

Seoul Domestic Policy and the Korean-American Alliance

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About the Author

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Introduction

While domestic politics helps to shape foreign policy, the two do not necessarily covary. That is to say, fundamental change in the former may not always trigger corresponding change in the latter. This is especially true of an alliance relationship, for a shared perception of an external threat that helps to sustain such a relationship is frequently unaffected by domestic political change.

The developments on the Korean peninsula during the past decade exemplify these observations. Notwithstanding breathtaking changes in South Korea's domestic politics, the perceived threat emanating from North Korea has not abated, leaving the alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States intact. The emergence of the nuclear crisis in the early 1990s, coupled with the frequency with which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) precipitates provocative incidents vis-à-vis the Republic of Korea (ROK), has actually enhanced the importance of the Seoul-Washington alliance.

Democratization, under way in South Korea since 1987, has not only entailed a marked increase in the degree to which its citizens are allowed to exercise freedom of expression but has also magnified the potential influence of public opinion and the press in policy making. None of this, however, has adversely affected the ROK-US alliance. The press has actually become more conservative, that is, hostile toward the North, which is translated into staunch support for the alliance, the principal source and symbol of deterrence against North Korean aggression. Supporting the alliance, however, is not the same thing as being pro-American. On such issues as trade friction, defense burden sharing, the Status of Forces Agreement, and arms purchases from the United States, the press, which both reflects and helps to shape public opinion, tends to strike an unmistakably nationalistic posture.

Despite a surge of nationalism, anti-Americanism has yet to emerge as a potent political force in South Korea, however. South Korea's transition to democracy has coincided with both the demise of socialism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and the rapid deterioration and near collapse of the North Korean economy. As a result, the radical student movement in the South, which extols the DPRK's ideology of *chuch'e* (self-reliance) while advocating the removal of the U.S. military presence and the termination of the ROK-US alliance, has failed to increase its political base.

I propose to begin this paper by delineating change and continuity in South Korean domestic politics. Next, I shall examine the emergence of the Kim Dae Jung government, briefly noting the manner in which inter-Korean relations and foreign policy, of which the ROK-US alliance is the centerpiece, were handled during the 1997 presidential election. I shall also discuss the constraints on the Kim Dae Jung government as well as the opportunities that have materialized. I then turn to a tentative assessment of the performance of the Kim Dae Jung government, scrutinizing progress registered and changes implemented in two related areas—inter-Korean relations and ROK-US relations. Finally, I shall ponder the probable sources of change and continuity in the Korean-American alliance, examining such factors as domestic political pressure and a possible reduction, even disappearance, of the North Korean threat.

Change and Continuity in South Korean Domestic Politics

South Korean politics have been marked by both change and continuity. The emblem of change is democratization. South Korea, one may argue, has begun to move from the initial stage of democratic transition to the more advanced stage of democratic consolidation. According to Linz and Stepan:

A democratic transition is complete when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government *de facto* has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies *de jure*.¹

It is indisputable that South Korea meets all of these criteria.

In order for a democracy to be consolidated, however, Linz and Stepan posit that certain conditions must be fulfilled that combine to make democracy "the only game in town":

Behaviorally, democracy becomes the only game in town when no significant political groups seriously attempt to overthrow the democratic regime or secede from the state. When this situation obtains, the behavior of the newly elected government that has emerged from the democratic transition is no longer dominated by the problem of how to avoid democratic breakdown. *Attitudinally*, democracy becomes the only game in town when, even in the face of severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas. *Constitutionally*, democracy becomes the only game in town when all the actors in the polity become habituated to the fact that politi-

cal conflict will be resolved according to the established norms and that violations of these norms are likely to be both ineffective and costly. *In short, with consolidation, democracy becomes routinized and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological life, as well as in calculations for achieving success.*²

While South Korea is clearly on its way to fulfilling these behavioral, attitudinal, and constitutional conditions for consolidated democracy, it still has a considerable distance to travel. Some of the milestones it has already passed are nonetheless noteworthy. They include (1) the depoliticization of the military, (2) the consolidation of civilian control, (3) the reassessment of recent political history, coupled with the punishment of those responsible for the December 1979 coup and the May 1980 Kwangju massacre, (4) a marked increase in the role of the National Assembly, and (5) the first peaceful transfer of power from the ruling to opposition parties in Korean history.

The Depoliticization of the Military

Given its track record of political intervention, the military in South Korea has the potential to threaten democratic institutions and procedures there. For over three decades since Park Chung Hee seized power in a coup d'état in May 1961, the military was the dominant actor in South Korea. While outright military rule lasted only two years, political power at the top remained in the hands of former generals continuously from May 1961 to February 1993.

This is not to minimize the contributions former generals have made toward democratic transition. It was Chun Doo Hwan who consented to sweeping democratic reforms, including the reinstatement of direct popular election for the president, in June 1987; permitted a relatively free election in December of the same year; and made possible the first peaceful transfer of power in South Korean history in February 1988. Roh Tae Woo, Chun's hand-picked successor and the beneficiary of the fragmented opposition in the December 1987 presidential election, presided over South Korea's transition to democracy.

It was not until Kim Young Sam became the first popularly elected civilian president in thirty-two years, however, that an opportunity to rein in the military presented itself. His success in implementing a "reform of the military" (*kun kaehyok*) would go down in Korean history as one of his major achievements. Within two weeks of his inauguration, Kim Young Sam began one of the most extensive personnel reshuffles in the top echelons of the ROK military. In the space of some forty days, fifty-nine general officers were either removed (i.e., forced to retire) or reassigned. All the key posts, such as chiefs of staff and the commanders of the Army Security Command, the Capital Defense Command, the Special Forces, and the Second and Third Field Armies, were reshuffled. The principal targets of what amounted to a purge were members of a secret army organization called *Hanahoe* (Society of One). Its members, all graduates of the Korean Military Academy, had received preferential treatment in promotion and assignments under Chun and Roh. The purge of *Hanahoe* eventually affected non-general officers as well—notably, majors, lieutenant colonels, and full colonels. Those who were charged with corruption were also dismissed, with many facing prosecution.³

Whether all this really had the effect of depoliticizing the ROK military, however, may be open to debate. For it was Kim Hyon Chol, the son of Kim Young Sam, who played a pivotal role in his father's vaunted military reform. Kim Hyon Chol, dubbed *sot'ongnyong* (the little president), had intervened extensively in the personnel management of the armed forces,

thereby politicizing the process. There was also a conspicuous rise in the proportion of PK (Pusan Kyungnam) natives in the military hierarchy; PK refers to the native region of Kim Young Sam.

The Kim Young Sam government nonetheless succeeded in sharply reducing the political influence of the military. It may also have curtailed, if not banished altogether, the danger of coups d'état.

The Consolidation of Civilian Control

The success of Kim Young Sam's military reform meant that the principle of civilian control over the military, a sine qua non of democracy, had prevailed. If any doubt remained on the issue, it was dispelled by the Kim government's stunning decision to arrest and try Chun Doo Hwan, Roh Tae Woo, and their associates and followers on charges of both corruption and treason.

The Reassessment of History: The December 1979 Coup and the Kwangju Massacre

Had the so-called slush fund scandal not erupted in October 1995, the stunning arrest of Roh and Chun might not have occurred. The dramatic disclosure by an opposition lawmaker of Roh's slush fund on October 19 prompted the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office to initiate an investigation. Following confirmation of the existence of the slush fund by the former chief of Roh's bodyguards, who had later served as the director of the Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP), Roh publicly admitted on October 27 that during his five-year tenure in office he had collected about 500 billion won (approximately \$650 million) from business firms as contributions to his "governing fund." No less shocking was Roh's revelation that over a third of the money remained unspent and in his possession.⁴

Once the decision to arrest and try Roh was made, other charges were added, of which the most serious was rebellion. The trail inevitably led to Chun, Roh's co-conspirator in the December 12, 1979, coup and the principal instigator of the May 1980 Kwangju massacre. On November 24, eight days after Roh was incarcerated in Seoul Detention Center, Kim Young Sam let it be known that his government would press for the enactment of a "special law" to punish those responsible for the Kwangju massacre. Shortly thereafter, the prosecutors in Seoul reopened their investigation into both the 1979 coup and the 1980 massacre, and on December 3 Chun was taken into custody. Like Roh, Chun was charged not only with rebellion but also with soliciting and receiving bribes.⁵

In August 1996 the Seoul District Court found Chun and Roh guilty of all charges, sentencing Chun to death and Roh to twenty-two-and-a-half years of imprisonment. Thirteen former military leaders, most of them generals, who participated in the December 1979 coup and the May 1980 Kwangju massacre received sentences ranging from four to ten years; one was acquitted. Five heads of conglomerates received two to two-and-a-half year sentences for paying bribes to Chun and Roh in exchange for favors, and five other business leaders received suspended jail sentences. In December, however, an appellate court reduced most of these sentences. Chun's sentence was reduced to life imprisonment, and Roh's sentence was reduced by five-and-a-half years; most of the businessmen had their prison terms suspended and two of them were found not guilty.⁶

Although both Chun and Roh would be pardoned after the December 1997 presidential election, their trial and conviction had nonetheless left an indelible mark on Korean political history. Forcible seizure of power, even if successful, could not be justified, South Korean

courts held in unequivocal terms. Both the 1979 coup and the events surrounding the 1980 massacre—the declaration of an expanded martial law, the dissolution of the National Assembly, the curtailment of freedom of expression and the press, the mobilization of troops to suppress demonstrators in Kwangju, and the use of brutal force against them—the courts declared, were unconstitutional, illegal, and totally unwarranted. They were flagrant acts of rebellion. This was a potent message to military leaders who might be tempted to plot coups d'état.⁷

A Marked Increase in the Role of the National Assembly

During the authoritarian era South Korea's parliament, officially known as the National Assembly, was a little more than a window dressing. What is more, the manner in which its members were selected was only marginally democratic. Not only did elections fail to measure up to the standards of fairness and freedom, marred as they were by manipulation of votes, intimidation of opposition candidates, and rampant corruption, but, beginning with Park Chung Hee's post-*Yusin* second term, up to a third of its members were either de facto appointees or those who had practically bought their seats.

Change began to occur during the second half of Chun Doo Hwan's Fifth Republic. During the first half of his presidency, the National Assembly continued to be relegated to the position of ratifier, rather than initiator, of policy, with its substantive functions barely exceeding those of a debating society. Then, in the parliamentary election held in February 1985, a newly organized opposition political party did surprisingly well, outpolling all established opposition parties. With post-election switch-overs, the New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP) secured a third of the Assembly seats. This gave the NKDP the right unilaterally to convene the Assembly and to initiate a motion to dismiss a cabinet member; it also acquired the power to block any attempt by the ruling party to amend the constitution.⁸

A true turning point came in April 1988, when the first parliamentary election since democratic transition began was held. The Democratic Justice Party (DJP), under whose banners Roh Tae Woo had won the presidential election four months earlier and which continued as the ruling party under Roh, failed to obtain a majority of the seats in the Assembly. Even though it won a plurality of seats—125 out of 299—it had nonetheless lost control of the parliament. The Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD) led by Kim Dae Jung became the largest opposition party with 71 seats. Two other opposition parties, the Reunification Democratic Party (RDP) led by Kim Young Sam and the New Democratic-Republican Party (NDRP) led by Kim Jong Pil, secured 59 and 35 seats, respectively.⁹

The opposition-controlled National Assembly, dubbed *yoso yadae* (small government party, big opposition parties), displayed its power by rejecting Roh Tae Woo's nomination for chief justice of the Supreme Court in August 1988. Later in the year it held widely publicized hearings on the misdeeds of the Chun regime, including its handling of the Kwangju incident and numerous financial scandals in which close relatives of Chun and his wife were implicated. Chun was compelled to appear before a nationally televised session of the Assembly to admit his wrongdoing and offer an apology. He announced that he would turn over all of his wealth to the state, and in March 1989 he and his wife went into a self-imposed exile in a Buddhist temple near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).¹⁰

In January 1990, however, *yoso yadae* came to an abrupt end. Two of the three Kims—namely, Kim Young Sam and Kim Jong Pil—had struck a deal with Roh Tae Woo to merge their political parties with the ruling party. The new party, named the Democratic-Liberal

Party (DLP), now controlled well over two-thirds of the seats in the Assembly. Although the formal powers of the Assembly remained intact, its actual power to check and balance the government was significantly diluted overnight.

The phenomenon of *yoso yadae*, however, would return to South Korea's political arena. In the parliamentary election of April 1996, in fact, the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) fell 11 seats short of the majority. By enticing independents and opposition politicians, the NKP managed to win control of the Assembly by the time it officially convened.¹¹ The election of Kim Dae Jung as president in December 1997, however, briefly resurrected the phenomenon. More on this later in the paper.

The First Peaceful Transfer of Power from the Ruling to Opposition Parties

Kim Dae Jung's victory in the presidential election of December 1997 and his inauguration as president in February 1998 marked the first peaceful transfer of power from the ruling to an opposition party in Korean history. Two previous transfers of power, while peaceful and based on elections that were free and fair, had been intra-party, not inter-party, affairs; hence they did not signal true turnovers. To be fair, both Roh Tae Woo's and Kim Young Sam's assumption of power were milestones in South Korea's democratic transition. The former marked the first time that power had been transferred peacefully in South Korean history, while the latter heralded the end of military hegemony in South Korean politics.

Nonetheless, Kim Dae Jung's ascent to the summit of political power in South Korea signified not a mere milestone but a watershed in South Korean politics. For he had been South Korea's most prominent dissident, a man whom two military regimes tried unsuccessfully to kill on two separate occasions—by abduction and murder in 1973 and by execution in 1980. In both cases his life was spared thanks to U.S. intervention. Kim Dae Jung's election and inauguration as president of South Korea therefore demonstrated how far South Korea had traveled in its quest for democracy. Democracy, it seemed to suggest, was no longer a distant goal but had already become a palpable reality. Democratic transition, in other words, had run its course, and South Korea had entered the phase of democratic consolidation.

The Persistence of the Imperial Presidency

Turning from change to continuity, one may identify the persistence of the "imperial presidency" as the most noteworthy dimension of continuity. The ROK president continues to wield awesome powers and remains the single most important policymaker. A combination of factors may help account for this extraordinary phenomenon—constitutional provisions, the deep-seated patterns of political culture, the low degree of political institutionalization, the fragility of countervailing forces, and the predilections of incumbents.

When the ROK constitution was revised in the fall of 1987 to allow the direct popular election of the president in keeping with Roh Tae Woo's June 29 pledge, the powers of the president were weakened in three respects. First, his term of office, limited to a single term as before, was reduced from seven to five years. Second, his power to dissolve the National Assembly was removed. Finally, his power to issue emergency decrees was scrapped except during a financial or economic emergency.¹²

The president's lack of power to dissolve the National Assembly, however, is counterbalanced by the provision, newly inserted in 1987, that the president is not bound by any vote of no confidence the Assembly may pass vis-à-vis cabinet ministers. The only member of the

president's cabinet who must be approved by the Assembly is the prime minister. The state council remains, as has always been the case, a deliberative organ (*simui kigan*), not a decision-making body (*kyoljong kigan*). The direct election of the president, the centerpiece of the 1987 constitutional revision, may, by enhancing the president's legitimacy, serve to solidify his overall influence as well. In short, the president is the head of state, the head of government, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and the supreme policymaker.¹³

Insofar as constitutional provisions are concerned, the powers of the ROK president are matched by those of the U.S. president. It is a conjunction of other factors, however, that helps to make the former eclipse the latter to a striking degree. The deeply ingrained habit of deference to authority, the salience of hierarchy in interpersonal relations, and the pervasiveness of patron-client networks—all of these combine to bolster the powers of the ROK president. Such cosmetic changes as jettisoning the practice of addressing the president as “your excellency” (*kakha*) and the use of a roundtable in cabinet meetings, both introduced by Roh Tae Woo, have proved to be insufficient to overcome the enduring effects of culture—a culture in which the head of an organization, be it a business conglomerate, a government ministry, or a university, is treated by all of his subordinates with utmost deference.

The low degree of institutionalization can best be seen in South Korea's political parties, which tend to be highly personalistic organizations bordering on personal political machines of their founders/bosses. To the extent that they are institutionalized, they embody patron-client networks. The frequency with which parties change their names, disappear altogether, or merge with other parties underscores their personalistic nature. When three parties merged to form the DLP in 1990, not only had the negotiations been conducted in secret but none of their leaders—Roh, Kim Young Sam, and Kim Jong Pil—had bothered to consult the officers, let alone rank-and-file members, of their respective parties in advance.

Countervailing forces are not absent in South Korean politics. Counter-elites, that is to say, opposition politicians poised or eager to take over control after the next election, can be counted on to criticize the policies and performance of the incumbent government and its leader, thus providing some check on the latter. The press can also exert a restraining influence on the president and his government. The judiciary, on the other hand, has yet to emerge as a significant factor in the equation. The executive branch, ultimately the president, controls the prosecutors in South Korea; hence the decision to arrest, detain, or indict people suspected of crimes and misdemeanors is a political one. The National Assembly can theoretically check and balance the president, especially when it is controlled by opposition parties. As will be noted below, however, the Assembly is frequently paralyzed and unable to perform its expected functions.

Finally, the predilections of incumbents tend to reinforce the preceding factors, contributing to the aggrandizement of presidential power. A strong commitment to democracy, coupled with a long struggle against oppressive regimes, is no guarantee that a leader is free of authoritarian proclivities. Kim Dae Jung is not appreciably different in this respect from his immediate predecessor. A relatively low tolerance for criticism and habits acquired from a prolonged experience as the boss of loyal followers thus tend to magnify the already awesome powers of the office.

The Emergence of the Kim Dae Jung Government: Constraints and Opportunities

The presidential election of December 1997 was decided not on the basis of issues, personalities, or party identification on the part of the electorate but on the basis of the fragmentation of the votes cast. Kim Dae Jung narrowly won the race with 40.3 percent of the effective vote, because the remaining vote was split between Lee Hoi Chang (38.7 percent) and Rhee In Je (19.2 percent); only one of the four minor party candidates surpassed one percent of the vote.¹⁴

This is not to suggest that issues were totally absent. The “issue” of military service, in fact, played a major role in swaying the voters. Had it not been for the controversy surrounding the failure of both of his sons to serve in the military, Lee Hoi Chang would most probably have outpolled Kim Dae Jung. Nor should one minimize the effect of the electoral alliance between Kim Dae Jung and Kim Jong Pil, which ensured that the latter’s native region, the two Ch’ungch’ong provinces, would produce large numbers of votes for Kim Dae Jung. Finally, since Lee Hoi Chang began his quest for the presidency as the candidate of the ruling party, even though that situation later changed, and since Lee had briefly served as prime minister in the Kim Young Sam administration, he must have suffered from a surge of anti-Kim Young Sam sentiment following the outbreak of the currency crisis. Notwithstanding all this, the absence of clear-cut differences among the three main candidates on substantive policy issues made it unlikely that issues would figure prominently in the voters’ decision making.

Discussion of issues, to be sure, did take place. The major candidates appeared in forums sponsored by newspapers and television networks to articulate their views, answer questions from panelists, or even engage in verbal matches with each other.¹⁵ In the process, they touched on both domestic and foreign policy issues. While they agreed more than they disagreed, some differences nonetheless surfaced. Regarding inter-Korean relations, none of the three candidates advocated any fresh approaches, with all three endorsing an incremental approach and the idea of a North–South summit meeting.

Subtle differences could nonetheless be detected regarding the relative importance each candidate attached to the principle of separating politics and economics—that is, pursuing economic transactions with the North without regard to the state of political relations. Kim Dae Jung appeared to be more firmly committed to the principle than either Lee or Rhee. Kim Dae Jung was also more emphatic than the other candidates in stating the view that a collapse of the North would not be desirable, asserting that it entailed the danger of “joint collapse” of both North and South.

Inter-Korea relations did become a campaign issue in an indirect fashion when the controversy over “prisoners of conscience” erupted. In a televised debate in Kwangju on October 31 Kim Dae Jung stated that should he be elected, he would pardon “prisoners of conscience,” meaning “those who are not Communists but were arrested solely because they loved their fatherland.” Asked whether he would include in the category of prisoners of conscience “those who belong to such anti-state organizations as *Hanch’ongnyon*,” the radical student organization, Kim replied that being a member of an organization and committing an anti-state act were two different things and that it was wrong to persecute individuals for their organizational affiliation alone.¹⁶

Kim's remarks prompted the Public Security Division of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office to convene an emergency meeting and the Ministry of Justice to issue a press release stating that "in our country today there is not a single prisoner of conscience who is not a Communist but was arrested for loving his fatherland." Kim Dae Jung had unwittingly reopened a debate on his "questionable" ideological leanings, known as *saekkalon* (the debate on colors). While both the prosecutor's office and politicians opposed to Kim Dae Jung stepped up their offensive, *Hangyore sinmun*, the most progressive daily in South Korea, and Amnesty International came to his defense. The newspaper pointed out that since 1980 the inauguration of a new administration following an election in South Korea always entailed a large-scale pardon of inmates convicted of "public security" offenses.¹⁷ A member of the executive committee of Amnesty International visiting Seoul, Ross Daniels, stated that there were "over one hundred prisoners of conscience" in South Korea. Most of them, he said, had been convicted of having violated the National Security Law, which fell short of meeting the standards of international human-rights law.¹⁸

In the final weeks of the campaign there were a series of suspicious events that appeared to suggest that North Korea was supporting Kim Dae Jung's candidacy. Dubbed the "North Wind" (*pukp'ung*), they turned out to be the products of a covert operation choreographed and funded by the Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP).¹⁹ More on this shortly.

As far as foreign policy was concerned, there was a consensus among the candidates that the cornerstone of South Korea's foreign policy must remain its relationship with the United States, of which the military alliance is a key component. No less important, the candidates agreed, were economic and political ties with the world's strongest economy and only superpower. They also agreed that U.S. troops should remain in Korea even after unification in order to maintain a balance of power in Northeast Asia. Eager to put a distance between themselves and the Kim Young Sam government, which was widely perceived as a failure, a government that had brought humiliation and suffering to the Korean people due to its inability to forestall the currency crisis, the candidates criticized its foreign policy as well.

Kim Dae Jung accused the Kim Young Sam government of a lack of consistency in its policy toward the North, wavering between a conciliatory and a hard-line posture, and of mismanaging its relations with the United States, pointing to occasional friction in Seoul-Washington relations over how to deal with the North. In Kim Dae Jung's words, "I blame President Kim for the current status of U.S.-Korea relations. He was arrogant and one-sided in dealing with Washington. He also attempted to make use of North Korean and diplomatic issues for domestic political purposes....[His] hard-line policy on North Korea and lack of policy consistency has invited unnecessary conflict with the U.S. policy of [inducing the North's] soft landing."²⁰

Asked by *The Korea Herald* to "talk about your blueprint for our foreign policy in the twenty-first century," Kim Dae Jung said that "cooperative relations in security and economy with the United States should be the pillar of our diplomacy in the new century." He hastened to add, however, that relations with the other Pacific powers—Japan, China, and Russia—and the European Union should not be neglected but strengthened so that they might "further our economic interest" and make "constructive contribution to peace, stability, and reunification on the Korean peninsula."²¹

Having attained his long-sought goal of becoming president—he had run unsuccessfully for president in 1971, 1987, and 1992—Kim Dae Jung now faced an immense challenge, the truly herculean task of putting the South's economy back on track, dealing with the continuing threat from the North, and managing relations with other countries, especially the United

States, Japan, China, Russia, and the EU. His government's ability to deal with the North and manage foreign relations, however, is constrained by (1) problems stemming from the need to maintain a coalition with Kim Jong Pil, (2) *yoso yadae* or the lack of control over the National Assembly, (3) the need to deal with the economic crisis, and (4) his personal predictions.

The Need to Maintain a Coalition

As noted, Kim Dae Jung benefited from his electoral alliance with Kim Jong Pil. Given the potency of regionalism in South Korean elections, one may safely assume that the alliance—and Kim Jong Pil's vigorous campaigning in his native region on behalf of Kim Dae Jung—probably helped to sway many voters in Taejon and the two Chungch'ong provinces. The three together produced over a million votes for Kim Dae Jung, whose margin of victory over Lee Hoi Chang, the candidate of the Grand National Party (GNP), in the nation as a whole was 390,557 votes.

In keeping with the terms of the bargain, Kim Jong Pil was rewarded with the acting prime ministership for himself as well as five cabinet posts for his own party members.²² The two coalition parties—the New Congress for New Politics (NCNP) and the United Liberal Democrats (ULD)—however, do not necessarily see eye to eye on policy and tactics. Occasionally, the ULD even issues statements that are openly critical of government policy.²³

Yoso Yadae

That Kim Jong Pil became *acting* prime minister bespoke another, far more serious constraint on the Kim Dae Jung government—the control of the National Assembly by the opposition parties. Unable to win confirmation of Kim Jong Pil as prime minister, Kim Dae Jung resorted to the device of an acting appointment that requires no parliamentary approval.

From the end of May to early August 1998 the National Assembly ceased to function. Disagreements between the ruling and opposition parties had prevented the election of a speaker, two vice speakers, and chairmen of standing committees. The GNP insisted on a “free vote,” which would ensure the election of its own candidate as speaker, while the ruling coalition parties argued that in keeping with tradition they should be given the right to elect their candidate to the post.

The impasse in the Assembly led to a suspension of legislative activity, delaying the enactment of some two hundred bills, including those on financial restructuring and foreign investment. When the Assembly marked the 50th Constitution Day on July 17 without the presence of the speaker, who traditionally serves as its host, there was a chorus of criticism in the press. What made the occasion more poignant was the decision by GNP Assembly members to wear black neckties or black ribbons as a gesture of protest against what they called the “death of democracy.”²⁴ Two days later President Kim Dae Jung indicated that he would accept the opposition party's proposal to elect the speaker of the Assembly in a free vote.²⁵

On August 2 such a vote did finally occur but, due to defections by GNP Assembly members, the GNP's candidate lost to the candidate of the ruling coalition by a margin of ten votes.²⁶ This surprising result was attributable in part to strenuous lobbying by the ruling coalition parties, which had conducted a vigorous campaign to “recruit” opposition lawmakers—that is, to entice them to switch party affiliation. The success of the campaign resulted in a steady erosion of GNP strength in the Assembly. Although in February 1998,

when Kim Dae Jung launched his administration, the GNP held 161 seats out of 299 in the Assembly, by late June its share of the Assembly had been reduced to 147. Since due to the death, disqualifications, and resignations of members, the Assembly had seven vacancies, the GNP still controlled the Assembly by a margin of a single seat.

In the by-elections held on July 21 to fill the vacancies, the GNP managed to win four seats, thereby retaining its majority. The GNP held 151 seats out of 299, while the remaining seats were distributed as follows: the NCNP 88, the ULD 49, the New People's Party (NPP) 8, independents 3. In other words, the ruling coalition had only 137 seats or 45.8 percent of the total.²⁷

The stunning success of the ruling coalition not only in the contest for the speakership of the Assembly but also in winning the confirmation of Kim Jong Pil as prime minister on August 17, however, suggested that the days of *yoso yadae* might be numbered.²⁸ On September 4, the GNP lost its majority status. The absorption of the NPP by the NCNP, the defection of more GNP members to the ruling coalition, and the entry of most of the independent lawmakers into the ruling coalition helped to put an end to *yoso yadae*. A new era of *yodae yaso* (big ruling parties, small opposition party) was dawning.²⁹

The Need to Deal with the Economic Crisis

Not only did these problems undercut President Kim Dae Jung's ability to deal with the economic crisis but the latter in turn hindered his overall operating effectiveness, thus serving as a constraint in its own right. Having presented himself as an expert in economic policy as well as in foreign policy and problems of reunification—someone who was said to be “well prepared” to deal with all of these problems—Kim seems to relish his role as an “economic president,” which is intertwined with the role of global salesman and skillful diplomat. He performed these roles exceptionally well during his state visit to the United States in June 1998.

Kim Dae Jung's Personal Predilections

Kim Dae Jung is known to be a voracious reader, which has helped him become well informed in many fields. His self-perception that he has expertise in such matters as economic issues, foreign policy, and problems related to reunification may, however, become a constraint in some cases. It may hinder his ability to keep a truly open mind; assess problems, situations, and options in a dispassionate way; and make decisions that will optimize, if not maximize, net benefits for the country as a whole.

As noted, his style of leadership may smack of authoritarianism at times. Judging from summaries of meetings over which he presides in the Blue House, available through his home page on the Internet,³⁰ Kim Dae Jung issues lengthy instructions to his senior secretaries (*susok pisogwan*) and cabinet ministers. On at least one occasion, Kim reportedly “scolded” (*chilch'aek*) cabinet ministers for lack of leadership.³¹ Discussions not only in Blue House meetings but also during the president's visits to government agencies often take the form of question-and-answer sessions, with the president asking questions and his subordinates providing answers. Since Kim does his homework and asks sharp questions, such sessions tend to be intimidating to the officials involved. Whether they help to improve government performance or enhance the president's grasp of the reality of situations is, of course, hard to determine.

Kim Dae Jung's cash gift of a million won (about \$770) to all 134 members of the National Assembly who belonged to the ruling coalition—86 members of the NCNP and 48 members of the ULD—just before they returned to their home districts for summer holidays in July 1988 demonstrated that he was no different from his predecessors in playing the role of paternalistic boss or patron to his followers or clients. Although the inclusion of ULD members, who have their own boss—namely, Kim Jong Pil, who formally relinquished leadership of his party to Park Tae Joon but remains its de facto boss—was unusual, it probably reflected how indispensable they were to Kim Dae Jung. To defuse a controversy over the source of the money, Blue House spokesman Park Jie-won explained that while the money given to NCNP members came from a “party fund being raised by donations from supporters,” the money given to ULD members “came from the President's own pocket.”³²

Institutional Reform

If the preceding constitutes constraints on the Kim Dae Jung government, they are offset to some degree by opportunities that have sprung up, of which perhaps the most significant is institutional reform. The first logical target of such reform was the ANSP, South Korea's principal intelligence organization. It was an ironical development, for the leaders of the two ruling coalition parties both had special relationships with the agency. Kim Dae Jung had been one of its victims, a man its predecessor, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), kidnapped and almost killed in 1973. Kim Jong Pil, on the other hand, had been its principal architect, having created it, with help from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, in the 1960s to buttress the military regime spawned by the May 1960 coup he and Park Chung Hee had successfully executed.

What made the task of reforming the ANSP pressing was the revelation that it had concocted another conspiracy to undermine Kim Dae Jung. As noted, during the 1997 presidential election, the ANSP carried out a covert operation aimed at linking Kim with the North. The “North Wind” scheme had the approval of its director, Kwon Young Hae. ANSP agents allegedly succeeded in bribing a number of North Koreans in strategic positions as well as Korean residents abroad. Kwon, who, along with other former ANSP officials, had been arrested and indicted, tried to commit suicide by slashing his stomach open during a prosecution interrogation on March 22, 1998. He issued a statement through his lawyers admitting his involvement in the operation: “It was my responsibility that I received a plan...and I let it go ahead.” The ANSP had paid “200,000 dollars to stage fake allegations against [Kim Dae Jung].” Kwon was also accused by the prosecution of “tampering with an ANSP report on the incident in [such] a way that it [could be used to] blackmail members of Kim Dae Jung's government.”³³ On September 23 Kwon was sentenced to five years of imprisonment by the Seoul District Court's criminal division.³⁴

On October 26 Kwon was indicted on a new charge—covering up an alleged plot by three individuals, including a former staff member of the Blue House, to have North Korea “provoke a border shoot-out to help garner conservative votes for [GNP presidential candidate] Lee Hoi Chang.” The three alleged plotters were also indicted, and their trial got under way on November 30.³⁵

Kim Dae Jung appointed Lee Jong Chan, who had served successively as Kim's campaign manager and transition committee chairman, as the director of the ANSP. Lee had previously served in the agency as a senior official and was familiar with its structure and modus operandi. Lee reorganized the agency, dismissed twenty-eight of its thirty-eight top officials, and

cut its staff by 10–15 percent. The targets of this “purge” included those who were known as protégés of Kim Hyon Chol, the former president’s son, and those who had taken active part in the “North Wind” operation. The latter numbered some forty people.³⁶ The agency changed its name to the National Intelligence Service (NIS or *Kukka Chongbo-bu*) in February 1999 when the National Assembly revised the ANSP law.

In early July, however, a controversy erupted when documents leaked to the press showed that the ANSP had not ceased activities suggestive of interference in domestic politics. They showed that the agency had prepared and circulated among select government agencies reports on how to deal with various criticisms leveled against the Kim Dae Jung government on the eve of the June 4 local elections and on other related matters. The agency suggested concrete countermeasures. Faced with widespread criticisms, including the GNP’s demand for the dismissal of its director, the ANSP explained that what it had done was part of routine analysis of domestic issues, asserting that no actual operations of any kind had been undertaken.³⁷

One result of the reform is the decrease in the relative influence of the ANSP in policy making. In the past the ANSP eclipsed the Ministry of Unification (MOU) on matters relating to North Korea. The latter, in fact, could not even monitor North Korean broadcasts because its request for funds with which to purchase necessary equipment had been turned down due to opposition by the ANSP. As a result, the MOU was reduced to using edited tapes of one-day-old North Korean broadcasts the ANSP made available on a daily basis.³⁸ Although the situation varied depending on who the ANSP director was and his rapport with the president, the ANSP generally carried more weight than other government agencies in the formulation of policies related to North Korea.

All this appeared to change in the Kim Dae Jung administration. One change is the emergence of the National Security Council (NSC or *Kukka Anjon Pojang Hoeui*) as the principal policy-making organ in foreign and security policy. Under the revised NSC law, it now consists of the president (chair), the prime minister, the chief of the presidential secretariat, the chief presidential secretary in charge of foreign policy and security, the minister for foreign affairs and trade, the minister of national defense, the minister of unification, and the director of the ANSP. Previously, the NSC also included the ministers of finance and economy, internal affairs, and political affairs. The NSC operates through two structures—the Standing Committee (SC or *Sangim Wiwonhoe*) and the Working-level Coordination Committee (WCC or *Silmu Chojong Hoe’ui*). Comprised of vice ministers or equivalent officials of the agencies represented in the NSC and headed by the chief presidential secretary in charge of foreign policy and security, the WCC meets every week; its decisions are then submitted to the SC for consideration, which in turn submits its decision to the president. The SC, which meets each week, consists of the chief presidential secretary in charge of foreign policy and security, the foreign minister, the defense minister, the unification minister, the ANSP director, and the director of the State Affairs Coordination Office (who works for the prime minister).³⁹

The pivotal person in the NSC decision-making structure is the chief presidential secretary in charge of foreign policy and security, who is the only NSC member who takes part in the proceedings of both the WCC and the SC. The current incumbent, Lim Dong Won, is a highly respected expert on both inter-Korean relations and security affairs. A graduate of the ROK Military Academy who also earned a degree from Seoul National University, Lim previously served as an ambassador, the chancellor of the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of the ROK Foreign Ministry, and the vice minister of national unification. He

was a participant in the North–South high-level talks that produced the two potentially momentous agreements—one on North–South reconciliation, non-aggression, and cooperation (known as the Basic Agreement) and another on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Having also served as the secretary-general of the Kim Dae Jung Foundation, which Kim Dae Jung had founded as his base of operations and eventually a springboard to political comeback, Lim enjoys both uncommon access to and the confidence of the president.

Lim stresses the importance of the WCC, for, as working-level experts in their respective fields, its members are well positioned to coordinate the divergent views and interests that inevitably arise on various issues. Even though the president does not normally participate in NSC deliberations, he is nonetheless its *ex officio* chairman. On July 15, he presided over its meeting for the first time since taking office. The meeting, called to discuss the continuing North Korean provocations, was preceded by a meeting of the SC. President Kim addressed the NSC meeting, which adopted the first NSC resolution (*uigyol-so*) of the Kim Dae Jung administration.⁴⁰

The NSC, of course, is not the only policy-making structure dealing with issues related to North Korea or national security in the Kim Dae Jung government. The numerous channels of access to the president can be potentially important. To mention the more salient of these channels, Kim Chung-gwon, the chief of the Presidential Secretariat (*Pisosiljang*), is one of the privileged few who enjoy unimpeded access to the president. Among those who meet the president weekly are Kim Jong Pil, the prime minister; Park Tae Joon, the president of the UDL, a coalition partner; Cho Se-hyung, the acting president of the NCNP; and Lee Jong Chan, the director of the ANSP; all cabinet ministers; all chief presidential secretaries; and leaders of the NCNP.⁴¹

The Performance of the Kim Dae Jung Government: An Interim Assessment

During its first ten months, the Kim Dae Jung administration managed to stabilize the exchange rate of the South Korean currency, increase the usable foreign exchange reserve tenfold—from \$5 billion to \$50.2 billion—and make slow but steady progress toward economic recovery.⁴² The painful process of economic restructuring, however, necessitated the closing of many financial institutions and triggered a growing number of bankruptcies among small and medium-sized firms. As a result, by late July the ranks of the unemployed had soared to one and a half million, fueling labor unrest. The hope that Kim Dae Jung, who had been widely perceived as pro-labor and a champion of economic and social justice, would be able to placate organized labor began to fade.

As the year drew to a close, the Kim government, under pressure from the United States and the IMF, vigorously pursued the goal of restructuring business conglomerates (*chaebol*). By early December an agreement was hammered out among the government, creditor banks, and the five largest chaebol—Hyundai, Samsung, Daewoo, LG, and SK—under which the chaebol would concentrate on three to five main lines of business, “dispose of marginal and money-losing units,” and “raise 2 trillion won by disposing of their owners’ private assets and unprofitable and marginal subsidiaries.” The agreement included “big deal” swaps, such as “Samsung Group’s infant auto-making unit and the Daewoo Group’s money-losing home

appliance maker.” The restructuring, if fully implemented, “would cut the total number of the subsidiaries and affiliates of the five chaebol from 264 to 130.”⁴³

Politically, *yoso yadae* created an impasse in the National Assembly, thus preventing the passage of bills dealing with a wide array of issues. Having failed to erode the GNP majority in the Assembly in the July 21 by-elections, Kim or, strictly speaking, his lieutenants, made an all-out effort to entice GNP lawmakers to defect to the ruling camp. As noted, that goal was attained in early September. Many of the defectors had been targets of investigation on suspicion of corruption or election law violations. Defection to the ruling camp thus served as means of avoiding, terminating, or lightening punishment.⁴⁴

In the realm of inter-Korean relations, the Kim administration has compiled a mixed record. Its vaunted “sunshine policy” (*haetbyot chongch’aek*), while multiplying nongovernmental contacts, has yet to produce a measurable change in North Korean policy toward the South. One area in which the new ROK government has scored notable gains is its relations with the United States. The Korean-American alliance has become stronger than ever.

Inter-Korean Relations under Kim Dae Jung

What is Kim Dae Jung’s sunshine policy? It is a policy aimed at inducing change in North Korean policy toward the South through conciliation and displays of goodwill, as opposed to a policy of trying to force such change by pressure, display of force, and other hard-line measures. The idea and the phrase are derived from an Aesopian fable in which, in a contest to determine which was the stronger, the Sun, not the Wind, succeeds in getting a man to take off his heavy coat. Kim explained the gist of the policy in his inaugural address on February 25, 1998:

Inter-Korean relations must be developed on the basis of reconciliation and cooperation as well as the consolidation of peace.... The path toward the resolution of North-South problems is already open. It is none other than the implementation of the North-South Basic Agreement adopted on December 13, 1991. The government authorities in the North and the South have already reached complete agreement on three items, namely, reconciliation, exchanges and cooperation, and nonaggression between the North and the South. If we carry out these agreements, we can successfully resolve inter-Korean problems and march on a broad path toward unification. On this occasion I would like to enunciate three principles governing our policy toward North Korea.

First, we will never tolerate armed provocations of any kind.

Second, we do not have any intention to undermine or absorb North Korea.

Third, we will actively pursue reconciliation and cooperation between the North and the South beginning with those areas which can be most easily agreed upon.⁴⁵

Any sense that this policy was but a continuation of the policy of Kim’s predecessor was quickly dispelled when the Kim Dae Jung government took steps to facilitate nongovernmental exchanges between the North and the South. It began to lift or reduce restrictions on travel to and investments in the North by South Korean citizens. For example, the new government removed both the five-million-dollar ceiling on investment in the North by South Korean companies and the one-million-dollar limit on factory machinery export to the North. It also changed rules to allow South Korean companies to engage in any type of business in

the North except those classified as strategic defense industries, including electronics, aeronautics, and computer science.⁴⁶

As a result of all this, the number of businessmen traveling to the North rose sharply. During the four-month period from March to June, 1998, 404 South Korean citizens traveled to the North, compared with 209 during the same period a year earlier.⁴⁷ The most prominent of these visitors was Chung Ju Yung, the honorary chairman of Hyundai Group. Unlike the other visitors, who went to the North via China, Chung not only crossed the DMZ to the North on June 16 but also led a convoy of fifty open trucks carrying five hundred cattle. His offer to donate a thousand cattle to the North, of which half were delivered that day, and the North's decision to accept it raised the hope that a new era might dawn in inter-Korean relations.⁴⁸

Of the projects on which Chung and his North Korean hosts, the Asia-Pacific Peace Committee, reached an agreement in principle, the one that drew the most attention in the South Korean press pertained to the proposed opening of the scenic Diamond Mountain (*Kumgang-san*) to South Korean tourists. Located in Chung's native province of Kangwon, the mountain is considered the most beautiful in Korea and would be certain to become one of the most popular tourist destinations among South Korean citizens.⁴⁹ Hyundai Group proposed six other projects to the North, while the North proposed five projects. They include building an automobile factory in Nampo, an industrial park in Haeju, a personal computer factory in Pyongyang, and a distilled water factory in the vicinity of Kumgang-san.⁵⁰

On October 27 Chung visited the North again, crossing the DMZ with 501 heads of cattle and 20 Hyundai passenger cars valued at 700 million won (\$539,500). His five-day visit was capped by a meeting with North Korea's supreme leader Kim Jong Il, a privilege rarely granted to visitors. Hyundai Group wrapped up an agreement with the North on tours of Diamond Mountain; under the plan agreed to by both sides, Hyundai would operate cruise ships carrying up to two thousand tourists from the South's Tonghae Port to the North's Changjon Port until 2001.⁵¹ Hyundai agreed to pay the North \$300 for each tourist; additionally, Hyundai agreed to provide the North with a loan totaling \$19.2 million over a five-year period beginning in 1999. Even though the North would pay annual interest of 13.5 percent and repay the principal at six-month intervals, the two sides would renegotiate the terms of repayment in the event that the North lacked sufficient foreign exchange.⁵²

The arrival of the Hyundai cruise ship, *Kumgang-ho*, carrying 1,356 passengers, of whom 889 were tourists, in Changjon Port on November 19 marked an important milestone in inter-Korean relations. Although the North's refusal to permit twenty-four of the tourists to disembark temporarily marred the otherwise historic event, the North relented and allowed them to go on their prepaid tours; some, however, had to wait two days and others three days. The unlucky tourists included employees of the Korea Broadcasting System (KBS), South Korea's government-owned network, and *Choson ilbo*, the conservative daily in Seoul with which the North had a long-running dispute.⁵³

Other displays of goodwill emanated from Seoul, such as the government's donation of 50,000 tons of grain in response to the World Food Program's \$378.2 million appeal for humanitarian aid to the North in 1998. The Seoul government also announced that it would provide "aid worth \$4.8 million carried over from last year," when it pledged \$10 million in response to the 1997 UN appeal.⁵⁴

On June 1, 1998, it was reported in the *New York Times* that during his forthcoming state visit to the United States Kim would "urge the United States to give up its economic sanctions against North Korea. He will suggest, instead, a policy of increasing political 'engagement'

and growing economic ties as the best way to moderate the behavior of North Korea, the world's last Stalinist state." This became headline news in the premier U.S. daily on June 2 and was hailed in its editorial on the following day. "His plea," the editorial said, "deserves a serious hearing, especially from Congressional Republicans inclined to treat any American overtures toward Pyongyang as a mortal threat to the security of South Korea." It added: "Mr. Kim is a better judge than anyone in Washington of South Korea's security needs, and by championing a less confrontational approach to his northern neighbor he effectively erases the argument that an adjustment in American policy would undermine Seoul's interests. Mr. Kim understands well enough that North Korea remains a harsh dictatorship and a potential military threat. But he recognizes that the best way to promote positive and peaceful change in the North is not by clinging to cold-war sanctions but by expanding economic and diplomatic links."⁵⁵

In another notable departure from the policy of its predecessors, the Kim Dae Jung government announced that it would include long-term North Korean prisoners who refuse to renounce communism among those who would be pardoned on August 15 in commemoration of the fifty-third anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule. The government, however, would require pledges from the prisoners, who number seventeen and include one inmate who holds the world's record for imprisonment (forty-one years), that they would abide by South Korean laws after their release. The government briefly toyed with the idea of dispensing with such condition but, faced with adverse reaction from the press and opposition politicians, decided to stick with it.⁵⁶ None of the long-term prisoners, however, submitted the required pledges. One hundred three prisoners who had been convicted of violations of the National Security Law complied with the requirement and were freed on August 15, 1998, along with 2,071 other inmates.⁵⁷

The first inter-governmental dialogue the Kim Dae Jung government held with the North, however, ended in failure. The vice-minister-level talks, held in Beijing from April 11 to 18, discussed the North's request for fertilizer aid from the South, the South's proposals on the reunion of separated family members, and other issues. The North originally wanted to limit negotiations to the fertilizer issue only and, even after grudgingly acquiescing to the South's demand that other issues be included in the agenda, tried very hard effectively to postpone a serious discussion of humanitarian issues. Whereas the South indicated a willingness to provide fertilizer on the basis of the reciprocity principle—meaning the North must agree to a timetable for setting up a meeting place for family reunions—the North insisted that the fertilizer issue be decided first before other issues could be taken up. There was a considerable gap between the two sides regarding the amount of fertilizer the South should provide the North, too—the North reportedly requested 500,000 metric tons but the South was willing to provide only 200,000 metric tons. After week-long negotiations between the delegations led by ROK unification vice minister Jeong Se-hyun and by Chon Gum Chol, a senior counselor (*ch'aegim ch'amsa*) of the DPRK Administration Council (*chongmuwon*), respectively, the talks broke down.⁵⁸

More serious than the failure of the Beijing talks, however, were the continuing North Korean provocations against the South. On June 22 a North Korean submarine was found entangled in fishing nets in South Korean territorial waters off the east coast city of Sokcho by a South Korean fishing boat and was seized by the ROK navy. The submarine, however, sank while being towed, and when it was recovered was discovered to contain the bodies of nine North Koreans; the South Korean authorities surmised that five of the dead might have

been crew members of the ship and four specially trained agents. The latter, they theorized, probably shot the crew and then committed suicide.⁵⁹

Amidst demands from the press and politicians for a strong response, the Kim Dae Jung government tried to refrain from overreacting to what the press called the “second submarine incursion”—since its precursor had been the submarine incident of September 1996—stressing that its sunshine policy would remain intact. The North’s demand for the return of the ship and the remains of its crew and passengers, however, led to a meeting of general officers at Panmunjom, which produced an agreement. On July 3 the UN Command handed over the remains of the nine North Koreans to the North at Panmunjom.⁶⁰

Within ten days, however, another provocative incident erupted. In the same area where the North Korean submarine was found and seized on June 22, the body of a man armed with a Czech-made submachine gun, a hand grenade, and a dagger and carrying two oxygen tanks was discovered on July 12. The ROK authorities concluded that he was a North Korean agent and demanded an explanation and an apology from the North, which not only dismissed the ROK demand but asserted that the whole incident had been fabricated by the South.⁶¹

This second incident prompted President Kim to preside over a meeting of the National Security Council for the first time on July 15, which adopted a resolution calling on the North to cease immediately all hostile acts against the South, admit that the recent provocations constituted violations of the Armistice Agreement and the North–South Basic Agreement alike, apologize to the South, punish those responsible for them, and take credible measures to prevent their recurrence. The resolution also underlined the ROK government’s resolve to strengthen its defense posture against the North, solidify the ROK–US security alliance, and heighten the people’s awareness of security needs. Finally, the resolution reaffirmed the ROK government’s policy of trying to improve North–South relations through peace, reconciliation, and cooperation, making it plain that the three principles it had enunciated regarding its policy toward the North would remain intact. The ROK government, the resolution stressed, will consistently pursue the policy of coupling the quest for exchanges and cooperation with an ironclad security posture vis-à-vis the North.⁶²

Instead of acceding to the South’s demand for apology, the North precipitated another incident that both provoked and alarmed Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington. On August 31 the North fired a multistage missile across Japan. The first stage of the missile, suspected of being *Taep’odong 1*, crashed in the middle of the Sea of Japan (the East Sea) and its second stage flew over Japan to land in the Pacific Ocean. Claiming that it was a satellite, not a missile, the North asserted that its third stage propelled a satellite named *Kwangmyongsong-ho* (Bright Star) into orbit; it allegedly began orbiting the earth.⁶³

Whether it was a missile or a satellite, the North’s launching of the multistage rocket showed that Pyongyang had missiles capable of hitting any target in Japan and that the level of Pyongyang’s rocket technologies was much higher than had previously been estimated.⁶⁴ Although the North Korean action posed a threat to the ROK, Japan, and the United States, it appeared to provoke Japan the most. Tokyo’s response was both swift and harsh. It announced a suspension of humanitarian aid to the North, negotiations for a resumption of normalization talks, and charter flights between Japan and North Korea. Most important, Tokyo decided to withhold its signature on an agreement with the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) under which Japan would commit itself to contributing \$1 billion to the light-water nuclear reactor (LWR) project. Estimated to cost \$4.6 billion, the

project would provide the North with two 1,000-megawatt LWRs. South Korea had agreed to finance 70 percent of the cost.⁶⁵

Both Seoul and Washington reacted more cautiously to the rocket launching. Seoul, while expressing concern over the incident and engaging in both bilateral and multilateral consultations with Tokyo and Washington, took pains to stress that its sunshine policy would remain intact and that its assistance to the North, including participation in the LWR project, would continue.⁶⁶

Washington agreed to send “an unusually large shipment of emergency food aid to North Korea”—about 300,000 tons of wheat and other grains. The agreement, which “angered Japan,” came “amid growing signs that North Korea was trying to launch a satellite, as it claims, when it shot off the missile.” If confirmed, “it would mean that the initial portrayal of the firing as a clearly hostile act was partially incorrect.”⁶⁷

Washington’s conciliatory posture was also related to its desire to keep dialogue with Pyongyang on track. For Washington’s discovery of a massive underground construction project inside a mountain at Kumch’angni, 25 miles northeast of Yongbyon, had aroused fears that North Korea might be trying to resume its nuclear weapons project. The United States demanded access to the construction site but the North reportedly asked for compensation of \$300 million for such access. After six rounds of talks aimed at resolving the controversy, held in New York and Washington in December, the two sides remained deadlocked. They were scheduled to meet again in Geneva in January 1999.⁶⁸

One possible explanation for the continuing provocation may be that despite its small size, the North Korean regime is far from monolithic. It is highly compartmentalized, and the various components engage in their routine duties oblivious to any changes or adjustments in the overall policy of the regime toward the South. Hence that part of the North Korean apparatus which is charged with responsibility for conducting operations of various kinds against the South continues to do its job to the best of its ability. On the other hand, the regime is capable of coordinating the activities of its component parts when the stakes are high. That may serve to bolster the expectation in the South that provocations may yet cease—at least for the time being.

The firing of the missile or satellite cannot be explained by North Korea’s domestic structure alone. It was most probably aimed at accomplishing multiple goals, of which the most noteworthy may have included (1) bolstering the DPRK’s self image and perceived international standing, (2) strengthening its bargaining position vis-à-vis Japan and the United States, and (3) advertising its missile capability to its clients in the global arms market.⁶⁹

Kim Dae Jung’s State Visit to the United States

The two most important developments pertaining to the ROK-US alliance during the first ten months of the Kim Dae Jung administration were Kim’s nine-day state visit to the United States in June and Bill Clinton’s return visit to South Korea in November. Not only did they provide opportunities for Kim and Clinton to get to know each other better but, more importantly, they helped to reaffirm and strengthen both the economic ties and security relationship between Seoul and Washington.

The warmth and respect the two leaders showed toward each other were extraordinary. During the arrival ceremony held on the South grounds of the White House on June 9, Clinton said:

We live in remarkable times. In the 1980s, some of the greatest heroes of freedom were the political prisoners of repressive regimes—Lech Walesa in Poland, Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, Nelson Mandela in South Africa, and Kim Dae Jung, who faced a death sentence in South Korea after years of unjust and brutal treatment by the government. How very different things are now. Lech Walesa was elected Poland's President; Vaclav Havel and Nelson Mandela are the Presidents of their countries; and Kim Dae Jung is here today as President, after the first ever democratic change of power from the governing party to the opposition in the fifty-year history of the Republic of Korea ... Mr. President, you have the admiration of the American people. We will work together to deepen democracy and economic opportunity.⁷⁰

Noting that "President Kim has spoken of the powerful link between democratic governments and market economies," Clinton expressed "strong support" for the Kim government's economic reforms—"opening markets, making financial institutions, businesses, and government more accountable." Clinton "also reaffirm[ed] America's steadfast commitment to our security alliance." "We strongly support," he said, "South Korea's efforts to find common ground with North Korea. The United States also will continue to participate with China in the four-party efforts to build a permanent peace." Finally, Clinton paid tribute to Kim's human-rights record. To "men and women all around the world who work to protect human rights," Clinton had the following message: "Your work matters. You help transform nations and end tyranny. You save lives. Standing with me today is living proof—Kim Dae Jung, a human-rights pioneer, a courageous survivor, and America's partner in building a better future for the world."⁷¹

Kim Dae Jung expressed his heartfelt thanks both to America and to Clinton personally:

As I faced forty years of persecution from dictators and authoritarian regimes, including death threats, imprisonment, house arrest, exile, and surveillance, the unwavering support from America was a source of encouragement and deliverance. Today the triumph of democracy in Korea is also a victory for the democracy-loving people of America.

...Mr. President...I will never forget the support and encouragement you gave me last year when the foreign exchange crisis hit Korea. The day I was elected President, you personally called me and extended your strong support. It was a deeply moving experience. It reminded me once again, a friend in need is a friend indeed.

Throughout history and throughout difficult times, the United States has been an unwavering friend. You liberated us from Japanese colonial rule. You helped us guard our nation against the communist aggression. You have given us on numerous occasions support and assistance.⁷²

Kim Dae Jung was to reiterate his personal indebtedness to the United States in a speech at a state dinner in his honor that evening and in a speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on the following day. "Whenever my life was in danger," he said in the dinner speech, "America helped save me, directly or indirectly, through its extraordinary efforts."⁷³ He was more specific in his speech to the Congress:

In 1973, I was kidnapped in Tokyo and taken onto a ship. Bound and gagged, I was about to be thrown overboard. But, as only someone who has brushed up to death's door can know, I saw Jesus Christ near me. I prayed for my life. And I truly believe God

saved me. At that moment, an airplane flew over the vessel and stopped my abductors. Later, we learned the plane had intervened because of information from the United States.

In 1980, I was arrested by the leaders of a military coup d'etat and sentenced to death. [Had it] not [been] for the active efforts by President Carter and President-elect Reagan, this podium would now be empty...

...And to those of you in this chamber, to those Americans who fought for democracy and to whom my life is literally owed, I will never forget the example of your safe haven. I will never forget America and the destiny that so strongly binds my political life to your nation.⁷⁴

As the first ROK president who owes his life to the United States, then, Kim Dae Jung has deep emotional attachment to that country as well as an unshakable commitment to both economic partnership and security alliance between the two countries. In his speech at the state dinner, Kim expressed the hope that the partnership between Seoul and Washington would “grow even stronger, expanding beyond our traditional cooperation in security and economics.” “We need,” he said, “to promote unceasing mutual cooperation, as Korea attempts to nurture both democracy and a free-market economy.” In the realm of security cooperation, Kim not only stressed the need to “maintain an unwavering alliance” between the ROK and the United States but also underscored the importance of pursuing “an active engagement policy toward North Korea to promote openness, peace, and stability.” “We should,” he said, “consult closely in pursuing inter-Korea and Four-Party talks—and formulate more flexible policy toward North Korea.”⁷⁵

In an interview with the editors and reporters of the *Washington Post*, Kim revealed that his eagerness to pursue his version of engagement policy “resulted in the only disagreement” between him and the Clinton administration “that surfaced during an otherwise warm and amicable visit.” Kim said that although “we are in complete agreement on the subject of engagement in principle,” “we have some differences” over tactics, adding “we can resolve them.”⁷⁶

On the issue of U.S. sanctions on North Korea, Clinton said that “what [Kim] asked me to do was to work with him to support a policy of reciprocity which would enable us to move forward with the reconciliation of the North and the South. And I said I would be prepared to do that.” A senior official in the Clinton administration explained to the *Washington Post*, however, that “the United States is less optimistic than Kim that North Korea will respond constructively to gestures such as easing sanctions.” “Our relationship and our history prove that once you do something with the North Koreans, they will pocket it and there’s no reciprocity,” he said.⁷⁷

All this represents what Joel Wit, a former U.S. negotiator with North Korea, calls “a role reversal.” As he put it, “we have become like previous South Korean administrations, where they didn’t want to do anything with the North. Now the new South Korean government wants to change...and we are stuck in the past.”⁷⁸

The first Kim-Clinton summit produced some tangible results as well as commitments to take specific steps. Two agreements were signed—an Open Skies Agreement and an extradition treaty. President Clinton “confirmed during the summit that OPIC (the Overseas Private Investment Corporation), a U.S. federal agency, will reinstate its investment guarantees for U.S. companies doing business in Korea, which were suspended in 1991.” Clinton “also reaffirmed the readiness of the United States and other industrialized countries to provide backup rescue financing for Korea, as necessary, through ‘second line of defense’ funds.” The

two presidents “agreed to work quickly toward establishing a Bilateral Investment Treaty.” At Kim’s request, Clinton “promised to send a U.S. delegation to Korea to investigate the investment situation.” Finally, the two presidents “agreed to restore operations of the Korea-America Economic Committee, as a working channel at the vice ministerial level.”⁷⁹

Kim’s busy schedule also included a visit to the New York Stock Exchange, where he gave a speech explaining tax incentives for foreign direct investment in his country, a visit to the Silicon Valley, where he made a pitch for investment in South Korea to the executives of Hewlett-Packard and Intel, a lecture at Stanford University on South Korea’s economic reforms, a visit to Georgetown University, where he received an honorary doctorate, and meetings with UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, IMF managing director Michel Camdessus, and World Bank president James Wolfensohn.⁸⁰

All in all, Kim Dae Jung’s state visit to the United States appeared to have been productive for both countries. Their bilateral ties, both economic and security, were placed on a firmer footing than ever before, and the prospects for cooperation and policy coordination improved measurably.

Clinton’s Visit to South Korea

President Bill Clinton’s three-day visit to South Korea in late November 1998 underscored both the solidity of the US–ROK alliance and Washington’s resolve to coordinate its policy toward the DPRK with its key allies. Clinton’s visit to Seoul had originally been scheduled to occur after his visit to Tokyo following his participation in the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Malaysia. Although the eruption of a crisis involving Iraq had forced him to cancel his plan to go to Kuala Lumpur, Clinton went ahead with his visits to Tokyo and Seoul.

The second US–ROK summit in five months took place in the Blue House on November 21, producing results in four areas. First, it provided the two leaders with an opportunity to “further strengthen the close security alliance,” with Clinton “reaffirm[ing] the unwavering security commitment of the U.S. toward the ROK.”⁸¹ Second, the two leaders agreed that the “strategy of engagement with North Korea” should not be jettisoned. Calling Kim Dae Jung’s “gradual engagement” a “wise policy,” Clinton expressed “hope that North Koreans will not do anything here to force us to change policy.”⁸² The two leaders concurred in the need to take “all necessary steps to clarify the purpose and character of the underground site [near Yongbyon] through full access.”⁸³

Third, Clinton and Kim Dae Jung discussed ways of promoting economic cooperation between their two countries. Kim expressed his satisfaction with the “smooth implementation of the economic measures that were agreed upon in the last summit meeting,” notably the resumption by the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation of investment guarantee programs in South Korea and the resuscitation of the US–ROK subcabinet consultations.⁸⁴

Finally, the two leaders agreed to “work together towards a closer partnership [on] regional and global issues.” To encourage a simultaneous “fostering of democracy and market economy in Asia,” Clinton and Kim “decided to create a democracy forum to bring together young leaders from the Asian region led by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy and the Korean Sejong Research Institute.”⁸⁵ Clinton praised Kim’s policy of combining de-

mocracy with market economy: "There are still people who say that democracy is a luxury people can afford only when times are good. But Korea is proving that democracy can provide the necessary support for action when times are difficult." Clinton added that "Korea's [approach] is helping to define what Asia's path will be in the twenty-first century."⁸⁶

As was the case in his previous visits to South Korea, Clinton made a point of visiting U.S. troops there, addressing them at Osan Air Base from a U-2 spy plane hangar on November 22. He told the troops that "our joint commitment to freedom is stronger than ever." He added:

President Kim faced prison and prosecution, death threats and death sentences, because he stood up for his belief in democracy and because he would not give up his hope that true democracy could flourish here in Korea. Now our countries work together more closely than ever before for peace and human rights around the world. And none of that could happen without you, the American and Korean military forces.⁸⁷

Conclusion

What are the possible sources of pressure for change in South Korea's relations with the United States? Internally, the erosion of support for the alliance, although remote, cannot be ruled out altogether. That in turn would depend on external developments, of which the most important is a sharp decline in or even the disappearance of the security threat. A marked improvement in inter-Korean relations, such as a vigorous implementation of the North-South Basic Agreement or unification, no matter how it may come about, will signal such a state of affairs.

The level of tensions on the peninsula, in other words, is a pivotal factor. At the current level, which is neither high nor low but perhaps "medium high" or "medium low," domestic support for the alliance remains solid. Only radical students question its value and advocate the removal of the U.S. military presence, but their number is negligible and their impact on either public opinion or policy is exceedingly limited, even nonexistent.

Should tensions abate measurably, however, this picture may change. The routinization of inter-governmental dialogue, economic cooperation involving public funds and government personnel, an increase in mutual visits involving ordinary citizens to a level comparable to that of Taiwan-Mainland visits (even though the direction of visits is lopsided)—all these will bespeak such change. Under such circumstances the value of the alliance and the U.S. military presence is bound to become a salient topic for heated debate among opinion makers.

Given the deep-seated and pervasive distrust of Japan among the South Korea people, rooted in their bitter historical experience, however, the argument, made by Kim Dae Jung and others, that the U.S. troops should stay in Korea even after reunification in order to prevent Japan or any other major power from gaining hegemony in the region may strike a responsive chord and may well emerge as the dominant view. One should recall, in this connection, that none of the major candidates in the 1997 presidential election in South Korea dissented from this view.

Interestingly, the task force report on the Korean peninsula sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations concurred with the logic of this view, even though it did not go so far as to

suggest the continued deployment of U.S. troops in the South. "In the postunification environment," the report said, "the United States will be interested in...maintaining the U.S.-ROK alliance as a symbol of the U.S. commitment to stability on the peninsula, *as a balance against possible hegemony over the peninsula by outside powers*, and as a basis for close U.S.-ROK political cooperation in the region."⁸⁸

The balance of power argument, it should be stressed, is not based solely on the Korean people's distrust of Japan; it is also sustained by their distrust of China and Russia. Not only have all three countries engaged in conflict in quest of hegemony at Korea's expense in the past, but they have all inflicted untold suffering on the Korean people—Japan through its colonial rule, Russia in its prior incarnation as the Soviet Union by contributing to the division of the peninsula and the outbreak of the Korean War, and China by intervening in the war. Notwithstanding the normalization of relations between the ROK and all three—and, in the case of Japan, the development of close economic ties and security cooperation—a sizable proportion of the Korean people continue to feel uneasy about the possible rise of any of the three, particularly Japan, as a hegemonic power. Dramatic improvement in South Korea's relations with the three powers would obviously go a long way toward alleviating such apprehensions, thereby undercutting the balance-of-power argument.

Such other sources of pressure for change in ROK-US relations as problems stemming from the U.S. military presence in the South—notably disputes related to the Status of Forces Agreement, the issue of relocating the U.S. military base in Yongsan, the issue of sharing the cost of the U.S. military presence—and trade friction appear to be manageable and hence will not seriously affect the alliance. South Korea's financial crisis has underscored the importance of the U.S. role in non-security arenas and may serve to strengthen the alliance.

In sum, political change in South Korea has not adversely affected its economic, political, and security ties with the United States. Thanks in part to President Kim Dae Jung's special relationship with the United States, which is truly unique, Seoul-Washington relations have become closer and stronger than ever. His sunshine policy of coupling firmness with inducements—and of separating politics from economics—may have created a role reversal of sorts. It is now Seoul that is eager to give Pyongyang greater inducements to change its policy, while Washington is prone to be a bit more cautious. This prompted the Council on Foreign Relations' task force report to urge Washington to adopt parallel measures—notably, assuring North Korea that "the United States seeks the gradual transformation and not the destruction or absorption of the North."⁸⁹ While calling on the Clinton administration to offer the North both initial inducements such as easing U.S. sanctions and "a subsequent package of reciprocal measures that might lead the North to improve relations with the South and reduce the military threat," the report also advocates "a South Korean lead in negotiations with the North, based on closely coordinated U.S. and ROK approaches to Pyongyang."⁹⁰

Thus far the main problem for the Kim Dae Jung government's policy toward the North has stemmed not from any domestic political constraints but from the lack of reciprocity from the North, which has neither jettisoned its past practice of dispatching armed agents to the South nor moderated its harsh rhetoric against the Seoul government and its officials. Particularly vicious has been Pyongyang's denunciation of Kang In Duk, the man Kim Dae Jung has appointed to be his unification minister. Kang, a former top official in the KCIA in charge of North Korea, is well known for his hard-line views on the North; moreover, he had served as a commentator for the Korea Broadcasting System, sending daily anti-Communist messages to the North. Despite all this, Kang has emerged as the principal implementor of President Kim's sunshine policy.⁹¹

Assuming that inter-Korean relations do undergo a metamorphosis from being confrontational to being cooperative, one can envision three scenarios for the fate of the ROK–US alliance: (1) status quo, (2) modified alliance, and (3) termination. The first scenario envisions the continuation of the alliance, with the mutual defense treaty intact and the American military presence in the South unchanged, except for marginal changes in its level and composition. Under the second scenario, however, the treaty remains in effect but the U.S. troops are withdrawn. Finally, the third scenario visualizes the termination of the alliance altogether, which means not only the removal of the American military presence but the scrapping of the treaty as well.

As already noted, it is the first scenario that appears to have the highest probability of realization. Nonetheless, the second scenario should not be ruled out. The actual degree to which inter-Korean relations become cooperative will be the pivotal factor in the equation. That in turn would hinge on domestic political developments in both North and South Korea. The ascendancy of pragmatism in Pyongyang's policy-making councils would be a *sine qua non*. Equally indispensable would be the ability of the government in Seoul to continue its policy of engagement with the North.

In brief, then, the ROK–US alliance will continue to be intertwined with the vicissitudes of inter-Korean relations. To the extent that domestic politics help shape the latter, therefore, Seoul domestic politics will exert a notable influence on the alliance. The influence, however, will not be direct but will be mediated by a multitude of other variables, over some of which Seoul will have little or no control.

Notes

¹ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 3.

² Ibid., p. 5. Emphasis added.

³ “Pihwa munmin chongbu kun kaehyok: sot’ongnyong ui kaeip” [Untold Stories about the Civilian Government’s Military Reform: Intervention by the “Little President”], *Tonga ilbo* [East Asia Daily] (Seoul), July 13, 1998; “Munmin chongbu 5 nyon: kun kaehyok oi makjon makhu” [Five Years of the Civilian Government: The Inside Story of Military Reform], *Hanguk ilbo* [Republic of Korea Daily] (Seoul) April 27, May 1, May 2, 1998. The “civilian government” or *munmin chongbu* refers to the Kim Young Sam government, which officially adopted the designation.

⁴ B.C. Koh, “South Korea in 1995: Tremors of Transition,” *Asian Survey*, XXXVI, 1 (Jan. 1996), pp. 54–55.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 55–56.

⁶ B.C. Koh, “South Korea in 1996: Internal Strains and External Challenges,” *Asian Survey*, XXXVII, 1 (Jan. 1997), p. 5.

⁷ For extensive excerpts from the Seoul District Court’s opinion, see *Hanguk ilbo*, August 27, 1996, pp. 7–10.

⁸ For details, see B.C. Koh, “The 1985 Parliamentary Election in South Korea,” *Asian Survey*, XXV, 9 (Sep. 1985), pp. 883–897.

⁹ Han Sung-Joo, "South Korea in 1988: A Revolution in the Making," *Asian Survey*, XXIX, 1 (Jan. 1989), pp. 29–34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.

¹¹ For a brief analysis of the 1996 parliamentary election, see Koh, "South Korea in 1996....," pp. 2–4.

¹² "T'agyldoen honboban kwa hyonhaeng honbop pigyo" [A Comparison of the Agreed Proposal to Amend the Constitution and the Current Constitution], *Hanguk ilbo*, September 1, 1987.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Chosun ilbo* [Chosun (or Korea) Daily] (Seoul), December 19, 1997.

¹⁵ See, for example, "Taeson TV t'oron 3-dang hubo chongch'aek pigyo" [A Comparison of the Policies of the Three Parties' Candidates during TV Debate in Presidential Election], *Hangyore sinmun* [One Nation Newspaper] (Seoul), July 30, 1997; "Ch'anggan 32-junyon 4-dang hubo kangyon, ne hubo ch'ot hapdong yuse taegyol" [Lectures by Candidates of Four Parties in Commemoration of the 32nd Anniversary of Our Newspaper's Founding, First Confrontation among Four Candidates During Joint Appearance], *Chungang ilbo* [Central Daily] (Seoul), September 22, 1997; "Ponsa chuch'oe chot haptong t'oronhoe, songo undong sae panghyang t'a chesi" [First Joint Discussion Meeting Sponsored by Our Newspaper, New Directions in Campaign Proposed], *Tonga ilbo*, November 26, 1997; "T'ongil chuje taeson hubo haptong t'oronhoe..Hangyore chuch'e" [Joint Discussion Meeting of Presidential Candidates Focusing on Unification Under Hangyore Auspices], *Hangyore sinmun*, December 6, 1997; "Interview with Candidates," *Korea Herald*, December 12 and 13, 1997.

¹⁶ *Chosun ilbo*, November 1, 1997.

¹⁷ *Hangyore sinmun*, November 2, 1997.

¹⁸ *Chungang ilbo*, November 3, 1997.

¹⁹ The events included the disclosure by the ANSP of the text of a letter allegedly written by a prominent South Korean defector to the North to Kim Dae Jung and allegations by a Korean resident in the United States that Kim Dae Jung had attempted to meet secretly with a high-ranking North Korean in Beijing in October 1996 and that Kim had been receiving campaign funds from the North since 1971. Other people displayed in a Tokyo news conference copies of letters allegedly sent to Kim by one of the vice presidents of the DPRK. *Hangyore sinmun*, December 14, 1997; *Tonga ilbo*, December 14, 1997.

²⁰ *Korea Herald*, December 12, 1997.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Kim Dae Jung appointed twelve politicians in his seventeen-person cabinet. Seven were from his own party, NCNP; they were given the top posts in the following ministries: (1) Foreign Affairs and Trade, (2) Justice, (3) National Defense, (4) Government Administration, (5) Education, (6) Culture and Tourism, and (7) Industry and Resources. The five ULD ministers were assigned to (1) Information and Communications, (2) Health and Welfare, (3) Environment, (4) Construction and Transportation, and (5) Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. *Hanguk ilbo*, March 4, 1998.

²³ See, for example, "Chaminryon taebuk hyomnyok p'ok chojol ch'okku" [ULD Calls for Adjustment of the Scope of Cooperation With the North], *Chungang ilbo*, June 29, 1998. This article deals with a statement issued by Kim Ch'ang-yong, deputy spokesman for the ULD, on June 28, 1998. The statement expressed reservations about the way in which the

government was handling the second submarine incident, saying that “defeatist thinking” underlay the armed forces’ operations, which might invite a third and fourth submarine incident. It called on the government to adjust the timing and scope of cooperation with the North in accordance with the North’s response, while maintaining the basic framework of its policy toward the North. In November 1998 Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil sparked a controversy by expressing his support during a visit to Japan for the proposal to establish an Asian Monetary Fund. The Blue House hastened to dissociate itself from Kim’s action. Upon returning to Seoul, Kim Jong Pil reportedly “clarified” his statement in Japan to Kim Dae Jung as reflecting his “personal views.” “Kim ch’ongni, Kim taet’ongnyong e churye pogo ‘AMF p’amun’ haemyong” [Prime Minister Kim Makes Weekly Report to President Kim; Clarifies “AMF Controversy”], *Tonga ilbo*, December 2, 1998.

²⁴ “Paralyzed Parliament Celebrates Constitution Day,” *Korea Herald*, July 17, 1998.

²⁵ Shim Yong-hae, “Public Pressure Leads President to Accept Compromise on Speaker Vote,” *ibid.*, July 20, 1998.

²⁶ *Hanguk ilbo*, August 4, 1998.

²⁷ “Chae, poson yo 3-got, ya o-got tangson” [By-elections: 3 from Governing and 4 from Opposition Parties Elected], *Chungang ilbo*, July 23, 1998; Kim Yong-bom, “GNP Poised to Launch Strong Offensive Against Ruling Camp,” *Korea Times*, July 23, 1998.

²⁸ Kim Jong Pil received 171 votes out of 225. This suggested that up to 25 GNP members who were present might have supported Kim. *Chungang ilbo*, August 18, 1998.

²⁹ Kim Chang-sup, “Ruling NCNP, Splinter NPP to Merge Today,” *Korea Times*, August 29, 1998; “Ruling Coalition Gains Plurality in Assembly; Desertion of GNP,” *Korea Herald*, September 5, 1998.

³⁰ <http://www.bluehouse.go.kr>. Although this homepage is available in both Korean and English, many documents, including summaries of meetings, are displayed only in Korean.

³¹ “Yoroni andoegettamyon...munch’aek kaegak sisa, D.J. changgwan tol chilch’aek” [DJ Scolds Cabinet Ministers, Implies Reshuffle Based on Public Opinion], *Hanguk ilbo*, June 17, 1998.

³² Chon Shi-yong, “Kim Dae-jung’s Aides Step Forward to Defend Cash Gifts,” *ibid.*, July 21, 1998; “Ch’ongwadae Kim taet’ongnyong oi oiwon hyugabi chaewon haemyong” [Blue House Clarifies Source of Funds for President Kim’s Vacation Expense Gifts to Assembly Members], *Chosun ilbo*, July 21, 1998.

³³ “Prosecution Wants Expanded Probe of S. Korea’s ‘North Wind’ Scandal,” *Agence France Presse* (AFP), Seoul, March 23, 1998.

³⁴ *Chungang ilbo*, September 20, 1998.

³⁵ Kim Kyung-ho, “Trial Opens for Border Shootout Plotters; Ex-Intelligence Head Kwon Also to Be Tried on Coverup Charge Today,” *Korea Herald*, November 30, 1998.

³⁶ “Kwollyok tae idong hyonjang: sogo tongjo omjiga yangji toeda” [Locale of Great Power Transfer: High West, Low East; Place Under Shadow Turns Into Sunny Place], *Wolgan chungang WIN* [Monthly Chungang WIN], vol. 4, no. 4 (April 1, 1998), the Internet version; Yun Sok-jin, “Angibu ottoke pakkwina: taedaejok mulgariro ch’ejil kaeson chongbo yuryo p’anmaeje komt’o” [How Will ANSP Change? Improve Caliber through Massive Reshuffle, Sale of Information under Consideration], *ibid.*, vol. 4, no. 5 (May 1998), the Internet version.

³⁷ “Angibu chongch’i kae’ip nollan” [Controversy over Political Intervention by ANSP], *Hangyore sinmun*, July 7, 1998; “Angibu saejongbu sodo chongch’i kae’ip” [ANSP Meddles in Politics Even under New Government], *Chosun ilbo*, July 7, 1998; “Hannara. Ch’ongwadae angibujang hae’im taerip” [GNP-Blue House Face-off over Demand for Firing of ANSP Director], *Chungang ilbo*, July 8, 1998.

³⁸ “T’ongil chumu puch’o T’ongil-won puk pangsong choch’a susin motae” [The Main Government Agency in Charge of Unification, the MOF, Cannot Even Monitor Broadcasts from the North], *Hangyore sinmun*, November 1, 1997.

³⁹ “Oegyo anbo chongch’aek choyul chal toenda...maeju ch’agwan silmuhoewi hyoryok” [Foreign and Security Policies Well Coordinated...Weekly Working-level Meetings of Vice Ministers Effective], *Tonga ilbo*, June 2, 1998.

⁴⁰ Chongwadae, *Kukka Anjon Bojang Hoe’oi taet’ongnyong malsom* [The President’s Statement at the National Security Council Meeting] (Seoul: The Blue House, July 15, 1998) and idem, ‘98 che 1-ch’a Kukka Anjon Pojang Hoe’oi oigyol-so [The Resolution of the 1st Meeting of the National Security Council in 1998] (Seoul: The Blue House, July 15, 1998).

⁴¹ See “Kongdong chongbu oisa kyoljong ch’egyedo” [Diagram of the Decision-Making Structure of the Coalition Government], *Hanguk ilbo*, April 20, 1998 and Chongwadae, *Taet’ongnyong iljong* [The President’s Daily Schedule] (Seoul: The Blue House, daily (Mon-Sat.))

⁴² “IMF 1-nyn, che-2 hwallan psikka’ oehwan poyugo ildan anjngkwon” [“One Year under IMF, Will There Be a Second Currency Crisis,” Foreign Exchange Reserve Stabilized], *Tonga ilbo*, November 23, 1998; “Oehwan poyuaek sasang ch’t 5-baek k tall tolpa’a” [Foreign Exchange Reserve Surpasses \$50 Billion for the First Time in History], *ibid.*, December 2, 1998.

⁴³ Chon Shi-yong, “Big 5 Agree on Reform Program; To Shed Unprofitable Units, Focus on Core Businesses,” *Korea Herald*, December 8, 1998.

⁴⁴ “Ch’lsae tri pakkunn isk kudo” [Balance of Power in the Assembly Being Changed by Migratory Birds], an editorial, *ibid.*, September 8, 1998; “Chungang form: ydang mujoe yadang yujoe?” [Chungang Forum: Ruling Party (Members) Not Guilty, Opposition Party (Members) Guilty?], *Chungang ilbo*, September 12, 1998.

⁴⁵ Chongwadae, *Che 15-dae taet’ongnyong ch’wi’imsa: kungnan kokbokkwa chaedoyak oi saesidae rol yopsida* [The Inaugural Address by the 15th President: Let Us Open a New Era in Which We Overcome Our National Difficulties and Make a Leap Anew] (Seoul: February 25, 1998), pp. 7–8; Embassy of the Republic of Korea, *President Kim Addresses Inaugural Ceremony* (Washington, DC: February 25, 1998), pp. 4–5. The quotation is an edited version of the official translation provided by the ROK Embassy in the United States.

⁴⁶ “Up-and-Coming Inter-Korean Exchange,” *People’s Korea* (Tokyo), May 13, 1998. That the pro-North Korean newspaper in Japan—an organ of the DPRK-oriented Korean residents’ federation, *Ch’ongnyon* (*Chosen soren* in Japanese)—published an article on this topic is a sign that North Korea welcomed the development.

⁴⁷ *Chosun ilbo*, July 9, 1998.

⁴⁸ Kevin Sullivan, “S. Korean Auto Tycoon Drives Cattle to North: Peasant’s Son Aids Hungry Homeland,” *Washington Post*, June 17, 1998, p. A01.

⁴⁹ In July Hyundai Group and the Asia-Pacific Peace Committee of the DPRK signed an agreement in Beijing in which the North guaranteed the safety of South Korean tourists to Komgang-san. The North agreed to make it possible for them to call their family members in

the South during their visit and even pledged not to detain any tourist for making remarks critical of the DPRK. Depending on further agreements, the first ship carrying South Korean tourists was scheduled to embark on its historic voyage on September 25. *Tonga ilbo*, July 24, 1998.

⁵⁰ *Chosun ilbo*, July 24, 1998.

⁵¹ *Newsreview* (Seoul), October 31, 1998, pp. 6–7.

⁵² *Chungang ilbo*, October 25 and November 23, 1998.

⁵³ “Puk, kwankwangdan 24-myeong kbu” [North Refuses Entry to 24 Members of Tour Group], *Hanguk ilbo*, November 20, 1998, p. 1.

⁵⁴ Kim Ji-soo, “Seoul to Give 50,000 Tons of Grain to North Korea,” *Korea Herald*, March 10, 1998.

⁵⁵ Nicholas D. Kristof, “Seoul Leader Asks End to Sanctions on North Koreans,” *New York Times*, June 2, 1998, pp. A1 & A8; “Kim Dae Jung Courts North Korea,” *ibid.*, June 3, 1998, an editorial.

⁵⁶ *Chosun ilbo*, July 20 and 28, 1998.

⁵⁷ *Chungang ilbo*, August 9, 1998; *Tonga ilbo*, August 16, 1998.

⁵⁸ *Chungang ilbo*, April 11–18, 1998.

⁵⁹ *Hanguk ilbo*, June 23–27, 1998.

⁶⁰ Oh Young-jin, “Two Koreas Yet to Cross Minefield to Conclude Sub Incident,” *Korea Times*, July 4, 1998.

⁶¹ *Chosun ilbo*, July 13–15, 1998; “‘Mujang kanch’op ch’imt’u sakon’ on uriwa amuron kwangye to opda, Choguk P’yonghwa T’ongil Wiwonhoe taeyonin i onmyong” [We Have Nothing to Do With the “Armed Spy Infiltration Incident,” Statement by the Spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland], *Chosun sinbo* [Korea News Report] (Tokyo), July 15, 1998. *Chosun sinbo* is the Korean-language organ of *Ch’ongnyon*, the pro-DPRK federation of Korean residents in Japan.

⁶² Chongwadae, ‘98 che 1-ch’a Kukka Anjonbojang Hoeoi oigyolso.

⁶³ “Pukhan taep’odong 1-ho misail palsa kyngno” [Trajectory of North Korea’s *Taep’odong 1* Missile], *Chungang ilbo*, September 2, 1998; “Kita Chsen misairu no kaij ssaku uchikuru” [Search Ends for North Korean Missile in the Sea], *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), September 2, 1998; Sheryl WuDunn, “North Korea Fires Missile over Japanese Territory,” *New York Times*, September 1, 1998; “Successful Launch of First Satellite in DPRK,” *Korea Central News Agency (KCNA)*, Pyongyang, September 4, 1998.

⁶⁴ Dana Priest, “N. Korea May Have Launched Satellite,” *Washington Post*, September 5, 1998, p. A21.

⁶⁵ *Asahi Shimbun*, September 1, 1998; “Missile Sparks Japan, ROK, US Talks,” *Daily Yomiuri*, September 4, 1998.

⁶⁶ *Tonga ilbo*, September 3, 1998.

⁶⁷ David Sanger, “U.S. to Send North Korea Food Despite Missile Launching,” *New York Times*, September 10, 1998.

⁶⁸ Edith M. Lederer, “U.S., N. Korea End Uneasy Talks,” *Associated Press*, New York, December 11, 1998; *Tonga ilbo*, December 11, 1998.

⁶⁹ For an incisive analysis of this issue, see Takesata Hideshi, “Pukhan in’gongwisng (misail) i pimil: taegikwon e ssoa olin Kim Jong Il i tamokjk mesiji” [The Secret of North Korea’s

Satellite (Missile): Kim Jong Il's Multi-purpose Message That Was Fired into the Atmosphere], *Sin Tonga* [New East Asia] (Seoul), October 1998.

⁷⁰ White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by President Clinton and President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea at Arrival Ceremony*, June 9, 1998, p. 1.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 2–3.

⁷³ Embassy of the Republic of Korea, *Official Speeches* (Washington, DC: June 9, 1998), p. 1.

⁷⁴ Idem, *Press Release: Address by President Kim Dae-jung at a Joint Meeting of the US Congress* (Washington: June 10, 1998), p. 1.

⁷⁵ Embassy of the Republic of Korea, *Official Speeches*, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Thomas W. Lippman, “Kim Pushes Cooperation For N. Korea,” *Washington Post*, June 12, 1998, p. A20.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Embassy of the Republic of Korea, *Press Release: Korea-U.S. Summit Results Outlined* (Washington, June 9, 1998).

⁸⁰ Ch’ongwadae, *Taet’ongnyong iljong* [The President’s Schedule], June 8–10 (Seoul: The Blue House).

⁸¹ Ch’ngwadae, *Opening Remarks for November 21 Joint Press Conference After R.O.K.–US Summit* (Seoul: November 21, 1998), p. 1.

⁸² Kevin Sullivan and John F. Harrison, “Clinton Defends ‘Wise’ Policy of Engaging Defiant N. Korea,” *Washington Post*, November 21, 1998, p. A12.

⁸³ Ch’ongwadae, *Opening Remarks*, p. 2.

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 2–3.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

⁸⁶ White House, Office of the Press Secretary (Seoul, Republic of Korea), *Remarks By President Clinton and President Kim Dae-Jung In Exchange of Toasts*, Blue House, Republic of Korea, November 21, 1998, p. 4.

⁸⁷ White House, Office of the Press Secretary (Seoul, Republic of Korea), *Remarks By President to Base Personnel and Their Families*, Osan Air Force Base, Republic of Korea, November 22, 1998, p. 2.

⁸⁸ *Managing Change on the Korean Peninsula: Report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), p. 40. Emphasis added.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 22.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 25–27.

⁹¹ See, for example, “Kang t’ongil nambuk kyonghyop hwalsong-hwa cheyak hanon kakjong kyuje wanhwa” [Unification Minister Kang Liberalizes Various Regulations That Restrict North–South Economic Cooperation], *Choson ilbo*, July 5, 1998; “T’ongilbu, kyoyok opch’e susi pangbuk ch’ot sungin” [Unification Grants Company Doing Business With North Permission to Visit North As Needed for the First Time], *ibid.*, July 11, 1998. Previously, South Korean companies could obtain single-visit permits only.

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