

## The U.S.-ROK Alliance: American Perspectives

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### Introduction

Non-specialist Americans, if they think of the Korean Peninsula at all, focus on the crisis that the U.S. faces with North Korea over nuclear and missile issues. Yet there are two crises facing the U.S. in that volatile and dangerous location that has been for two millennia a nexus of regional conflict. The first is the more obvious one with North Korea that the Bush administration has yet seriously to address on a bilateral basis, and still seems unwilling to do so at the highest levels; and the second crisis, a stealth one between South Korea and the U.S.—one that is obscured by both a lack of transparency on relations on the part of both governments and by the media in the United States that has under-reported the issue. The prospect of the Bush-Roh summit did raise its visibility, but the meeting itself and its aftermath were poorly reported in the United States and the subsequent limited official statements lacked depth and implied substantial disagreements.<sup>1</sup> The second crisis with South Korea is arguably as profound as the first for longer-range relations and stability in Northeast Asia. Although both are related, they are not coterminous.

In 2004, there were a plethora of conferences and statements on the strength of the U.S.-ROK alliance, which that year celebrated its half-century, and congratulations were proffered all around. Yet this was a simplistic exercise in public relations—well meaning no doubt, but one that effectively undermined the need for serious consideration of where the alliance had taken the intertwined relations between both states, where it was likely to lead, let alone the tensions under which it has operated for most of its history. The relationship was both enduring and endured, and by both sides. Relations have continuously been subject to various, sometimes, extreme, tensions.<sup>2</sup> Commendations were presented for the past, but the future was ignored except for hortatory comments that were not

prescriptions for policy.

A few years ago, the commander of UN forces in Korea said at a conference that U.S.-ROK relations were the best they had ever been. This was patent nonsense, insulting to our intelligence and destructive of effective policy formulation. In addition, until recently, the official Korean position was that there were no issues that could not be, or were not being, negotiated.

This public euphoria has now changed, one would like to say for the better, but, alas, that would not be accurate. But the now-admitted issues connected with the alliance do provide an opportunity, devoutly to be consummated, to confront the present with the prospect of bettering the future. One cannot be sanguine that this will happen. The prognosis thus must be moderately pessimistic, for both sides have their own set of dilemmas. The depth of analytic assessments by specialists and academicians are too often shunted aside by those who make policy.

In Korea, the government and the President are split with an opposition political party that has accused the Roh administration of destroying U.S.-Korean amity. Whether entirely accurate or not, their charges are given less credence than might otherwise be the case because of generic confrontations: in Korea; if party A is in favor of anything, party B is immediately against it, whatever “it” may be. So do the articulated concerns of the opposition concerning the poor state of U.S.-South Korean relations translate into an acceptable policy framework to the populace? The Roh administration has been intent on restructuring the South Korean elite, with whom the U.S. has negotiated for many years across a number of Korean administrations.<sup>3</sup> However unsuccessful in toto this attempt will be, and the Korean courts have invalidated some such attempts, it cannot help but affect negotiations with the U.S. Changing attitudes within the Korea power structure have negatively influenced U.S. policy makers. In the relatively new Korean democracy, the opinions of the people now really do count, and civil society is both highly nationalistic and active and profoundly important: they shape as well as reflect popular sentiment.<sup>4</sup> Do the people agree with the opposition or do they simply feel that the administration is perceived as so

incompetent that its credibility and popularity have been severely reduced?

In the United States, attention is completely focused on the various debacles occurring in the Middle East. Policy formulation, and that may be too gracious a phrase, is constricted to a small group whose concerns, understandably, are in a different region, whose attention is otherwise focused, and who would prefer not to negotiate with an “evil” North Korean regime. Insofar as any senior people have the time to consider Korea, the North Korean crisis trumps all, as inevitably it must from an American vantage point. Yet those problems—North Korean nuclear and missile issues—are often approached from an ideological stance that makes amelioration of the problems or negotiating a solution less probable.<sup>5</sup>

### **The State of Play**

Since the events of 9/11, there has been a heightened sense of nationalism in the United States, nationalism reflected in the simplistic, Manichean views of President Bush, who has publicly said that if you are not with us you are against us. So when Americans view South Koreans burning the American flag or holding candle-light vigils in front of the U.S. embassy, they react with heightened anger that the Koreans, whose country many Americans believe they saved for the South Koreans in the Korean War and in the economic aid program that followed, are “ungrateful.” We know that the facts and attitudes are far more complex than this simplistic diatribe, but these scenes affect official and probably public attitudes toward the alliance to some immeasurable degree at a time when the U.S. feels particularly vulnerable on the world scene, and when anti-American sentiment is spreading and is in many areas virulent.

If the U.S. has exhibited a rise in nationalism, there is the equal or perhaps even greater influence of the new nationalism within Korea (both North and South), with implications for anti-American sentiment in Korea.<sup>6</sup> This is a complex phenomenon, and although partly attributable to significant differences between South Korean and U.S. policies toward North Korea, the basic causes may be found in historical, societal, and attitudinal discrepancies toward priorities and national interests.

It is not simply that President Roh has said, as he has, that he cannot appear to be subservient to the United States, but the people as a whole are far more ambivalent toward reliance on the U.S., its presence and pressure, and its influence over Korean foreign policy. Although in August 2006 senior members of the Korean military demonstrated against Korea’s assuming wartime operational command of forces in South Korea in a few years, and although they have been socially influential and obviously knowledgeable on military matters, whether they reflect popular sentiment, or even their own generation, which tends to be more conservative and relies more on the U.S., let alone the populace as a whole, is a question. The major (opposition) newspapers have been against such a transfer in the near term. There have even been calls for a referendum on that issue, which would at least gauge popular opinion.<sup>7</sup> Although polls have shown that the majority of Koreans do not want to see a precipitous withdrawal of U.S. forces from the peninsula, they do want to see them leave at some not-too-distant time. Similarly, polls indicate that a majority of Koreans want eventual control over their own forces, but a majority of those do not call for abrupt changes.

The U.S., because its national interests are first, worldwide, then focused on Northeast Asia as a region and especially on Japan (galling as that is to Koreans), and then finally on the peninsula, wants the flexibility of policies that would allow it to move its troops and change the force composition to reflect not only (nor necessarily primarily) dealing with the perceived (to the U.S.) threat from North Korea, but to respond to other regional problems (e.g., the Taiwan Straits issue) or to those in another theater, such as the Middle East. With the arrogance of a superpower, these considerations and decisions are normally made first in the Pentagon, and then allies, such as Korea, are informed of the results, often with cosmetic cover of token discussions. As a Korean scholar lamented, allies are supposed to consult on issues, but the U.S. informs Korea, rather than consults, which results in a loss of prestige for any Korean administration. This, then, becomes an issue of the sovereignty of the Korean state, with which the administration (any Korean administration, but especially a sensitive one such as that of

President Roh) must take umbrage. In effect, this undercuts the authority of any Korean administration.<sup>8</sup>

Prompted no doubt by the demands for troops elsewhere and the attitude of the South Korean government, a feeling of “alliance fatigue” has become manifest in the U.S.<sup>9</sup> This seems to be more acutely felt in the Department of Defense than in other segments of the administration. During the dictatorial periods of South Korean governance, the U.S. Defense Department, with its primary concern for security, was the most vocal element of the executive branch that defended the alliance the Department of State was concerned over the overarching priority given to security over economic and political relations. Those positions now seemed to have been reversed.<sup>10</sup>

If “alliance fatigue” does, in fact, exist, it should not be construed to be a conscious effort to eliminate the alliance. Rather, some might call it outmoded in the present age given other demands on U.S. policy, the clearly diminished capacity of the North Korean regime to engage in conventional warfare, and the rise in conventional South Korean military capabilities..

### **The Alliance in Regional Context**

The alliance has meaning beyond the peninsula, and even beyond the stationing of troops in the Republic. Questions of the location of such forces, their size, force composition, and issues connected with the costs of their presence or movement are legitimate areas for concern and negotiation, but an alliance does not necessarily depend on troop presence itself. The U.S. alliances with both the Philippines and Thailand, both stemming initially from the SEATO attempt to counter communist influence in the region, are examples of U.S. alliances having been transformed into ones without a semi-permanent military presence. An alliance also need not only be a formal treaty. U.S. relations with Singapore are a substantial basis for mutual support short of any formal treaty, which would require U.S. Senate approval.<sup>11</sup>

If we are to consider the alliance, we should also contemplate the potential effects of a “non-alliance” peninsula, one in which the U.S. has perceptibly withdrawn from a forward military, if not diplomatic, presence there. The core relationship

in East Asia, as the U.S. administration has indicated, is that of the alliance with Japan, which in itself raises nationalistic issues with Koreans as to U.S. regional priorities (and translates into frustration over U.S. neutrality over the disputed claims of each to Tokdo/Takashima). Yet, if the Koreans seem more volatile and antagonistic toward the U.S. presence in their country as their nationalistic sentiments have grown, nationalism is also more evident in Japan, although it is less vociferous and usually does not spill into the streets.<sup>12</sup> As former foreign minister and ambassador to the U.S. Han Sung Joo indicated, the U.S. regards Japan as the ally “prepared to fill any vacuum” in the region, thus diminishing the Korean-U.S. relationship.<sup>13</sup>

The new Japanese government under Prime Minister Abe, former governor of Tokyo, and many others has made it clear that Japan intends to become a more “normal” state, which will mean increased pressures to reinterpret the Japanese constitution (Article IX) and allow for increasing Japanese rearmament. The new prime minister has made it clear that he wants the Japanese educational system to reflect a more positive view of Japanese history, one that would create pride in Japanese children but one with which many foreign states would markedly disagree. Former Prime Minister Nakasone has been quoted as saying that Japan should consider having nuclear weapons.<sup>14</sup> The American alliance with Korea and its influence on that society are both reassurances to the Japanese that they will not be unprotected, but it is equally a reassurance to Korea (and to China) that a Japanese state rearmed will be at least delayed, if it cannot eventually be avoided, and kept under some moderating influence. In this connection, it is important to remember that the rationale for U.S. forces in Japan is as backup to U.S. forces on the peninsula. It is likely that the virtual elimination of U.S. forces on the peninsula will increase pressures for their reduction or withdrawal from Japan as well.

This Japanese nationalism was not only simply manifested in Prime Minister Koizumi’s visit to the Yasakuni Shrine on August 15, 2006, in a highly significant and symbolic presence and timing on the eve of his departure from office (and with the predictable Korean and Chinese complaints), but also reflected a political reality—that there is a strong public opinion in Japan that

appreciates this expression of sentiment.<sup>15</sup>

A United States absent from the Korean Peninsula could well mean heightened Japanese concerns over North Korea, and sanctions against North Korea have recently been passed by the Japanese Diet. This concern is likely to continue even if the nuclear issue were to be either resolved or contained in some manner, and if the question of the kidnapped Japanese were to be settled or explained. The proverbial Japanese concept that “Korea is a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan” has some emotional traction in that country. A United Korea, even one neutralized, would be viewed by many in Japan with suspicion.<sup>16</sup> South Korean anxiety toward a more nationalistic Japan, already heightened because of Tokdo, textbook interpretations of Japan’s past role in Asia, the Yasakuni Shrine visits, and the rhetoric of nationalistic conformity more evident today, is probably matched by Japanese concerns over President Roh’s attempts to identify and then punish those Korean collaborators with Japan who inappropriately garnered Japanese-held assets in Korea following liberation in 1945.

The disagreement concerning operational control over forces stationed in South Korea raises serious issues indicative of the difficulties of maintaining the alliance as a meaningful relationship. If Korea were to take over command of all forces in the country, including those of the United States, then some have stated this would mean the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the peninsula, as the U.S. has consistently maintained that it would not cede control over its troops to any foreign power.<sup>17</sup> Yet this is not necessarily an accurate appraisal, for it is possible to have two separate commands, if some U.S. troops remain, with a linking organization designed to coordinate planning and operations.<sup>18</sup>

Yet two separate commands raise a number of disturbing implications. Internally, it be effective only if there were a high degree of trust and continuing consultations on strategic issues and the sharing of intelligence. This has not been as apparent as officials would like the public to believe. Perhaps a primary, and important, difference in strategic planning is more than amply illustrated in the now fabled “5019 Plan,” in which there are fundamental differences between South Korean insistence that

its troops be those to occupy North Korea should that country collapse or be defeated in any new war, and the U.S. is equally strong demand that its forces be involved in any such endeavor.<sup>19</sup> If there cannot be agreement on such a basic point, the separation of control raises serious concerns.

Externally, a different set of issues becomes apparent. Whatever the loss of sovereignty that South Korea endured through operational control being given to foreigners, that factor may have had an effect on Japanese policy. As we have indicated, Japan has entered a highly nationalistic phase of its political life. Although the Japanese may not be in the streets, as Koreans have been on a number of significant occasions in recent years, the growth of Japanese nationalistic sentiment is apparent and should be of concern to all Japan’s neighbors and the United States.<sup>20</sup> If operational control reverts to the Korean government, would this provide ammunition to the Japanese nationalists, who, as noted above, wish to change Article IX of the Japanese Constitution, to make Japanese more militarily assertive? And how would China react to such a move? Whatever the defects of U.S. operational command, and however galling they may be to Korean nationalistic sentiments, their elimination could raise regional fears.<sup>21</sup>

The opposition Grand National Party (GNP) has indicated through its policy statements that although Korea should at some future date exert wartime operational control, this is not the right time and that all discussions should be postponed, as they were expected to take place at the September 14, 2006 Bush-Roh summit.<sup>22</sup> The GNP has stated that wartime operational control “has nothing to do with national sovereignty or pride.”<sup>23</sup> Yet, it seems inevitable to this writer that these sentiments are directly involved in such control, for South Korean governments of various inclinations have given up elements of national sovereignty for what are perceived to be greater security benefits, but dealing with a Korean democracy with a hundred flowers of opinion blooming creates severe political problems for any Korean or American administration today.

Disagreement within Korea indicates a fundamental fault line between the heightened Korean nationalism noted above, and most prominently exhibited by the Blue House and the

government's Uri Party, and the more conservative or middle-of-the-road Grand National Party; autonomy from and emotional dependence on the United States vie in a complex and vituperative internal and evolving Korean political scene.

American perceived needs for troop flexibility and rapid response to global priorities are in direct confrontation with Korean official and political needs to assert Korean autonomy. The problems connected with troop presence are exacerbated in Korean eyes by the U.S. priority given the Japan alliance, the reluctance of the U.S. to support Korea on the Tokdo (Takashima) territorial dispute, the Korean love affair with China (in spite of the Kokuryo problem),<sup>24</sup> and the general rise in anti-American sentiment with the changing demographics of South Korean society where youth are both more nationalistic and liberal, and where they have no personal memory, and perhaps little knowledge, of the U.S. contribution to Korea's preservation.

To some in South Korea, the alliance and the presence of U.S. forces in the south may be viewed as insurance policies. One is positive: against the contingency of a North Korean attack.<sup>25</sup> The other is negative: U.S. forces, along the DMZ, were originally conceived as a "trip-wire" that would effectively force the U.S. to respond immediately to any North Korean invasion, even before the defense treaty became effective, as the treaty requires congressional approval. Without such a close relationship, some Koreans fear that the U.S. might unilaterally take military action against the North to eliminate its nuclear threat.<sup>26</sup> But, Seoul city is effectively held hostage to any such act, and although knowledgeable observers recognize that U.S. military action is thus neither militarily nor politically feasible, some in Korea may believe that maintaining the alliance places an additional restraint on the U.S., for the catalogue of U.S. foreign interventions in recent U.S. history does not provide reassurance that it could not happen again.<sup>27</sup>

But more than a fundamental fault line between two contending political parties in South Korea, the disagreement is symbolic, both of the ambivalent nature of South Korean attitudes toward the United States and of the tenuous state into which South Korean-U.S. relations have drifted.

This fault line is expressed linguistically by the differing approaches between South Korean and U.S. official characterizations of the regime and its leader in the North. While President Kim Dae Jung encouraged the South Korean media to stop using invectives against the North (which it promised during a visit to Pyongyang in August 2000), President Bush and his administration's choice of words "axis of evil" and "outposts of tyranny" simply exacerbate the problem, because Kim Jong Il has called for respect.

Indicative of the pressures on a conservative U.S. administration are outcries from human rights and religious groups concerning human rights issues in North Korea and the flow of refugees (a term used, not in the legal sense that China denies) who have fled across the Yalu River into Manchuria. These are said to number perhaps 200,000 and who try to meld into the Korean population on the Chinese side of the border. The appointment of Jay Lefkowitz, U.S. ambassador with conservative credentials to monitor human rights in North Korea is indicative of the stance of the Bush administration toward this problem, while there has been concerted pressure from the Kim administration not to chastise the North on human rights issues. Coupled with religious organizations in the U.S., as well as more conservative religious groups in the South, the differences in official U.S. and South Korean policies toward the North are in stark contrast.

The reluctance of the U.S. to engage in bilateral negotiations with the North and the suspicion on the part of many observers that the U.S. at high political levels has little interest in having the six party talks succeed, or even continue, further results in strains between the U.S. and the South. If, as has been charged, North Korea has been eager to "drive a wedge" between the U.S. and the South, that wedge has been driven by U.S. policies.<sup>28</sup>

The gradual decay of the alliance might well mean that South Korea could be "forced" into a dilemma. Without the U.S. South Korea might feel it has to align itself with either of the potential hegemonic powers in the region—China or Japan. There seems little doubt today that if this were to happen, Korea would choose China as its ally, with all the historic and potential issues that would raise. Parenthetically, the Roh administration has

severely undermined the tenuous good relations that South Korea and Japan developed under the Kim Dae Jung administration, during which a Japanese senior foreign office official indicated that this was the most important accomplishment of President Kim. The Japanese, of course, have often been insensitive to Korean concerns, witness Prime Minister Koizumi's visits to the Yasakuni Shrine, and so have contributed to the malaise.

The predilection of the United States to prefer bilateral relationships rather than regional ones further exacerbates the pressures on the South Koreans to make specific choices when a more regional focus by the U.S. could perhaps alleviate some of these tensions.<sup>29</sup>

### **The U.S.-ROK Summit and the Free Trade Agreement**

On September 14, 2006, Presidents Bush and Roh Moo Hyun held what was probably their last summit meeting before both presidents' terms end. Dominating the agenda were alliance issues and the North Korean crisis, now exacerbated by the North's recent series of missile tests. This real problem, together with the continuing nuclear standoff presents dilemmas for both states. Their policies toward the North may be characterized as ones of substantial disagreement, in spite of often official, but evidently inaccurate, disclaimers to the contrary.<sup>30</sup>

The alliance between the two states that has proven to be so vital for over fifty years has become severely frayed. This has not only been a product of substantial disagreement on how to deal with the North, with South Korea prepared to negotiate and provide economic and humanitarian assistance and the U.S. presenting a set of strict demands only to be discussed in a multilateral setting. Impatience with Korea in the U.S. is evident, and conflicting emotions of nationalism and dependence, in part stratified by age demographics, prevail in Korea. Although neither side officially wants to see the alliance terminated, it could slowly fade away into insignificance.

These disagreements are a natural product of disparate national interests, described above. Korea's targeted concerns are first on the peninsula and then in the region. Yet there is evident and critical overlap in the interests of both states.

A close U.S.-South Korean relationship is in the mutual long-range interests of both countries. In a forthcoming era in which China and Japan could become rivals for hegemony in the region, a South (or united) Korea in close relationship with the U.S. would help protect Korea, which has always existed in a dangerous neighborhood, and provide the U.S. with an avenue or balance to mitigate the overbearing rise of any other state.

In spite of a pessimistic assessment of the current state of relations, something could, however, be done to reinvigorate the alliance. This is the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between South Korea and the U.S. that is presently under negotiation.

The path toward approval is uncomfortably narrow. Legal time constraints in the U.S., the terms of both presidents, and substantive issues on both sides make progress difficult. Interest groups in both states have been vociferous in their protests against the FTA, and in Korea they have taken to the streets. President Roh is confronted by opposition to the agreement by many of the groups that initially supported him—labor, non-governmental organizations, and rural interests, especially with the problem of rice imports.<sup>31</sup> President Bush must deal with American interests, including labor, which oppose the agreement. The roadblocks are many, but the long-term advantages to both states are profound. Compromises are necessary on all sides, on the Kaesong Industrial Complex of South Korean factories in North Korea, automobiles, films, textiles, and agricultural products, among others.

Presidential leadership is required in both countries if the legacies of both presidents in this important bilateral relationship are to be deemed positive by history. Each must be willing to use up some political ammunition in dealing with their own parties and supporters, and to convince their opposition that national interests are paramount. There is no evidence yet that either president is interested in this approach.

Both presidents have low opinion poll ratings in their respective countries. Core supporters of each have become dissatisfied, and although neither legally can run for another term, both should look to their historical record as pursuing their national interests, which in this case coincide over the longer

term. They both need foreign policy successes if their legacies are not to be tarnished. There is an opportunity for both men to demonstrate their statesmanlike qualities, to surmount the obvious problems each state face. Compromises on the agreement are possible, indeed needed, but it will take a strong and positive stance and a personal commitment by both presidents if this opportunity to re-cement relations between the two states is not to be lost. As Peter Beck of the International Crisis Group noted, "The two leaders have fundamentally different ways of looking at North Korea. They are on opposite ends of the political spectrum, and they don't have good chemistry with each other."<sup>32</sup>

In short-term retrospect, given the lack of rapport, one cannot help but wonder why the summit of September 2006 took place at all. For President Bush, preoccupation with the Middle East is obviously paramount, and no meeting with the South Korean president would have enabled his popularity to rise or his policy objective of containing North Korea to be resolved. Preparations for the meeting were largely ignored in the American media. The potential benefits to President Roh were somewhat clearer. There is still a strong body of public opinion, although now diminished, that looks to U.S. relations as important for the future of the Republic. Yet this was, in effect, a non-meeting, at which nothing was resolved. In spite of requests by the Koreans to have the meeting at the Bush ranch in Texas, or at least at Camp David in Maryland (the intimacy of the relationship uses the meeting sites as surrogate indicators of its closeness), this was denied by the White House. There was no mutual press conference and there was no joint communique. Rather than having a positive effect on the relationship, the meeting simply indicated the depth of disagreement and misunderstanding.

### **Quo Vadis?**

The growing well-educated and relatively affluent Korean-American population estimated now at some two million, with most South Korean extended families having some ties to the U.S. in terms of residence, education, or business could be exerting a political influence in the U.S. on maintaining the

alliance. Yet their impact has yet to be demonstrated. American investment in Korea and the tens of thousands of American civilians living in Korea should also prompt pressures on any U.S. administration to relate more effectively to the Roh or subsequent Korean administrations. This is complicated because of the stance of the Bush administration's core political support that, as part of the now proverbial "axis of evil," the U.S. should not negotiate with the North but rather let that state essentially collapse or wither away, to employ a Marxist phrase. Thus, South Korea has been charged by some in the U.S. with "appeasing" North Korea (with emotional overtones of the rise of Hitler) by separating political issues from humanitarian concerns. There are serious questions about whether the U.S. administration has really been interested in the six party talks, and simply used the real, but long publicly known, charge of North Korean counterfeiting effectively to scuttle them. This is not to discharge the North from its own complicity in the talks' stalemate, but the lack of attention to the North Korean crisis simply increases the leverage, already considerable, for the North as it continues to produce nuclear weapons.

If, on one hand, President Bush believes that his blunt and deeply felt negative views on North Korea and its leadership, however accurate in his mind, will achieve his objectives, he is patently wrong. If, on the other hand, President Roh believes that suppression of Korean negative assessments of the situation in the North will assist in attaining his goals, he is likely wrong as well.

Should, however, some appropriate *modus vivendi* be reached on the status of North Korea's nuclear program, and guarantees established against the sale of technology or weaponry to any third power or force (this likely being the ultimate "red line" beyond which the U.S. might unilaterally act against North Korea), Korean-American relations are unlikely to be as close as they once were, in spite of the continuing tensions that have characterized the successful alliance over its more than fifty-year history. It matters not whether the more conservative political forces win the next presidential election in Korea in 2007, or indeed whether a less conservative Democratic party succeeds in the United States' election in 2008. There still may

be differences between the approaches of the South Koreans and the United States administrations toward North Korea. If the Democratic Party were to win, it cannot be perceived to be “soft” on North Korea, although there is every likelihood that it would be prepared bilaterally to negotiate. So it is probable that there will still be a significant hiatus between policies of the South and the U.S. toward the North. This will no doubt reflect the increased nationalism in South Korea that no change in Korean administration is likely to alter.

Although the need for the alliance in the longer-range strategic terms of both nations seems evident to this writer, but one cannot be sanguine over the prospects because politicians of all stripes concentrate on the immediate.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> There was disagreement between the Korean Embassy in Washington and the Blue House in Seoul on interpreting the results of the talks.

<sup>2</sup> For a succinct summary, see op-ed, *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2006. Others have claimed that the issues between the two states were more manifest following the end of the Cold War, which had concentrated a mutuality of concern over North Korean intentions.

<sup>3</sup> See David I. Steinberg, “The New Political Paradigm in South Korea: Planned Social Change and the Elite Structure,” in *New Paradigms for Transpacific Collaboration* (Washington, D.C.: Korea Economic Institute, 2006). Also, his *International Herald Tribune* op-ed, “A Social Revolution Shakes South Korea,” November 10, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> For an excellent discussion of these issues, see Katherine Moon, “US-South Korean Relations,” in John Feffer, ed., *The Future of US-Korean Relations* (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> See Donald Gregg and Don Oberdorfer’s op-ed, *The Washington Post*, September 6, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see David I. Steinberg, ed. *Korean Attitudes Toward the United States: Changing Dynamics*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2005). In that volume, Meredith Woo Cumings makes a critical distinction between “anti-Americanism” and “anti-American sentiment,” with the former denying a whole society, people, and culture (e.g., anti-semitism in Nazi Germany), which is not the usual Korean response, while the latter may involve praise for some aspects of the society

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while condemning another’s. Kathleen Moon (*op. cit.*) treats the issue of anti-American sentiment, in part from a U.S. military base-local society perspective, while in the same volume Gi-Wook Shin and Paul Y. Chang look more broadly in their “The Politics of Nationalism in US-Korean Relations.”

<sup>7</sup> Kim Dae Jung, “Call a Referendum on Wartime Control.” *Chosun Ilbo*, August 11, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. insensitivity to Asian relations is typically illustrated, in living memory alone, to the snub when Japan and Korea were not informed by President Nixon of the U.S. intent to restructure relations with China. There are many more examples.

<sup>9</sup> Some have charged that there is a growing “anti-Koreanism” in the U.S., but insofar as this is remotely accurate, it is probably confined to officials whose primary focus is on U.S. military flexibility worldwide and the difficult discussions with Korean officials on troop and military issues.

<sup>10</sup> Security was paramount, economic interests second, and democracy or human rights a distant third, See David I. Steinberg, “U.S. Policy and Human Rights in the Republic of Korea: The Influence of Policy or the Policy of Influence,” in Debra Liang-Fenton, ed., *Implementing Human Rights Policy. Agendas, Policies, Practices*. (Washington, U.S. Institute of Peace, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Note that the Agreed Framework of October 1994 between the U.S. and North Korea was not a treaty, which would have required ratification by the Senate. In November 1994, the Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives, and it became clear that the Clinton Administration was not prepared to fight for gradual normalization of relations with the North, as included in the Framework. Congressional approval was required, however, for funding for the heavy oil component that the U.S. was to supply the North.

<sup>12</sup> Anecdotal evidence indicates that there are increasing numbers of Japanese demonstrations that go unreported in the international media, and even in the Japanese press.

<sup>13</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, September 11, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, September 6, 2006.



<sup>15</sup> Whatever the symbolic nature of the Yasakuni Shrine may be, the museum attached to the shrine is a patent example of the Japanese attempt to whitewash historic Japanese expansionism in East Asia, basically by arguing that foreign nations forced Japan to do it.

<sup>16</sup> A number of years ago a Japanese intelligence officer visited Washington; at that time many in the Congress were complaining that Japan needed to pay more than one percent of GDP for its own defense as the U.S. was shielding Japan at a time of financial problems in the U.S. He replied that all one had to do to increase Japanese defense spending was to unify Korea.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Kim Dae Jung, “What ‘Independence’ Will Mean,” *Chosun Ilbo*, August 29, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> For an article supporting the Korean government’s position on early transfer of authority, see Moon Chung-in, “Misunderstandings over the Transfer of Wartime Operational Control,” *Korea Policy Review*, September 2006, Vol. 2, No. 9, pp. 26-31. This is a South Korean Government publication.

<sup>19</sup> The magnitude of projected U.S. augmentation in the face of a full-scale North Korean invasion—690,000 troops, 2,000 planes, and 160 ships—seems far in excess of U.S. capacities in the foreseeable future.

<sup>20</sup> In August 2006 alone, consider the August 15 visit to the Yasakuni Shrine by then Prime Minister Koizumi (in response to earlier political pledges), and *The New York Times* article in August on the silencing of critics of Japanese policies in a Foreign Ministry-supported think tank.

<sup>21</sup> Some have suggested that a resuscitation of the United Nations command might prove useful because it would deter any potential Chinese intervention into peninsular affairs should there be a crisis.

<sup>22</sup> See “The Grand National Party’s Position on Transfer of Wartime Operational Control.” Statement of August 29, 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Statement by the Grand National Party International Relations Committee on the Issue of Wartime Operational Control.” August 27, 2006.

<sup>24</sup> See *The Korea Times*, “Seoul Warns Beijing Against Distorting Ancient History.” (September 6, 2006) This issue resulted from a 2002 research study by a Chinese state-sponsored research institute that Koguryo was not Korean, but Chinese, implying claims of Chinese control over the northern part of the peninsula. In August 2004, the

Chinese officially promised not to repeat those charges, but some groups seem to have done so.

<sup>25</sup> See *Joongang Ilbo*, September 22, 2006.

<sup>26</sup> For example, editorial in the *Chosun Ilbo*, September 4, 2006, “South Korea Paints Itself into a Corner.” Former Defense Minister Cho Young-gil under President Roh charged this would give the U.S. “. . . flexibility and freedom to take military action against North Korea.”

<sup>27</sup> In 1994, when North Korea flexed its nuclear ambitions, the U.S. was prepared to augment its troops in the South and supply additional naval forces in the region. But any potential and pinpointed strike against a North Korean nuclear facility would have prompted an early exodus of U.S. civilians from Seoul, which would have been destructive of the South Korean economy and resulted in massive capital flight from the South. So an actual attack on the North is not needed negatively to affect the South in major ways.

<sup>28</sup> When the Korean government was considering, over the overwhelmingly negative popular view in Korea, to send Korean troops to Iraq, it was warned through private intermediaries that such a move would not alter U.S. policies toward North Korea. Personal interview.

<sup>29</sup> See John Feffer’s “Grave Threats and Grand Bargains: The United States and the Regional Order in North-East Asia” in his edited volume, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> This section in somewhat different form appeared in *Ohmy* online news, August 29, 2006.

<sup>31</sup> One observer noted that if the FTA is approved, then President Roh has won internationally, but if it is not approved, he also has won, but internally. But in a selective pole of knowledgeable people, some 80 percent favored negotiations. William Watts Survey, “The Korea-US Free Trade Agreement: KORUS FTA Views of Experts and Concerned Parties: Opinion Survey Report #2, August 31, 2006. Prepared for the Korea Economic Institute.

<sup>32</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, September 11, 2006.