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KOREAN UNIFICATION AND UNITED STATES SECURITY
ALTERNATIVES IN NORTHEAST ASIA

BY

Edward L. Hasell

JUNE 1993

Thesis Advisor:

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**Korean Unification and United States Security
Alternatives in Northeast Asia**

by

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Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.S., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1983

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

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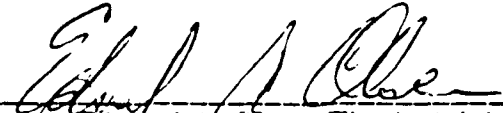
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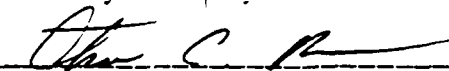
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ABSTRACT

The end of the Cold War has removed the external restraints placed on the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that in the past have proved to be a barrier to unification of the two states on the Korean peninsula. An inter-Korea Cold War lingers on, frustrating both governments plans for unification of the peninsula. North and South Korea have made unification a major goal of their governments, and they will eventually succeed in unifying the Korean peninsula. Unification of the Korean peninsula removes the primary basis for a US military presence on the peninsula, that of deterring North Korea. Even in the post Cold War context, the Korean peninsula remains an area of strategic importance to the United States, and to Japan, China, and Russia.

The United States has enduring political, economic, and security interests in Korea and Northeast Asia. The United States should expand its relations with North Korea which can now be done without damaging relations with South Korea. Unification of the Korean peninsula would reduce tension and the potential for instability, so the United States should work toward that goal. In the post Cold War, multipolar world of competing economic and political interests, a strong unified Korea as an ally would be an asset to the United States in Northeast Asia, particularly if relations between the US, Japan, and China suffer serious setbacks. It would still best serve the interests of the United States to maintain a military presence on the Korean peninsula in cooperation with the unified Korea government.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The end of the Cold War confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States changes the context for the relations both between the United States and South Korea and South Korea and North Korea. For the first time since 1945, North and South Korea can deal with each other without the concern and intervention of two global superpowers. The history of a bitter war and more than forty years of hostile coexistence has proven to be very difficult to overcome however, and the two Koreas have yet to make a significant reduction in the level of tension on the peninsula. Each nation continues to view the other as the primary threat to its existence.

The United States, unlike Russia, still has a major influence in the course of events on the Korean peninsula by virtue of the presence of its combat forces on the peninsula and the existence of a Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea (South Korea) views the continued presence of American forces as essential to facilitate the eventual peaceful unification of the peninsula, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) views the presence of US forces as the major obstacle to the unification process.

Given the strong and enduring desire of all Koreans for the ending of the division of their country and the precedent of German unification, one can assume that eventually a unified Korean nation will be created. This would be a major change in the Northeast Asian security environment, and requires an evaluation of the impact of unification on US interests in Korea and Northeast Asia, and how best to safeguard those interests in the new world created by Korean unification.

There are significant problems for both Koreas to address before a successful and peaceful unification could be achieved. Economically, South Korea has thrived on international trade, while North Korea has developed its economy stressing "self reliance." North Korea is struggling under the limitations of a Stalinist style command economy, while South Korea has used large private corporations (*chaebol*), government, and the free market to foster tremendous economic growth. Politically, South Korea has undergone a slow transformation from authoritarianism towards liberal democracy. North Korea is a one man dictatorship, with plans to transfer leadership of the nation from father to son in a style similar to dynastic succession. Both Koreas have undergone an ideological divergence based on more than forty years of isolation. North and South Korea confront each other with large and capable armed forces, and each mistrusts the other.

The attempts at unification since the division in 1945 have run the gamut of negotiations, propaganda, and armed attack. The lack of success is evident of the difficulties involved, but all previous efforts occurred in the context of the Cold War. With the Cold War over, prospects for eventual unification are increased.

The various possibilities on the Korean peninsula can be categorized as no unification and a continuation of a hostile relationship between the two Koreas, no unification but a development of peaceful coexistence, unification with the formation of a new Korean state, or unification under the authority of either North or South Korea. The most likely scenario is the gradual reduction of tensions followed by the creation of a new Korean state that would look very much like the ROK. If North Korea can not sustain itself that long due to political and economic difficulties, then it may collapse and be absorbed by the South. This is not a desired scenario for either the North or South Koreans.

China, Russia, and Japan, although not enthusiastic about a unified Korea, believe the matter is best settled by the Koreans and would not take any action to prevent unification. Russia has almost completely abandoned its former ally North Korea in view of its more

pressing need for financial assistance from South Korea. China too has moved closer towards South Korea, and has a rapidly growing trade relationship with the South. Japan can play a useful role in aiding the process of unification, but must tread lightly on the Korean peninsula due to the burden of history. Both China and Russia would see a unified Korea as a potential counterweight to Japan's economic and possible future military might.

The United States has interests in maintaining peace, stability, and economic access to Northeast Asia. An allied unified Korea could provide the United States with a strong position to advance its interests in the region. As Korea has developed, it has transcended its role as a buffer state to communism or an adjunct to Japanese security, but in the post Cold War context is important to the United States in its own right.

In the post Cold War, multipolar world of competing economic and political interests, a strong unified Korea as an ally would be an asset to the United States in Northeast Asia, particularly if relations between the US, Japan, and China suffer serious setbacks. A United States military presence in a unified Korea could safeguard the interests of the United States in the Northeast Asian region, and even in a multilateral security environment where the economic component of national security is looming larger in importance, the efficacy of a military presence in a region of vital importance to the continued security of the United States should not be discounted.

I. INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union into fragmented Republics removed what had been the foundation of United States security policy since shortly after World War II, that is, the policy of containment of the Soviet Union and communism. One of the darkest moments of what President Kennedy called "the long twilight struggle" between the United States and the Soviet Union occurred early in the Cold War, when the American policy of containment was given physical meaning with the commitment of American blood and treasure to repel the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June of 1950. At a cost of greater than 30,000 American lives, the United States purchased the survival of an undemocratic, corrupt, economically crippled, but thoroughly non-communist regime in South Korea.

The South Korean regime was not just saved by the hard logic of containment and the Cold War, but was in fact a creation of those very same forces. Soviet and American mutual suspicions and competing visions of a post World War world prevented them from successfully ending their military occupations of North and South Korea and reuniting the separate administrative zones on the divided peninsula. An American sponsored government was born in the South, and a Soviet sponsored government was created in the North. Both these governments reflected the mistrust and suspicions of their sponsors, and their mutual dislike was made more intense by the fact that there were elements of civil war, countryman against countryman, superimposed on the Cold War ideological conflict. The Korean people, their nation small and poor, had lost control of their fate and had

become enmeshed in superpower rivalry and geopolitical strategy. The Cold War dominated the relations of both North and South Korea.

With the end of the global Cold War, the Koreans are presented with an opportunity to build their own relations free of the pressures of superpower rivalry. While the United States now debates how much aid to give to the Russian Republic, however, North and South Korea still confront each other in a state of a heavily armed cease fire. No peace treaty has ever been signed between them. Neither state officially recognizes the other, and both claim to be the sole representative of all the Korean people as well as having authority over the entire Korean peninsula. Almost three years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Korean families separated over forty years ago have yet to be reunited. South Korea maintains United States forces stationed inside its borders in large part to deter another North Korean attack, and the international community fears that the North in turn is attempting to develop nuclear weapons.

Despite all of the problems between North and South Korea, both nations decry the continued division of the Korean peninsula, and state that formation of a single Korean nation, or unification, is their constant goal. Given the enduring desire of the Koreans to end the division of the peninsula, and seeing the dramatic events of 1989 and 1990 in Europe as a precedent, the prospects are good that eventually the Korean people will unify their two states. While the South Koreans see the United States military presence as useful force to facilitate the eventual peaceful unification of the peninsula, the North Koreans see it as the major obstacle to bringing the two states together.

This thesis will examine the problems facing the two Koreas in their quest for unification, what attempts at unification have been made in the past, and evaluate any success those attempts may have met with. The interests of China, Japan, Russia, and the United States in Korean unification will also be reviewed, and possible unification scenarios developed. It will conclude with recommendations about the policy that the

United States should adopt toward a military presence in a post unified Korea, and what actions the United States could take to further its interests in Korea and Northeast Asia.

The 1992 National Military Strategy of the United States describes "Forward Presence" as one of the four foundations of the National Security Strategy of the United States, and as vital to the maintenance of the system of collective defense by which the United States protects its security interests.¹ The November 1992 report to Congress A Strategic Framework For The Asian Pacific Rim states that "Our forward deployed presence has underpinned stability in East Asia and helped secure its economic dynamism," and that one key to our forward military presence has been "largely bilateral security alliances" with Japan and the Republic of Korea.²

It is only a matter of time before Korea unifies, and that eventuality, coupled with the end of the United States—Soviet confrontation, might argue for an end to the United States' military presence in Northeast Asia, thus eliminating one of the foundations of the United States National Military Strategy.³ If unification of the Korean peninsula is accomplished, would a US military presence in Korea still serve United States' interests? The United States has enduring economic, political, and security interests in Korea and Northeast Asia; the hypothesis of this study is that those interests would best be safeguarded by maintaining a military presence on the Korean peninsula.

¹Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States Department of Defense, The National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 7.

²Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (East Asia and Pacific Region), United States Department of Defense, A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Report to Congress, (Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 2.

³For a prominent example of such an argument, see Chalmers Johnson, "Rethinking Our Asian Policy," The National Interest, (Summer 1993). (forthcoming issue).

II. THE PROBLEMS OF UNIFICATION: DIVERGENCE IN THE TWO KOREAS

A. ECONOMIC

The state of economic development in the two Koreas is a study in contrasts. The Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have followed different paths in their quest to meet the economic needs of their nations, and as they approach the end of the 1990s, they have created two very different states. South Korea has an outwardly looking, export orientated, market economy while North Korea has an inward looking, isolationist, command economy. Successful unification of the two Koreas will require that somehow these two different systems become one, which may resemble one or the other, or be a hybrid of both.

When the Korean peninsula was partitioned into American and Soviet zones of occupation 1945, North Korea inherited most of the industrial base built up by the Japanese as well as the majority of natural resources. South Korea inherited the bulk of the labor force and had been developed as an agricultural region by the Japanese.¹ With these basic differences, the two nations set out on two different development paths.

The South Korean economy has evolved into a system that combines state directed capitalism with free markets, a "mixed economic system." This mixed system was initiated in Korea under the leadership of President Park Chung Hee after he gained control of the government in 1961. Park's major goal was to lead South Korea from a primarily agricultural economy to a modern industrialized economy that would increase the standard of living for its citizens and provide the means for the state to defend itself from outside aggression. President Park caused the government to play a key role in economic

development. The new administration guided private industry by providing export and production targets, controlling credit, applying informal pressure on reluctant companies, and through the use of fiscal and monetary policy.²

The Park administration was similar to the previous Rhee administration in its desire to exercise strong control over the economy, but its motivations and policies were quite different. President Rhee exercised strong authority over economic policy in order to strengthen his power base. There was little economic planning for long term development. President Park staked his claim to political legitimacy on the economic development of the nation. To this end President Park concentrated significant power under his direct command. He nationalized all banks, created the Economic Planning Board,³ and placed the central bank (the Bank of Korea) under the direct control of the Ministry of Finance. He created a single, umbrella labor union and manipulated it with his intelligence services, and placed hand-picked men in leadership positions of a variety of industrial, professional, and social organizations. President Park even eliminated local government, replacing local officials with men appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs. "Few governments in the world had so effective, pervasive, and controlled a hierarchical system reaching down so far into society, one that was augmented by Korean social patterns."⁴ President Park made use of his power to embark on a development strategy that called for higher standards of living with less dependence on the United States aid that had up until then been crucial for the survival of the South Korean state.

The South Korean government exercised strong control to first establish a self-reliant industrialized economy and then to modernize and sustain growth. To obtain capital for investment, South Korea was not afraid to take on a heavy load of foreign debt. Indeed, in 1985 South Korea was the fourth largest Third World debtor.⁵ The source of much of the loans, grants, and commercial credits for development was Japan. In 1965, President Park exercised his power and pushed through the National Assembly a treaty normalizing

relations with Japan. Discontent with the treaty contributed to widespread student demonstrations, which were put down with the imposition of martial law. Strong government rule may have stifled the free expression of student demonstrators, but it also freed up a source of capital that made up more than half of the total foreign investment in South Korea by 1985, \$US1.4 billion out of \$US2.65 billion.⁶

The South Korean government, realizing that South Korea was relatively resource poor and heavily dependent on imports of raw materials, particularly oil, stressed the development of export industries to balance off vital imports. Government planners selected industries to promote and gave them protection from foreign competitors. Once the industry was on its feet, the government provided tax credits for exporters and tariff exemptions on raw materials imported for export production. In this way, under President Park an export-driven, indeed an export dependent, economy was developed in South Korea. The success of the government's development plans is well known. From 1965 to 1978, the Gross National Product (GNP) of South Korea increased by a factor of five.⁷ In the 1980s, South Korea began to invest overseas in order to develop export markets and procure natural resources. By 1987, South Korean overseas investment totaled US\$1.195 billion.⁸ The South Korean drive for exports shifted their balance of payments deficit to a surplus by the mid 1980s. As of 1993, South Korea is one of the major trading nations in the world.

While the government exercised strong control on economic development by devising and implementing a series of Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plans, the first from 1962-1967 and the most recent 1992-1996, no picture of the South Korean economy would be complete without describing the role of the *chaebol*. *Chaebol* are groups of specialized companies with interrelated management, giant business conglomerates. They had their beginnings when some Korean businessmen picked up the assets of departing Japanese companies in 1945. Under President Rhee, many of these companies grew and

prospered from sometimes shady dealings with the government. When President Park took control, *chaebol* leaders were slapped on the wrists for corruption, and then made partners in the government's plans for economic growth. The *chaebol* benefited from government secured loans and projects, and in return helped the government realize its development plans. There was a cost, however, as "the *chaebol*-led industrialization accelerated the monopolistic and oligopolistic concentration of capital and economically profitable activities in the hands of a limited number of conglomerates."⁹ In 1987, the revenues of the four largest *chaebol* were equal to two-thirds of South Korea's GNP.¹⁰

Thus the South Korean economy is marked by a combination of strong government control of the market and a considerable role for private enterprise, which is dominated by the *chaebol*. It is by no means a command economy and the price mechanism is allowed to operate with little regulation to guide the allocation of resources. As South Korea moves into the next century, there is a trend of relaxing government regulation of the free market and increasing antipathy towards the large *chaebols'* role in the Korean economy. President Kim Young Sam, elected in December of 1992, has made the liberalization of the Korean economy one of his primary goals. "Kim's next important initiative, say his advisors, will be to persuade the bureaucracy to abandon its efforts to micromanage a US\$274 billion economy, the world's 15th largest in 1991."¹¹ A major initiative is the relaxing of government control of the South Korean financial system, particularly interests rates. The government also seeks to encourage the growth of smaller businesses, limiting the role of the *chaebol*, which many Koreans now see as a new threat to democracy, replacing the military in that regard.

While South Korea developed into an export dependent, government guided, market economy, North Korea's economy reflects almost fifty years of development along the Stalinist model. "More than 90 percent of this command economy is socialized; agricultural land is collectivized; and state-owned industry produces 95 percent of manufactured

goods."¹² Pyongyang has augmented a Soviet style command economy with the ideology of *juche*, or self-reliance.

As mentioned earlier, North Korea benefited from Japanese development of the peninsula in that most of Korea's industrial base was located in the north. The Korean War resulted in the destruction of most of what was in place, however, and the North Korean regime created a highly centralized planned economy in order to rebuild and pursue development. Government ownership of the means of production and direct control of resource allocation was successful during the 1950s in rebuilding North Korea's shattered economy. Indeed, economic expansion was impressive and the North Korean economy outperformed that of South Korea's during this period.¹³

While South Korea under President Park was undergoing an economic vitalization, North Korea began to suffer a slow down. Many scholars attributed this slowdown to the limitations inherent in the centrally planned economic system. Dr. Woo Sik Kee, former president of the Lucky-Goldstar Economic Research Institute (one of South Korea's large *chaebol*), explained the situation in North Korea like this:

In the absence of the market mechanism balancing supply and demand, central plans and commands determine supply in North Korea. Prices are predetermined by the planning authorities and have little to do with consumer preferences. As the economy grows in size and becomes more complicated in structure, the task of detailed economic planning and management becomes very burdensome, making the whole process all the more inefficient. Furthermore, the lack of material incentives discourages creativeness and innovation. Unrealistically ambitious plan targets force people to work harder, often leading to conflicts between units in planning and production and decreases in efficiency.¹⁴

Whatever the reason for North Korea's economic slowdown, by 1976 South Korea's GNP had surpassed North Korea's for the first time.¹⁵

A major factor in the North Korean economy in addition to central planning is the concept of *Juche*. This is the official ideology embraced by the North Korean government that extols the virtues of North Korean socialism and focuses on making North Korea an

independent and self-reliant nation. In the realm of economic planning, *juche* initially manifested itself in North Korea's efforts to develop a self-contained economy, independent of imports, exports, or foreign investment. The limitations of North Korea's domestic economy, such as lack of investment capital, small domestic markets, and underdeveloped technologies, confined the growth potential of the economy without foreign participation.

It is important to realize that the meaning of *juche* as defined by the North Korean leadership has changed to meet the needs of the regime. North Korea has at various times instituted programs to allow greater foreign participation in its economy to increase the prospects for economic growth. In the early 1970s, the North sought foreign capital and technology in exchange for its mineral resources. The program failed due to a lack of competitive industries, oil price shocks, and falling prices for North Korean export commodities. Exports did not expand, and North Korea defaulted on approximately US\$2 billion in foreign loans.¹⁶ More recently, in 1984 North Korea enacted a joint-venture law and in 1988 created a joint-venture ministry to attract foreign investment. The government has instituted reforms to decentralize planning and provide limited material incentives to promote production. It is also attempting to promote international tourism and to shift production from heavy industry to consumer goods.¹⁷

While North Korea appears to have embarked on a program of economic reform, one can easily see the divergence between both the paths North and South Korea have taken toward economic development and the results achieved. A measure of the divergence in the results can be obtained by comparing the GNP of each nation. The CIA estimated North Korea's 1991 GNP as US\$23.3 billion, resulting in a per capita GNP of US\$1,100 with a growth rate of negative two percent. The CIA figures for South Korea are a GNP of US\$273 billion, per capita US\$6,300 and a growth rate of 8.7 percent.¹⁸ South Korea's GNP is greater than ten times that of North Korea's, and per capita GNP is greater by a

factor of almost six. Comparing the total trade of both nations also serves to illustrate the great gap between the two economies. In 1989, total trade for South Korea, exports and imports, was valued at US\$118.2 billion, verses US\$4.79 billion for North Korea.¹⁹ Trade value for South Korea was greater than that of North Korea by a factor of almost 25.

The National Unification Board of South Korea states that "the economic gap between the two sides of Korea arises from the disparity in the bases of their respective economic policies, and the fact that the bases of their policies, in turn stem from differences in their economic systems."²⁰ South Korea has been less constrained by ideology in developing its economy. The government is not afraid to intervene in the market, but it is not afraid of private capital either. North Korea has been wedded to the concepts of socialism. Peaceful unification of North and South Korea will require a careful transformation of one or both of these two different economies, a considerable challenge. It is not a challenge that is impossible to meet, however. Given North Korea's fitful efforts at reform and the South Korean government's strong role in the economy, it is not unreasonable to expect that with time and planning, a mutually satisfying compromise could be reached, and the two economies could be successfully harmonized.

B . POLITICAL

The political divergence of the two Korean governments is perhaps the most obvious problem of unification. Two states with a recent history of mistrust and a bitter and bloody war between them, the two Korean governments profess different and opposed, but not necessarily hostile, ideologies. South Korea has been moving fitfully towards a pluralistic democracy, while North Korea has developed its own brand of socialism and is dominated by a single party, the Korean Workers' Party, and the father-son team of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il.

The political evolution of the Republic of Korea since its founding under the auspices of the United Nations in 1948 has seen a slow, if not quite steady, growth towards a functioning democracy. Under Syngman Rhee, Steinberg calls South Korea "...a sad commentary on democratic principles" and "...a state in which democracy was a textbook concept, unrelated to a long, indigenous authoritarian tradition."²¹ Rhee's government would throw opposition members in jail, rig elections, buy and sell the votes of legislators, and manipulate the National Assembly by intimidation in order to maintain its grip on power. It is generally conceded that Rhee rigged the presidential elections of 1952 and 1956, but in 1956 discontent was so widespread that Rhee was unable to prevent the election of the opposition candidate Chang Myon to vice president.²²

Rhee's government fell in the spring of 1960 in the wake of widespread student demonstrations over the corrupt March 15, 1960 presidential election and particularly the death of a student at the hands of the Masan police and whose body had been found in Masan harbor. The government was unable to contain the protests, in spite of martial law and the use of deadly force. On April 25, 1960, faculty members demonstrated with the students, and they were joined by other citizens. Soldiers sent to put down the protest either joined the students or simply stood by. Rhee left Korea on April 26.²³ Han Sung Joo, the first foreign minister under President Kim Young Sam, when he was a professor described the Rhee government:

The twelve year period between 1948 and 1960 under President Syngman Rhee can be characterized by two closely related phenomena: the supremacy of state power over the rest of the society, and Rhee's personal dictatorship, supported by the national police.²⁴

Thus while the desire for democracy was expressed by the students and intelligentsia, it was not mirrored in the Rhee regime.

In the aftermath of the Rhee government, there was the first brief flowering of South Korean democracy. In July of 1960, South Korea's first truly free election was held, a new National Assembly was seated, and Chang Myon became prime minister. Chang was reformer, and tried to stabilize the new government and lay a firm foundation for Korean democracy. Unfortunately, in the turbulent times following the fall of Rhee, his government was unable to deal effectively with demands for political and economic progress. The new atmosphere of democracy saw various interest groups promote their agendas with little or no restraint in the interest of effective government. During Chang's government, there were over 2,000 demonstrations with 900,000 participants.²⁵ On May 16, 1961, General Park Chung Hee, seeing a weak government, social instability, and claiming an imminent military threat from North Korea, led a military coup that overthrew South Korea's first popularly elected government.

President Park ruled South Korea until his assassination on October 26, 1979. During his regime, Park expended considerable effort to ensure the consolidation of power in the executive branch. The struggle between the forces of authoritarianism and liberal democracy continued, but President Park fought to maintain tight control of the government right up to his death. Park held elections largely to enhance his legitimacy and to satisfy pressure from the United States. In the presidential elections of October 1963 and May 1967, Park defeated Yun Po Sun, the last victory with only 51.4 percent of the vote.²⁶ The margin of victory is significant given the resources available to Park and that the elections were hardly "free and fair." In September of 1969, Park pushed through an amendment to the constitution that allowed him to run for office a third time. In April of 1971, Korean democracy showed signs of life when Park narrowly defeated Kim Dae Jung in the presidential election. Even with the powers available to him as president, Park clearly was losing the support of the Korean people. In the following general election, Park's party lost the two-thirds majority necessary to tamper with, or amend, the

constitution. Democratic forces suffered a setback when on October 17, 1972, President Park declared martial law.

The final blow Park dealt to any democratizing trend came with his announcement of the Yushin Constitution. This revision to the constitution gave broad powers to the government and created, in Steinberg's words "...the most centralized, autocratic, and dictatorial Korean regime in history."²⁷ This assessment may be a little harsh given the government in North Korea, but it certainly was a major step away from a pluralistic democracy. There was considerable opposition to the increasingly authoritarian nature of Park's regime, and throughout the 1970s anti-government demonstrations were held to protest abuses of power. Park continued to take a hard line with the demonstrators until his death in 1979.

The political climate in South Korea in the wake of the death of President Park was similar to that in the wake of the fall of Syngman Rhee's regime. There was a hope for a liberalized political system and efforts began to reform the constitution yet again. Those efforts were stopped when General Chun Doo Hwan maneuvered himself into power, arresting the head of the Martial Law Command and essentially exercising a successful coup. The interim president, Choi Kyu Ha, had no real power and was gradually eased out by Chun.

Chun confronted severe economic and political challenges immediately as his regime took shape. The most significant was what came to be known as the Kwangju Incident, where students and citizens of the city of Kwangju in South Cholla Province demonstrated against government abuses of power and poor treatment of Cholla Province at the hands of the government, which was dominated by persons from the rival Kyongsang provinces. At one point, the protesters had control of the city. The government dispatched troops and the suppressed the protest with great loss of life.²⁸

Both the Chun regime and the United States (for perceived support of the bloody put down) suffered a loss of support and credibility. The Kwangju Incident has come to be seen a significant event in Korean movement toward democracy, as many Koreans continue to press the authorities to fully explain and perhaps to apologize for the events in May of 1980. Many hope to someday hold those responsible accountable in a court of law. President Kim Young Sam has attempted to put the problem to rest. On 13 May 1993, President Kim declared the site of the uprising "sacred ground," but he earned the displeasure of many reformers by declining to investigate any role that former Presidents Chun and Roh may have played in the incident, saying that "the matter should be left to history."²⁹ The Chun regime never fully recovered from the ramifications of its actions, and all succeeding South Korean governments will have the legacy of Kwangju to contend with.

The Chun government faced constant protest, stemming from questions of its legitimacy in the wake of its seizure of power, Kwangju, economic problems, and continuing political suppression. Chun was made president under the old constitution in August of 1980, and under yet another revised constitution in January of 1981. Neither constitution provided for the direct election of the president. National Assembly elections gave the governing Democratic Justice Party (DJP) a ruling majority.

Widespread disenchantment with Chun manifested itself in the 1985 National Assembly elections. Opposition parties together won more votes than the government party, which received only 35.3 percent of the vote.³⁰ President Chun faced increasing opposition to his authoritarian methods, and matters came to a head in 1987 over demands to reform the constitution to provide for the direct election of the president. President Chun maintained a hard line, ending negotiations with the opposition over the constitution in April of 1987. Popular discontent spread, and Chun was under pressure from the United States to compromise and negotiate.³¹ On 29 June 1987, Roh Tae Woo, President Chun's

hand picked chairman of the Democratic Justice Party (DJP), announced a major shift in government policy and endorsed several political reforms. These included a constitutional amendment to call for direct election of the President, more fair and open election laws, amnesty for Kim Dae Jung, a leading government critic, freedom of the press, and freedom for political parties. On 27 October 1987, the new constitution was approved by a referendum. It limited the President to a single five year term.³²

In December of 1987, the first Presidential election was held under the new constitution. Roh won the election with 36.7 percent of the popular vote, mainly because his primary rivals, Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung split the opposition vote.³³ Roh held on to his support from conservatives, his home base of North Kyongsang Province and the city of Taegu. The voting as a whole reflected Korea's regional factionalism, and the continuing dominance of Taegu-Kyongsang region in Korean politics.³⁴

The National Assembly elections of April, 1988 presented President Roh, leader of the DJP, with a major political dilemma. His ruling party's parliamentary majority was taken away by the voters of Korea, resulting in a "ruling minority and opposition majority."³⁵ The DJP received 34 percent of the popular vote and 125 of 299 (42 percent) of the Assembly seats. Kim Dae Jung's Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD) gained 70 seats, Kim Young Sam's Reunification Democratic Party (RDP) gained 59 seats, and Kim Jong Pil's New Democratic Republican Party (NDRP) won 35 seats. All told, whereas before the DJP held 58 percent of the seats, they now controlled only 42 percent. President Roh confronted three opposition parties that together controlled a majority in the assembly, but at the same time the opposition could not work together to govern. For the first time in post-war Korea, the ruling party was forced to deal with the democratic concepts of "compromise and consensus" in order to govern.

The "one Roh and three Kim" four party system lasted for almost two years. In an effort to end the four party stalemate and enhance both personal political power and ensure

the continuance of the conservative dominance of South Korean politics, on 22 January 1990 Roh, Kim Young Sam, and Kim Jong Pil merged their parties to form the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). The move in one fell swoop created a ruling party with 75 percent of the Assembly seats. It also left out Kim Dae Jung, whose policies were too progressive for the conservative DJP and NDRP. The DLP was a broad based conservative alliance that provided considerable political power to keep Kim Dae Jung and the PPD out of power. Both the NDRP and the RDP secured greater power by gaining a place in the ruling coalition. Kim Young Sam also increased his power and chances for being elected President in 1992 by siding with the ruling party, although he took a political risk of being accused of "selling out" after being part of the opposition for all of his life.

To be sure, such a broad-based conservative coalition in Korea will be affected by factionalism and clashes of personality, but a harmony of interests among the various factions will probably serve to keep the DLP in power for some time to come. Park assesses the effect of the formation of the DLP as follows: the DLP will dominate the process of "democratization" in Korea, the DLP will dominate inter-Korean relations, and that the foreign policies carried forward under President Roh will continue due to less concern about opposition criticism.³⁶

Kim Young Sam won the 18 December 1992 election for President as the DLP candidate in a race that was dominated by economic issues. He was particularly strong among conservative middle class voters, and captured 41.4 percent of the total vote, with a victory margin of 1.9 million votes. His opponents, Kim Dae Jung and Chung Ju Yung, received 33.4 percent and 16.1 percent respectively.³⁷

The election of Kim Young Sam represents a transition in Korean politics. He is the first civilian to hold power since 1960. He also comes to government with a long history of calling for economic and political reform. Although the success of pluralistic democracy is far from certain in the South, the events since 1988 indicate that the ROK is moving in

that direction. Heightened tensions with North Korea or an economic downturn might cause a return to authoritarianism, but the longer the South enjoys political and economic success, the less likely that is to occur. Another question is whether or not President Roh was successful in institutionalizing checks against government abuses of power, which still occurred under his rule. As the New York Times phrased it, "will democracy depend on South Korea's laws, or on the character of the next occupant of the garrison-like Blue House compound?"³⁸ With the pro-democracy reformer Kim Young Sam in power, it is clear that the nature of South Korea's government has undergone a significant change since the regime of Syngman Rhee.

The evolution of South Korea's political system contrasts with political developments in North Korea. The Central Intelligence Agency describes the government very briefly, "Communist State; Stalinist dictatorship."³⁹ Since its founding in 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been dominated by the Korean Workers' Party, which in turn has been dominated by Kim Il Sung. The state has the dual hierarchy of a communist system of government, with executive power vested in a president as head of state who presides over the "Supreme People's Assembly," and a party organization headed by the general secretary, politburo, central committee, and party congress. Kim Il Sung, as both the general secretary of the Korean Workers' Party and president of the state, wields dictatorial power. Although Kim was the first Premier of the DPRK at its founding in 1948, it was not until the late 1950s that he consolidated his power as the unchallenged leader of North Korea through a series of purges of his political foes. He formally adopted the title of President with the revision of the North Korean constitution in December of 1972.

Kim Il Sung has augmented the traditional power inherent in the one party communist system with a highly developed "cult of personality" that has expanded over time to include his son. The North Korean media preface every mention of Kim with "the Great Leader"

and any mention of his son, Kim Jong Il, includes "Dear Leader." Kim Il Sung has built up a mythology surrounding his life that claims among other things that it was he, not the Allies, that liberated Korea from Japan, and that at the early age of 13 he was already planning for the future Korean revolution.⁴⁰ Hard as it may be to believe, the strong control exercised by the government appears to have succeeded in securing some measure of viability for the cult among the North Korean people.

By most accounts, it is an effective cult. Propaganda, brainwashing, fear--whatever actually may lie behind the continuing viability of the cult--many North Koreans, according to some Western visitors, genuinely revere Kim as a national symbol.⁴¹

Not only Westerners share this view. An Eastern European diplomat has said "the worst things get, the louder everyone becomes about the Great Leader's infallibility. This place just gets scarier and scarier."⁴²

North Korea has developed into a highly regimented police state that mirrors the worst excesses under the most repressive periods of South Korean regimes. A security rating is assigned to each individual based on his or her family background, ranging from "elite," or "loyal," to "waverers" and "hostile elements." The state actively encourages all citizens to inform on one another, and police permission is required even for domestic travel. Students studying in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union during the "pro-democracy" movements of 1989 were called home and reportedly have been segregated from the rest of society in an apparent effort to prevent "dangerous ideas" from taking hold in North Korea.⁴³ There are estimates that as many as 150,000 people are imprisoned in 12 detention centers for ideological crimes.⁴⁴ North Korea receives harsh criticism on its regard for human rights from the United States Department of State, Asia Watch, and Amnesty International.⁴⁵

North Korea under Kim Il Sung has never held a genuinely contested election. Although all North Koreans over the age of 17 have the right to vote, all candidates for representative bodies are approved and presented by the Korean Workers' Party and run unopposed. All major decisions on policy are made by the Politburo, which are then handed over to the unicameral "Supreme People's Assembly" of 687 members for "rubber stamp" action. The Korean Workers' Party, with approximately 13 percent of the population at 3 million members, dominates the life of a nation of more than 22 million people.⁴⁶

While Koreans North and South share a common history, the paths they have taken in structuring their political institutions have diverged since the founding of the two Republics in 1948. In the South, the state has moved from the authoritarianism of an autocratic Syngman Rhee towards a pluralistic democracy. In the North, the state has moved from the authoritarianism of Marxism-Leninism towards a totalitarian police state based on the worship of its "Dear Leader," Kim Il Sung. While South Korea has twice peacefully transferred power, from Chun to Roh in 1988 and from Roh to Kim in 1992, North Korea's Kim Il Sung has been in power longer than any living head of government today, and the question of the stable transfer of power in North Korea may depend on the ability of Kim and his son Kim Jong Il to engineer a successful "dynastic succession." With Kim Il Sung already 81 years of age, the question of succession is an important one. However the issue is decided, one can be sure the means used to determine the transfer of power will not be a nationwide election between three very different candidates, each vying for popular support, as was the case in South Korea in December of 1992.

Thus South and North Korea confront each other over a significant political divide that has grown over the almost fifty years of a separated Korean peninsula. To successfully unify, the Koreans will have to transcend the political division and look to a shared history for common culture and values. A significant reduction in tension and a concomitant

increase in trust will be required before common bonds overcome deep differences. The political divergence of the two Koreas is a major road block on the path to unification.

C. SOCIAL

The division of the Korean peninsula has caused what the National Unification Board of South Korea calls a "social breakup and deepening heterogeneity."⁴⁷ Simply put, it implies that over the length of the division, North and South Koreans, by virtue of the different societies they have created, have grown apart in their customs, values, and beliefs. "If this national heterogeneity is left unchecked, the two societies will become so different from each other that the people of the two sides will feel hardly any brotherhood when they happen to meet."⁴⁸ Some scholars feel that social integration of the two societies will be the most difficult task of unification. Dr. Koo Young Nok, a political scientist at Seoul National University, has said "I dare say it will take decades, not years, trying to successfully bring the two sides together socially."⁴⁹

The social divergence of the two Koreas is a result of the different political and economic systems put in place in the two countries in 1948. Those systems have been examined in previous sections, and one can now look at the societies they have created.

Although both states share a common Confucian heritage, North and South Korea have developed that heritage in different manners. In the past (prior to both the division and Japanese occupation), the legitimacy of the state was derived from the Confucian concept of the sovereign as a paternal ruler, and in foreign relations Korea saw the world in terms of Confucian hierarchy, with China at the top. While both North and South Korea have now rejected the role of subordinate to any nation in their foreign relations, the Confucian heritage in the domestic context has undergone different interpretations in both states. North Korea is closer to the traditional concepts of Confucianism in its promotion of Kim Il Sung as the father, or "Great Leader," of the state and Kim Jong Il as the "Dear

Leader" and the son. However Kim Il Sung has written that "only a man who loves his both his country and his family can be called a truly dutiful son."⁵⁰ North Korea teaches its youth that the country comes before parents, and the state raises infants in nurseries, "teaching them to revere the country's 'fatherly leader.'"⁵¹ South Korea has added to its Confucian heritage the concepts of democracy and pluralism. While maintaining the traditional family relationships, South Koreans look less at the state in a paternalistic manner, but instead base the state's legitimacy on how well it performs in meeting the needs of the nation. Although both North and South Koreans share some of the same tendencies in respect for authority, hierarchy, and other traditional East Asian Confucian concepts, the Confucian heritage has evolved differently as their nations have changed.

In North Korea, agriculture accounts for approximately 25 percent of the GNP and 36 percent of the work force. This contrasts with South Korea, where agriculture accounts for just eight percent of the GNP and 21 percent of the work force.⁵² One in three North Koreans is tied to agriculture vice one in five South Koreans, despite the fact that North Korea has emphasized heavy industry and South Korea inherited the bulk of the farming industry at the division in 1945. South Korea is undergoing a massive shift of population from rural to urban communities. More than 65 percent of the population live in urban areas of 50,000 people or more, with one-quarter of the population in Seoul alone.⁵³ The percentage of people who actually make a living farming or fishing has declined from 60 percent in the 1960s to 14 percent in 1991.⁵⁴ It is estimated that the proportion of labor in North Korea involved in agriculture declined from 57 percent in 1965 to 37 percent in 1986.⁵⁵ While North Korea too has reduced the number of people employed in the agricultural sector, it has not undergone the massive urbanization that has occurred in South Korea.

Over time, this process of urbanization will profoundly compromise traditional values and affect political and economic institutions and the culture itself. Its influence is immediate in politics, but its impact far transcends imminent issues.⁵⁶

The changes in South Korean society brought on by urbanization may not be mirrored in the North. Problems that exist internally in South Korea between rural and urban populations, such as income disparity, differences in standard of living, access to higher education and government services, would exist at a significantly greater degree between North and South Koreans.

North Korea is a closed society, where only the privileged few have access to information not controlled by the government. There are no Western papers, and radios and televisions can not be tuned to foreign stations.⁵⁷ The highly collectivized and regimented society in the North contrasts markedly with the relatively freewheeling capitalistic society in the South. North Korean defectors reportedly have faced a hard time adjusting to what they see as individualism, social disorder, disrespect for authority, and materialistic consumerism in the South.⁵⁸ These North Korean views take on a whole new meaning when contrasted to a Western perspective of South Korea. "A sustained diet of totalitarian propaganda has rendered many North Koreans vulnerable to an acute state of shock on seeing a different version of reality...."⁵⁹ Illustrative of the degree of their isolation from the world is that many North Koreans are unaware that man has landed on moon, much less that it was done by Americans more than twenty years ago. When a visiting American journalist questioned students of Pyongyang High Middle School No. 1 about the nationality of the first man on the moon, he was met with silence, until finally one stated "it was Russian people, I think."⁶⁰ Lack of knowledge by high school students is not significant by itself, but since the American was given a tour of that particular high school as an example of North Korea's educational system, one could suspect such

ignorance of world events might exist throughout the nation. North Koreans would face a major readjustment of their world view should they ever be freed from their isolation.

South Korea has transformed itself from an agrarian subsistence level economy to a relatively prosperous industrializing society in a single generation. Opinion polls have shown that over 60 percent of South Korean households now consider themselves "middle class."⁶¹ There is what analysts call "a trend towards centrist moderation."⁶² Many South Koreans may feel that reconciliation rather than unification is the more practical goal for the time being.

Preoccupied with the democratic transition from decades of authoritarian rule, and basking in relative prosperity for the first time in history, they have grown conservative and inward-looking. The economic cost of Germany's integration has not been lost on many middle class people to whom improved living standards under a measure of political stability matter more than reunification.⁶³

As democracy gives greater voice to middle classes concerns, one may expect pressure for a "go slow" approach towards unification on the part of South Korea.

As democratic pluralism grows in South Korea, not only will the middle class be heard, but also other special interests as well. With a revision of an anti-labor union law in 1987, there was a substantial increase in the number of strikes, and by 1992 the average income of industrial workers had increased 50 percent.⁶⁴ Labor unions have clearly learned to flex their muscles, though granted it is at the forbearance of the government. Farmers, small businessmen, professionals, and other groups can all be expected to get involved in the "politics of distribution" that is common to modern democracies. Unification may prove harder to achieve if the South Korean government is forced to try to satisfy many competing interest groups.

The rise of a middle class and independent interest groups in South Korea is a phenomena that separates the social life of North and South. Even if one were to take membership in the Korean Workers' Party as roughly equivalent to a middle class status,

only approximately ten percent of the North Koreans qualify, verses the 60 percent of the South Koreans who feel that they are middle class. The North Korean government does not allow the existence of organizations not under the control of the Party.

Most Koreans today have known nothing but a divided Korea. As time goes on, those with divided families and memories of the North will pass away. "Koreans are one" has an emotional appeal, but it does not agree with the facts to a whole generation of North and South Koreans. It is an appeal that can not help but lose impact the longer the division is allowed to exist.

North Korea was the center of Korean Christianity before the arrival of communism.⁶⁵ Under the leadership of the Korean Workers' Party, all religious activity must be officially sanctioned. There was reportedly not a single Christian Church in North Korea until the late 1980s, when one Protestant and one Catholic Church were built in time for the 1989 World Festival of Students and Youth.⁶⁶ It is doubtless that many North Koreans, having grown up in a communist state, have a different view of religion from that of their southern neighbors. In South Korea, 23.4 percent of the population are Christian, and 42.6 percent profess adherence to some kind of religious community.⁶⁷

The social divergence between North and South Korea is the product of almost fifty years of a separate and isolated existence. Successful unification will require at least as much effort to ease the "social breakup and deepening heterogeneity" as there will be to bridge the political and economic divide.

D. MILITARY

The military situation on the Korean peninsula represents not so much a divergence of capability as a divergence of goals. Both nations dedicate a great deal of their human and economic resources to the defense establishment. In 1991, it is estimated that North Korea spent US\$5.45 billion, or more than 26 percent of its GNP, on defense, while South

Korea spent almost twice as much, US\$10.77 billion, which represents approximately four percent of its GNP.⁶⁸ North Korea has been described as one of the most militarized countries in the world, and indeed, the Korean peninsula is the location of some of the largest and most capable military forces extant. The principal problem for unification is that each of these military establishments view the other as the major threat.

The South Korean Ministry of National Defense states that its objectives are "to defend the nation from armed aggression by potential adversaries, support the nation's effort for peaceful unification, and contribute to the security and peace of the region."⁶⁹ To support peacetime deterrence and wartime preparedness, the South Koreans have created a capable military force. North Korea, according to both the Republic of Korea's Defense Ministry and the United States Defense Intelligence Agency, has developed its military forces with two goals in mind. First, to have sufficient combat power to prevent a reoccurrence of the devastation it suffered during the Korean War, and second, to structure its forces to allow for a quick and powerful surprise attack on the South to unify the peninsula by force, should favorable conditions ever arise. The South Korean Defense Ministry states "...despite its apparent attitude of reconciliation, North Korea has not, in reality, renounced its strategy to communize the South by force...."⁷⁰ Table 1 below shows the relative size of the two military establishments.

TABLE 1
MILITARY COMPARISON OF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA

	<u>North Korea</u>	<u>South Korea</u>
Defense Expenditures	US\$5.45 billion (1991)	US\$10.77 billion (1991)
Defense Expend (%GNP)	26%	3.8%
Population	23,760,000	44,908,4000
Total Armed Forces Active	1,132,000	633,000
Reserve	540,000	4,500,000
Army (Active)	1,000,000	520,000
Armored Vehicles	7,840	4,350
Artillery	8,300	4,500
Rocket Launchers	2,400	140
Surf to Surf Missiles	69	12
Navy	40,000	60,000 (25,000 Marines)
Submarines	26	4
Frigates/Destroyers	3	38
Patrol/Coastal Craft	379	81
Air Force	92,000	53,000
Bombers/Ground Attack	390	190
Fighters	342	96
Helicopters	50	20
Paramilitary		
Border/Coast Guard	115,000	3,500
Militia	3,800,000	3,500,000

Source: Military Balance 1992-1993, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, pp. 152-155.

While Table 1 provides an idea of the size of the forces that confront each other across the 38th parallel, it is difficult to capture the true state of the military confrontation by just examining numbers. Quality of equipment, training, morale, leadership, and employment strategy all play a role in determining the effectiveness of a combat force.

In terms of quality of equipment, South Korea has had access to western technology while North Korea has not. Western technology has generally been given credit for the combat success of the Israelis against the Syrians in Lebanon in 1983 and more recently for the success of United Nations coalition forces in Operation Desert Storm. While the North Koreans maintain a large inventory of equipment, most of it is based on Soviet designs

from the 1950s and 1960s.⁷¹ This is not to say that the North Koreans are completely outclassed, as they do operate Soviet designed MiG-29 aircraft, which are comparable with the American designed F-16s flown by the South Koreans. North Koreans charged with designing their forces must be concerned with the historical performance of their equipment verses the type of equipment held by South Korea. The question of how much quantity is required to offset a lack of quality is apparently answered conservatively in North Korea, which enjoys an almost two to one advantage in active duty ground forces and combat aircraft over South Korea.

North Korea, as part of its *juche* ideology, has developed its arms industry to the point where it is nearly self-sufficient. They produce all their own equipment with the exception of sophisticated aircraft, radars, and electronic equipment. The Defense Intelligence Agency estimates that the North has stockpiled enough ammunition, food, and oil in hardened underground bunkers to sustain combat for several months without outside aid.⁷² South Korea also has made a self-reliant defense posture a priority. Initiated under President Park as part of his development plans, and given even greater emphasis in the wake of President Carter's plan to remove American ground forces from Korea in the 1970s, South Korea's drive for military self-reliance reflects the South Korean government's need to "...conscientiously prepare...to meet the changes in the strategic environment on and around the peninsula."⁷³ South Korea also seeks to diversify its sources of military supplies. "To adjust to the expected changes in the international security situation, the ministry (Ministry of Defense) has made active efforts to strengthen our logistics cooperation with other nations."⁷⁴ Nevertheless, South Korea continues to rely on the United States as a counterweight to perceived North Korean military superiority. Indeed, "the combined defense system now serves as the cornerstone of the ROK defense posture."⁷⁵

It is difficult to quantify and compare the areas of training, leadership, and morale. One could assume that a soldier defending his homeland from an aggressor might have the superior motivation, but then the aggressor might sincerely believe he is liberating his "brother" from his imperialist oppressors. Leadership in a crisis also is an intangible. What American in April of 1861 would have thought that four years later it would be Ulysses S. Grant accepting the surrender of Robert E. Lee? The edge in training probably lies with South Korea, given that their defense expenditures per soldier are three and one-half times that of the North (granted that their equipment costs are higher as well), and South Korea's regular participation in military exercises such as Team Spirit and RIMPAC.⁷⁶

The major factor in the North-South military balance is that while the South is not convinced that North Korea has renounced the use of force to unify the peninsula, the North maintains most of its forces forward deployed along the "demilitarized zone" (DMZ) such that no major redeployment would be necessary to launch a surprise attack. Not only are the North Korean forces forward deployed, but they are highly mechanized with tanks and self propelled artillery, and supported by a considerable number of special forces troops. "The force structure shows a marked emphasis on mechanized and armored capabilities and is obviously aimed at strengthening the capacity for a full-scale blitzkrieg."⁷⁷ Since Seoul is considered vital to the defense of South Korea,⁷⁸ and is located only 25 miles from the DMZ, the South Koreans voice reasonable concern over the need for credible deterrence to prevent war.

Given the tremendous burden that both North and South bear in their military confrontation, it may be somewhat surprising that efforts at arms control have met with no success. South Korea desires to establish an atmosphere of confidence and trust before it is willing to reduce its forces, while North Korea, having made over two hundred fifty arms control proposals since 1948,⁷⁹ has appeared to use arms control talks as a method to

try to remove United States forces from South Korea. Confidence building through such actions as military to military exchanges, notification of maneuvers, and verification of agreements have been proposed by the South, but have been rejected. Perhaps overly simplified, the North desires reductions, then confidence, while the South desires confidence, then reductions. The South's strategy is more realistic in the Korean context of mutual distrust and hostile confrontation.

The inability of each state to successfully engage in arms control may have contributed to a possible North Korean nuclear weapon development program. Leaders of North Korea confront an increasingly potent South Korean nation, that not only has a defense treaty with the United States, the world's most powerful nation militarily, but has United States troops stationed within its borders. The United States has already demonstrated its willingness to use force on the Korean peninsula to defend its interests, and the North Koreans and United States do not maintain normal relations, despite periodic talks since 1987. Not only does the possible involvement of the United States in another Korean war give the South Koreans a tremendous conventional advantage, but always in minds of the North Koreans would be the threat of United States nuclear weapons.

Simple economics may also drive a North Korean nuclear weapons program. North Korea spends between 20 and 25 percent of its GNP on defense, verses the roughly five percent that the South spends. Still, the South's military budget is approximately twice that of the North, and the military balance on the peninsula is swinging in the South's favor.⁸⁰ North Korea is in an economic crisis. The country owes an estimated US\$6.8 billion to foreign creditors, and produces almost nothing of value to the rest of the world, with the exception of weapons. Former sources of aid have dried up. There are chronic food and power shortages, and diplomats who have seen their factories have described them as "primitive even by Soviet or East European standards."⁸¹ In short, North Korea is losing the conventional arms race. There are estimates that Pyongyang could redress a future

conventional arms imbalance by developing nuclear weapons for approximately 5 percent of their annual defense budget.⁸² Such a program would remove a tremendous burden from an all ready crippled economy.

In the past, a nuclear armed North Korea could have made use of an indigenous nuclear deterrent to wage and win a conventional war against a weaker South Korea. The American threat to blunt a Northern attack with nuclear weapons would be made hollow by the North's ability to respond in kind. Now the balance of forces has shifted, and South Korea and its allies have a reasonable chance of not only of turning back an attack by North Korea, but of actually being able to dictate the terms of peace without resorting to nuclear weapons. As long as the South remains covered by the US nuclear umbrella, any Northern attempts at "nuclear blackmail" would have to take into account the United States' response. In addition, the threat of US retaliation against North Korea in the event of the North's actual use of a nuclear weapon is much more credible than that which existed in Europe against the Soviets, as the US can destroy North Korea without fear of counterattack, subject only to moral constraints and world opinion. A South Korea with a US ally has a tremendous nuclear advantage. According to Lieutenant General Richard Hawely, commander of US forces in Japan, North Korean nuclear weapons "would not give them the capability to significantly alter the regional military balance."⁸³

The military divergence between the two Koreas is a both symptom of the continued division and a contributing cause to its perpetuation. Any plan for unification will have to break the two Koreas from their mutual distrust and the legacy of the bitter war fought more than forty years ago.

¹Lee, Charles S., North Korea: Country Background Report, (Washington, D. C., Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 1990), p. 9.

²Daniel Metraux, "The Economy," in South Korea: A Country Study, ed. by Andrea N'ales Savada and William Shaw, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), p. 141.

³The Economic Planning Board is an executive office headed by a deputy prime minister that performs government planning for economic growth and coordinates the economic functions of other ministries, including the Ministry of Finance. As first constituted under Park, it not only planned, but allocated resources and directed the flow of credit. See Metraux, p. 142.

⁴David I. Steinberg, The Republic of Korea: Economic Transformation and Social Change, (London, Westview Press, 1989), p. 130. Steinberg gives an excellent review of Park's sweeping changes to remake the Korean economy.

⁵Metraux, p. 143.

⁶Steinberg, p. 131.

⁷Ibid., p. 143.

⁸Metraux, p. 186.

⁹Metraux, p. 148.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 147.

¹¹Ed Paisley, "Kim the Broker," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Feb. 4, 1993), p. 37.

¹²"North Korea," The World Fact Book, (1992 ed.), p. 185.

¹³Lee, p. 9.

¹⁴Woo Sik Kee, "The Path Towards a Unified Korean Economy," Korea And World Affairs, Vol. 15, No. 1., (Spring 1991), pp. 25-26.

¹⁵Lee, p. 10.

¹⁶Kee, p. 26.

¹⁷See Kee, p. 26. and Lee, p. 10.

¹⁸See "North Korea," The World Fact Book, p. 186 and "South Korea," The World Fact Book, (1992 ed.), p. 187.

¹⁹Kee, p. 24.

²⁰National Unification Board, A Comparison of Unification Policies of South and North Korea, (Seoul, Korea, 1990), p. 19.

²¹Steinberg, p. 53.

²²See Steinberg, p. 53 and Woo Keun Han, The History of Korea, (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1974), pp. 508-509.

²³Han, p. 509.

²⁴Sung Joo Han, The Failure of Democracy in Korea, (Berkeley, Ca., University of California Press, 1974), p. 7.

²⁵Steinberg, p. 55.

²⁶Ibid., p. 56.

²⁷Ibid., p. 57.

²⁸The government puts the loss of life at approximately 200 people, while opponents claim more than 2,000. See Steinberg, p. 59.

²⁹Jae Hoon Shim, "Bitter Harvest," Far Eastern Economic Review, (May 27, 1993), p. 15.

³⁰Steinberg, p. 61.

³¹Ibid., p. 63.

³²Myung-Soon Shin, "Democracy in Korean Politics: Present and Past Aspects," Korea Observer, (Spring 1989), p. 427.

³³Ibid., p. 428.

³⁴Steinberg, p. 66.

³⁵Jin Park, "Political Change in South Korea; The Challenge of the Conservative Alliance," Asian Survey, (December 1990), p. 1155.

³⁶Ibid., p. 1154.

³⁷Jae Hoon Shim, "Civilian Mandate," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Jan. 7, 1993), p. 21.

³⁸James Sterngold, "Koreans in Watershed Vote: Is the New Democracy Real?," The New York Times, (Dec. 14, 1992), p. A7.

³⁹"North Korea," The World Fact Book, p. 186.

⁴⁰Bradley Martin, "Remaking Kim's Image," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Apr. 15, 1993), p. 40.

⁴¹Lee, p. 5.

⁴²David E. Sanger, "4 Score Years of the 'Great Leader,'" The New York Times, (May 11, 1992), p. A7.

⁴³See Martin, p. 37, Lee, p. 6, and Titus North, "The Kim Jong Il Succession Problem in the Context of the North Korean Political Structure," Korea And World Affairs, Vol. 16, No. 1, (Spring 1992), p. 54.

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- ⁴⁴North, p. 54.
- ⁴⁵See Lee, p. 29, and North, p. 54.
- ⁴⁶"North Korea," The World Fact Book, p. 186.
- ⁴⁷National Unification Board, p. 11.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 15.
- ⁴⁹Jae Hoon Shim, "Welcome to Reality," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 26, 1992), p. 60.
- ⁵⁰Martin, p. 37.
- ⁵¹Ibid., p. 38.
- ⁵²See "North Korea," The World Fact Book, p. 186 and "South Korea," The World Fact Book, p. 187.
- ⁵³Steinberg, p. 174.
- ⁵⁴Jae Hoon Shim, Robert Delfs, and Julian Baum, "Seeds of Despair," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 4, 1993), p. 21.
- ⁵⁵"Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)," Europa World Year Book 1991, (1991 ed.), p. 1559.
- ⁵⁶Steinberg, p. 174.
- ⁵⁷Andrew Mack, "Traveller's Tales," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Apr. 8, 1993), p. 30.
- ⁵⁸Jae Hoon Shim, "Southern Comfort," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Aug. 6, 1992), pp. 16-17.
- ⁵⁹Hoon, "Welcome to Reality," Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 60.
- ⁶⁰Sanger, The New York Times, p. A7.
- ⁶¹Jae Hoon Shim, "Smoke Without Fire," Far Eastern Economic Review, (May 30, 1991), p. 32.
- ⁶²Ibid., p. 32.
- ⁶³Jae Hoon Shim, "Slow Road to Unity," Far Eastern Economic Review, (May 9, 1991), p. 16.
- ⁶⁴Sterngold, The New York Times, p. A7.
- ⁶⁵Hoon, "Welcome to Reality," Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 61.
- ⁶⁶Martin, Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 37.

⁶⁷Donald M. Seekins, "The Society and Its Environment," in South Korea: A Country Study, ed. by Andrea Matles Savada and William Shaw, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), p. 127.

⁶⁸The Military Balance 1992-93, (London, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1992), pp. 152-155.

⁶⁹Defense White Paper 1992-1993, (Republic of Korea, Korea Institute for Defense Analysis (English Version), 1993), pp. 20-21.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 54.

⁷¹Defense Intelligence Agency, United States Department of Defense, North Korea: The Foundations for Military Strength, (Washington, D. C., 1991), p. 34.

⁷²Ibid., p. 34.

⁷³Defense White Paper 1992-1993, p. 117.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 179.

⁷⁵Ibid., p.135.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 106-107. Team Spirit is a combined arms exercise with the United States, while RIMPAC is a large scale naval exercise with the United States, Canada, Australia, and Japan. North Korea used to conduct exercises with the Soviet Union, but no more.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 56.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 101.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 82.

⁸⁰Andrew Mack, "North Korea and the Bomb," Foreign Policy, Issue 83, (Summer 1991), p. 94.

⁸¹Mark Clifford, "A Rough Fit," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 26, 1992), p. 57.

⁸²Mack, Foreign Policy, p. 94

⁸³Tai Ming Cheung, "Nuke Begets Nuke," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Jun. 4, 1992), p. 22.

III. TOWARD UNIFICATION: STATUS 1993

A. BASIS OF POLICIES

It is necessary to keep in mind some of the foundations of policy when examining the approaches of both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Republic of Korea towards the question of unification. The current constitution of the ROK (Article 3) stipulates that its territory consists of the entire Korean peninsula and its adjacent islands. Article 3 finds legislative expression in the national security law which "stipulates that the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) is an anti-state organization which illegally occupies a part of the territory of the Republic of Korea."¹ The government of South Korea interprets a 1948 United Nation's General Assembly resolution that stated that the Republic of Korea was the only legitimate government in the areas where UN observed elections were held to mean that the ROK is the only legitimate government on the Korean peninsula.² North Korea also claims authority over the entire peninsula and rejects the legitimacy of the ROK.

The belief that the ROK is the only legitimate government on the Korean peninsula was a foundation of South Korean foreign and unification policies until the early 1970s. It was the basis for a South Korean version of the West German "Hallstein Doctrine," a doctrine whereby the West German government claimed sole representation over the whole of German territory.

Given that South Korea was the only legal government in the Korean peninsula, the South Korean government broke off relations with those states which recognized North Korea since it would legitimize an anti-state organization as a state.³

South Korea's legal position reflected the bloc politics of the Cold War, with the South having diplomatic relations with the United States and other western powers and allies,

while the North enjoyed the support of the Soviet Union, China, and other socialist or Warsaw pact nations.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was nurtured by the Soviet Union under Stalin, and reflects some of the communist revolutionary ideology. The preamble to the platform of the Korean Workers' Party states

The immediate objective of the Korean Workers' Party is to achieve a complete victory of socialism in the northern half of the Republic and accomplish national liberation and people's democratic revolutionary goals across the country.⁴

The National Unification Board of South Korea feels that the North views unification in terms of "liberation," "struggle," and "revolution." The writings of Kim Il-Sung suggest that revolution in South Korea is necessary before "unification of the fatherland" can occur, which would complete the "national liberation and people's democratic revolution all across the country."⁵ MacDonald sums it up like this:

North Korea has envisaged a people's revolution in the south, perhaps assisted in the critical stage by the north Korean armed forces, as the stepping-stone to unification. At times, it has sought to promote the revolution with its own agents and strategies. South Korean policies have no revolutionary component.⁶

The stated basis of the North Korean unification policy is predicated on the success of a revolution in the South, and the elimination of the current form of the Republic of Korea's government. One does not have to look too hard to see the difficulties facing both sides in their attempts to reach agreements.

The relative success of North Korea in courting the non-aligned movement in the 1960s, where North Korea gained recognition from many third world nations and created the impression that they were less of a "puppet" of the Soviets than the ROK was of the United States, coupled with changes brought about by the reduction in tensions due to détente and the ROK's economic progress, caused South Korea to alter its position

somewhat. Modifications to South Korea's constitution since 1972 have called for the peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula.

implying that the South recognizes the North at least as an independent political entity. On July 7, 1988, the South went one step forward by declaring that the North is the South's partner in pursuing national reconciliation and unification.⁷

Finally, the historic "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and North" signed in Seoul on 13 December, 1991 by North and South Korean Prime Ministers, states in its preamble that the North and the South are "recognizing that their relations, not being a relationship between states, constitute a special interim relationship stemming from the process towards unification."⁸ It is clear that a way has been found to deal with the difficult issue of legitimacy and government to government relations.

In the past, North Korea has routinely referred to the ROK as a "fascist puppet (of the US) regime." Since the 13 December agreement, the North more routinely refers to the ROK government as the "South Korean authorities."⁹ Thus the 13 December accord represents a shift in attitude of both states, not just South Korea's.

With due regard to the position of each government on the question of the legitimacy of the other, one now has a context with which to examine the development their unification policies.

B. LIBERATION TO 1950

On August 15, 1948, the Republic of Korea was officially formed in southern Korea. It was a product of the failed attempts of the United States, the Soviet Union, and various Korean political factions to reach an agreement on how to end the administrative control of the United States in the South and the Soviet Union in the North and form a unified Korean nation. One month later, in September of 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea was proclaimed in northern Korea. Soviet and American troops were removed from their respective zones of occupation by June of 1949.

The creation of two separate Koreas was not the intention of the United States, but was instead the unfortunate result of conflicting priorities in the face of mounting challenges to America's post World War II plans from the Soviet Union. For example, at the same time American Chief of Staff George Marshall was telling the Russians that the United States had no plans for the military occupation of Korea in July of 1945, Stalin had very definite plans.

Basically, Stalin's intentions were to dominate Korea. Initially, he accepted Roosevelt's ideas for a four power trusteeship because he was confident that after the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the establishment of a Korean provisional government, Korea could be dominated by Soviet-trained Korean communists working with native communists and those who would be returning from China.¹⁰

Stalin's idea of domination was headed for conflict with the American goal, expressed December 1, 1943 at the Cairo Conference attended by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Chiang Kai-shek, that "in due course Korea shall become free and independent."¹¹

In the aftermath of World War II, the United States government demonstrated little concern toward United States policies with regard to the Korean peninsula directly. Instead, debates on United States' policy in East Asia were dominated by concerns over protecting America's position in Japan, increasing Soviet power, and support for the nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek in China. Any interest toward the situation on the Korean peninsula took place in the larger context of the United States' goals in Japan and China. Korea was a peripheral matter at best.

The United States was involved in Korea due to wartime agreements at the Cairo and Yalta conferences that specified that the Soviets would accept the surrender of Japanese forces north of the 38th parallel while US forces accepted their surrender south of the 38th parallel. It was at the Yalta Conference that Roosevelt also proposed the above mentioned

multipower trusteeship for the administration of Korea after the Japanese surrender. The Soviet Union was able to place troops in Korea even before the Japanese surrender, while US troops did not arrive until 8 September 1945. The result was that two separate administrative regions were created.

It is interesting to note that as early as 1944, the State Department had been considering the "nuts and bolts" of post-war occupation requirements, and on 29 March 1944, the Inter-Divisional Area Committee on the Far East

recommended that zonal military governments be avoided, that Korea be occupied "on the principle of centralized administration," and that such administration "be established as early as possible with all participating countries bearing a joint responsibility."¹²

This advice was not followed, and zonal military governments with separate administrations were established.

In December of 1945, Secretary of State Byrnes recommended an immediate end to the military division of Korea as a preliminary to establishing a four power trusteeship under the United Nations that would grant independence after a period of five years.¹³ The idea of delaying independence was met with wide opposition in Korea, and led to civil disorder in the South, where American control was not as tight as that of the Soviet's in the North. In January of 1946, representatives of the Soviet and American administrations met in Seoul to discuss interzonal problems. They established a joint commission to create a provisional Korean government. During this time frame there was constant turmoil between Korean rightists and leftists, Syngman Rhee was constantly agitating for immediate independence, and American-Soviet relations were beginning their post-war descent into confrontation.

The United States Army was a reluctant occupier of South Korea. General Hodge, the Commander of US forces in Korea, was given the task on the basis of being in command

of the troops closest to Korea at the time of the Japanese surrender.¹⁴ He was eager for an agreement to end the occupation so that he no longer would have to deal with the confused politics on the Korean peninsula. Not only was he forced to deal with the problems of administering the occupation, but also had to sort out the moderate Koreans from the rightists and leftists, and deal with Syngman Rhee, who he characterized as "a worse pain in the neck every day."¹⁵ At the same time, the Army questioned a commitment to South Korea that might weaken their ability to defend Japan, which was the real interest of US security policy.

While the Army was eager to withdraw from Korea, the State Department argued that despite the problems in reaching an agreement with the Soviets on unification, or actually because of the difficulties, the US had a stake in the survival of an indigenous government in the south. With the growing mistrust between the Soviets and the US, and lines beginning to be drawn in the Cold War, the US could not afford to appear soft towards the Soviets in Korea for fear of jeopardizing American interests throughout the world.

In June of 1947, when talks on unification by the Joint Commission in Seoul broke down over the issue of what Korean organizations (leftists, rightists, or those who opposed trusteeship) would be allowed to consult on the formation of a provisional government, the United States began a successful move to bring the issue to the United Nations.

At this point, an Ad Hoc Committee of the State-War-Navy-Coordinating Council stated that US credibility was an issue in Korea, and that every effort should be made to reduce US commitments to Korea "without abandoning Korea to Soviet domination." The Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded that Korea had little strategic value, and the Army felt that the US should maintain the status quo, but ultimately may have to accept a communist Korea.¹⁶

Against Soviet opposition, the UN proposed Korean elections to form a government. On 2 April, 1948, NSC 8 was approved by President Truman. It directed continued US support for South Korea, and expressed the US stake, in prestige and credibility, in the survival of a non-communist regime in the south. It also directed continued encouragement for UN interest and participation in the Korean problem and that the United States should continue to cooperate with the UN in regard to Korea.¹⁷ In May of 1948, Rhee's party won the elections, held only in the South. The American military government ended in August when Rhee became President. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established the following month.

The ROK was granted recognition by the United Nations as a legitimate government in December of 1948.¹⁸ This recognition is not surprising as the ROK was the product of the United Nations (UN), specifically the United Nations Committee for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK).¹⁹ UNCURK itself came about because the United States, frustrated by its inability to conclude an arrangement with the Soviets on Korean unification, successfully brought the matter up for United Nations consideration.

The UN supervised elections formed the basis for the ROK's first unification strategy. The policy was quite simple.

The South declared that the South Korean government was the sole legitimate government on the entire Korean peninsula, and retained the right to restore sovereignty in the North Korean area. It then called for the filling of 100 National assembly seats reserved for the North through "democratic elections."²⁰

North Korea maintained an aggressive guerrilla and propaganda campaign to destabilize the shaky South Korean government. The South's policy of unification through peaceful elections was briefly abandoned under the pressure of the Korean War, which began on 25 June, 1950. North Korea had embarked on a policy of unification of the peninsula by force.

C. 1950-1961

North Korea's attack failed to achieve its goal. The successful United Nations counterattack, which destroyed much of the North Korean army and saw some UN forces reach the Yalu river in November of 1950,²¹ caused the ROK to call for a military occupation of the North and a forced unification of the peninsula. The intervention of Chinese forces caused the retreat of UN forces and saw the eventual development of a stalemate along roughly the same pre-war border, the 38th parallel. Despite the objections of the ROK government, on 27 July, 1953, an armistice agreement was signed that called for both sides to pull their forces back behind a "demilitarized zone," which followed the battle line at the time of the armistice. President Syngman Rhee of the ROK, although pressured by the United States to accept the armistice, advocated the forceful unification of the peninsula.²² This policy became known as "unification through march to the North," and held that unification should be achieved not by elections in the North, but through a military thrust and direct control of northern areas by the ROK government.²³

At the Geneva conference on the Korean armistice in April-June 1954, the official position of the ROK was described by South Korean Foreign Minister Pyun Yung-tai in a proposed 14 point program for unification. Key elements included the holding of free elections in North and South Korea under UN supervision and in accordance with the constitution of the ROK, a UN conducted census to determine the correct number of legislators for proportional representation, guaranteed freedom of the press and movement for both candidates and UN observers, the retaining of the ROK constitution until it was revised by an all-Korea legislature, the withdrawal of Chinese forces one month prior to the election, and finally, the withdrawal of all UN forces once the unified government assumed control of the entire peninsula.²⁴ Needless to say, this policy of unification through general elections in the South and North under UN supervision, which was rejected before the war, was rejected after it as well.

North Korea, with the support of the Soviets and the Chinese, rejected any UN participation in the settlement of the Korea question on the grounds that the UN itself was a belligerent. The North stated that the problem was a Korean one, and should be left for the Koreans themselves to solve. The North proposed that first all foreign troops should be removed from Korean soil, and then elections held for a national conference where both sides would be equally represented. The conference would then work out a unified administration for Korea. The plan was rejected, as the ROK and the US rejected withdrawal of US forces as a precondition for unification.

North Korea for the remainder of the 1950s maintained the initiative on the unification issue. In 1955, it proposed a nonaggression pact, and in 1957 an international conference to solve the Korea question and mutual force reductions to 100,000 troops. North Korea also advocated cultural and economic exchanges.

During this same time frame, North Korea also denied the legitimacy of the ROK, referred to it as an imperialist puppet, called for popular revolution against it, and engaged in efforts to subvert it with its own agents. Up until 1955, the ROK was engaged in a guerrilla war with remnants of the North Korean army in south-central Korea.²⁵ During this period, North Korea was stronger economically and more stable politically, and the sincerity of their efforts is open to question. In any case, the government of Syngman Rhee rejected their proposals.

The collapse of the Rhee regime in April of 1960 saw an increase in North Korean efforts to achieve unification by taking advantage of the political upheavals in the South. The North's "peace offensive" caused many problems for the new government of South Korea. The government of Prime Minister Chang Myon, overseeing the birth of a fledgling liberal democracy in Korea, was beset by various proposals on unification from competing political parties and lacked sufficient political power to do anything other than continue the previous policy.²⁶

North Korea appears to have seen the collapse of the Rhee government as an opportunity to advance its unification agenda. On August 14, 1960, the North proposed a Confederal Republic of Koryo, which would consist of separate but equal states, and have a Supreme National Committee to handle common problems.²⁷ While not strong in detail, the plan was advanced as an interim measure and did succeed in adding to the confusion in South Korea. The military coup of General Park ended debate on the proposal.

D. 1961-1970

When General Park Chung Hee took over the reigns of government following a successful military coup in May of 1961, debate on the unification issue was to take a back seat to national development. This policy was described as "construction first, unification later."

It believed national strength should be bolstered first, before discussing unification, in order to overcome the weakened anti-Communist posture and the split in public opinion resulting from the sentimental debate on unification.²⁸

Due to President Park's desire to strengthen the ROK relative to the North, and the North's open hostility to his rule, this policy remained in effect throughout the 1960s.

In 1962, North Korea began a military build up and embarked on a period of military provocations. The sixties saw North Korea infiltrate armed guerrillas into the south in large numbers and even make an commando raid on the South Korean executive mansion, the "Chong Wa Dae," or "Blue House." These missions, probably designed to foster instability and create unrest, instead caused President Park to hold the reigns of power all the more tightly, increasing ROK pressure on dissidents. The missions also failed to provoke a wide outburst of revolutionary feeling among the people of South Korea.

The rapid growth of the South Korean economy, the changing nature of the Cold War caused by détente and US-China rapprochement, and the shock of US withdrawal from

Vietnam and the "Nixon Doctrine" of non-employment of US forces in other nations battles, allowed and encouraged the ROK to modify its unification policy from that of the 1960s.

E. 1970-1979

On August 15, 1970, President Park proposed that both North and South engage in a "peaceful competition" to determine which system could best meet the needs of Korean. He stressed that the North should abandon any attempt to communize the South by force of arms as a first step toward peaceful unification, and implied that the South was now ready to more aggressively pursue unification. At the very least, the proposal was significant because it "tacitly recognized the existence of two political entities on the Korean peninsula."²⁹

The ROK proposed a South-North Red Cross conference on August 12, 1971, to discuss the issue of separated families, and North Korea agreed. In 1972, secret meetings between both governments were held, culminating in a South-North Joint Communiqué issued July 4, 1972. The Communiqué called for each government to pledge themselves to (1) peaceful unification, (2) no foreign interference, and (3) independence. It also called for the establishment of a South-North Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to discuss unification measures and the creation of a Seoul-Pyongyang "hot line."³⁰ Talks were held at both the Red Cross and SNCC levels, but no significant agreements were reached. By the end of 1973, largely in reaction to the authoritarian "Yushin" constitution installed by President Park in late 1972, North Korea had withdrawn from the talks.

North Korea also objected to the ROK's new "Special Foreign Policy for Peace and Unification," announced June 23, 1973. South Korea's policy had changed toward a more moderate position. The South said it would not oppose the North's joining any international organization (specifically the UN), and that it would seek an "open door" with

all countries regardless of ideology. The DPRK denounced the policy as a ploy to prolong the division, and suspended all North-South dialogues while demanding a retraction of the policy.³¹

North Korea changed tactics, along with South Korea, when it agreed to the inter-Korean talks and the July 4 Declaration described earlier. North Korea made several proposals which the South viewed as unreasonable, and different interpretations of what was actually agreed to complicated talks. The North wanted the South to repeal anti-communist and national security laws, release political prisoners, and allow the participation in the talks of non-governmental groups, especially groups either hostile to the ROK government or sympathetic to the North. The last demand was a rather blatant attempt to minimize the role of the ROK government, which the North regarded as illegitimate, and to provide a larger forum for the North's propaganda (or initiatives, depending on one's viewpoint). There was also the always present demand for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea. The South refused to yield, and as described before, the talks were suspended by the end of 1973.

South Korea maintained the initiative by proposing a non-aggression agreement in January 1974 and an economic consultative organization for inter-Korean cooperation in June of 1978. In January of 1979, President Park proposed a meeting of North and South Korean authorities at "any time, any place, and at any level."³² North Korea in the meanwhile called for negotiation of a peace treaty with the United States in March of 1974, and in January of 1976 sent letters to prominent South Koreans proposing a "political conference." From 1976 on, the North Koreans refused to acknowledge test calls on the recently established hot line and maintained a steady stream of hostile propaganda.³³

South Korea described its three principles of peaceful unification in August of 1974. These three principles form the basis for all the South's subsequent unification policies, and are: 1) that peace should be firmly established on the Korean peninsula and, to this

end, a mutual non-aggression pact should be concluded between the South and the North; 2) the South and the North should open their doors to each other and that mutual trust should be restored between them and, for this purpose, the two sides should sincerely carry through dialogues and multi-purpose exchanges; and 3) that free general elections should be held throughout Korea under fair election management and supervision in order to accomplish unification.³⁴ This policy is what the National Unification Board of South Korea calls "peace first, unification later."³⁵

It was during the 1970s that the initiative on the unification issue began to shift from North Korea to South Korea. The North increasingly had to reject South Korean proposals vice suffer the rebuff of their own. An example was the North's hostile reaction to President Park's policy declaration in June of 1973. North Korean was opposed to the simultaneous entrance of both Koreas into the United Nations, and took a dim view of attempts to somewhat "normalize" relations between the two governments. Where South Korea's position appears to have moderated to the point where it publicly accepts the reality of a hostile government to the North, North Korea's policy on unification is pinned to the hope of eventual revolution in the South. As South Korea grew and prospered throughout the 1970s, that hope became fainter and fainter.

South Korea's evolving foreign policy reflected not only the increase in confidence brought about by successful economic programs, but also, in the wake of America's experience in Vietnam and the Nixon doctrine, a belief that some effort must be made to moderate tensions because the United States might not be a reliable ally if tensions should escalate into war. It was hoped that some progress in the reduction of tensions might be possible in light of Soviet-American détente and Sino-American rapprochement. With the tensions easing between the outside actors who played such a large role in the division of the peninsula, South Koreans desired to work out a solution to the high level of mistrust on the peninsula.

F. 1979-1988

The political turmoil that followed the assassination of President Park Chung Hee in October of 1979 once again saw North Korea take the initiative. After having rejected talks in the late 1970s, they proposed ministerial level talks and their own plan for unification to the shaky government in the South. North Korea once again made an attempt to promote its Confederal Republic of Koryo plan, first proposed in 1960. Now the plan was more detailed, with a ten point plan to govern interchange and cooperation, and calling for a combined national army, in addition to regional forces.³⁶ The North also proposed a meeting of Prime Ministers. Working level talks were held, but no definite agreements were reached. When General Chun Doo Hwan firmly established himself in control in late 1980, North Korea broke off the talks.³⁷

Under President Chun, the ROK's unification policy changed in tone from the policy under President Park. It reflected South Korea's growing self-confidence and represented a maturation of the ROK's foreign policy. Gone was President Park's "peaceful competition," replaced by "mutual trust and cooperation." President Park's policy intrinsically viewed North Korea as threat, and the competition was to determine which system was better for Korea. It implied that one system would triumph and destroy the other. Under President Chun it evolved to the point where South Korea implicitly recognized an equal status between both states, and that both had to cooperate to build a unified Korea. South Korea had rebuilt its economy, stabilized its government, increased its military strength, and had a strong ally in the United States under President Reagan. The ROK was poised to be a strong and confident negotiator with the North.

South Korea began its "new look" when, on January 12, 1981, President Chun proposed mutual visits of top leaders of both sides to discuss ways to prevent war and to resume the suspended dialogue on unification.³⁸ This was an early manifestation of the "step by step" path towards unification that the ROK was embarking on. Clearly, the first

step was to prevent war, and then resume talking about unification. The DPRK rejected calls for talks.

On January 22, 1982, President Chun articulated the "Formula for National Reconciliation and Democratic Unification." It described three principles for unification: national self-determination, democracy, and peace. It also proposed a process of unification: 1) form a Consulting Conference for National Reunification with representatives from the South and the North, 2) draft a unified constitution, 3) confirm the draft constitution through a national referendum, and 4) accomplish unification by forming a unified government through general elections held under terms of the unified constitution. Finally, the formula called for a Provisional Agreement on Basic Relations to end mutual mistrust and foster national reconciliation.³⁹

The January blueprint was followed by a list of twenty inter-Korean projects (various initiatives in cultural, economic, and even military matters) that could be performed before unification to foster trust and cooperation. President Chun's plan "was the most detailed and realistic that the South Korean government had put forward."⁴⁰

Under President Chun's policy, North-South talks were held and limited exchanges of separated families and cultural groups were conducted, but no major progress was made on unification. Talks were derailed by North Korean terrorism (October of 1983 Rangoon bombing that killed several senior members of the ROK government), US-ROK joint military exercises (Team Spirit), and acrimonious debate on joint teams and sponsorship for sporting events and the 1988 Olympic games.

The political upheaval in the spring of 1987 that led to the election of Roh Tae Woo as president also provided an impetus for progress on unification issue. Critics of the government's policies such as Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung gave voice to the feelings of many Koreans, particularly the student demonstrators who had played a role in forcing the revision of the constitution that led to the first ballot box selection of a president

since 1960. The rise of democratic pluralism represented by the transition from Chun to Roh also gave Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung powerful positions in the National Assembly. The government of Roh Tae Woo was forced to liberalize its stated unification policies in order to deal with agitation for greater progress on that issue.

G. 1988-PRESENT

1988 was a year of dramatic change for the Republic of Korea, and may come to be seen as the year that saw the beginning of the end for North Korea. The successful conclusion of the Seoul Olympic games, with the participation of the Soviet Union and Eastern European nations, greatly increased South Korea's international standing. The peaceful transition of power to Roh Tae Woo following contested elections was a first for South Korea, and was a hopeful step towards genuine political democracy. President Roh's conduct contrasted markedly with North Korea's belligerency and stubbornness. The year saw the formal announcement of the northern policy, a unification policy that had its genesis under President Chun and that led to eventual diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China, and United Nations membership for both Koreas.

Just as world events in the early 1970s made possible changes in President Park's policies, so too did world events in the mid to late 1980s create a favorable atmosphere for President Roh's initiatives. The participation in 1988 Seoul Olympic games by the Soviet Union was made possible by a reluctance on their part to allow a trend to develop in the Olympic games. The American boycott in 1980 was followed by a Soviet boycott in 1984. If the Olympic games were going to survive as an international competition, both the Soviets and the Americans were going to have to make some effort to depoliticize them. North Korea failed to convince the Soviet Union and other fraternal socialist nations to place solidarity above the Olympic spirit. Internal changes in the Soviet Union brought about by Gorbachev, such as *perestroika* and *glasnost*, which South Korea had no control

over, caused North Korea and the Soviet Union to drift apart, and provided an opportunity for South Korea to implement its northern policy with regard to the Soviets. On a larger scale, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the end of the Cold War in 1989 removed the superpower conflict from the Korean peninsula, strengthening the position of South Korea while weakening that of North Korea. While North Korea was forced to react to a series of setbacks, for example recalling its citizens from the Soviet Union and turning toward China to make up for lost support, South Korea saw each of these events on the world stage as an opportunity to advance its unification policy. South Korea could proclaim that North Korea was bucking the tide of history, and that the North too must adopt a policy of "openness" if it wishes to survive. North Korea saw the events in the late 1980s as proof of the errors of Gorbachev's policies, and responded by maintaining a hard-line on questions of "openness."

A month before the start of the Seoul Olympic games, President Roh Tae Woo expanded on the policy of his predecessor when he issued the "Special Declaration for National Self-Esteem, Unification and Prosperity," known as the July 7 Special Declaration (made July 7, 1988). The July 7 Declaration represents the culmination of the policy shift initiated under President Chun, and included the following points. Visits between the people of North and South Korea would be actively promoted, to include politicians, businessmen, journalists, religious leaders, academicians, and students, as well as overseas Koreans. Before the successful conclusion of North-South Red Cross talks, the South would actively assist separated families and promote exchanges of correspondence and visits between them. The South would allow trade between North and South, and consider it as internal trade. The South desired the economic development of the entire national economy to improve the quality of life for all Koreans, and therefore would not oppose the conduct of peaceful trade with North Korea by nations friendly with the South. The South was willing to help North Korea make a "positive contribution" to the

international community, and hoped that representatives of both sides would cooperate in international forums to pursue the common interests of all Koreans. And last, the South was willing to assist the North in efforts to improve relations with Japan and the United States, while at the same time it would seek improved relations with the Soviet Union and China.

President Roh's development of this new initiative was a major breakthrough for the ROK. It presented North Korea with a more sophisticated and subtle approach from their rivals in the South, and it laid the groundwork for South Korea's successful northern policy. It made possible the normalization of diplomatic relations with a number of East European countries, and was a major step towards eventual diplomatic relations with North Korea's traditional allies, the Soviet Union and China.

President Roh continued to refine South Korea's proposal for unification that he inherited from President Chun. On September 11, 1989, he announced the "Korean National Community Unification Formula." In it he described principles of unification, the process of unification, organizations and roles for an interim unification system, procedures for the establishment of a unified state, and the future image of a unified Korea.

The three principles for unification described by President Roh are independence, peace, and democracy. These are consistent with President Chun's three principles listed in January of 1982, and are also mirrored in the 4 July 1972 Joint Communiqué. It was a good place for President Roh to begin, because North Korea had already agreed to those three principles. The continuing problem, however, was one of interpretation. The North and South have different views, for example, on whether or not "independence" should imply the withdrawal of all US forces from South Korea.

President Roh proposed a phased process of unification consisting of first, a North-South summit; second, adoption of a "national community;" third, formation of a Korean commonwealth; fourth, development of a common national life and a restoration of national

homogeneity; fifth, formation of common social, cultural, and economic communities based on mutual recognition, nonaggression, coexistence, and prosperity; and finally, sixth, political integration and final unification.⁴¹

The term "national community" refers to the development as much as possible of the common bonds that link northern and southern Koreans. It is clear that the South believes that successful unification will not occur until the social, economic, and cultural differences that have developed between the North and South since the division of the peninsula are minimized or done away with. If that can be done, it is hoped successful political unification will be possible.

The Korean Commonwealth would be an interim step towards final unification. It would consist of equal representation from both sides, and would exist to deal with unification issues and foster a spirit of trust and cooperation. Its major task would be to draft a unified constitution and develop specific steps to implement unification.

President Roh's vision of a unified Korea was specific.

The Korean people are one. Therefore, a unified Korea must be a single nation. This is what the Korean people long for. No system for bringing the two parts of Korea together will accomplish genuine unification so long as it is aimed at perpetuating two states with differing ideologies and political systems.⁴²

President Roh was specific as well to the type of government, suggesting a bicameral parliament with an upper house based on regional representation (recognizing North Korea's smaller population), and a lower house with representation based on population.⁴³ Finally, President Roh stated that a unified Korea would be "a democratic nation that guarantees the human rights of every individual."⁴⁴

In the 1980s, South Korea "took the unification ball and ran with it." North Korea failed to make significantly new proposals, and was hamstrung by poor timing and a lack of consistency. In one case, the North called for talks between the North, South, and

United States shortly after its agents had tried to kill Chun and his ministers with a bomb in Rangoon in October 1983.⁴⁵ Needless to say, they were rejected.

The North spent the later half of the 1980s attempting to counter South Korean successes in diplomacy, while trying to regain the initiative. For example, after having suspended inter-Korean talks earlier in the year due to the annual Team Spirit exercise, on June 17, 1986 the North proposed a US-ROK-DPRK meeting to discuss military affairs. In January of 1987 the North proposed a high level meeting between North and South, and in July of that year a multi-national disarmament conference. Throughout the remainder of 1987 and for most of 1988, the North kept up a barrage of proposals for talks and meetings that had little hope of success. Given the inability of North and South to agree on even relatively benign matters, such as whether or not some events of the 1988 Olympic games could be held in the North, it is doubtful a meeting on unification or arms control would have born fruit. The North did not show much Olympic spirit when it had its agents blow up KAL Flight 858 on November 30, 1987.⁴⁶

Diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China, and UN membership are powerful examples of the strength of South Korea's unification strategy. Since the Korean War, both the North and South insisted on either a "quid pro quo" type of recognition, or no recognition. The Soviet Union and China would recognize the South if the United States would recognize the North. Under President Roh, the Soviet Union formally recognized the Republic of Korea on 30 September 1990, and China established relations on 24 August, 1992. There was no "quid pro quo," as although the US and DPRK established informal talks in Beijing in 1987, they have yet to establish normal relations. South Korea, on the strength of its economy and foreign policy, had successfully sidestepped a significant stumbling block in its foreign relations. Similarly, North Korea had always opposed UN membership for both Koreas on the grounds it would legitimize and prolong the division. Throughout 1990, South Korea made efforts to convince North

Korea to accept simultaneous but separate entry into the United Nations. After fruitless negotiations, South Korea applied for membership on its own. When China and the Soviet Union informed the North that they would not block its application, and Japan made simultaneous entry a precondition for normalizing Tokyo-Pyongyang relations, a reluctant North Korea announced on 28 May 1991 that it would seek a separate seat in the United Nations. Both Nations officially became UN members on 17 September, 1991.⁴⁷

Of course, UN membership is not without its advantages to North Korea, but it is illustrative of a significant change in the North's policies in response to South Korean initiatives and pressures.

More recently, talks between North and South Korea have been dominated not by specific issues of unification, but by questions concerning the nuclear development program of North Korea. It was hoped that the "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and North" and the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," also agreed to during December 1991 talks, would lead to a decrease of tensions and allow the Koreans to move forward towards negotiating plans for eventual unification. Instead North and South Korea, somewhat in keeping with their previous history, have been unable to agree on how to implement the provision for inspections of each others nuclear sites as specified in paragraph four of the Joint Declaration on denuclearization.⁴⁸ North Korea's decision to withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and not to allow International Atomic Energy Agency inspections of certain sites in North Korea has called into question its sincerity and have not only caused concern in South Korea, but the international community as well.⁴⁹ Its conditional reversal of that much criticized decision, on June 11, 1993⁵⁰, was welcomed but the fundamental problem remains unresolved as of this writing. While Japan, China, Russia, and the United States have all stated that Korean unification is

a "Korean problem," the issue of nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia is certain to keep the world's attention on the Korean peninsula.

While some Korean scholars have questioned the emphasis given the nuclear question because it has come to overshadow what they see as the larger, and for Korea, the more important question, of unification, there can be no doubt that lingering suspicion and inability to resolve the question has fostered an atmosphere of mistrust and poisoned unification talks.⁵¹ For President Kim Young Sam, it presents a major obstacle in his efforts to expand on his predecessor's success in dealing with the North.

In summary, North-South talks continue on unification, humanitarian concerns, trade, and the reduction of tensions, but there is a fundamental difference in the approach to unification of the North and South. As MacDonald says, the South's is an "evolutionary approach through smaller confidence-building steps to larger ones, in contrast to the north Korean proposal for unification by a sort of once-and-for-all leap of faith."⁵² These differences in approach have yet to achieve either parties goals, it is yet to be seen if either will be sufficiently flexible to allow a real breakthrough in relations.

¹Hak-Joon Kim, "Korean Unification: A Seoul Perspective," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 15., No. 1, (Spring 1991), p. 8.

²Ibid., p. 9.

³Ibid., p. 9.

⁴National Unification Board, A Comparison of the Unification Policies of South and North Korea, (Seoul, Korea, 1990), p. 38.

⁵Ibid., p. 43.

⁶Donald MacDonald, The Koreans, Contemporary Politics and Society, (London, Westview Press, 1988), p. 263.

⁷Kim, p. 9.

⁸"Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and North, Put into the Force at the Sixth Round of the Inter-Korean High-Level Talks, Pyongyang, February 19, 1992," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 16, No. 1, (Spring, 1992), p. 145.

⁹See almost any Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report (FBIS) for East Asia in 1992. For example, "South Criticized for Lack of Independence," FBIS, East Asia, 8 Oct. 1992, p. 8.

¹⁰Donald S. Zagoria, Russian Policy Towards Korea: An Historical and Geopolitical Analysis, (Paper prepared for the US.-Korea Bilateral Forum, Berkeley, California, Aug. 26-29, 1985), p. 11.

¹¹Albert Craig, John K. Fairbank, and Edwin O. Reischauer, East Asia: Tradition and Transformation, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1989), p. 913.

¹²William Whitney Stueck Jr., The Road to Confrontation, (Chapel Hill, N. C., University of North Carolina Press, 1981), p. 21.

¹³Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁸Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1974), p. 504.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 504.

²⁰National Unification Board, p. 78.

²¹Han, p. 506.

²²Bingham, Conroy, and Ikle, A History of Asia, (Boston, Allyn, and Bacon, Inc., 1974), p. 665. The ROK never actually signed the armistice agreement.

²³National Unification Board, p. 78.

²⁴Ibid., p. 79.

²⁵MacDonald, p. 266.

²⁶See Sung-Joo Han, The Failure of Democracy in South Korea, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974) for a description of the confused situation confronting the Chang government.

²⁷MacDonald, p. 267.

²⁸National Unification Board, p. 81.

²⁹Ibid., p. 82.

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- ³⁰MacDonald, p. 267.
- ³¹National Unification Board, p. 83.
- ³²MacDonald, p. 268.
- ³³Ibid., p. 267.
- ³⁴National Unification Board, p. 85.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 84.
- ³⁶MacDonald, p. 268.
- ³⁷National Unification Board, p. 85.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 86.
- ³⁹Ibid., p. 87.
- ⁴⁰MacDonald, p. 268.
- ⁴¹National Unification Board, p. 126.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 130.
- ⁴³Ibid., p. 131.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 131.
- ⁴⁵MacDonald, p. 269.
- ⁴⁶National Unification Board, p. 62.
- ⁴⁷Sung-Joo Han, "The Republic of Korea as a UN Member," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 15, No. 3, (Fall 1991), p. 407.
- ⁴⁸"Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula: To Enter into Force as of February 19, 1992," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 16, No. 1, (Spring, 1992), p. 149.
- ⁴⁹The UN Security Council voted 11 May 1993, 13-0, with China and Pakistan abstaining, to call on North Korea to permit international inspections and remain in the non-proliferation treaty.
- ⁵⁰See Douglas Jehl, "U.S. and North Korea Press to Resolve Nuclear Dispute," The New York Times, (Jun. 11, 1993).
- ⁵¹See, for example, Taewoo Kim, "South Korea's Nuclear Dilemmas," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 16, No. 2, (Summer, 1992), pp. 250-294. Kim argues that South Korea has overlooked, and perhaps sacrificed,

its long term national interest in both the Joint Denuclearization statement and in holding progress with North Korea hostage to the resolution of the nuclear question.

⁵²MacDonald, p. 269.

IV. ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

With due regard for the difficulties in bringing the two Koreas together and the history of attempts in the past, it is possible to develop a broad sense of where the two Koreas may be headed in their quest for unification. While it is difficult to predict with certainty what a unified Korea may look like, or indeed how and when such a unification will take place, it is necessary to examine what the nature of various types of unified Korean states may be in order to estimate what course the United States should pursue in order to safeguard its interests in Northeast Asia.

Possible scenarios for Korean unification can be broken down into five general categories. After highlighting them, each will be examined more closely. The first two are what might be called the null category, that is, unification does not occur. Scenario one involves no unification, status quo. North and South Korea would maintain their current state of tense relations, and no matter how the Kim Il Sung succession problem is resolved, both states continue to see the other as a threat and would be unable to reduce the level of tension between them. Scenario two involves no unification, but accepts peacefully divergent paths. The North Korean state may renounce the use of force to unify the peninsula, and major efforts are made to reduce tensions. Both North and South would engage in a form of Korean détente, but neither government would be willing to risk the major changes in their respective social and political systems that unification might bring. As a result, both states would continue their separate development along different paths.

The last three scenarios all assume that unification does occur. The first of these is unification with the creation of a new Korea. It would represent a successful merging of the two states to form a new Korea. It may have characteristics of both states, but could

not be characterized as just a continuation of one or the other. The last two scenarios would reflect the possibility of absorption, that is, one state's political, social, military, and economic structure would expand to encompass the whole of the Korean peninsula. The two possibilities are either the ROK absorbs the North, or the DPRK absorbs the South.

A. NO UNIFICATION (STATUS QUO)

North and South Korea have failed to overcome their differences despite over forty years of proposals and counter-proposals. One could point out that even with the significant changes in the world that have taken place since the formal establishment of separate regimes in 1948, North and South Korea have yet to go beyond the distrust and hostility that has been allowed to exist between them and take a concrete step toward unification. Certainly the agreements reached in December of 1991, especially the pledge of reconciliation and nonaggression, represented progress, but the two states have yet to even open their borders to reunite separated families, much less resolve the questions of arms reductions and nuclear weapon programs. How far will each state go to improve relations? One answer is "not very." One possible outcome is the perpetuation of hostile, mistrustful regimes on the Korean peninsula into the next century.

In this scenario, North Korea would maintain its defense posture and do little to dispel South Korean fears that it is willing to attempt unification of the peninsula by force. Whatever the outcome to the succession question following the passing from the scene of Kim Il Sung, the North Korean leaders may maintain their claim to be the sole legitimate government on the peninsula, and at the same time maintain the firm grip that the North Korean state has on the society. The question that must be faced in this scenario is whether or not North Korea can continue to support such a policy.

The North Korean government has demonstrated its ability to exercise tight control of its people. While one can not discount the possibility of dissent on the part of the North

Korean people, or even more likely on the part of the North Korean power elite, there is also the possibility that policies and structures developed under the Korean Worker's Party and Kim Il Sung have been successfully institutionalized and have taken a firm hold in North Korea. Even if Kim Jong Il does not succeed his father in the long run, that does not mean that the North Korean people will reject the entire legacy of Kim Il Sung and *juche*. North Korea did not endorse Gorbachev's reforms of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and it may successfully resist the efforts of South Korea, Japan, and the United States to open its society for fear of North Korea going the way of the Soviet Union.

There is concern that the North Korea economy can no longer support the *juche* ideology, and that in fact it is on the verge of collapse.¹ There are reports of food shortages and chronic power outages.² North Korean efforts at economic reform, however, may solve these problems without necessarily causing a modification of its relations towards South Korea. In December of 1992, Kim Il Sung replaced Prime Minister Yon Hyong Muk with Moscow-trained Kang Song San reportedly in an effort to push economic reform.³ It is important to note that North Korean problems with foreign investment, trade, and international relations are more related to questions about their possible nuclear program than any specific concern about other unification issues. North Korea may be able to parlay concerns about their nuclear program into needed economic assistance, and the Koreans would not necessarily be any closer to unification.

Faced with such a situation, South Korea would be required to abandon its stated goal of peaceful unification of the peninsula under liberal democratic regime in order to achieve unification with the North. The prospects for South Koreans unilaterally yielding their hard won rights gained under an increasingly democratic system of government in order to achieve unification with the North are remote. These conditions would lead to the continuation of the status quo.

B. NO UNIFICATION (DIVERGENT PATHS)

There also exists the possibility that unification may not occur, but nevertheless the two Koreas still manage to create a "Korean détente" that allows for peaceful coexistence. In this scenario, both Koreas would reject the use of force to unify the peninsula, and embark on projects that would increase the level of trust and foster cooperation. At the same time, however, neither state would be willing to surrender its vision of what a unified Korea should be

North Korea may solve its economic problems and successfully resolve questions concerning its military posture. North and South Korea could expand economic contacts, negotiate and carry out successful arms control, and in general remove the barriers that exist between them. This scenario would assume, however, that neither state so desires unification that it is willing to negotiate itself out of existence. If both North and South Korea are both rigidly committed to their different systems, a unification in the sense described by former President Roh, that is, that genuine unification is impossible if it perpetuates two states with different ideologies and political systems, would be impossible to achieve. More likely in such a case would be an eventual unification of the type described by Kim Il Sung's Confederal Republic of Koryo, where each Korea would be a separate but equal state and have a Supreme National Assembly to deal with common problems. Such a possibility is discussed below. In this case, if neither state desires to subordinate its interest to a Supreme National Assembly, and such a Confederal Republic does not meet the goals of either the North or the South, then its prospects are not good.

As in the first scenario, North Korea could take steps to ensure its continued survival, ranging from economic reform to possible possession of nuclear weapons. The difference in this case, however, is that once North Korean leadership is confident of the survival of their society, both North and South Korea may take concrete actions to reduce the tensions on the peninsula. If the day should come that neither nation views the other as a threat, it

would mean that great progress had been made, but it does not guarantee that unification will occur. The problems of divergence in the two Koreas would still exist, and there is the constant question of who will continue to wield power in a unified Korea "Neither of the two Korean power hierarchies wants to concede first place to the other, even if it could be assured of fair treatment, and even if the ideological differences could be removed."⁴ The future of the Korean peninsula may see a reduction of tension, but no unification.

The scenario of two independent sovereign Korean republics maintaining amicable bilateral relations is the one that is judged most likely by some Korean scholars.⁵ Dr. Sang Woo Rhee concludes

At least for the coming decade, the two Koreas will remain as sovereign states engaged in economic competition to win political hegemony in order to dictate the form of national unification that will come in the next century.⁶

It may take sometime to determine the outcome of any competition to win political hegemony. The peninsula may be divided well into the next century.

C. UNIFICATION (NEW KOREA)

There is a possibility that if peaceful unification is carried out successfully, a "new Korea" will be formed. This new Korea could take many forms, but its distinguishing characteristic would be that it is not just a continuation of either the Southern or Northern regimes expanded over the entire peninsula. As mentioned above, unification might occur that had elements of North Korea's confederal republic approach, or it might develop into a true federal or a unitary system, where North and South were no longer sovereign states. Unification is the stated goal of both governments, and if a situation of peaceful coexistence could be established, it is not impossible that inter-Korean relations could be developed to the point that a peaceful unification could occur. A path roughly similar to what occurred in the United States, when independent crown colonies progressed through the Articles of

Confederation to the United States Constitution, might be followed by the two Korean governments. While the early United States and the Korean peninsula are hardly analogous, both Korean states would have to undergo the same political process of gradually diminishing sovereignty that the American colonies underwent in order to form a "more perfect union."

Though at first glance such a path appears to mirror the proposals of North Korea for unification, an important prerequisite is left off of the North's confederation proposals. That prerequisite is peaceful coexistence. Without trust and confidence in place, it is not reasonable to expect either North or South to yield their sovereignty. If a state of peaceful coexistence can be achieved, however, this process would be the next logical step toward unification, unless absorption of one state by the other occurs first.

D. UNIFICATION BY ABSORPTION

The final route that unification could follow would be that of unification by absorption. In this case, the political, social, and economic structure of one state would be installed throughout the peninsula. In such a case, either the ROK or the DPRK survives, but not both. Absorption of one state by another could take several forms. It could be the result of internal collapse of the North or the South, caused either by subterfuge or the failure of the respective government to deal effectively with political, social, or economic crises as they develop. Such a collapse would leave the other government as the only functioning state on the peninsula and in position to pick up the pieces and declare a "victory" for its unification policy. Absorption might also result from a decisive military victory of the sort that was attempted by both sides during the Korean War. Absorption implies that one state ceases to exist, and that the remaining nation carries on its as the sole survivor, administering to regions formally controlled by its rival.

Unification by absorption has historical precedence. The best examples of unification by internal collapse being the cases of Yemen and of Germany in 1989-90. A recent example of unification by military force is the North Vietnamese victory over South Vietnam in 1975. One can examine the potential for such a unification from both North and South Korea's viewpoint.

North Korea does not desire to achieve unification by being absorbed by the South. Its statement of its unification goals, however, make clear that it does not rule out "absorbing" South Korea, should favorable circumstances ever arise. Chapter III described the basis for North Korea's unification policies, but it bears repeating that North Korea sees successful unification possible only when a "people's democratic revolution" occurs in the South and destroys the current "fascist regime." The North Korean armed forces are poised to aid that revolution should it ever occur.

The probability that the North Korean government can absorb the South either by war, subterfuge, or internal collapse, has over the past twenty years diminished considerably. In practically all measures of national power, particularly military and economic strength, the South Koreans, coupled with a superpower ally, have a significant advantage. The increasing standards of living in South Korea and the movement toward genuine pluralistic democracy do not provide fertile ground for "people's revolution." The political legitimacy of the government of Kim Young Sam is the highest of any South Korean government. Certainly South Korea will endure more violent student protests, but now the students generally graduate and look for jobs, instead of ending up shot or thrown into jail for long stretches of time. Kim Young Sam has shown himself to be responsive to the protests of reformers, students included (recall his observance of the anniversary of the Kwangju uprising), and responsive, effective, and democratic governments are not easy targets for revolution.

The shifting of the power balance between North and South Korea has presented North Korea with a difficult situation. North Korea fears that the South, supported by the United States, instead of undergoing a people's revolution, may instead absorb the North, not only destroying their socialist society, but removing from positions of power the members of the Korean Worker's Party. In order to survive, North Korea must attempt to maintain the status quo, or at least not continue to fall behind the South at a steadily increasing rate. They can see that the reforms initiated by Gorbachev failed to protect the Soviet Union, but that the reforms initiated in China by Deng Xiaoping have made China a major economic force in East Asia without yet costing the Chinese Communist Party its hold on power. The lesson to be learned at first glance appears to be that the party can afford to loosen its control of the economy, but must retain a firm grip on the political life of the nation.

North Korea has sufficient military power, more than sufficient if it is augmented by nuclear weapons, to prevent South Korea from forcibly unifying the peninsula. What must cause the most concern in Pyongyang, all rhetoric aside, is that the Soviet Union and the communist regimes of Eastern Europe all collapsed from within. None succumbed to an invasion from the outside, unless that invasion was in the form of western television and culture. North Korea maintains tight control of its population, and there is very little incentive to loosen it. This situation will make it all the more difficult for North and South Korea to develop the wide-ranging ties that the South hopes will increase the sense of "Korean community" and facilitate a reduction of tension.

South Korea may be characterized as the "reluctant absorber." If reports on North Korea's economy are accurate, it may very well be on the verge of collapse.⁷ South Korea does not desire unification to occur with the added burdens of refugees and a requirement for massive aid to the North. South Koreans have made an extensive study of the problems encountered during West Germany's fairly rapid absorption of East Germany,

and the conclusions reached have not encouraged South Korea to adopt a policy of unification through absorption of the North.

The economic burden that would fall on South Korea in the wake of a collapse by and subsequent absorption of North Korea would be formidable. Even without a total collapse of the North Korean economy, there are estimates that unification could cost the South as much as US\$200 billion to US\$500 billion over five to ten years.⁸ Recognizing that the smaller figure represents approximately two-thirds of South Korea's 1991 GDP (Gross Domestic Product), one can get a feel for the tremendous costs involved. The contrast with the German situation is useful and provides a cautionary note to South Korea. For example, West Germany at the time of unification had the second largest current accounts surplus in the world at US\$290.5 billion. In the aftermath of unification, Germany had a current account deficit of US\$20.5 billion. In 1989, South Korea enjoyed a current account surplus of US\$33.7 billion, but it has run deficits in both 1990 and 1991. South Korea simply does not have the capital that Germany had to facilitate unification.⁹ The problems of inflation and wage policy for former East German workers that have caused Germany such concern would be even worse for South Korea, given the relative scale of the two German economies relative to the two Korean economies. For example, West Germany had three times the per capita GNP of East Germany, and roughly three times the population. South Korea has five times North Korea's per capita GNP with a population only twice as large. This implies that the burden on an individual South Korean to pay for unification would be higher than that born by the more wealthy West Germans.¹⁰

With the example of Germany as a guide, almost none of North Korea's industries would be competitive in a unified economy. Former communist bloc diplomats have said that many of North Korea's factories are similar to those that existed in East Germany.¹¹ While North Korea's low wages make investments attractive in labor intensive industries, a large amount of capital will be required to upgrade outdated technology and inadequate

infrastructure. In addition, the pressures of unification may place an upward pressure on North Korean wages similar to what has happened in Eastern Germany, reducing the attractiveness of investing there and further adding to the cost of unification.

The South Koreans make a very good case that although they desire unification, they do not desire to absorb the North. A gradual program of economic integration provides both a better chance at managing economic union and also at increasing the level of trust and the number of contacts among all sectors of Northern and Southern societies. Absorption would short circuit an evolution towards the "Korean national community" that South Korea sees as essential to peacefully unify the peninsula.

¹See, for example, Jae Hoon Shim, "The Price of Unity," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar 26, 1992), pp. 54-56.

²David E. Sanger, "North Korea Is Seeking Investors Who Look Beyond the Bleakness," The New York Times, (May 21, 1992), p. A4.

³"Prime Minister Replaced," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Dec 24-31, 1992), p. 12..

⁴Donald MacDonald, The Koreans, Contemporary Politics and Society, (London, Westview Press, 1988), p. 273.

⁵See Sang-Woo Rhee, "Inter-Korean Relations in the 21st Century," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. XVI., No. 1, (Spring 1992), pp. 68-81.

⁶Rhee, p. 81.

⁷See Sanger, p. A4, Rhee, p. 78, Hoon, p. 54, and Mark Clifford, "A Rough Fit," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar 26, 1992), p. 57.

⁸Hoon, p. 54.

⁹Mark Clifford, "Expensive Embraces," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar 26, 1992), p. 54.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 55.

¹¹Clifford, "A Rough Fit," p. 58.

V. REGIONAL INTERESTS

The problems of Korean unification do not occur in a vacuum. It is often pointed out that the Korean peninsula is the one location of earth where the interest of four of the world's major powers collide: Japan, China, Russia, and the United States. United States policy toward Korean unification and its aftermath must take into consideration the policies and interests of Japan, China, and Russia, as well as its own and those of the Koreans, if it hopes to be successful in promoting US interests and preventing conflict. The division of Korea was the result of the US-Soviet conflict. With that conflict now history, what role might the Northeast Asian powers play in Korea? Korean unification will occur in a climate of declining Russian power in the Far East, rising economic power in China, and a Japan that it still searching for a role to play in post-Cold War Asia. The regional powers, as well as the United States, will play a major role in determining the course of post-unified Korea Northeast Asia.

A. JAPAN

It is common sense that each nation should desire good relations with its closest neighbors, and Japan's closest neighbor is Korea. Paradoxically, while Japan may be free to assertively pursue its own interests in distant regions of the world, it must tread lightly in its own backyard. The past history of relations between Japan, Korea, China, and Russia weigh heavily on the future of the region.

Japan's policy toward the Korean peninsula will play a crucial role for the future prospects for peace and stability in all of Northeast Asia. What is Japan's policy toward the two Koreas, and what role might Japan play in easing tensions and in the aftermath of possible reunification?

Japan and Korea have a long history of relations. They both share a Sinic orientated culture, and have strong Confucian societies. It was via the Korean peninsula that Chinese culture was brought to Japan in the 7th Century. Today, there are almost 700,000 ethnic Koreans living in Japan.¹ Despite the cultural ties that exist between the two nations, relations between Koreans and Japanese cannot be characterized as one of "mutual affection."

The history of Japanese-Korean relations was characterized by the Japanese Emperor Hirohito as "unfortunate."² It is a history marred by invasion, war, and colonial rule. In the 13th Century, Korea twice served as a staging area for Mongol invasions of Japan. Koreans, under Mongol domination, supplied manpower and ships in support of these efforts. In the 16th Century, the Japanese General Hideyoshi invaded Korea in hopes of continuing on to China, and while in Korea he devastated the countryside and left behind a legacy of "undying hatred" for the Japanese.³ It was the Japanese who ended Korea's isolation in the 19th Century by using the western technique of "gunboat diplomacy" to obtain treaty rights in Korea similar to those the western powers had wrested from China. Twice Japan went to war in large part to ensure a dominating position on the Korean peninsula, once with China in 1894 and again with Russia in 1905. In 1910, Japan annexed Korea, but not before a Korean nationalist could assassinate the first prime minister of Japan, Ito Hirobumi. Japan's colonial rule lasted until 1945, and it was not until 1965 that formal relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea were initiated.

With the signing of the Basic Treaty establishing diplomatic recognition between Japan and the Republic of Korea in 1965, a new era opened in the relations between the two countries. Although the colonial period still left a bitter taste in the mouths of the Koreans, an agreement was reached on Japanese reparations, and the way was cleared for increasing contacts between the two governments. Political contacts increased throughout the sixties and seventies, Japan supported Korea's position at international conferences, and it

promised not to initiate any political moves toward North Korea without consulting with the South.⁴ Even in this more conciliatory atmosphere, it still was not until 1983 that Prime Minister Nakasone became the first Japanese head of state to visit Korea. President Chun Doo Hwan became the first Korean head of state to visit Japan a year later.⁵ More recently, Japan and the Republic of Korea have moved in the direction of more frequent high level talks. Japanese Prime Minister Miyazawa and South Korean President Roh Tae Woo met on 8 November 1992 in Kyoto for an informal exchange of views. Reporter James Sterngold of the New York Times described the meeting:

It has taken them 47 years and the end of the Cold War to warm relations to the point where they too approach a level of cooperation and dialogue similar to that of one-time antagonists like France and Germany. The leaders said they would adopt the French and German model of holding two informal summit meetings a year.⁶

In contrast to the Republic of Korea, the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK), as a legacy of the Cold War in Asia, maintains no formal diplomatic relations with Japan. Since 1945, Japan and North Korea have maintained loose, unofficial contact. In the 1950s, many expatriate Koreans, some 70,000, left Japan for North Korea.⁷ Approximately 200,000 of the ethnic Koreans living in Japan are affiliated or sympathetic with a group called Chosen Soren, a pro-DPRK organization for Korean residents of Japan.⁸ Since 1990, partially in response to the rapprochement between the ROK and the Soviet Union and the subsequent loss of support from the Soviets, the DPRK has made steady efforts to improve relations with Japan. The DPRK seeks much needed capital and technological assistance from Japan, and the eventual normalization of relations.⁹ Efforts at normalization have been stymied by the inability of the two governments to resolve questions concerning North Korea's nuclear program and money (US\$593 million) owed by North Korea to Japanese companies.¹⁰

Economic relations between the ROK and Japan have become a dominant issue between the two nations. Two-way trade grew from US\$221 million in 1965 to US\$16.3 billion in 1986.¹¹ Japan and Korea are each others second largest trading partner, after the United States and Europe, and together account for over 10% of the worlds Gross National Product (GNP).¹² Mirroring the Japanese post world war economic growth, the ROK adopted a highly successful export orientated growth strategy in the 1960s. The ROK's impressive growth (approximately five percent of GNP annually in 1992)¹³ has not removed all friction with Japan, however. Japanese and ROK trade relations are strained by a persistent trade deficit run by the ROK with Japan, and by what Korea sees as restrictive Japanese policies on technology transfers.¹⁴

The Japanese view North Korea as a potential market, but as mentioned previously, economic relations between the two nations are hampered by the DRPK's poor debt record (there are 96 western banks with claims outstanding against the DPRK)¹⁵ and what Japan sees as the larger issue of the North Korean nuclear program. The DPRK is actively courting the Japanese. In September of 1990, Shin Kanemaru of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party visited Kim Il Sung (not as a representative of the Japanese government) and the two issued a joint statement calling for talks to establish diplomatic relations as soon as possible.¹⁶ In May of 1992 the North, through the North-East Asia Economic Forum, hosted 145 Japanese, Chinese, American, and South Korean academics and business executives on a tour of their nation.¹⁷ North Korea hopes for considerable aid from Japan, in the guise of war reparations, if relations can be normalized. Small scale business contacts already are in evidence, as the best hotel in Pyongyang is equipped with Toshiba television sets, Hitachi elevators, and Oki telephones.¹⁸ Although total North Korean foreign trade is relatively small, US\$4.6 billion in all of 1990 as compared to US\$40.18 billion in February through April of 1993 for South Korea, Japan is the North's largest trading partner, followed by China, the former Soviet Union, and South Korea.¹⁹

When reviewing the history of relations between Japan and the Korean peninsula, one factor appears to dominate or preface any discussion about the nature of those relations and where they may be headed. Their "unfortunate" history has created an animosity that will color relations between the two people for some time to come. Polls have shown that South Koreans see Japan as one of their least liked countries, second only to North Korea. Similar polls in Japan have shown that South Korea holds a like position, behind only the Russia and North Korea in the minds of the Japanese.²⁰ "In both halves of the peninsula Japan bashing is a national sport."²¹ Koreans are resentful of their colonial past and the Japanese attempts to subordinate Korean culture to their own, while Japanese often feel that the Koreans are ungrateful for the contributions that the Japanese made toward modernizing Korean society. One can only speculate if, and how long it will be before, such deeply held emotions will fade away and allow for closer relations between the two people. If history is any guide, such as in Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia, and the Middle East, it will be quite some time. President Chun Doo Hwan stated in the 1980s "Korea and Japan are the closest neighbors, and Japan is our ally. The time has come when we should forget the unfortunate history of the past."²²

President Chun was taking liberties by using the word "ally," as Japan and South Korea maintain no formal security ties, and Japan is reluctant even to refer to the United States as an ally. He was referring, perhaps, to the "harmony of interests" that the two nations share in Northeast Asia. This "harmony of interests" could provide a foundation for closer cooperation and better relations in the future.

Japan's interests in the Korean peninsula are continued peace, stability, and the development of long-term commercial prospects.²³ In 1969, Japanese Prime Minister Sato made the first official statement of Japanese concern when he said, under US pressure, that the security of the Republic of Korea was "essential to Japan's own security."²⁴ South Koreans question whether Japan has a commitment to the ROK per se, or was just

responding to the US pressure under the constraints of the Cold War. Realizing that perhaps Japan has more of an interest in peace on the peninsula than the security of the ROK, South Koreans view with skepticism any Japanese contacts with the DPRK.²⁵ Not desiring a costly war in Northeast Asia, Japan seeks to ease hostility between the two Koreas.

During the Cold War, Japan was almost committed "de facto" to the support of the ROK by Article 6 of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan. Article 6 granted the United States use of Japanese facilities for "the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East." If the United States decided to commit its forces to the defense of South Korea, Japan would have played a supporting role. The Japanese government's policy of following the US lead in foreign policy and maintaining a low profile in international affairs, combined with the antagonism of a hostile communist regime in North Korea, provided no impetus for Japan to seek a larger role in the affairs of the Korean peninsula.

In the early 1980s, Japan adopted what has come to be called a "comprehensive security strategy."²⁶ Driven by Japan's postwar experiences, the Nixon doctrine and American disengagement from Asia, Japan's growing economic power, and a perceived decline in US power overall, the strategy includes economic assistance, defense forces, and diplomatic initiatives. It reflects the belief that economic power will supersede military power in the global security environment. Utilizing this concept of comprehensive security, Japan can now hope to influence Korean affairs and reduce tensions in Northeast Asia. Kenzo Oshima, Political Minister at the Japanese embassy in Washington D.C., stated in November of 1991 "Japan's wealth will give it a large economic/financial role in the area and, thus, a large political role. Japan will stress peace and security in Asia."²⁷ Japan certainly envisions playing a larger role in Asia.

Japan's concerns on the Korean peninsula in the 1990s and beyond can be listed as the possibility of war between North and South Korea, and the military and economic unknowns of a unified Korea. More specifically, Japan could be concerned about a militarily strong and hostile Korean nation, possibly armed with nuclear weapons, and the rise of a formidable competitor in international trade. However likely or unlikely these events may be, it is the task of Japan's comprehensive security strategy to reduce the likelihood of any of the above happening.

Japan's position as a growing economic power that lacks commensurate political and military power, and the burden of history, handicap the potential of the comprehensive security policy to play a constructive role on the Korean peninsula. Although Japan conducts limited trade with North Korea, and holds out the promise of aid and increased investment, relations between Japan and North Korea are held hostage to both ROK and US concerns, and the inability to resolve questions concerning the North's nuclear program. Japan's "carrot" is as yet insufficient to influence the DPRK's behavior, and Japan has no "stick" to fall back on. This deadlock is not necessarily unfavorable to Japan, as the status quo is not inimical to its interests (peace, stability, and trade), and any accommodations with North Korea could cause friction with both the ROK and the United States. Nevertheless, if Japan's strategy results in increased trade and investment in North Korea for Japanese companies, it may contribute to a reduction of tensions and lead to an increased openness in the North, perhaps easing the way for Korean reunification.

Another view of Japanese investment in North Korea is that it would be done purely for self-serving reasons, and that it would merely prop up the North Korean regime, delaying the process of unification. While it is sure that there would be Japanese self-interest involved, there also exists a "harmony of interests" with South Korea. The ROK expresses the desire for peaceful unification of the peninsula, but at the same time fears "absorbing" an economic basket case in the North.²⁸ If Japanese investment makes the

North more stable, and the Japanese bear some of the cost of unification, that would appear to make the prospects of peaceful unification more promising and in South Korea's interest.

The prospects for Japan's comprehensive security strategy in dealing with the ROK suffer from some of the same limitations as when dealing with the North, though not to the same degree. Japan and South Korea eye each other warily as economic competitors. The problems of trade and technology transfer have already been discussed, and South Korea desires Japan to behave more in line with its declared policy by offering economic assistance and investment, addressing trade imbalances, and bearing more of the cost of defense in Northeast Asia.²⁹ It is interesting to note that South Korea, because of its defense burden deterring North Korea, voices many of the same complaints that the United States does about Japan being a "free rider" in Northeast Asia and receiving an unfair competitive advantage in international trade.³⁰

The cautious improvement in diplomatic relations between the ROK and Japan has been noted previously, with a meeting between Prime Minister Miyazawa and President Roh Tae Woo as recently as November of 1992. Additionally, President Roh invited the Japanese Emperor to visit Korea, and plans were expected to be formulated after the Korean December 1992 Presidential election.³¹ It would be the first ever visit by a Japanese Emperor to Korea and a pivotal event in the history of relations between the two peoples.

Despite the fact that the United States maintains close security ties with both the ROK and Japan, and both played important roles in Asia in the US policy of containment during the Cold War, Japan and South Korea maintain no direct, formal security ties. This is a result of the historical animosity between the two nations, domestic political considerations, a security perception gap, and the lack of clear and long term direction or consensus on Japanese security policy.³²

The historical animosity needs no further elaboration, and it is a major factor in the domestic political considerations that inhibit closer security ties between South Korea and Japan. South Koreans are reluctant to enter into formal relations with the military that belongs to the nation that was once their colonial oppressor. If formal security arrangements led to Japanese Self-Defense Forces exercising and being seen on Korean soil, who could predict the emotional response of the Korean populace? On the Japanese side, the political opposition, the Komeito, the Socialists, and the Democratic Socialists, have only recently toned down their opposition to the U.S.-Japan security treaty,³³ and were vocal in their displeasure with the Peace Keeping Operations bill. It is doubtful the LDP could, even if it wanted to, reach a security accord with South Korea.

There is also a perception gap between South Korea and Japan on what constitutes the biggest security threat in the region. Not surprisingly, the ROK is concerned about North Korea's military threat on its northern border. Japan, however, views the military power of Russia in the Far East as a bigger concern. If there is no common security threat, there is little basis for mutual security treaties and cooperation.

Finally, it is difficult to develop mutually supportive defense and security arrangements if one does not have a framework for cooperation. Japan is still in the process of defining its post Cold War role in Asia, and policies that will be in effect for "the foreseeable future" do not fill neighboring countries with a great deal of confidence in the rapidly changing post-1989 world.

There do exist informal security relations between Japan and the ROK. Article 6 of the U.S.-Japan security treaty was described earlier, and the two nations are linked by their mutual bilateral security relations with the United States. It has been pointed out that US forces in Korea contribute to Japan's security by preventing the potential dominance of the peninsula by a hostile power, and also by deterring war. At the same time, US forces in Japan enhance the capability of the United States to defend Korea, should it so chose.³⁴

The United States has placed itself in middle of security relations between the ROK and Japan.

Due to the perception of the security problems confronting both Japan and the ROK, each has adopted a different force structure that may in fact be complimentary and provide a possible avenue of increased cooperation. The ROK is concerned with a land assault from the DPRK, while Japan has focused on maritime capability to protect the home islands and the sea lines of communications (SLOCS). As the threat of North Korean invasion fades due to the increasing military capability of the South, South Korea may turn its attention to the protection of the SLOCS vital to its export based economy.³⁵ Japanese and Korean warships conduct "passing exercises" regularly in the Sea of Japan, both navies participated in the US lead RIMPAC exercises in 1990 and 1992, and the Japanese and Koreans share strategic intelligence and provide logistical support for each other during exercises.³⁶

Thus, while relations are not as close as those between Germany and France, Japan and South Korea are not perched on the edge of a precipice, awaiting some provocation to launch them into open hostility, held back only by the good offices of the United States. While the prospects for further security cooperation are not good, they can not be ruled out completely.

The major question confronting Japanese policy towards the Korean peninsula is how to deal with attempts at unification, what role does Japan wish to play, and what does Japan want a post unification Northeast Asia to look like?

Many Koreans feel that Japan does not wish to see a unified Korea.³⁷ It is felt that Japan would be militarily threatened by a unified Korea, and therefore has no desire to see it happen, regardless of what the Japanese diplomats say. This might be true if one of four things happened: unification occurred under a hostile North Korean regime, or after unification Korea maintained a formidable military force, or a unified Korea developed

nuclear weapons, or finally, unification occurred despite active and open Japanese opposition.

In the first case, it is increasingly doubtful that the North Korean regime will be able to take over the South, instead the concern is that it does not collapse before the South can handle the burden of restoring its economy and feeding its people.³⁸ It is more likely that a unified Korea will either be dominated by elements of the ROK or at least politically neutral.

In the second case, there is little incentive for a unified Korea to maintain a large military establishment. It would be a needless burden on an economy struggling to cope with unification, and in any case, would be unable to cope with a hostile China, Russia, or Japan. Since the ROK now maintains relations based on mutual self-interest with all these nations, a large military would seem superfluous. It must be noted that a resurgent military in Japan, capable of projecting power onto the Korean peninsula, would be a development of world wide interest, and Korea would likely find allies throughout Asia, notably China and Russia.

In the third case, a nuclear armed Korea would be a threat to Japan, and leave Japan as the only non-nuclear power in Northeast Asia. However, Japan is working with the ROK and the United States to see that does not happen, and the ROK has already renounced the right to produce nuclear weapons, as has the North, in their 31 December 1991 Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Japan is cooperating with the ROK in holding a hard line with the DPRK on the issue of nuclear site inspections.

In the last case, while it may be true that Japan is not enthusiastic about reunification, it does not actively oppose it.³⁹ As mentioned earlier, the status quo is not hurtful to Japan interests, but then neither is the peaceful unification of the peninsula. If Japan actively opposed unification, they would raise the level enmity between themselves and the Koreans, and that would appear not to be in their self interest. Mr. Oshima has said "as for

reunification, Japan does not oppose it at all, and feels it must be achieved by direct North-South talks."⁴⁰ Perhaps the Koreans flatter themselves in thinking Japan plays such close attention to their problems.⁴¹

One additional consideration is that the Japanese might fear the economic competition of a unified Korea. The economic threat to a Japan from a unified Korea would not be a large one.

The South Korean economy today is one-fourteenth the size of Japan's. Adding North Korea's mismanaged economy does not significantly alter that ratio; the additional small weight of the DPRK is almost lost in the rounding off.⁴²

The ROK would also have to shoulder the costs of unification for quite some time, so the threat to Japan's economic well-being is minimal.

The Japanese comprehensive security policy, while limited in its ability to directly influence events on the Korean peninsula, is ideally suited for situation Japan finds itself in Northeast Asia. Without stepping on its neighbor's toes, Japan is moving forward and into position to take advantage of events as they unfold on the Korean peninsula. Consider the words of Ho-Joong Choi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Reunification of the ROK in November of 1991:

Japan, too, should continue to play the role of good neighbor in maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. Furthermore, we expect Japan to play a positive role in the process of Korean unification.⁴³

Japan will continue to let the ROK take the lead on the unification issue, and allow the United States to wield the "big stick" with regard to the DPRK. As Japan searches for its role in the post Cold War world, Korea will provide a continuing challenge for its foreign and security policies.

In a post unification Northeast Asia, Japan is ready to play a major role in the economic reconstruction of northern Korea. Korea will need Japan's massive economic

might to ease the burden of unification, and Japan's policy of peace and stability through comprehensive security will face a real test in emotional area of Japanese-Korean relations. If Japan meets the challenge, the ensuing trust and goodwill may be enough to end the long history of bitter relations and usher in a new era of peace and economic growth in Northeast Asia.

B. CHINA

China's relations with the Korean peninsula are as old as the history of Korea itself. It was during the fourth and third centuries B.C. when the first Korean state, now known as Ancient Choson, came into being. Ancient Choson had extensive contact with the inhabitants of the various states in Northern China. The importance of China in Korean history would be hard to overestimate. As Han says of Ancient Choson:

It was during this period that Korea began to be influenced significantly by events in China. Since this Chinese influence was to become all-pervasive and was to continue down to modern times, it will frequently be necessary, in order to understand Korean history, to refer to China.⁴⁴

Historically, China has always played a dominant role on the Korean peninsula. It was not until the late 19th century that China, unable to cope with Czarist Russia and a modernizing Meiji Japan, lost its place as the dominant foreign power in Korea.

The history of relations between Korea and China is characterized for the most part as that of a king (China) and a loyal vassal (Korea). While the Korean dynasties such as Koryo and Yi did assert their independence at times, they often accepted the status as vassal of China in exchange for the benefits of peace and trade. Unfortunately for the Koreans, their faith in China collided in the late 19th century with the reality of China's weakness relative to Japan, and Japan defeated China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895. The Treaty of Shimonoseki brought the war to a close in April of 1895 and replaced China with

Japan as the dominant foreign power in Korea. China, beset by problems of her own, was not to play a major role in Korea again until 1950.

The founding of the People's Republic of China in October of 1949 was seen by many in the United States as a major setback for American policy in the Far East. Fear of Soviet domination of a communist China, coupled with American support for the defeated Nationalist Chinese, who were now confined to the Island of Taiwan, lead to a break in relations between the communist Chinese and the United States. This was the situation when the Korean War began in June of 1950.

China's decision to intervene in the war on the side of North Korea in October of 1950, preventing unification of the peninsula under the UN forces and bringing her into direct combat with United States forces was the most significant action China had taken towards Korea until August of 1992. While scholars are still debating about how involved China was in North Korea's decision to attack the South, China's decision to intervene appears to have been driven by fear of a US military presence on their border, which coupled with American support for Taiwan and hostility towards their regime, was not a risk the Chinese leadership desired to take.⁴⁵ A 2 October 1950 cable from Mao the Stalin stated

If we allow the United States to occupy all of Korea, Korean revolutionary power will suffer a fundamental defeat, and the American invaders will run more rampant, and have negative effects for the entire Far East.⁴⁶

In a follow up cable on 13 October to Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, then in Moscow, Mao concluded

In summation, we think we should enter the war, we must enter the war. Entering the war will have great benefits, and the harm inflicted by not entering the war would be great.⁴⁷

China's intervention created almost four decades of hostility between it and South Korea, and also made China, along with the Soviet Union, a major backer of North Korea. North Korea skillfully played off the Soviet and Chinese, taking advantage of each for aid and trade, but always maintaining a sufficient distance to prevent becoming completely beholden to one or the other. In the wake of the Sino-Soviet split, North Korea gained even more leverage over its allies, as neither the Soviets nor the Chinese wished to see North Korea become too close to its rival. North Korea was important to China because it bordered on China's industrial heartland and was a "buffer state" to prevent the encirclement of China by the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, China and South Korea had no formal relations.

The dramatic changes in China under Deng Xiaoping coupled with the northern politics of South Korea led to a major change in China-Korean relations. On 24 August 1992, China and South Korea established formal diplomatic ties. The establishment of ties reflected the growing economic relations between both countries. In October of 1990 Seoul and Peking set up trade missions in each others capitols. While China maintained its ties with North Korea, trade between the much more wealthy South and China increased significantly. China is likely to become South Korea's fourth largest export market, and that market grew 71.4 percent in 1991 and 164.7 percent in 1992 to a value of US\$2.7 billion.⁴⁸ South Korea has become a major source for investment in China, some US\$205 million worth,⁴⁹ and it may be, to paraphrase the pragmatic Deng Xiaoping's earlier comments on the color of cats, that it does not matter whether a Korean is from the North or the South, as long as he invests in China. South Korea, not North Korea, has the capital to invest.

Economics will play a major role in the relations between the Koreans and China. Daewoo, one of South Korea's largest *chaebol*, has plans to invest as much as US\$1.1 billion in China, the Russian Far East, and North Korea by 1995.⁵⁰ Both China and South

Korea desire peace and stability in Northeast Asia to foster the growth of their economies, and the evidence shows that they are working together for mutual economic benefit. China's role as one of the only countries to have any influence in Pyongyang will be very important in providing for the peace and stability that both the Koreas and China need for economic growth.

Some scholars feel that the closer relations between China and South Korea have actually increased the tensions on the Korean peninsula. Suh Dae Sook, head of the Center for Korean Studies at the University of Hawaii, has said

This is bad for North Korea, and it is bad for reunification. North Korea has lost two big brothers and it fears a South Korean attack, at the very least it must build the perception of nuclear capability.⁵¹

If North Korea feels truly isolated, this is indeed a cause for concern. It must be recognized, however, that China, although recognizing the South, still maintains relations with North Korea. China is the only nation at present that has significant influence in both North and South Korea. It has set itself up to play the role of "honest broker" between North and South Korea, and from the North Koreans point of view, China provides them a voice with clout as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

Cha Young Koo, director of the security division of the Korea Institute for Defense Analysis, makes an interesting observation on the rise of Chinese influence in Northeast Asia. He says that there are parallels between the current situation and the late 19th century, when the Qing dynasty, Russia, and Japan all battled for influence over the Korean Yi dynasty. He also points out that the similarity ends when one realizes that now South Korea is a strong power and has improved its ties with Russia and China to balance its ties to Japan and the United States. The Sino-Korean normalization could serve as a balance to Japan's role as regional economic superpower.⁵² As neither China nor Korea wishes to see an East Asia dominated by Japan, this last factor could prove to be the most

significant. During his speech announcing the normalization of relations, Roh Tae Woo talked about the changing power structure in Northeast Asia, mentioning China and Korea, but not Japan.⁵³

China's policy toward unification is that it a Korean matter. They urge patience in dealing with North Korea, and claim that their influence there is greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, China has a role to play on the Korean peninsula, and could facilitate or complicate any plans of the United States or the South Koreans to deal with North Korea. China does not desire a nuclear armed North Korea, more for its concern about Japan's response than any danger from Korea. At the same time, China does not wish to upset the status quo at the risk of war.

In post Cold War Northeast Asia, China is uniquely suited to advance its interests. Its historical relationship to Korea, in contrast to Japan's, give it an advantage in dealing with the problems of Korean unification. While China could not contribute to unification in the manner that Japan might, specifically financial support, it does have the advantage of growing economic ties, vice competition, a shared land border, and relations with both Korean capitols. Regardless of how much influence it actually has in Pyongyang, it doubtless has more than any other nation. If China truly desires a strong trading partner, and an independent nation to balance off Japan and a resurgent Russian Far East, it could find such a country in a unified Korea. Similarly, a unified Korea, even with good relations with Russia, Japan, and the United States, would have many incentives to maintain mutually beneficial relationships with China.

C. RUSSIA

Korea has played a role in Russian policy calculations since the 19th century, when Czarist expansion into the Far East established a common border with Korea on the Tumen River. In July of 1860, the port city of Vladivostok was founded, and that was followed

fourteen years later with a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Russia and the Yi dynasty of Korea.⁵⁴ Russia became intimately involved in the Korean court, vying with Japan and China for influence in Korea to further its own interests. It was Russia that led the "triple intervention" (along with Germany, and France) in the wake of the Treaty of Shimonoseki that compelled Japan to relinquish some of the concessions made to it by China. In 1896, the Korean government, desperate for help against Japan, even asked the Czar to make Korea a Russian protectorate. The Czar refused, unwilling to challenge Japan and Western Powers in the Far East until the completion of the Trans-Siberian railroad.⁵⁵

Russian policy toward Korea brought it into conflict with Japan, culminating in the Russo-Japanese War which saw Japan defeat Russia and establish itself as the dominant power in Korea. Article II of the Treaty of Portsmouth, formally ending the Russo-Japanese War, stated that

The Imperial Government of Russia, recognizing that Japan has predominant political, military, and economic interests in Korea, agrees not to interfere or place obstacles in the way of any measure of direction, protection, and supervision which the Imperial Government of Japan may deem necessary to adopt in Korea.⁵⁶

Russia's Imperial goal of "at the least, ...not to allow Korea to become a base for a hostile foreign power. At the most, ...to bring Korea into her own sphere of influence,"⁵⁷ had failed. Russia did not play a major role in Korea again until World War II and its aftermath.

The difficult negotiations between the United States and the Soviets over Korea in the years immediately following World War II have been described in chapter III. It is interesting to note here that Stalin told Ambassador Harriman of the United States as early as 14 December 1944 that Russia's position in the Far East (after the war) should be generally reestablished as it existed before the Russo-Japanese War.⁵⁸ The Soviets

provided a base of operations for anti-Japanese Korean nationalists, and in occupying the North, made use of Soviet trained Koreans to administer and eventually form the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In the period from 1945 to 1950, the Soviet Union dominated North Korea. It provided the bulk of trade and military assistance to North Korea, and had advisors throughout the country and at all levels of government. Military advisors stayed on even after Soviet troops withdrew from the country in 1948. Korean nationalists, even hard core communists, were most likely less than happy with the extensive control that the Soviets had assumed throughout the North. A United States Department of State study concluded that North Korea was close to actually being incorporated into the Soviet Union.

In the long run, the Soviet program of progressively tightening North Korea's economic, political, psychological, and cultural ties with the USSR strengthened the Soviet position in North Korea and in the long run opened the way for 'voluntary' political integration of the area into the USSR.⁵⁹

The Korean War radically altered the Soviet's relations with North Korea. While, according to Khrushchev, Kim Il Sung proposed the attack on the South to Stalin in 1949, and Stalin supported it, the Soviets lack of support in the wake of the collapse of the North Korea army in the fall of 1950 contrasted markedly with China's massive commitment of troops. When told that Kim Il Sung was desperate for help, Stalin reportedly said "So what? If Kim Il Sung falls, we are not going to participate with our troops. Let it be. Let the Americans now be our neighbors in the Far East."⁶⁰ Stalin possibly was surprised at the American response to North Korea's attack, and did not desire to escalate the war to a direct US-Soviet confrontation.⁶¹

Thus the Korean War increased the newly proclaimed People's Republic of China's influence in North Korea, and resulted in a loss of influence for the Soviets. The Soviet Union continued to support the North in international forums and also maintained trade, but

since 1950 had become leery of North Korea dragging it into a war with the United States. It is no coincidence that Kim Il Sung launched his *Juche* campaign in the wake of the lessons learned from his Russian ally.

In 1961, a mutual defense treaty was signed between North Korea and the Soviet Union, but this development can be seen in the light of the Sino-Soviet split, the Cold War, and skillful North Korean diplomacy rather than any long term commitment by the Soviets to the survival of Kim Il Sung's regime. At the same time, South Korea's strong anti-communism coupled with Soviet support for North Korea prevented any relations between the Soviet Union and South Korea until South Korea changed its policies under President Park in 1973.

South Korean and Soviet began non-governmental contacts in 1973, but the major change in relations did not occur until Gorbachev's initiatives towards the Far East and the Pacific were announced in July of 1986 at Vladivostok. In that speech Gorbachev made clear that the Soviet Union was a Pacific power and that the development of the Soviet Far East was a major priority for the Soviet Union. In another speech at Krasnoyarsk in September of 1988, Gorbachev specifically expressed a desire to develop economic relations with South Korea.⁶² Such goals fell in step with South Korea's northern policy, and the Soviets participated in the Seoul 1988 Olympic games over North Korean objections, held a summit meeting with South Korea in San Francisco in June 1990, and eventually normalized relations with the South on September 30, 1990. The Soviet Union, now Russia, maintained its ties with North Korea, although they became quite restrained.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union does not remove the justification for carrying on Gorbachev's initiatives in the Far East. On the contrary, these events bolster the desire for Russians to strengthen their relations with South Korea all the more, and they diminish the reasons to expend diplomatic capital and state treasure to support North Korea.

Russia's interest in Korea now, in contrast to the geopolitical concerns of the Czar, are mostly economic. "Having abandoned ideology and the military leverage used by the former Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy makers insist economic imperatives are now driving the country's foreign relations."⁶³ Despite Russian problems in paying the interest on debts incurred under a loan package from the South Koreans obtained under Gorbachev, President Yeltsin convinced the South Koreans to resume aid suspended in late 1991 during a visit to Seoul in November of 1992.⁶⁴ During that same visit Yeltsin told President Roh that Russia would review its defense treaty with North Korea. He also offered to sell military equipment and technology to South Korea, and agreements were made to initiate military to military ties.⁶⁵

Unfortunately for Russia, China is opening up investment opportunities to South Koreans and competing for capital with the Russian maritime provinces. In light of Russia's political troubles and difficulty in making payments, South Koreans are increasingly unwilling to invest and trade with Russia. Trade with Russia rose just one percent in 1992, verses 20 percent, 50 percent, and 40 percent in 1989, 1990, and 1991 respectively. Total South Korean investment in Russia is only US\$20 million.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, South Korea and Russia have developed closer economic ties which will benefit both countries. A major proposed project, which will require the cooperation of North Korea, is a natural gas pipeline from Yakutsk in eastern Russia through North Korea to the South, and eventually to Japan. Total cost is estimated at US\$20 billion. North Korea has reportedly already agreed to cooperate.⁶⁷ South Korean companies are also taking advantage of Russian technology to boost such industries as consumer electronics. High technology transferred from Russia and unavailable from Japan and the United States may help Korean industries become more competitive, while at the same time providing Russia much needed capital.⁶⁸

Russia has an interest in maintaining good relations with Korea on a partnership basis. Korea as a source of capital in competition with Japan for the development of the Russian Far East has even been referred to as Russia's "Korea Card."⁶⁹ Russia would find a strong unified Korea a useful ally in its dealings with both China and Japan in Northeast Asia, and like China, the United States, and Japan, has said that Korean unification is a Korean matter. Unlike the days of the Czar, Korea is no longer subject to foreign domination, North Korean propaganda notwithstanding. In the post Cold War world, and in a post unified Korea world, it is doubtful that any country could establish a protectorate over Korea in the 19th century sense. What the Russians should hope for is a vigorous trading ally and stable partner on their border in the Far East.

¹Mark T. Fitzpatrick, "Why Japan and the United States Will Welcome Korean Unification," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. XV, No. 3, (Fall 1991), p. 435.

²D. M. Kristick, United States-Republic of Korea Security Relations: Policy /Strategy For the Future, (Naval War College, Newport R. I., June 1990), p. 62.

³Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1974), p. 274.

⁴Chongwhi Kim, "Korea-Japan Relations and Japan's Security Role," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. XII, No. 1, (Spring 1988), p. 106.

⁵Kristick, p. 62.

⁶James Sterngold, "Japan and Korea Worry That U.S. May Pull Out," The New York Times, (Nov. 9, 1992), p. A5.

⁷Bingham, Conroy, and Ikle, A History of Asia, (Boston, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1974), p. 666.

⁸Fitzpatrick, p. 434.

⁹Sang-Woo Rhee, "Inter-Korean Relations in the 21st Century," Korea And World Affairs, Vol. XVI, No. 1, (Spring 1992), p. 73.

¹⁰Mark Clifford, "Unsettled Relations," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 26, 1992), p. 58.

¹¹Chongwhi Kim, p. 106.

¹²Kristick, p. 61.

¹³"Prices and Trends," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Jun. 3, 1992), p. 73.

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- ¹⁴Chongwhi Kim, p. 106.
- ¹⁵Clifford, p. 59.
- ¹⁶Tsuneo Akaha, "Japan's Comprehensive Security Policy," Asian Survey, (April 1991), p. 336.
- ¹⁷David E. Sanger, "North Korea Is Seeking Investors Who Look Beyond Bleakness," The New York Times, (May 21, 1992), p. A4.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. A4.
- ¹⁹Jae Hoon Shim, "The Price of Unity," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 26, 1992), p. 55 and "Prices and Trends," p. 73.
- ²⁰Chongwhi Kim, p. 105.
- ²¹Fitzpatrick, p. 429.
- ²²Chongwhi Kim, p. 108.
- ²³Kristick, p. 31.
- ²⁴Chongwhi Kim, p. 107.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 106.
- ²⁶Akaha, p. 324.
- ²⁷Council on U.S.-Korea Security Studies, The Korean Peninsula in the Post-Cold War Era, (Conference Report, Washington, D.C., Nov. 6-8, 1991), p. 5.
- ²⁸Jae Hoon Shim, p. 54.
- ²⁹Chongwhi Kim, p. 115.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 114.
- ³¹Sterngold, p. A5.
- ³²Chongwhi Kim, p. 116.
- ³³Ibid., p. 111.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 116.
- ³⁵Kristick, p. 63. See also Edward A. Olsen, Prospects for an Increased Naval Role for the Republic of Korea in Northeast Asian Security, (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Ca., March 1989) for a discussion of a possible increase in the role of the ROK navy.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 63-64.

³⁷Fitzpatrick, p. 429.

³⁸Mark Clifford, "Expensive Embraces," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Mar. 26, 1992), p. 54.

³⁹See comments by Yoshihisa Komori in The Korean Peninsula in the Post-Cold War Era, p. 18.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 5.

⁴¹See comments of Hideshi Takesada in Ibid., p. 17.

⁴²Fitzpatrick, p. 434.

⁴³Ho-Joong Choi, "Korean Unification in a New World Order," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. XV, No. 4., (Winter 1991), p. 623.

⁴⁴Han, p. 14.

⁴⁵See Michael H. Hunt, "Beijing and the Korean Crisis," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 107, No. 3, (Fall 1992), pp. 453-478, for an excellent review of the burgeoning scholarship on China's decision to enter the Korean War.

⁴⁶"Mao's 2 Telegrams on Korea," The New York Times, (Feb. 26, 1992), p. A4.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. A4.

⁴⁸Jae Hoon Shim, "China Market Roars", Far Eastern Economic Review, (May, 27, 1993), p. 44.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 46.

⁵⁰Laxmi Nakarmi, Rose Brady, and Lynne Curry, "Can Korea Unite and Conquer?," Business Week, (Nov. 16, 1992), p. 52.

⁵¹Ed Paisely, Lincoln Kaye, Julian Baum, "Risks and Rewards," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Sep. 3, 1992), p. 8.

⁵²Ibid., p. 9.

⁵³James Sterngold, "Korean Says China Pact Brings End of Cold War in Asia Closer," The New York Times, (Aug. 25, 1992), p. A5.

⁵⁴Sung-Hack Kang, "Korea-U.S.S.R. Relations in the 20th Century," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. XV, No. 4., (Winter 1991), p. 681.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 685.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 688.

⁵⁷Donald S. Zagoria, Russian Policy Towards Korea: An Historical and Geopolitical Analysis, (Paper prepared for the US.-Korea Bilateral Forum, Berkeley, California, Aug. 26-29, 1985), p. 1.

⁵⁸Max Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, cited by Kang, p. 689.

⁵⁹U.S. Department of State, North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 121.

⁶⁰Kang, p. 694.

⁶¹See Jon Halliday, "A Secret War," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Apr. 22, 1993), pp. 32-36 for a discussion of the lengths to which both Soviets and Americans went to avoid open combat, although they were engaged in an air war over Manchuria.

⁶²Kang, p. 697.

⁶³Jeff Lilley, "Russian Handicap," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Nov. 26, 1992), p. 24.

⁶⁴Andrew Pollack, "Seoul to Resume Its Aid to Russia," The New York Times, (Nov. 18, 1992), p. A5.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. A5.

⁶⁶Lilley, p. 24.

⁶⁷Nakarmi, Brady, and Curry, p. 53.

⁶⁸Bob Johnstone, "Russian Bargains," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Apr. 15, 1993), p. 44.

⁶⁹Lilley, p. 24.

VI. THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES

With an overview of the interests of the Northeast Asia regional powers, one now has a context within which to consider the national interests of the United States in the region. The National Military Strategy of the United States, issued in January of 1992, lists the broad and enduring national security interests and objectives of the United States.¹ Although the administration of the United States has changed since these interests were first described, they are indeed broad and provide a basis for which to examine the United States' security policy in any region of the world. The interests of the United States are listed as follows:

- The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure.
- A healthy and growing US economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.
- Healthy, cooperative and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.
- A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.

These interests and goals are considerably expanded from those announced by President Thomas Jefferson during his first inaugural address on March 14, 1801. "Peace, Commerce, and honest friendship, with all nations...entangling alliances with none."²

While there is little room for disagreement with the first two points of the 1992 strategy, the question must be asked why, unlike Jefferson, the United States limits its desire for good relations to just "friends and allies." In the post Cold War world, what

constitutes an enemy? When does an economic competitor shift from ally to neutral to hostile power? Should a state with a political and social system antithetical to that of the United States' automatically be classified as hostile? Clearly a state that commits hostile actions towards the United States such as outright aggression, terrorism, or piracy can be considered an enemy, or certainly "not friendly," but the issue becomes murky when no such actions have been committed and it is a question of sovereign states pursuing a different vision of how best to provide for their own security. In Northeast Asia, with North Korea, China, and Japan, these are not just theoretical questions but ones that must be considered in the United States' post Cold War security policy.

A specific statement of United States interests in Asia is found in A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Report to Congress 1992.³ The November 1992 report lists the following security interests in Asia:

- protecting the United States and its allies from attack
- maintaining regional peace and stability
- preserving our political and economic access
- contributing to nuclear deterrence
- fostering the growth of democracy and human rights
- stopping proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and ballistic missile systems
- ensuring freedom of navigation
- reducing illicit drug trafficking

These statements of United States interests in general and in Asia specifically provide a context with which to examine United States interests in Korea and Northeast Asia, and how those interests coincide in the global context of United States security policy.

A. INTERESTS IN KOREA

The first six of the eight previously listed US interests in Asia are challenged on the Korean peninsula. Regardless of what form of government exists in a unified Korea, or whether or not unification even occurs, the Korean peninsula will always maintain its strategic location in Northeast Asia. The Korean peninsula shares borders with China, Japan, and Russia. Korea's "geopolitical and strategic location has historically occupied a central role in regional politics, and any shifts of power in the region have greatly affected the status and policies of the neighboring powers."⁴ Due to Korea's strategic location, as long as the United States has an interest in regional peace and stability, it will have some interest in the Korean peninsula.

At present, the United States' interests in Korea are focused on its relationship with the Republic of Korea. Prior to World War II, the United States took no real interest in the Korean peninsula since the Taft-Katsura Memorandum of July 1905, whereby the United States recognized Japan's free hand in Korea in exchange for Japanese non-interference in the Philippines.⁵ United States interests in Korea grew in the context of the Cold War, and saw concrete expression in June of 1950 with President Truman's decision to commit US combat forces to repel the North Korean attack. Perhaps the most visible example of the US commitment to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula is the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954 and the continuing presence of US ground forces in South Korea.

In the sense that US interests in Korea are peace, stability, and trade, the presence of US forces in Korea plays a role in safeguarding the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula. It is important to realize, however, that the presence of US forces is not required by the Mutual Defense Treaty. Secretary of State Dulles, testifying before the Committee on Foreign Relations, explained "If it seems wise to us, we could, consistently with the treaty, wholly withdraw our forces in Korea."⁶ It is clear that the major purpose of US forces in Korea is to deter a North Korean attack on South Korea. In the context of

the Cold War, a North Korean take over of South Korea could be seen as an expansion of Soviet power and a failure of the American containment policy. In the context of post Cold War Northeast Asia, the United States has an interest in the continued survival of a major trading partner and in the peace and stability of the region. In the case of eventual Korean unification, the United States would have an interest in maintaining good relations with a vigorous, economically strong, and independent Korean nation.

United States economic interests in the Republic of Korea are relatively easy to quantify. With a successful conclusion of a peaceful unification, it is reasonable to assume that after a period of difficult adjustment, the combination of South Korean capital and North Korean resources would produce a major economic power in Northeast Asia. South Korea was the United States' seventh largest trading partner in 1990, ranking number six as an export market, ahead of France and the Netherlands, and number seven as a source of imports.⁷ In addition, South Korea was the fourth largest market for US agricultural products in 1989.⁸ Continued good economic relations with Korea will give the United States better access to the development possibilities of the northern half of Korea should unification occur, and also allow the United States to work in partnership with Korea, Japan, China, and Russia for the development of Manchuria and the Russian Far East. Even if unification does not occur, the United States has an interest in participating in the development of North Korea. Of course, economic relations between North Korea and the United States would require a breakthrough in their currently unfriendly relationship, but that does not negate the fact that the United States would have an interest in participating in any efforts to develop Northeast Asia, including North Korea. This interest would fall in the category of preserving the United States' political and economic access.

In the areas of nuclear deterrence and special weapons proliferation, the United States has clear interests in Korea. Currently both Japan and the ROK are "under the US nuclear umbrella." North Korea's apparent nuclear weapons development program represents a

physical threat to the ROK and Japan and a proliferation concern as well. It is in the interest of the United States to both deter nuclear war and to prevent special weapons proliferation. Those interest will require significant US policy attention toward both North and South Korea, and a post unified Korea.

If one of the United States' goals is to foster the growth of democracy and human rights, a unified Korea will provide an opportunity for the United States to support the spreading of South Korean democracy to North Korea. Just as the United States bears some of the responsibility for the division of Korea and the excesses South Korea's authoritarian regimes, it can take some small credit for South Korea's transition from Syngman Rhee to Kim Young Sam. Such a transformation in North Korea would be no small achievement, and if accomplished peacefully, a credit to the Korean people and the farsightedness of American support for their efforts.

Both a post unified Korea and the United States would have an interest in maintaining security ties. For the United States, its presence would give it enhanced leverage to promote peace and stability in the region. The United States would be in a more credible position to safeguard the continued independence of the Korean peninsula from the possible domination of Japan, China, and Russia. On its part, Korea has always been aware of its position as "the shrimp among whales." It may perceive a security threat from any of the much larger and powerful regional powers, and having a security relationship with the world's greatest military power (despite the reduction in US forces, both Republican and Democratic parties have supported the desire to maintain America's preeminent military position in the world), which at the same time is not located directly on its border, could be a useful tool in maintaining Korea's independence of action in Northeast Asia. It must be cautioned here, however, that America's commitment to Korea might secure Korea's survival as an independent and vigorous state in Northeast Asia, but it should be made plain that it does not give Korea free reign to involve the United States in

a war with China, Japan, or Russia, just as it currently does not support a South Korean invasion of North Korea.

To summarize, the United States has enduring interest in the Korean peninsula regardless of whether the status quo endures or unification occurs, even if under a North Korean regime. The US-ROK relationship was forged in the coldest days of the Cold War, but there is now an opportunity to adjust that relationship to meet new realities. While the US-Soviet confrontation has ended, there still remains the threat of war on the Korean peninsula. That reality has not changed. It remains in the United States interest to prevent war and reduce tension, and how to best do that is the challenge for the United States now and in a post unified Korea Northeast Asia.

B . INTERESTS IN NORTHEAST ASIA

It would be simple to just expand United States interests in Korea and say they apply to the region as a whole. It would be accurate, but it would understate the importance of the region to the United States. Indeed, US interest in Northeast Asia encompass relations with China, Japan, and Russia. As important as relations with North and South Korea are by themselves to the United States, they also must be considered in the context of US relations with Japan, China, and Russia.

The major change in Northeast Asia with the demise of the Soviet Union is that war on the Korean peninsula would no longer involve a superpower confrontation. To be sure, both China and Russia still have a mutual defense treaty with North Korea, but given the post Cold War emphasis on economics and the greatly improved relations between the US, China, and Russia, and between South Korea, China, and Russia in 1993 as compared to 1950, it is doubtful that North Korean aggression against the South would be supported by China and Russia. Similarly, South Korean aggression against North Korea would not be supported by the United States.⁹ This lack of major power involvement is a positive

development as it lessens the risk of nuclear war. It must be pointed out here, however, that although China and Russia would not be involved in another Korean war automatically, the current situation would automatically cause the United States to be involved in the event of a North Korean attack, due to the presence of US ground troops forward deployed between Seoul and the DMZ.

As mentioned previously, the stated purpose of the presence of US troops is to deter such a North Korean attack. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the only immediate military threat to the United States in Northeast Asia is the one posed by North Korea to US forces in Korea. Needless to say, if those forces were removed, the military threat to the United States would be removed. In the long term, however, possible military threats to the United States interests in Northeast Asia could develop from a hostile Korea or Koreas, or a hostile Russia, China, or even Japan. It is in the United States interest to prevent such an eventuality from occurring.

In 1989, the GNP of the United States, Japan, and South Korea constituted 40 percent of the world's GNP, and was forecasted to constitute more than half of the world's GNP by 2010.¹⁰ China's economy is forecasted to grow at a rate of 13 percent of its GNP in 1993.¹¹ Russia, China, and North Korea are attempting to develop Siberia and the Tumen River estuary, and special economic zones are proliferating in Northeast Asia. The South Koreans and Japanese are hoping to tap the areas abundant natural resources, and have already made deals with the Russians for oil and natural gas exploration.¹² Clearly the United States has an interest in participating in the economies of a rapidly developing region of the world.

The prospect of a unified and stable Korea in Northeast Asia as an ally of the United States would be a positive development for US security. Not only would it provide economic and political access to a dynamic and increasingly important region, but after the shocks of unification it would be a powerful actor in its own right. A vigorous and

friendly Korea in Northeast Asia would lessen the individual significance to the United States of any other regional power. That is to say that the United States would be less dependent on either China, Russia, or Japan to achieve its goals in Northeast Asia. Conversely, a hostile unified Korea would cause the United States to rely more on its relationships to China, Russia, and Japan, thus decreasing the United States' flexibility in dealing with individual issues of economics and security.

In summary, what Professor Edward A. Olsen said in 1983, that "the United States has three longstanding interests in the Japan-Korea area: maintaining strategic stability, maintaining smooth political relations and furthering United States' economic interests in the area," still holds true today.¹³ With the end of superpower confrontation, maintaining strategic stability loses its heavy stress on military balance and the geopolitical emphasis of containment. It still requires, however, that the United States work to maintain regional peace and stability and thus facilitate the furthering of its economic interests.

C. KOREA AND NORTHEAST ASIA IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

From the above discussion, the importance of Korea and Northeast Asia to the United States security is more than evident. To quote the National Military Strategy,

The East Asian economic miracle has made the Pacific Basin America's principle overseas trading area, a situation that shows every evidence of continuing. Throughout the Pacific, the surge of democracy and economic growth and an accompanying improvement in the military capabilities of our friends and allies have eased the US security burden.¹⁴

America is a trading nation, and three of its top seven trading partners are in East Asia (Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea). It has been said that the most important bilateral relationship in the world is that between the United States and Japan. The United States' relationship with China, a United Nations Security Council member, will play an important role in the success of United States initiatives on collective security, weapons proliferation,

and human rights. The success or failure of the development of the Russian Far East could play a role in determining whether Russia continues on a path towards democracy and capitalism, suffers further breakup into smaller states, or slides back into a totalitarian state hostile to the United States. United States actions and policies in Northeast Asia and toward Korea have the potential to influence the chain of events for better or for worse.

If the United States can maintain peace and stability in Northeast Asia and work with other regional powers and the two Koreas to facilitate a peaceful Korean unification, then the path will have been cleared for a post Cold War world that holds much promise for the United States. This should be the goal of United States security policy in Northeast Asia.

¹Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States Department of Defense, The National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 5.

²Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address, quoted by In Kwang Hwang in The United States and Neutral Reunited Korea, (Lanham, MD, University Press of America, 1990), p. 1.

³Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (East Asia and Pacific Region), United States Department of Defense, A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Report to Congress, (Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 9.

⁴Michael A. Canavan, The Future Role of United States Forces in the Republic of Korea, (US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Mar. 1990), p. 5.

⁵Hwang, p. 28.

⁶US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Mutual Defense Treaty With Korea, Hearings, 83rd Congress, 2d Session, (Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office, 1954), p. 19.

⁷"United States of America." Europa World Year Book 1992, (1992 ed.), pp. 3011-3012.

⁸Robert G. Sutter, Korea-US Relations: Issues for Congress, (Washington, D.C., Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 1989), p. 2.

⁹The US was never bound to support unilateral action by the ROK. See Secretary Dulles comments in Mutual Defense Treaty With Korea, p. 11.

¹⁰David M. Kristick, United States-Republic of Korea Security Relations: Policy/Strategy For the Future, (Naval War College, Newport, RI, June. 1990), p. 43.

¹¹"Prices and Trends," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Jun. 3, 1993), p. 72.

¹²Kazuhiko Shimizu, "Zone of Dreams," Far Eastern Economic Review, (May 28, 1993), p. 30.

¹³Edward A. Olsen, "Northeast Asian Security," US-Korean Relations 1882-1982, quoted by Paul R. Scott in US National Interests in Korea, (Monterey, CA, Naval Post Graduate School, Class Paper NS 4579, 1986), p. 14.

¹⁴The National Military Strategy, p. 3.

VII. CONCLUSION: US ALTERNATIVES

A look at the problems of Korean unification, the attempts up to 1993, the possible scenarios, the regional interests, and finally the United States' interests enable one to evaluate the central question of this thesis: following a successful unification of the Korean peninsula, will a military presence in Korea best serve America's interest? Clearly the question depends in part on the nature of a unified Korea as well as the regional and global security environment. From the outset, whether it is in the United States' interest to maintain a military presence on the peninsula or not, the United States will not maintain a presence unless invited to by the unified Korean government. The United States may determine it in its interests to stay, but if it fails to convince the host government that such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial, then the political and economic realities of the United States would not allow it to become an occupying power unless it was engaged in a war for its own survival in Northeast Asia. The question is, should the United States expend any effort to maintain a military presence in a unified Korea, or should it withdraw its military forces, regardless of the desires of a unified Korean government?

Regardless of the status of US forces or the process of Korean unification, there are several measures that the United States can pursue to meet its objectives of promoting peaceful unification of the peninsula on terms acceptable to the Korean people and at the same time reduce the instability of the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia as a whole.

If no unification takes place, that is the "status quo" scenario prevails indefinitely, then US policy is probably clear. The US military presence contributes to deterring a possible North Korea attack. In the interest of peace and stability, the United States should maintain some military presence in South Korea. This begs the question of how much military

presence is sufficient to deter, but clearly the complete withdrawal of US ground forces, leaving behind only very mobile air and naval units, decreases the credibility of the US commitment to defeat any attempt by North Korea to unify the peninsula by force of arms. Since that commitment is still in the United States' interest, the US should seek the most effective way to meet it. It has become a cliché that it is cheaper to deter a war than it is to fight one, but it is undoubtedly true. It is important to realize that although the commitment to defend South Korea was made in the context of the Cold War, a re-evaluation of that commitment indicates that it is still valid. In the post Cold War, post Gulf War world, the United States has a stake in the prevention of a forceful subjugation of the South by North Korea. This is not out of a sentimental attachment to the Republic of Korea, but in the US interests of peace, stability and trade in Northeast Asia. Unlike the Cold War commitment, America's relationship with the ROK need not be viewed in terms of defense of Japan (now a very wealthy nation and an economic competitor capable of providing for its own defense), or in terms of the containment of communism, but in terms of the intrinsic value that a strong ROK and an allied unified Korea would have to the United States.

Even more important than the actual location of US ground forces, the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty itself can also be viewed as a relic of the Cold War. In the debate over US security policy in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union, "Cold War commitment" is a descriptive phrase that has taken on a pejorative aspect when applied to any US relationship with another nation. Undoubtedly, enlightened thinkers, now free of the restrictions placed on them by the overarching need to contain the Soviet Union, can determine ways to enhance US security without relying on outdated and unimaginative solutions no longer relevant in a new security environment. US commitments should always be constantly evaluated to determine if they best meet the needs of the nation and how they may be improved, but that does not necessarily mean that a commitment made in one context is no longer useful or valid in another. If it is no longer useful or valid, it

should be scrapped. If it still has a role to play in enhancing US national security, then it should be maintained. The latter is the case with the US-ROK defense treaty.

In addition to maintaining its relationship to the ROK, the United States can move effectively to promote its interests in Northeast Asia by engaging North Korea actively and openly in all areas. This is not to say that the US needs to make concessions to the North for appeasement purposes, but a concession by the United States that reduces tensions on the peninsula and perhaps initiates a crack in the North's isolation to the benefit of all, and at the same time costs the United States almost nothing, would seem to be the essence of diplomacy. Diplomatic recognition of North Korea would allow the United States to address its many concerns about the behavior of North Korea directly and on a regular basis to the North Korean authorities. It is also fairly safe to say that a North Korean flag flying in Washington D.C would not garner much attention, but could the same be said of the American flag in downtown Pyongyang? An increase in the role of diplomacy and economics and a decrease in the role of joint US-ROK military exercises in the conduct of United States relations with North Korea would be a major step toward reducing tension and facilitating eventual peaceful Korean unification. In the past, a nervous and suspicious ROK would take a dim view of such American initiatives toward the North. Now the ROK is much more confident and would welcome any move on the part of the United States to reduce tensions on the peninsula.¹

The United States can push to replace the United Nations administered armistice signed in 1953 with a genuine peace treaty between North and South Korea (not just the North and the United States). While the North Koreans will not likely support such a move as it will "legitimize" the division of the peninsula, such a peace treaty would be yet another major step toward reducing the risk of war and normalizing relations between both Koreas, and as such is a worthy goal. Also in regard to the United Nations, the United States should work to remove the United Nations Command, set up in 1950 to prosecute

the war, as an actor on the peninsula. Any United Nations role in eventual unification must be tempered by the fact that the United Nations was in fact a belligerent in the Korean War against the North. Since the major interested parties (China, Russia, Japan, and the US) all at least publicly state that Korean unification is a Korean affair, the United Nations should be removed from the middle of the dialogue over intra-Korean issues.

In all the remaining scenarios, the United States would be faced with major changes in the security environment of Northeast Asia. It can be assumed that should unification occur under a hostile North Korean regime, then the question of a United States military presence on the peninsula is moot. That is not to say that US interest in the Korean peninsula disappears, but that the option of enhancing its policies through a military presence on the Korean peninsula would not be available.

In the scenarios of two diverging Koreas, a new Korea, or a unified Korea under the authority of the ROK, the question of a continued US military presence is more provocative. In the current context, the main function of US forces in Korea is the deter a North Korean attack on the South. If the likelihood of such an attack evaporates, either by virtue of real tension reduction and an increase in mutual trust, or the disappearance of the North Korean regime, then why maintain forces in Korea?

The answer is that the United States has significant and diverse interests in Northeast Asia, and a military presence on the Korean peninsula helps to safeguard those interests. To quote the commander of United States forces in the Pacific, Admiral Charles Larson, "the US shouldn't dismiss the leverage military presence provides in dealing with Asia on a wide variety of issues."² A withdrawal of US forces from Korea would diminish the United States ability to influence events in Northeast Asia, and leave the United States' interests, which differ from those of the Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, and Russians, more at the mercy of the actions of these very same nations.

The benefits that the United States accrues by maintaining a military presence in Korea include continued deterrence of war, enhanced stability in an economically dynamic region, and the strengthening of a relationship with a major trading partner who sits athwart two of the United States' major present and potential future economic rivals, Japan and China, and borders Russia, a country whose future will effect Asia, Europe, and the world. The costs would include potential involvement in regional matters that have no direct bearing on the United States national interests, such as the Russian-Japanese territorial dispute over four of the Kurile Islands and the Japanese-Korean disputes over islands in the Sea of Japan (East Sea). Additional costs would be incurred in US treasure to support US forces stationed in Korea, although it is important to note that the ROK was singled out by United States Secretary of Defense Les Aspin as ranking first in the world in defense burden sharing with the United States, ahead of Japan and the NATO allies of the United States.³ The heaviest cost would be involvement in a war should deterrence fail. An American presence would make war less likely, and would be less expensive to the United States than belatedly deciding it had interests to protect in Korea and Northeast Asia and then getting involved in a war for which it was not prepared.

The current debate on the structure and strategies of the US armed forces has implications toward the ability of the United States to meet security commitments towards any of its allies. The reduction of US forces in the post Cold War world has led to a shift in strategy from the US preparing to fight two regional wars at the same time to one wherein the US proposes to fight and win one regional war while supporting a "holding action" through the use of naval and air power in any other area of hostilities involving its interests. It can be pointed out here that the debate over whether the force cuts are driving the strategy or the new strategy is driving the force cuts is irrelevant in this context, as the point is that US forces will be reduced in size and capability in any case. The point should be made to all of the United States' security allies that they must maintain a credible ability

to defend themselves, or put another way, shoulder the greater part of the burden providing for their own defense. There is no guarantee that a local but nonetheless threatening situation to an American ally may be overshadowed by threats to areas deemed of greater import to the United States' security. A particularly good example would be a war on the Korean peninsula followed by a war threatening the Persian Gulf oil supplies.

Of course US security policy is not made in a vacuum, and it must reflect the economic and political realities of the times. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord stated during his confirmation hearing on 31 March 1993 that the US must "integrate our economic, political and security policies" and try "fresh approaches and structures of cooperation...it is time to build, with others, a new Pacific community."⁴ United States relations with the Korean peninsula will be an integral part of any new "Pacific community," and will prove vital to the success or failure of United States security policy in Northeast Asia.

¹The most recent example of this is South Korean support for direct US-DPRK talks on North Korea's withdrawal from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). During testimony before the Korean National Assembly, Deputy Prime Minister Han Wan-sang said that in regard to nuclear weapons, the government supports "US-North Korea high level contacts." See "Premier: Reform Pace to be Stepped Up," Yonhap, (May 5, 1993), PAC RIM Intelligence Report, downloaded from America Online May 5, 1993.

²Charles R. Larson, "American Military Presence Remains Crucial for Asia," Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly, (May 3, 1993).

³South Korea bears 78 percent of the cost of stationing US forces there, vice the 76 percent born by Japan and just 25 percent born by NATO allies. See "Editorial Urges Reduced Defense Contribution," Kyonghyang Sinmun, (Apr. 28, 1993), PAC RIM Intelligence Report, downloaded from America Online Apr. 29, 1993.

⁴Susumu Awanohara, "Group Therapy," Far Eastern Economic Review, (Apr. 15, 1993), p. 10.

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