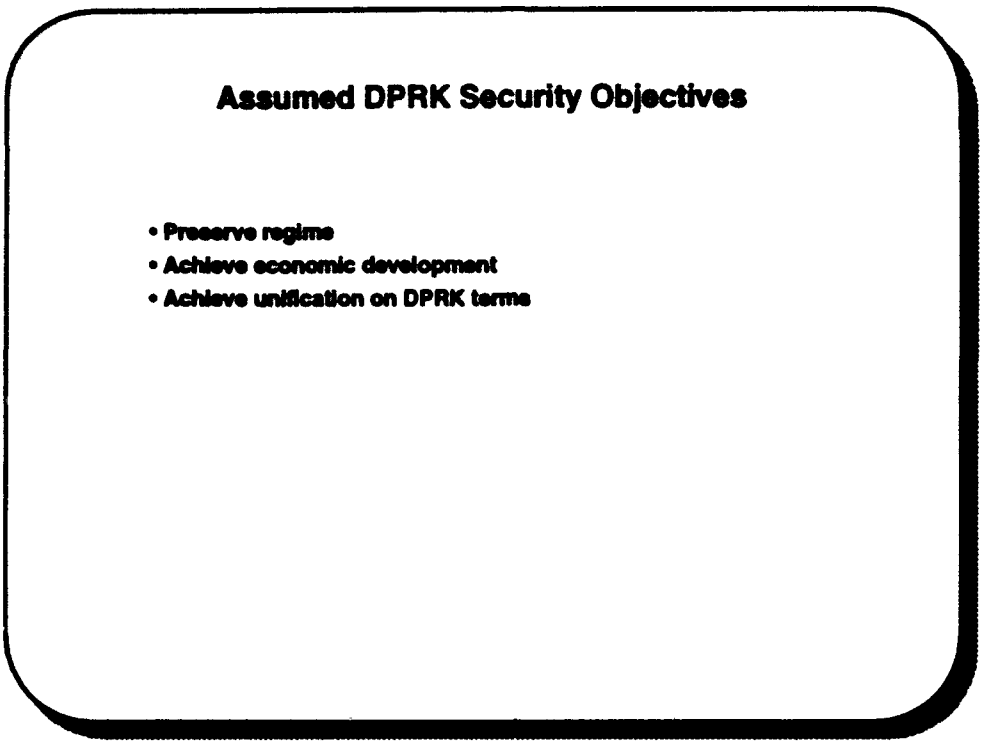


In summary, the ROK may find resistance to this approach from the North Koreans, because the North does not want to reach an agreement for other reasons. But there is no way around this issue for the ROK. If they try to ignore the Americans and reach an agreement involving only North/South forces, then it is certainly possible, if not likely, that U.S. forces could be withdrawn sooner than anyone would prefer. **Then, the ROK may get more rapid movement on the reconciliation process (although that is by no means certain), but it could be sacrificing its long-term security.**



We have identified an arms control approach that we believe could be a major instrument in accomplishing U.S. objectives in the region and on the peninsula. Although the ROK could object to some aspects of this approach, it is consistent with their objectives and is likely to be acceptable to them. We now examine DPRK objectives in an arms control agreement.

This part of our discussion is much more speculative. We do not know what North Korean objectives are nor do we know what type of an agreement (if any) the North would find acceptable. What we will describe is not what the United States puts on the table; rather it is an exercise in logic about what we believe the North might find acceptable, so we can decide whether paying that price is worth it to achieve U.S. objectives.

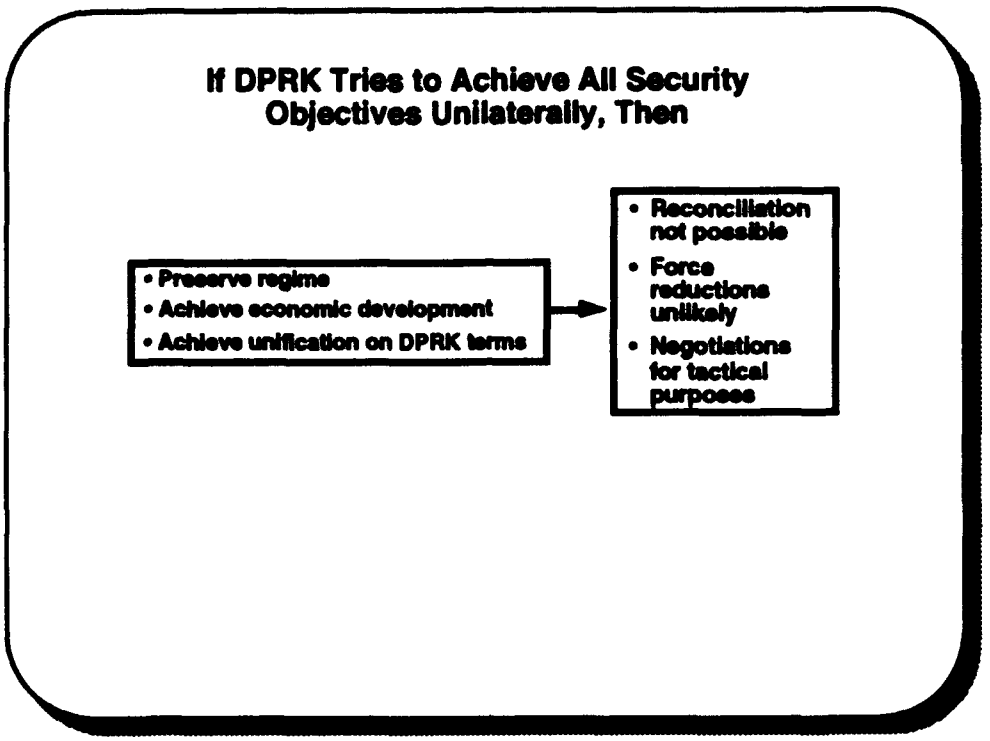


Discussions with many Korean experts (including South Koreans) have convinced us that the North has three main objectives: (1) preserving its regime, (2) achieving economic development, and (3) achieving unification on its own terms. All these objectives are currently being threatened.

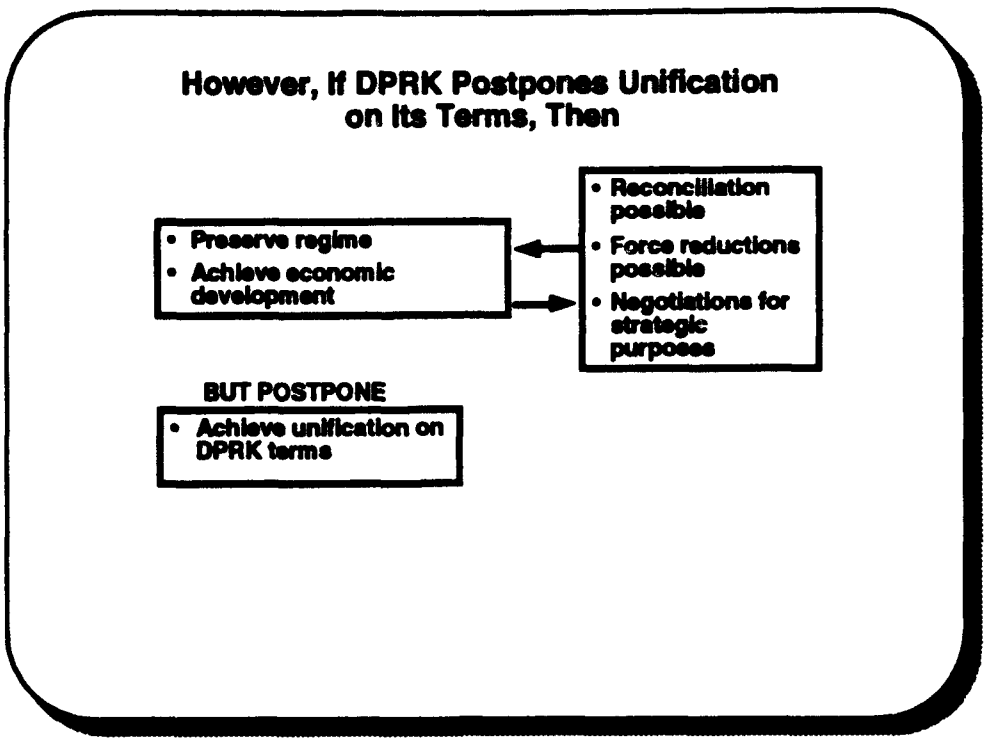
With the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the legitimacy of the DPRK system is being challenged. In a more practical sense, the DPRK cannot count on the support of the Russians or Chinese anymore. And it is facing a potential succession crisis as Kim Il Sung tries to pass power to his less charismatic son.

Its economy continues to exhibit the problems of all command economies and continues to deteriorate. These economic problems are exacerbated by the loss of economic support with the breakup of the Soviet Union. The North's dismal economic performance could undermine its regime through a failure to "deliver the goods." But perhaps even more important, its failure is in dramatic contrast with the prosperity in the South. The North may be a closed society, but it is not airtight. As information filters in about the prosperity of the cousins in the South, it further undermines the North's regime.

Finally, achieving unification on the North's terms has become less likely. Through the 1970s, the North could have had some cause to be optimistic about unifying on its terms. The South was undergoing internal political turmoil, the United States seemed about to withdraw from Korea, and the influence of the North's patron, the Soviet Union, was expanding. All that has now changed and unification on North Korean terms must seem remote.



If the North continues unilaterally to try to achieve all its objectives, then an agreement is unlikely. Genuine reconciliation is not possible because it involves acceptance of the legitimacy of South Korea. Force reductions are unlikely because large forces would be needed to overcome the South and unify. Negotiations are likely to continue because they are useful for propaganda purposes, but these negotiations will be for tactical purposes only.



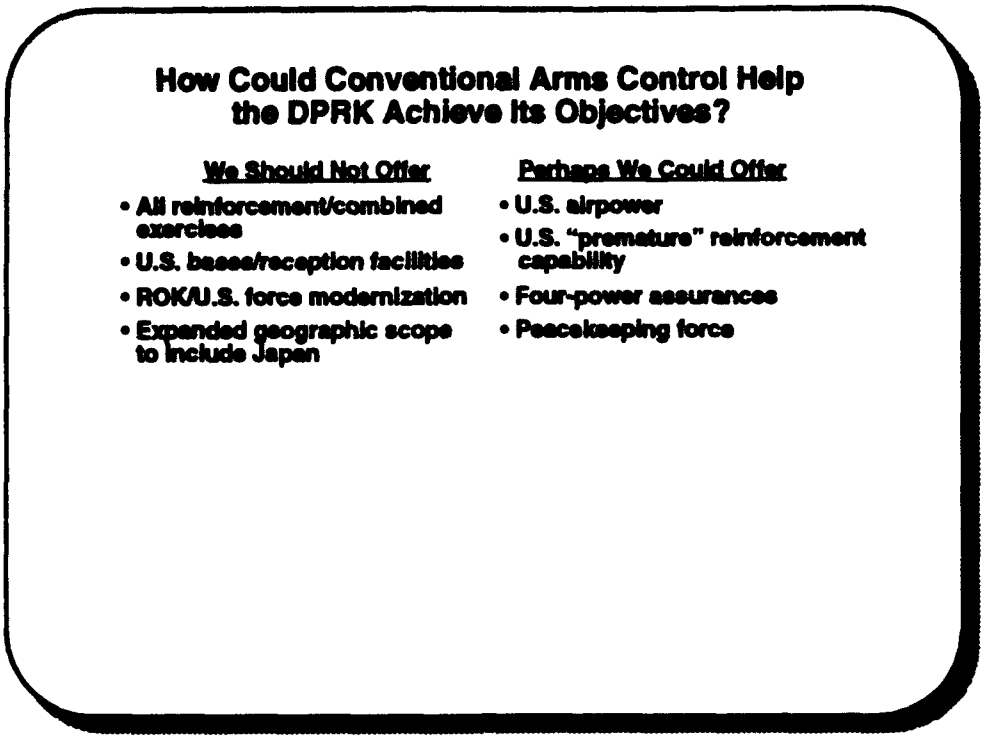
If the North is willing to postpone unification on its terms, progress on negotiations is possible. This is likely only if the North comes to believe that its regime is sufficiently threatened that it must act to preserve its rule. Furthermore, the North must come to believe that it can get concessions from the South and the Americans that make it more likely that it can preserve its regime and achieve economic development with an agreement than without one.

In this way, reconciliation is possible, because the North could accept, if only temporarily, the legitimacy of the South. It could reduce its forces if it sees that these forces are more useful for invading the South than for its own defense and that, furthermore, these conventional forces are a wasting asset as the ROK modernizes its forces and improves its military capability. And the North could negotiate to achieve regime preservation and economic achievement if it thought it could achieve these objectives through negotiations.

Some may argue that the North poses no real threat to U.S. interests and that the perceived threat helps the United States to maintain forces required for a regional role. Furthermore, the North will

collapse over time and concessions are not worthwhile if the United States can get what it wants for nothing. Our judgment is that a negotiated settlement would be best for U.S. interests because it could provide increased legitimacy for continued presence.

We now examine what the United States could put on the arms control table to see if it might be sufficiently attractive to persuade the North to reach an agreement.



We now consider the categories of concessions the United States might make to ascertain their potential value to the North. First, let us consider what would be unwise to offer because those concessions would be inconsistent with achieving U.S. objectives. As discussed above, the United States must continue to have combined exercises with the ROK at some level or the United States will lose its force effectiveness.

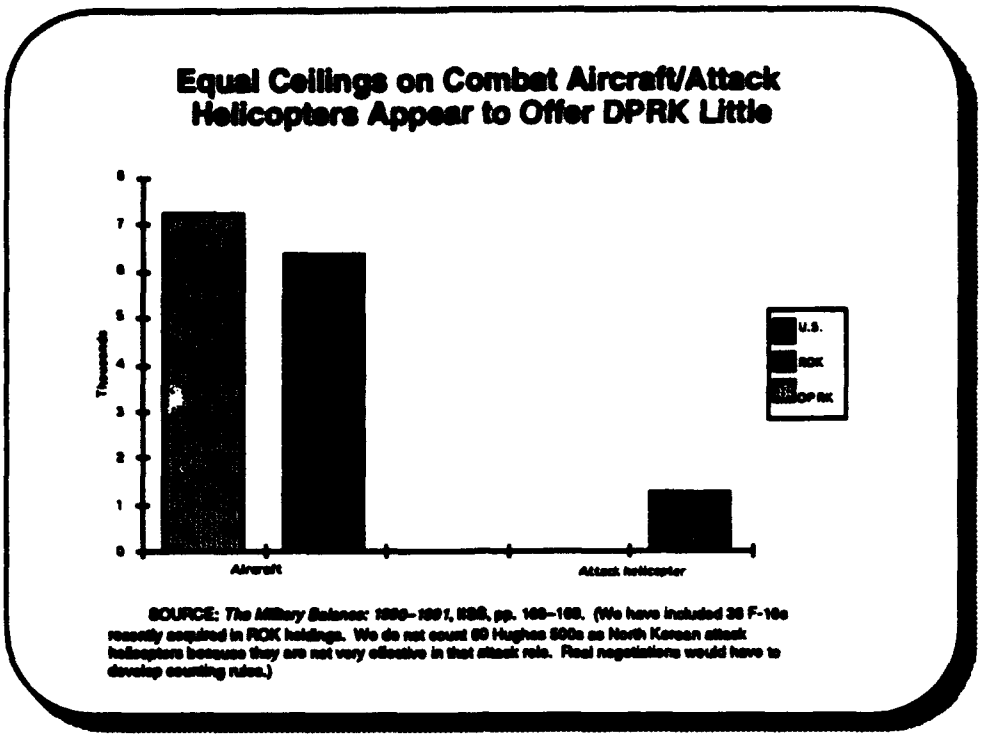
U.S. bases and reception facilities are essential for reinforcement. The United States may close some or turn some over to the ROK, but that should be between the United States and the ROK and not subject to negotiation with the North.

ROK/U.S. force modernization cannot be constrained for the reasons described above.

The North may argue (with some justification) that the United States can operate out of air bases in Japan or from carriers as well as from bases in South Korea. While this is true, the United States has no obligation to compensate the North for all U.S. advantages. The United

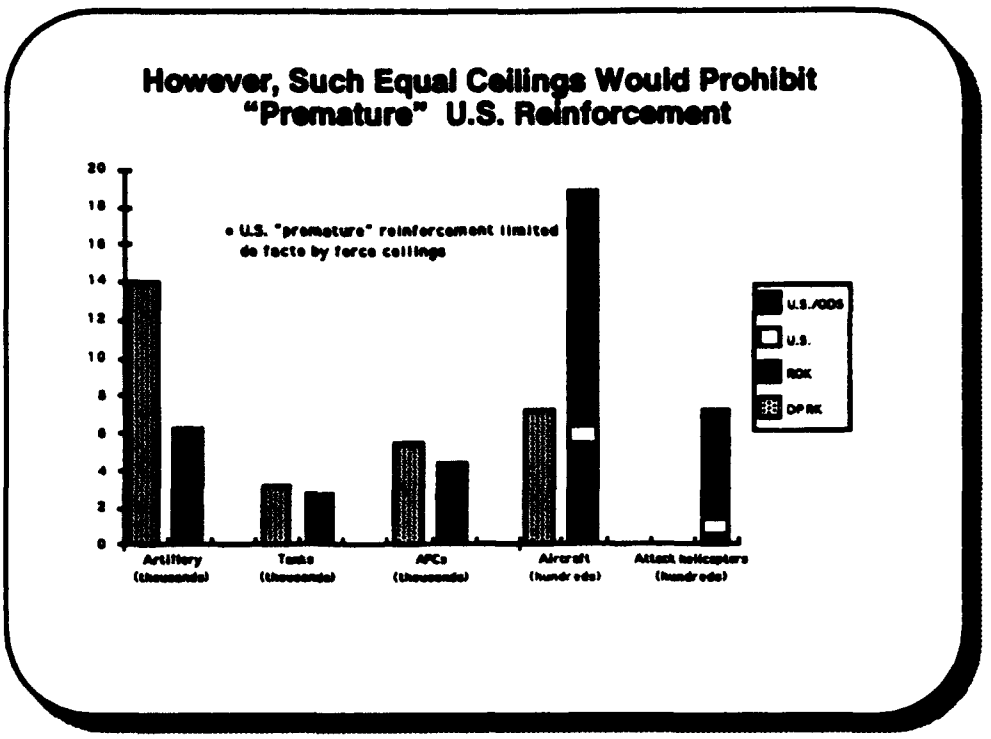
States is a world power and requires its forces for other purposes. The United States should confine its discussions to the Korean peninsula.

However, the United States may be able to give something in airpower and "premature" reinforcement. In addition, the United States could take the lead in providing additional assurances to the North that its security will not be undermined by reducing its holdings of artillery, tanks, and APCs. We now discuss each of these.



Unfortunately, the United States/ROK do not appear to have much to offer the North on combat aircraft numbers. In the chart above, we see that for combat aircraft the North has over 700 (the black bar), whereas the combined U.S./ROK total is only slightly over 600. Without some creative categorization, it would be the North that would have to reduce aircraft to reach equal ceilings.

Attack helicopters offer more because the North does not have any. Removing all U.S./ROK attack helicopters would be a concession, albeit a small one.

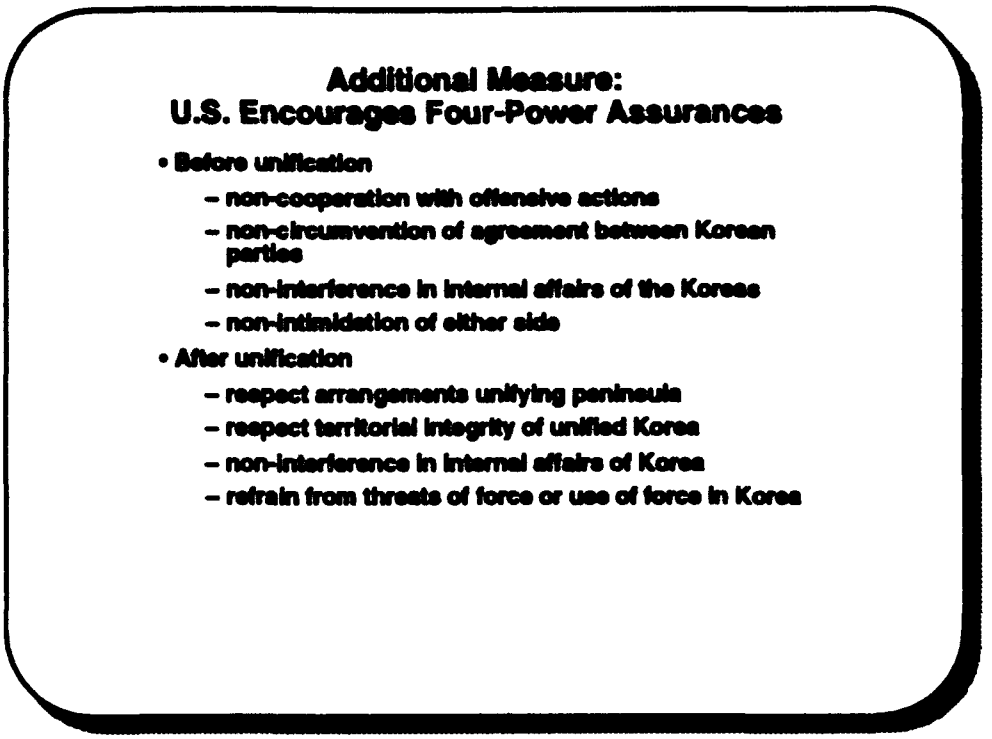


U.S. reinforcement to Korea can be of two types: quick reaction ("timely") and anticipatory ("premature"). "Timely" reinforcement is reinforcement in response to North Korean aggression. "Premature" reinforcement (from the point of view of the North) could occur if the United States decided to build up a force in South Korea (like in Operation Desert Storm [ODS]) to attack the North (perhaps for some international threat such as nuclear proliferation).

The chart above shows what "premature" reinforcement could look like to the North Koreans. Here we have compared DPRK equipment holdings for major equipment items with a combination of ROK holdings, U.S. in-country holdings, and a U.S. reinforcement based on Desert Storm reinforcement levels. Even though the U.S. reinforcement plan for Korea is not the same as it was for the Persian Gulf, the North does not know exactly what the United States would do and could assume a similar reinforcement schedule. Although these numbers do not capture qualitative differences between the forces or the training differences, they do show that even in terms of numbers, especially of combat aircraft and attack helicopters, the United States could assemble an advantage over the North.

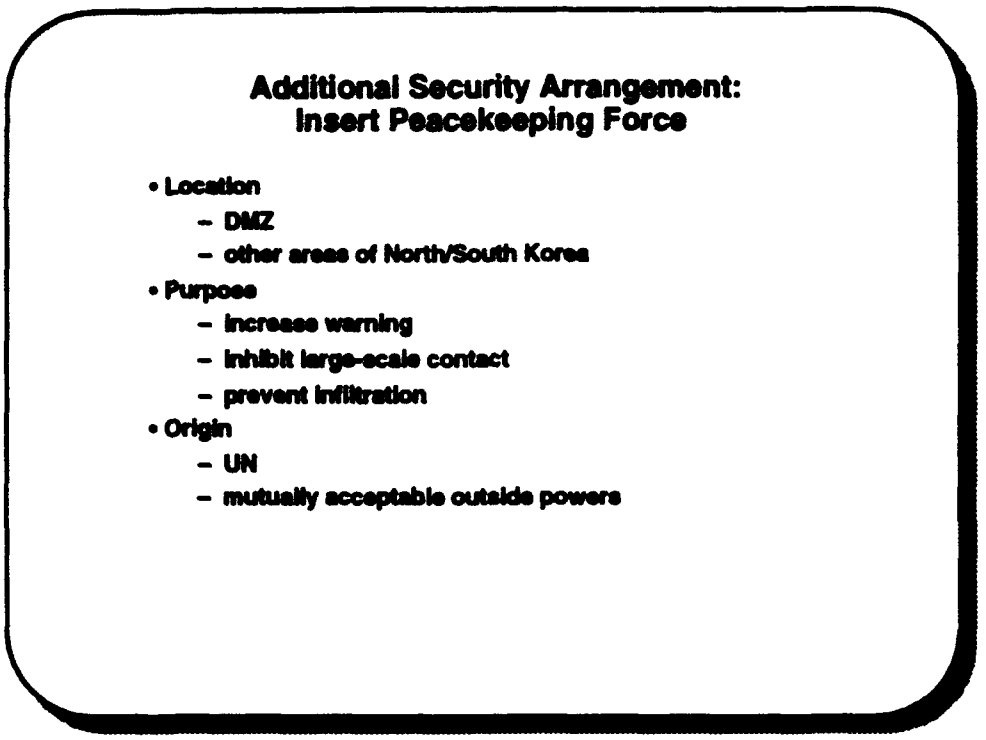
An arms control agreement limiting major equipment items (including combat aircraft and attack helicopters) to equal ceilings would not preclude a "timely" reinforcement if the North broke the agreement by aggression. But it would not allow a "premature" reinforcement without a treaty abrogation, because force ceilings would not permit this type of buildup.

We should also note that such an agreement would limit the U.S. freedom to use Korea as a base for contingency operations in the area. The United States may be able to negotiate some kind of transit arrangements, but these arrangements would be unlikely to allow a large and sustained buildup of forces in Korea without causing a reciprocal North Korean violation.



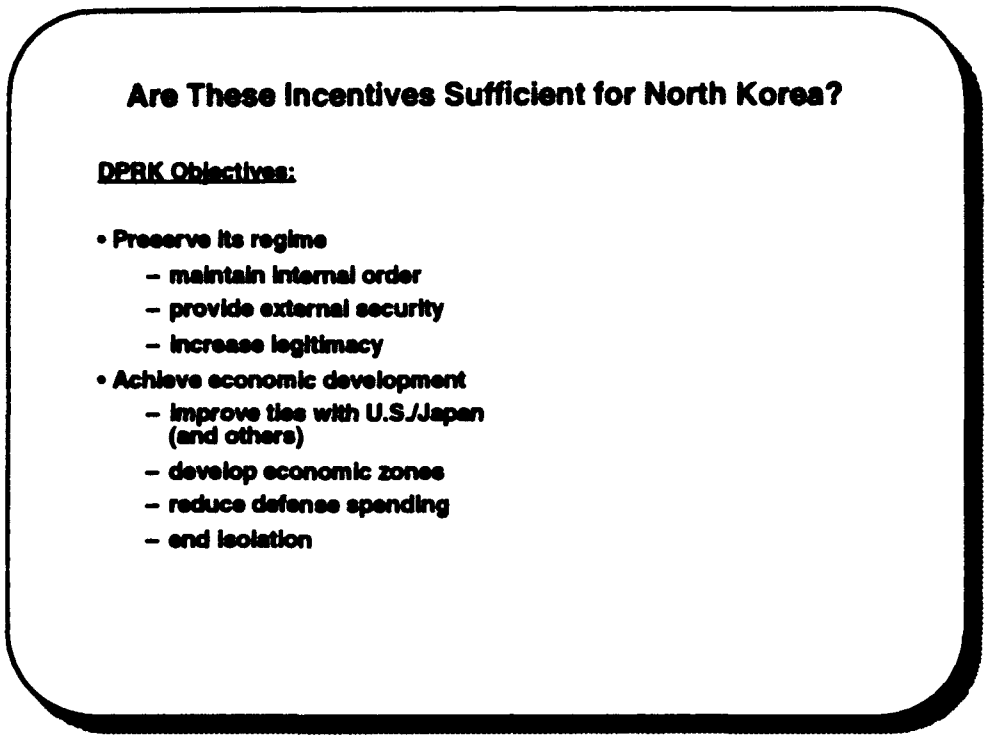
If the United States persuades North Korea to give up its advantage in artillery, tanks, and APCs and has not given much of a military nature in return, then the United States will probably have to try to assure the North that it has not undermined its own security. The United States could try to do this by providing additional assurances. One potentially useful set of assurances could come from the four major powers in the region: China, Japan, Russia, and the United States. All could assure both Koreas that none will support offensive actions by either side, none will help to circumvent any agreements, none will interfere in internal matters of the Koreas, and none will intimidate either side before and after unification. Although such assurances might be potentially useful, they could be difficult to define and measure.

Such assurances would not involve the presence of the powers in Korea (except the continuing U.S. presence) and should not lead to objections by the Koreans on that account. Furthermore, the process could have an additional benefit for the United States. If the four powers could be persuaded to agree to these measures in Korea, then perhaps measures of this kind could be formulated to apply to a broader region. If adhered to, such constraints on action could help stabilize the region.



In addition to four-power assurances in Korea (and perhaps the region as well), the insertion of a peacekeeping force could be useful. The conditions for a peacekeeping force would be met. Two adversaries (not currently engaged in a war) would be in the process of reducing tensions. They would presumably have established sufficient trust to move the negotiations along, but not enough trust to feel secure about one another.

In this environment, a peacekeeping force could be useful. It could patrol in the DMZ and in other areas of Korea. Its purpose would be to separate the two forces and, as called upon by the agreement, to observe exercises and troop movements. Such observations would increase warning of an attack, inhibit large-scale contact, and help prevent infiltration. (It is not clear that the UN could afford another peacekeeping effort because its effort in Cambodia has exhausted peacekeeping funds. In addition, South and North Korea are currently not in favor of peacekeepers, believing the two Koreas can solve their own problems. But the Koreas could change their minds if such an approach appeared to help each accomplish its goals.)

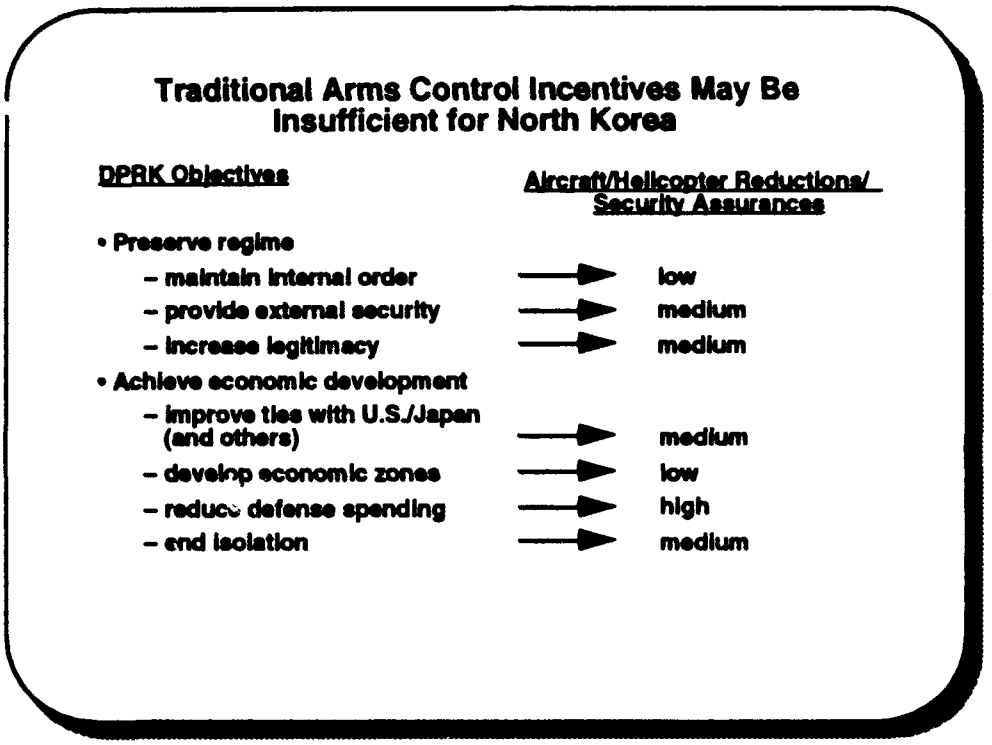


We have outlined some elements of what the U.S./ROK could perhaps offer to the DPRK. Would the North find these incentives attractive enough to reach an agreement with the United States?

To answer this question, we expand on the two principal objectives of the North—preserving its regime and achieving economic development. To preserve its regime, the North will have to be concerned with maintaining internal order, especially during the succession period. In addition, it must provide for its external security. And the hold on power of those in the North will be enhanced if they can increase their legitimacy at home and abroad.

The DPRK economy could be improved (which is related to preserving its regime) if it could enhance its trade ties with all countries in the region, especially the United States and Japan. It has declared its intent to develop economic zones in the north of its country in a manner similar to the Chinese. Whether this effort will be successful probably depends on the political attractiveness of the North as a place to invest, because the only economic advantage it can offer is cheap, disciplined labor. A reduction in its defense spending would allow more to be invested in productive activity and

allow a rise in living standards. Finally, the DPRK could improve its trade relations and induce investment if it could end its isolation in the world. Some of this isolation is by the North's own choice, but some results from pressure by others, especially the United States.



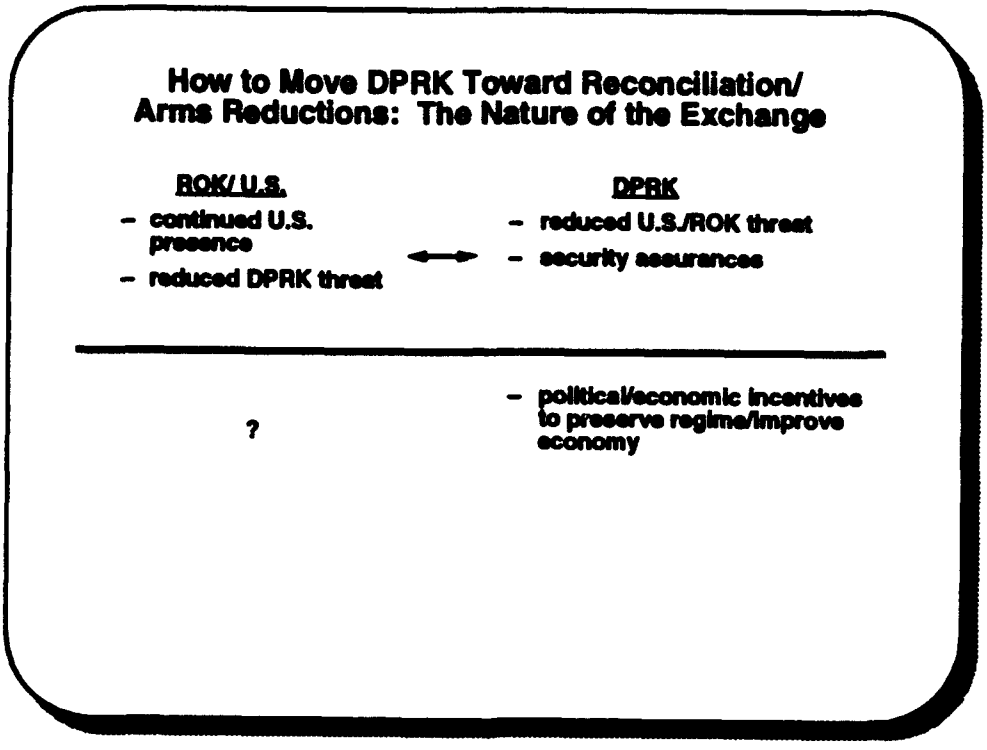
We can now examine the DPRK objectives—preserving its regime and achieving economic development—to see how well the elements of a possible U.S./ROK arms control package might help the North to achieve these objectives.

A package of equal ceilings on combat aircraft and attack helicopters as well as security assurances could offer some incentives to the North.

The security assurances and the reduced U.S./ROK threat would probably improve DPRK external security. But, in addition, its external security would be improved just by reaching an agreement with the United States. Likewise, dealing with the United States would increase the North's legitimacy. Thus, this package could have some value in helping to preserve the North's regime.

Dealing with the United States could also improve the North's contacts with the United States and Japan and help end the North's isolation. The DPRK might reduce its defense spending if it felt more secure as a result of an arms control agreement.

However, the benefit from such an agreement, while not insignificant, is not great and would depend on how the United States treated the North during and after an agreement. And, in any case, these benefits might not be sufficient to persuade the North to reach an agreement.

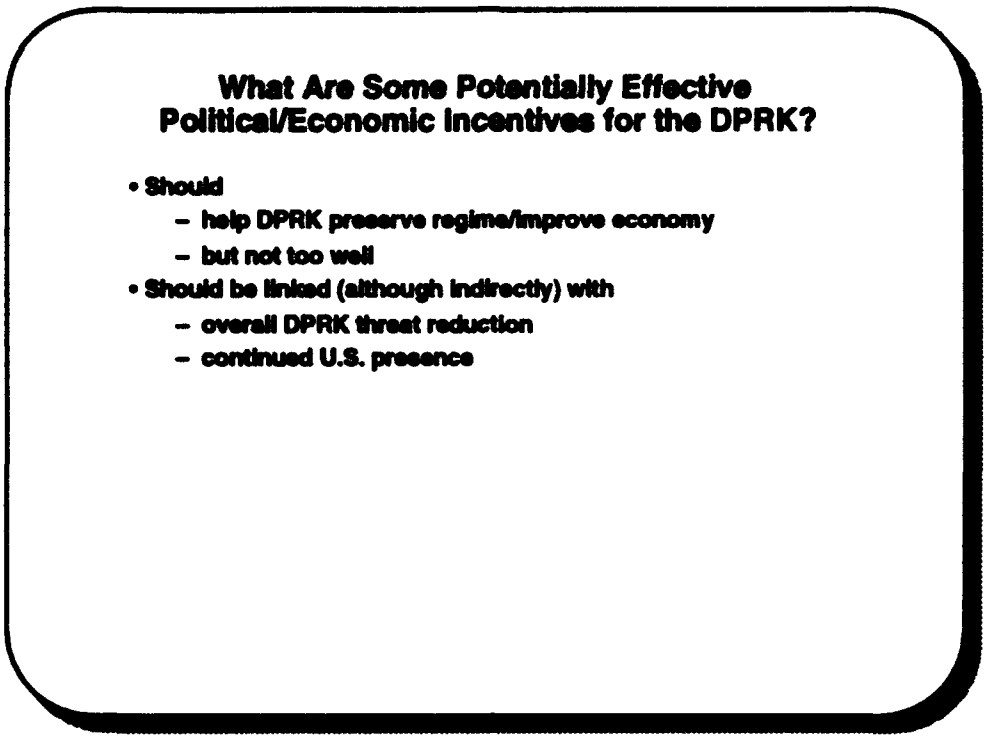


Our approach would help accomplish the two U.S. objectives of continuing U.S. presence and reducing the DPRK conventional threat to South Korea. In terms of traditional arms control inducements, the United States might be able to make an offer to the North of a reduced U.S./ROK military threat and an attempt to arrange security assurances by all regional powers. (There is no guarantee that the United States could deliver the other regional powers, especially China and Russia, but no other country has a better chance.) Such an offer may provide a sufficient incentive for the North to reach an agreement. However, although no one knows the North's objectives with any certainty, and no one can predict its behavior, logic suggests that such an offer may be insufficient to reach an agreement.

If such an exchange seems unlikely to be acceptable, it may be that no agreement will be reached. However, if U.S. objectives are considered sufficiently important, then other incentives might be used to persuade the North to reach an agreement. These incentives would not be directly part of the negotiations (i.e., not on the table), but would be clearly part of the incentives for the North to reach an

agreement. (Exactly how negotiations might proceed is beyond the scope of this analysis.)

This approach is parallel to the negotiations over nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula. U.S. withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Korea (if they existed) is not considered to be a sufficient quid pro quo to entice the DPRK to discontinue its nuclear program. Thus, the United States is proposing to offer some political incentives (hinting at upgraded U.S. relations) and economic incentives (Japanese recognition with subsequent reparations and investment in the North). *It is important that not all quids be used to achieve a settlement of the nuclear issue. Some should be retained for bargaining over the conventional force issue.*

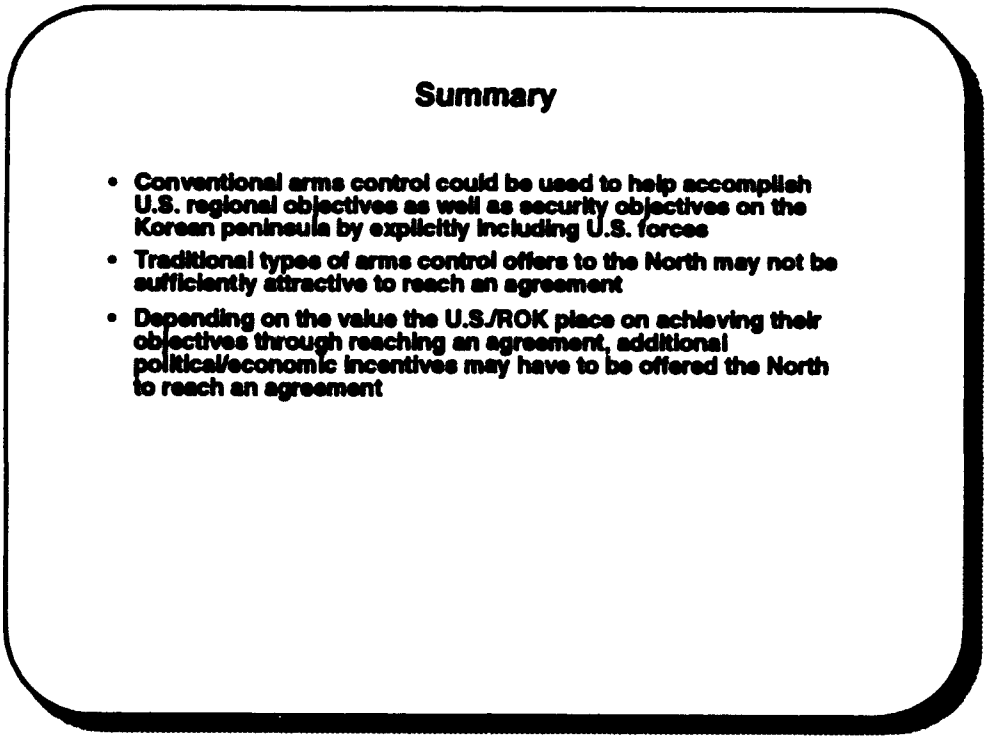


The content of these political and economic incentives will be determined in our follow-on work. Such an incentive structure will be difficult to construct. The incentives must convince the North that it is helping to preserve its regime and improve its economy. However, the United States does not really want to help the North, at least with regime preservation. In addition, the United States does not have much to offer economically and thus will probably have to persuade the Japanese to support the approach.

But the United States must make clear to the North what it wants in return. We believe that the North is under considerable pressure and that proper incentives can be found to reach an agreement in which the United States accomplishes its objectives.

Outline

- U.S. objectives in negotiations
- Potential approach
- ROK objectives
- DPRK objectives
- Summary



A key issue in constructing an arms control process and developing positions for arms control in Korea is whether to include explicitly U.S. forces in the negotiations. While there are pluses and minuses, on balance U.S. regional security objectives (as well as those of the South Koreans) would be more likely to be achieved if U.S. forces were included.

However, traditional arms control offers may not be enough to reach an agreement between the two parties. If the United States and the ROK place sufficiently high value on achieving their objectives, then other political/economic incentives may have to be offered to the North to reach an agreement.