

# **The Roh Moo Hyun Government and the ROK-U.S. Alliance: Opportunities, Constraints, and Prospects**

by  
**Dr. Chung In Moon**

**Chung In Moon:** I'll give a much shorter version of speech because I have been giving several talks in town. It seems much better for us to have more open discussion rather than me giving a long talk. And anyhow, I was amazed by the size of the audience in Washington, D.C. and I have been talking now seven times in town but every time I see different faces. It is really one of the greatest places on earth, and I thank you very much for inviting me. I hope I can avoid the overlap with my previous talks in many different places, including Council on Foreign Relations, SAIS, Carnegie, and USIP.

## **U.S.-ROK Alliance Pivotal to Formation of South Korea**

Let me get to the point, very straightforward. I would argue that the contribution of the U.S.-ROK alliance was pivotal to the formation of contemporary South Korea. Without the alliance, I really don't see that South Korea could achieve such stability, and I don't think that South Korea could have achieved its current economic prosperity.

Some folks in Seoul argue that without the United States, South Korea could not have the past, the present, and the future. I agree with their views. Think about the Soviets coming to the south and setting up the Soviet Occupation government in South Korea and vice versa, North Korea under the American occupation forces. Well, we could have a different history now. While the North could have been enjoying prosperity, the South might have fallen into the trap the North is currently in.

A very famous economist, Robert North, argues that the evolution of one country's economy is path dependent. If you have right political and economic institutions in the first

place, you can prosper. If you have the wrong institutions, you can devolve. And I've seen in the case of South Korea. Owing to ties with the United States, we could have capitalist economic development and we're now enjoying the economic fruits of capitalism and democracy in South Korea. In addition, it was the United States that liberated us from Japan. And the United States sent more than 300,000 soldiers to the South during the Korean War who saved us from communization by the North and Soviet Union.

And at the same time, it was the United States, which provided a security umbrella to us during the Cold War era, and we were a sort of a free rider. We made the maximum benefit of being a free rider so that we can minimize our investment in national defense, while diverting the resources into the economic development. And we have now become the 13th largest economy in the world. Therefore, I would say that you cannot really over-exaggerate and over-emphasize the pivotal contribution of the United States to South Korea and that contribution was undertaken through the alliance tie.

South Korea and the United States have maintained a strong alliance for the past 50 years. Obviously, it was possible because there were shared common threats, those threats coming from North Korea, and China, and the Soviet Union. South Korea and the United States were unified in containing the communist world.

## **U.S.-ROK One of the Most Successful Alliances**

The words, "common threat," put both the U.S. and South Korea together very strongly. More than that, there has been an institutional

inertia which has been responsible for fostering the close alliance ties between the U.S. and South Korea. I would argue that the U.S.-ROK alliance is one of the most successful alliances, along with the NATO and the US-Japan alliance. Why? Because of the high degree of institutional integration through the formation of Combined Forces Command. Although war time operational control lies in the hands of the American commander in South Korea, institutional integration between the American and South Korean forces has been conducive to sustaining a stable alliance between the U.S. and South Korea.

And there has also been very strong domestic support. In the United States, there was no doubt among Americans that they should continue to support the ROK-U.S. alliance. And in South Korea, also, a large number of South Koreans strongly believed in the virtue and importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance. South Korea has also been increasing its defense burden sharing with the U.S. as part of obligations of an ally. In the 50s and 60s, South Korea was a free rider. America was providing collective goods for the ROK-U.S. alliance but in the mid-70s on, South Korea has been quite faithful to defense burden sharing and defense cost sharing.

Likewise, the ROK-U.S. alliance was not only sustained, but also developed into a mutually beneficial alliance, prospering for the past 50 years. Today, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the ROK-U.S. alliance. It is a time for joy and celebration for all. But in reality that is not the case, we have different voices.

In South Korea, according to a recent poll by *Chosun Daily*, 50.9 percent of the respondents, which was conducted in the first week of January, said that they did not favor continuing the presence of American forces in South Korea. Out of which 44.3 percent advocated gradual withdrawal of American forces, while 6.3 percent calls for the outright withdrawal of American forces in South Korea. Almost 96.2 percent of the respondents said that the present

Status of Forces Agreement between the U.S. and ROK is unequal, and therefore, it must be amended. And you have seen an array of candlelight protests in the wake of the innocence verdict by the American military court related to the deaths of two middle schools girls by an American armored personnel carrier.

### **Less Support for Alliance Among U.S. and Korean Public**

We can clearly see newly emerging sentiments among South Koreans, supporting the position of “abandon the U.S. and let us be independent and self-reliant and self-confident.” On the other hand, look at the United States. You see a similar trend. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations conducted a survey, asking “if Korean War breaks out again, should we commit to South Korea?” Fifty-six percent say no and only thirty percent, yes.

Some opinion leaders have been taking much radical positions. William Safire, Robert Novak, Richard Allen, who used to be very strong friends of South Korea and are now saying that if they don’t want us, let us get out of South Korea. In other words, a new doctrine of “abandon South Korea” is emerging in the United States.

Of course, I would argue that these views are not really mainstream views. I would say that their views, in statistical terms, might belong to a three standard deviation from the center of distribution curve. But it is very, very important to note that we are now seeing these voices in a very pronounced manner, creating cause for real concerns.

And young folks in South Korea, and particularly those who supported President-elect Roh in the last presidential election, have argued that there should be some changes in wartime operational control that belongs to the U.S. They also call for the amendment of SOFA. A more balanced and equal relationship between Washington and Seoul has become a new foreign policy motto.

Some argue that the excessive dependence on the United States could increase our vulnerability. It is more so because of an American plan to reduce its forces in South Korea. As you all know, that the 1989 Nunn-Warner amendment mandated the gradual reduction of American forces in South Korea. And then in 1990, the U.S. announced the East Asian Strategic Initiative out of which the first phase of reduction was undertaken; about 6,000 American soldiers were taken out of South Korea. Then, in 1994, we had the North Korean nuclear crisis which froze the reduction idea up to now.

The idea of reducing American forces in South Korea is resurfacing under the Bush administration. And Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has been pursuing a new strategy called the military transformation strategy that would reduce the size of overseas deployed forces, while enhancing mobilization capability from the mainland U.S. Such shifting strategic ideas could foster the reconfiguration of American forces in South Korea that can lead to a reduction in its ground forces.

“Abandon the U.S.,” “abandon South Korea,” more self-reliance in South Korea, and American plans to undertake the reconfiguration of its forces and to reduce its ground forces in South Korea can be seen as critical signs of strained ROK-U.S. alliance ties.

You may blame the Sunshine Policy for the change. The Sunshine Policy might have caused divergent threat perception on North Korea between the U.S. and ROK. But there are several additional factors.

### **North Korean Nuclear Issue Strains Alliance**

The most important factor that strains the ROK-U.S. alliance is the North Korean nuclear issue. There are some difference of opinions between Washington and Seoul on how to deal with it. While the U.S. is insisting on the principle of “dismantle first, then we

will talk,” South Korea is urging the U.S. to engage in a direct talk with North Korea through a simultaneous exchange of North Korea’s public commitment to dismantle its nuclear weapons and American security assurance. The new leadership in South Korea argues that since time is not on our side, the U.S. should take immediate actions to defuse the North Korean nuclear problem through dialogue.

There also seems to be a major gap in the perception of the North Korean nuclear problem. In October last year when North Korea admitted the existence of a highly enriched uranium (HEU) program, the U.S. considered it a crisis and urged immediate actions to punish the North. But South Korea thought that it was not a crisis and that there is time for collective coordination to deal with the HEU program. Ironically, South Korea considers the current nuclear stand-off a real crisis, while the U.S. believes it is not a crisis by saying that the North has been doing all this stuff of black-mailing for the past twenty five years.

Divergent views in the urgency and criticality of the North Korea’s nuclear issue have divided South Korea and the U.S. While the U.S. argues that sanctions and military options should be on the table, the new leadership in South Korea explicitly opposes putting the military option on the table. More importantly, there seems to be a major difference in strategic goals. The Bush administration’s hard-liners tend to believe that isolation, containment, and transformation of North Korea is the most desirable goal. But South Korea urges to narrow the focus on nuclear and missile issues, not regime transformation.

These differences have raised the sensitive issue of whose side South Korea is currently taking. In the wake of the nuclear stand-off, North Korea has been trying to exploit cleavage between Seoul and Washington by appealing to inter-Korean people’s cooperation. And some in South Korea have also urged Seoul to play a more assertive leadership role in

mediating the nuclear confrontation between Pyongyang and Washington. Such attitudes have in turn caused major suspicions in the U.S., questioning which side South Korea is taking with. Robert Novak and Richard Allen have argued that the new leadership in South Korea has been either taking side with the North, or sliding into the neutral zone. Likewise, different perceptions of, and methods of dealing with, the North Korea nuclear issue have critically undercut the U.S.-ROK alliance.

### **Domestic Political Change in South Korea and the U.S.**

And the second important factor is domestic political change. A new political landscape in South Korea has been partly responsible for the gradual erosion of the ROK-U.S. alliance. The majority of the South Korean population comes from the post-Korean war generation. They're young. They have forgotten the American contribution in the past 50 years in ensuring security, fostering prosperity, and facilitating democratic stability in South Korea. They say "oh, our parents get the benefits; we did not get any benefits from the U.S." It is something like Japanese youths saying that "we have nothing to do with Japanese mistakes during the colonial past; our parents, not us, should bear responsibility."

There is a lesser degree of appreciation of the American contribution to South Korea on the part of the young generation. And South Korea youths feel less threats from North Korea than the old generation does. Mr. Roh Moo Hyun got elected as the new president with the overwhelming support of Korean youths. The mandate of peace echoed by young supporters will narrow the margin of maneuver in the pursuit of Roh's policy on the ROK-U.S. alliance.

On the other hand, the United States has also encountered a changing domestic political landscape in the post-9/11. The 9/11 shock has made the dichotomy of friends and foes the basic guiding principle of new American

foreign policy. South Korea should make a clear position, whether it is with the United States or not. There will be no such thing as the middle ground. In view of this, domestic political changes in both South Korea and the U.S. are likely to be the principal source of frictions and tension that could undermine the fifty years' old bilateral alliance.

### **New Identity Syndrome**

And third, it's much more on the South Korean side, what I call the new identity syndrome. Many South Koreans think that South Korea has grown big; it is now the 11th largest trading nation, and 13th largest economic power in the world. We even got into the final four of the World Cup. Despite this ascension in world society, we are still inferior to the U.S. We are too much dependent on the U.S. We need to realign and correct the gap between power and status by having a more equal and balanced relationship with the United States. This is a new national identity widely shared among Korean youths, which in turn poses major challenges to the U.S.-ROK alliance.

Finally, a series of "bad" events have stirred anti-American sentiments in South Korea and produced a negative spill-over effect on the bilateral alliance management. The tragic deaths of two little girls and the acquittal of the two suspects in the accident by the American military court, the short track scandal during the Salt Lake Winter Olympics in 2001, and South Korean media's negative portrayal of American military personnel have all contributed to aggravating anti-American sentiments in South Korea.

### **Important Issues Regarding the Alliance's Future**

Now, there are three important pending issues regarding the future of the ROK-U.S. alliance. They are the amendment of wartime operational control, the amendment of the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA), and relocation of American military bases and reduction of its

ground forces through force reconfiguration. All these issues will be sensitive. Given the structure of the Combined Forces Command between South Korea and the U.S., returning the wartime operational control to the South Korean military might not be easy without significantly realigning the alliance. Amending the SOFA that was amended less than two years wouldn't be easy either. And a careful comparative analysis of the SOFAs in Japan and Germany shows that the amended version in South Korea is no different from them or in some areas better than those in Japan and Germany. And relocating American bases in the southern part of South Korea and concomitant reconfiguration and force reduction in the middle of the North Korean nuclear crisis do not look good either.

Political leaders can have different views, as being influenced by domestic politics and their own foreign policy visions. But it is important for those leaders to narrow different views through diplomacy and mutual consultation. It is more so among allies. Then how can we overcome the differences?

I think the most important factor is the next government in South Korea. President-elect Roh Moo Hyun's view of the United States, his view of the alliance, and his view of American forces in South Korea will be extremely important.

### **Roh Has Long-Term Perspective on Alliance**

Roh used to be anti-American in the 1980s. As a human right lawyer, he used to join the young folks in staging anti-government and anti-American demonstrations. But now that's changing, particularly after he got elected. He made it very clear to the public that we need to have the continuing alliance with the United States. We need the alliance until we have a stable peace in East Asia. The stable peace can be achieved only when all countries in the region adopt a free market system, make a full transition to democratic governance, and cre-

ate a community of security. Thus, Roh seems to have in mind quite a long-term perspective on the value of the ROK-U.S. alliance.

And also, he has been strongly appreciating the importance of American forces in South Korea. He has admitted on several occasions that the U.S. forces in South Korea have played very important roles in deterring North Korea's military attack, stabilizing strategic balance in the region, and reducing strategic uncertainty to be followed by American disengagement.

Likewise, he has now completely different views of the alliance and the American forces in South Korea. Of course, Roh often comes with contradictory statements on the U.S. and North Korea. But one thing is clear: he is an extreme pragmatist. For him, national interests are more important than his personal ideologies which he used to share in the past.

Moreover, Roh is well aware of domestic and external constraints in taking any initiatives on the realignment of the bilateral alliance. He made that point very clearly in his recent dialogue with the Korean people at the Korean Broadcasting System.

First, he assured South Koreans that American forces in South Korea should be retained and the U.S.-ROK alliance should be maintained until North and South Korea create a viable and lasting inter-Korean peace system. Second, he wouldn't take any risk of polarizing domestic political views in South Korea and thereby creating political instability. That means what? He believes in the importance of domestic consensus. More than 10 million South Korean voters maintain a conservative view on the status of American forces and ROK-U.S. alliance. Roh cannot ignore these conservative forces.

Thus, any decisions on these issues will be made through extensive domestic political consensus building process. We should be reminded of that as much as the many youths who participated in the candlelight protests,

pro-American people have also organized several large public demonstrations in support of the United States. Finally, he made it clear that there will be no unilateral actions. If any changes are to be made, there will be very, very close and constant consultations and consensus-building with the United States.

### **Prospects for the ROK-U.S. Alliance**

What then would be prospects for the ROK-U.S. alliance? I believe that it will last by overcoming current constraints. I can point out several factors that can sustain the bilateral alliance. Although the Cold War is over, I would argue, South Korea and the U.S. still share a common threat. Whether North Korea possesses nuclear weapons or not, threats from North Korea are real and present. Until we have a stable peace arrangement with the North, we cannot ignore its military threats. Moreover, a precarious East Asian security environment also justifies the continuing alliance tie.

We have a very different pattern of deterrence in East Asia compared with Europe, which I call the structure of finite deterrence. East Asian countries are still captives of their historical past of domination and subjugation, sustaining perpetual suspicions and distrust among them. Suppose the U.S. disengages from East Asia and then Japan will be rearmed, then China will be trying to counter the Japanese ascension through more military build-up. Thus, arms races between the two cannot be ruled out. Such development will bring a nightmare for South Korea, whether it is being divided or unified.

There are some forces in South Korea who argue that in the case of American disengagement, South Korea should take side with China, which is the continental power. We have also those who favor Japan as a maritime power. Some guys say, "oh, let us have the nuclear weapon, so that we can be a middle power." Some say we should declare a permanent, neutral state.

We have all kinds of options but none of those options can satisfy the security needs of South Koreans as much as the current formula based on the U.S.-ROK alliance does. When we have American forces in South Korea, and when we have a very strong alliance with the U.S., we can feel more secure and safe.

### **Institutional Inertia Matters**

Second, I think, institutional inertia matters. We now have the Combined Forces Command. We have an array of networks between Americans and South Koreans, which have been formed around the alliance. They can influence domestic politics in a very significant manner; therefore, it wouldn't be easy for any new social forces to change the nature and direction of the ROK-U.S. alliance overnight. We should pay close attention to the importance of institutional inertia and networks formed through the ROK-U.S. alliance. They can serve as critical elements in sustaining the bilateral alliance.

Third, as I pointed out, there is a very strong domestic support in South Korea for the alliance as well as the continuation of American forces in South Korea. We should not discount the fact that despite recent anti-American sentiments in Seoul, the silent majority of South Korean citizens still appreciate the alliance. I believe American citizens would show a similar feeling.

What is really interesting is this, at a consultative meeting between Seoul and Washington which was held in Washington D.C., defense ministers of South Korea and the U.S. have agreed to commission a special task force to study the future of the bilateral alliance. I would strongly suggest that there should be track two-level private mechanisms to deliberate on the alliance. Such efforts will be conducive to enhancing mutual understanding.

And, finally, I agree within President-elect Roh's perception of importance of the alliance. As President Kim Dae Jung has been

arguing, President-elect Roh is also saying that we need to have American forces in South Korea even after Korean unification. I concur with his view on the future of the ROK-U.S. alliance.

We need to continue the alliance not simply to contain China. The institutional inertia might serve as another rationale. But there are more important rationales. The U.S.-ROK alliance can play a very important role as a regional alliance. Effective functioning of the regional alliance could be pivotal to building a community of security in East Asia, like that in Europe, that can ensure a stable and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula as well as in the region.

### **Preconditions of Building a Community of Security**

Then, how can you build the community of security? You should satisfy the two preconditions: first, all the countries in Northeast Asia should be capitalist countries, free market economies. A high degree of economic independence and integration in the region through the expansion of free market can reduce the likelihood of any major conflicts in the region, while enhancing shared norms and values. This is called the logic of capitalist peace. The second condition is that all of the countries in Northeast Asia should be democratic countries. As proponents of the democratic peace theory argue, democracies do not fight each other.

If countries in Northeast Asia share common values such as free market and democracy, then it will be extremely easy for us to form a community of security. The future of the U.S.-ROK alliance, thus, should go beyond military deterrence of North Korea. It should serve as the cornerstone in building a viable and effective security of community in the region. It can become a NATO type of an extended alliance including China, North Korea, and Russia. It can also evolve into a regional collective security system. Until we have such a

stable community of security in the region, the ROK and the U.S. need to maintain a strong alliance. The Pacific East Asia will be beneficial to South Korea and the U.S. economically, politically, and even militarily.

**John Ikenberry:** Thank you.

**Bill Drennan:** Professor Moon, you're a tough act to follow. I've had the challenge of following Chung In Moon on several occasions and it only gets harder and harder as time goes on. First off, I'd like to thank the Sasakawa Foundation for inviting me and John Ikenberry for playing the role of lion tamer here this afternoon. And to tell you that it's a pleasure to share the podium, not only with John, but Professor Moon as well as Alan Romberg.

If you were paying attention to the brief introductions, you may have noticed that both Alan and I have a background with the Council on Foreign Relations. Mine is for a very short while and Alan's for a much more lengthy and substantive period and I just wanted to point out that that's where my association with Alan began. I was studying at his knee when he was the CV Starr scholar for Asia, I think the title was, or close to that, senior fellow for Asia.

### **Crisis in U.S.-ROK Relations**

Alan is a former diplomat, of course, and I'm a former military guy and I suspect that the nature of our remarks, if not the substance, will reflect the differences in our professional background because I tend to be rather direct in my remarks and I don't propose to differ this afternoon. So let me begin by rather bluntly stating that I see a crisis in the U.S.-ROK relations.

A crisis that I think is the worst in the 50 year history of the alliance, worst than under Syngman Rhee, both in war and in peace because the differences there were particularly over policy issues and governance, again, during the war and after. Worst than under Park

Chung Hee, who also was famously anti-American, again, the differences were in policy, in governance issues, human rights, and that sort of thing; worst than the outbreak of anti-Americanism. For instance, in the 1988 period during the Seoul Olympics when feelings were, shall we say, rather raw.

### **Most Sustained Outbreak of Anti-Americanism in Last Seven Months**

The last seven months has seen the largest and most sustained outbreak of anti-Americanism in the 50 years of the alliance and it's different this time, not just in duration and in size. Let me tick off some of the reasons why it's different and why the differences matter. It's different this time because, for the first time, the critically important middle class has joined the traditional opponents of the alliance and of the United States. And by that, I mean the radical students, the dissident's teachers unions, militant labors, and the politicians who support their views and who are supported by them. It's the first time since the democratization movement of 1987 that the middle class has come out into the streets and joined with the radical fringe of South Korean society.

Another significant difference this time is that the targets of South Korean wrath are not just the United States or the unfair SOFA or trade disputes or policy differences. The targets now, quite literally, are Americans on the streets of Seoul and other South Korean cities, and particularly GIs. To date, there's been one kidnapping, there's been one attempted murder, and numerous instances of verbal and physical abuses and assaults against Americans or anyone assumed to be an American: English, Canadians, Australians, etc.

Something else that's different this time is that for the first time, these activities/these incidents have gotten the attention of the American media. In the past, during previous outbreaks of anti-Americanism, these things tended not to be covered or not covered exten-

sively in the American media. They are now and you've seen the backlash that has been building, an anti-Korean backlash, which leads to me to my fourth major difference. And that is that the ROK now is running the risk of alienating that critically important key base of support that has traditionally defended the alliance in U.S. government and also public councils.

### **A New Day in South Korea**

There are some other things that are different this time because I think it is a new day in South Korea. The rise of what I refer to as the new political establishment in South Korea, a new majority, if you will, of the younger generations who, one, as Professor Moon pointed out, do not feel threatened by the North; who, in overwhelming numbers, two to one, either dislike or hate the United States according to recent opinion polls.

The data that Professor Moon cited about the continuing support for the United States is accurate. But what it doesn't show is the downward trend, the deterioration in those numbers and now it's a bare majority. Fifty-four percent of the people polled in South Korea, if the polls are dependable and I think they are, support the continued stationing of U.S. forces in Korea and support the alliance. It's down significantly from previous years and it also, interestingly enough, is the same number of people who have an unfavorable view of the United States across all age groups, 54 percent in those cases.

It is this new political establishment that propelled Roh Moo Hyun to victory, a candidate who campaigned on continuing the Sunshine Policy of unconditional engagement with the North; who campaigned on establishing a "more equal" relationship with the United States; and who aspires to a mediating role between Pyongyang and Washington on the issue of nuclear weapons as if this wasn't something in which North Korea had the most fundamental type of state.

I would submit that the president-elect and South Korea, more generally, can't have it both ways. You can't be formally aligned with the United States and neutral about a fundamental aspect of South Korean security. Perhaps, the most fundamental gap or the fundamental difference, I should say, is the huge gap in something that I've already referred to and that Professor Moon has alluded to and that is the threat perception: the difference in threat perception between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Now let me point out that countries form alliances to face a commonly perceived threat. The whole basis for alliances is to address a common threat perception. A shared perception simply is not there, certainly not to the degree that it used to be and it is most notably absent in this new political establishment, this new majority that I've alluded to, this champion, if you will, is the president-elect.

### **Both Sides Benefit From the Alliance**

Now why does this matter? Let me state clearly that I've been a long-time supporter of this alliance, I served in the USFK, I'm the third member of my family who has served in Korea, we kind of have a stake in this. I understate the case when I say that both sides benefit from the alliance, both sides pay a price to sustain the alliance and I don't just mean in financial terms, and both would suffer if the alliance were to crumble. The U.S. forward-deployed presence in the region is, after all, the key to stability in the region; there is no NATO-like, multilateral structure. The security architecture in the Asian-Pacific region is founded on those five key bilateral relationships we have with critically important countries: the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and Thailand, as well as our friendly relationships with other key states in the region.

If one of those relationships, say with South Korea, were to disappear it would pressure the remaining architecture, if you will. So my

bottom line is the alliance is important and valuable to the U.S. and to our interests. Objectively, though, I think it is even more valuable to the Republic of Korea which, after all, is still in a historically tough neighborhood.

### **Three Basic Truths**

I would like to suggest that South Korea remember three basic truths. The first is that the defense of South Korea is important to the United States, that it cannot be, it will never be more important to the United States than it is to South Koreans themselves. Secondly, North Korea does, objectively, represent a clear and present danger to South Korea, the new orthodoxy in the post-Pyongyang summit era, notwithstanding.

And finally, at the end of the day, when all is said and done, the third basic truth is that South Korea has only one friend and only one ally and it needs to remember that. To borrow a phrase from Wall Street: I think that Korea, today, is in play and we don't know how it's going to be resolved. People on both sides of the relationship now are asking the most fundamental questions, questions that have not been asked a year ago or two years ago or three years ago, they simply weren't heard about whether or not the alliance should be continued.

I'm a little concerned that in December of 1992 or in the campaign that led up to the election in December of 1992, we saw a glimpse of the future of Korean politics and it's not a pretty picture from the standpoint of the future of the alliance or for the interests of the United States on the peninsula. What we saw in the campaign, from both the candidate on the right and the candidate on the left, as well as candidates on the far, far left, was a contest to out-Korea the other guy. The conservative candidate, Moo Hyun, actually moved further to the left than the more progressive candidate, Nu Moo Yung.

Among the slated candidates, no one defended the alliance. No one articulated the strategic

rationale for the alliance to the Korean voters. This is not a prescription for optimism, Professor Moon's reassuring words, notwithstanding. And I personally find it revealing and troubling that a 56-year-old president-elect who grew up under and who has never known a South Korea that was not under the protection has only discovered the value of the alliance since December 19th.

**Alan Romberg:** I think we have two radically different visions on what's going on in Korea with a lot of commonality between them and that's what I would like to talk about a little bit and where one goes with this. I don't come here as a person with nearly as much background on South Korean domestic realities and history as either of our speaker or commentator, but I've spent some time looking at the relationship between the U.S. and South Korea and at the North Korean issue in that context.

One thing that I think that has to be said about the neuralgia in the U.S.-South Korean relationship and I think there is a lot of it is that it has not suddenly blossomed, it's been growing for some time. I think we've seen for some years a certain impatience among South Koreans about the senior partner-junior partner kind of relationship. We saw, even before that, going back to 1987 and the democracy movement, a sense of disillusionment that somehow the U.S. wasn't selflessly acting in Korea, but rather, perhaps, was acting on its own interests.

### **Differences of Perception**

As we moved into the North Korean problems in the early 1990s, we had the differences of perception. We all wanted – we, the Japanese, and the South Koreans – the same things in terms of the three major issues on the table at the time regarding nuclear weapons, missiles, and conventional weapons. But our priorities were quite different. South Koreans looked at this issue, from the point of view of the Korean Peninsula and the United States, tended to look at the issues from the point of

view, not only of the peninsula but also of larger strategic issues. And I think those differences, again, are not new, they've been there. We had a complication, I think, in the relationship in terms of the beginning of this administration when President Kim Dae Jung came here in March of 2001 for a rather tense and testy session with President Bush.

I think that has been largely overcome on both sides but I think it has left a residue, especially I would argue, to some extent, on the Korean side about that in the sense that the U.S. was insisting on its perceptions. I think that the data that Professor Moon cites about support for the U.S. relationship is important, it maybe going down. But I don't see Koreans having turned away from wanting a good relationship with the United States or even wanting the alliance, or at this moment anyway, a troop presence, although I think we've seen for some time a desire to change the nature of the military relationship.

When the president-elect says he would like to see a change in the command structure, he'd like to see some changes in the SOFA arrangements, I don't think these are new issues on the Korean scene. It maybe that they haven't been articulated in quite this way and I have to say that I think one needs to question whether now the president-elect as opposed to the candidate shouldn't think more carefully about how he talks about some of these issues.

There's nothing wrong with raising them and there's nothing wrong with particularly raising them with the U.S. government. But I think that to the extent that it leaves the impression that somehow if these things don't get fixed, well over time we're going to see an erosion of this relationship. And that comes in the context of talking about how well maybe over a 10 or a 15 or 20 or 30 years or whatever that maybe the U.S. won't be here.

I think one needs to be more careful and I get the sense that, perhaps, that is going to be the case. But it does create an impression in this

country that maybe Koreans don't want us and we've taken the position for years if Koreans don't want us, we'll go home. The fact that it's coming out in sort of an assertive way among some of our columnists is perhaps new but we've seen demonstrations against the U.S. before and that has been the position but it's always been a confident position the Koreans did want us.

Now I think what Bill Drennan is saying is the confidence is a little less secure than it was. My own view on the question of troops and arrangements and so on is that I think, over time, we do need to reduce U.S. forces in South Korea; not withdraw them but reduce them, draw them down. I wrote a piece about this over 10 years ago and now the situation changed as Chung In Moon pointed out, that that's stopped. It was frozen with the nuclear program in North Korea and this may not be the time to do this, but I think that, over time, it does need to happen.

#### **Need to Address Burden of U.S. Troops in South Korea**

I think that the imposition of either a psychological or a physical burden, however you want to view it and probably both, is something that needs to be addressed seriously if we want to maintain this alliance over time. I don't think it's too early to start talking about it but I think if there's going to be anything that is actually done, it needs to be done, first, in a way which maintains confidence and the commitment of the United States to peace on the peninsula and it maintains confidence in both countries in the value of the alliance.

And I think here, and this is sort of a bottom line, but I'll jump to it, I think that both governments need to do a much better job at making clear to publics in both countries the value of the alliance. That is a point that's been made earlier but I think that this really needs to be underscored. I don't get the sense that, not just in the campaign, but in general, that there is a selling of the alliance if mentioned.

I hear what you say, Chung In, about what the president-elect has said and President Kim Dae Jung has also said positive things and important things about the alliance and about the force presence. But this is not sort of a sustained effort and I would say that on the part of the U.S. I think that that is also the case and I think we ignore that in our peril.

#### **Troop Reductions Should Not be Seen as Rewarding North**

Another thing about troop reductions is that this is something, which could be perceived, over time, as a reward to the North and I think we have to be careful we're not rewarding the North for bad behavior. That's not just true of negotiations, it's true about what we do and I think we need not to send the wrong signal to the North. But I'm not sure we can afford to wait until the North has come to terms that we find satisfactory to make some of the adjustments that may need to be made. So we need to approach it carefully and thoughtfully but I do think we need at least to be thinking about it.

On North Korea, itself, yes, we have some divergent threat perceptions. We've had this before, as I say, in terms, at least of priorities. I think the North may well, once again, come to our rescue through its bad behavior. There are reasons that they are acting as they are acting as they are, in part, it's to get our attention. But in part it's also because they want to gain an advantage here, perhaps, inevitably having nuclear weapons.

I'm not absolutely convinced of that, that it's the only way they can serve their interests. But it seems to me there is a high possibility, probability that they will do something else that will make clear to South Koreans and Americans alike that this is a dangerous situation and that the North's behavior is dangerous and whether they want a war or not, which I'm sure actually the North does not want, they risk sending things into a spiral.

I think that we'll see what happens in terms of attitudes, but my suspicion is that if there is, for example, the North pulls the spent fuel out of the cooling pond they're now in that that will have an affect on attitudes in both South Korea and the United States, I would certainly hope so. I would certainly hope that people would understand that this is a frontal challenge, if you will, to the situation and the security of both countries.

Having said that, I do think that the U.S. needs to talk directly to North Korea. I don't think we should be rewarding North Korea, paying them not to do what they shouldn't do, on the one hand. On the other, it's pretty clear, in my mind, that North Korea is not going to stand and talk with us except in the context of a broader agenda. That is, they will not, I think, agree to sit down with the United States as the United States now insists, only to talk about how they will dismantle their HEU Program and come back into compliance with the agreed framework and so on.

I think that they will want some other context; that doesn't mean that we will reward them for doing the things that bring them into compliance. But they need to have some context that goes beyond that or else I just don't think it's going to work. The U.S. approach, at this point, is international pressure, I think there will be more of that but I just am skeptical that either it will work at all or that it will work in time.

### **North Tempted to Pursue a Nuclear Program**

And part of my concern about time is that, over time, the North is going to be tempted to do more, either to pursue a nuclear program because it think it needs it or to get our attention. Either way, it is not good news. And so while I think that the notion that South Korea will mediate between the United States and North Korea is a notion that needs to be gotten off the table because I think it does raise fundamental questions about what the alliance is

all about. That the notion that South Korea could somehow play a role has been one or tried to play in the last few days. There's nothing wrong with that and there's nothing wrong with talking with each other, frankly, about how we see these issues being approached.

There are two other points I want to make and then I'll shut up. The relationships with other countries counts a lot here, I think the one that's on the minds of most people is China. And I think that in recent weeks, certainly, as well as going back over time, South Korea has increasingly tried to develop a relationship with China which would serve its interests with North Korea by persuading the North to take a more forthcoming attitude. But also I think that when one does look at some polling results, one sees the South Koreans look at China as a larger factor in their future than in the past or, even according to at least some polling, than the United States is in South Korea's future.

### **Closer China-ROK Alliance Could Destablize U.S.-ROK Alliance**

Obviously, there are some reasons for that but I think that in political terms it would be fundamentally destabilizing and certainly disruptive of U.S.-South Korean relations if somehow the notion took hold in South Korea that its future lay with China, its friend was China.

I'm not arguing against a good relationship between South Korea and China. What I'm saying is, though, that if somehow the dissatisfaction or the angst or whatever you want to call it with the U.S. alliance were to be translated into we can do without the U.S., we can manage in the region with other friends, I think that is a fundamentally problematic situation.

As to China's role with North Korea, I don't think China wants a nuclear North Korea, I don't think China wants a chaotic Korean Peninsula, I don't think it wants war. The question we all have, of course, is what is

China going to do about it and that isn't very clear to me at this point. If on the other hand North Korea does some of the things I suggested, especially withdrawing the spent fuel, we'll see if that doesn't have some affect on China as well and I'll just leave it at that. John.

**Ikenberry:** Let Professor Moon have a few minutes to respond and then we'll open it.

**Moon:** Thanks a lot for your wonderful comments. And Bill and I have been engaging in several debates in the past weeks. His views are fixed, and some of my views are fixed, too.

### **Media Blows Incidents Out of Proportion**

But, Bill, let me make one point very clear, and I hope people would not commit the fallacy of reductionism. I watched NBC on December 30th, and NBC news was closing up a scene of an American soldier being beaten by South Korean youths and of his nose bleeding for almost five seconds. Any Americans who watched the news would think that is what it's all about taking place in South Korea; that is not in reality. If you pick up all of those rare incidents and close them up as if they were routine events in South Korea, I think, this poses a big problem. I think we've got to be very, very careful about all of this media sensationalism, picking on minor things and blowing them up out of proportion. That might not be reality.

Look at the other side. More than 800 American students are currently studying at my university, Yonsei University. They maintain wonderful relationships with South Korean students. Of course, I see some occasional tensions and discord among them, but they manage them quite well and build lasting friendly relationships. We have so many positive things going on between the U.S. and South Korea, but none of them are properly introduced. If you begin to emphasize the negative aspects of bilateral relationship, noth-

ing can be done. We got to be prepared to deal with this fallacy of reductionism that exaggerates what is happening in South Korea. You cannot give a full picture of South Korea through the prism of minor things.

There can be differences of opinions between Washington and Seoul. Any interstate relations can have differences in foreign policy. Every country has its own national interests. These interests can converge or diverge, depending upon overall circumstances. That is true even among allies. When there is divergence in policy, we should narrow it through diplomacy, acts of diplomacy and search for common ground.

Of course, in the past, South Korea has nearly almost been complying with American policy, and there was a lesser degree of policy discord between Seoul and Washington. Now things are changing. Domestic political changes in South Korea will be calling for a more balanced relationship with the U.S. But we should not be alarmed with this development. I believe we can overcome the differences through diplomacy and mutual understanding and cooperation.

### **Countries Should Improve Mutual Understanding**

What is important here is communication, consultation, and inter-subjective understanding. We try to understand Americans, and Americans should also try to understand South Koreans. Let me give you one example. Most universities in South Korea have a Chinese research center and a Japanese research center. But they do not have American research centers. I once proposed to have an American research center at my university. University administrators told me that we have all those American educated professors. They are American specialists. Why do we need to have an American studies institute? That kind of understanding needs to be changed. We need to have a more systemic understanding of America.

And let me comment on anti-Americanism in South Korea. There's nothing new about anti-Americanism. At the time of the opening of Korea in the late 19th century, there was anti-Americanism, very, very strong anti-Americanism. There has been an evolutionary pattern of Korean perception of the U.S. from associating with the United States, pro-American, and even "worship American" attitude; then, a sudden downturn toward anti-American sentiments in the 1980s.

In the second half of the 1980s, we have witnessed the rise of a "dislike/distaste for America" sentiment and all of those things conjured together creating a structural whole which cannot be disaggregating into component parts. I, myself, lived in America 17 years, and I sometimes support the U.S., and sometimes oppose the U.S. pro-American and anti-American feelings co-exist in my personal psyche.

The national psyche is the same. South Koreans have both pro-American and anti-American sentiments at the same time. It is all about the psychological foundation of a nation, that makes the dichotomy between we and others. America is seen as the other; we are not identical with the U.S. Sometimes, love and hatred relationship pops out. Therefore, we've really got to understand this very clear and I noticed that Bill really touched on a good point.

We've got to make the distinction of anti-Americanism in three different categories. We have anti-Americanism as an ideology, which prevailed in the 1980s among radical students. They attributed all of the agonies of South Korea – a fascist regime, structural exploitation, national division – to the United States. But most of them are gone now. You rarely see the ideologically driven anti-Americanism in South Korea's university campuses.

The second variety is anti-Americanism as a national sentiment, which fluctuates over time depending on circumstances and events such

as trade conflict between the two countries. Let me tell you one thing, if you compare the current anti-American sentiment with that in the late 1980s and the current one, the anti-American sentiment in the late 1980s was much stronger than the current one. The current anti-American sentiment resulted from the deaths of two little girls in Uijongbu. These anti-American sentiments come and go.

### **South Koreans Argue Americans Should Be Subject to Korean Law**

The third one is not really anti-Americanism; it's what they call the rejection of American exemptionalism. American soldiers have been exempted from the application of South Korea's law and rule in the past because they were defending South Koreans. But now South Korea has changed. Korea now has a stable democracy. South Koreans now argue that even American forces should be subject to the rule of law. Thus, the third one is very different from other types of anti-Americanism.

I would say the current trend in South Korea reflects the third variety, and that could pose more problems than the second one. National sentiments come and go, but the third one is much more structured. It poses a major dilemma concerning the choice between democratic governance and alliance. That is a very difficult situation.

And finally, regarding Alan's comments, unlike Kim Dae Jung, Roh Moo Hyun is most misunderstood by people in the United States. During the presidential campaign in South Korea last year, I have not heard any single positive remark on Roh in the U.S. Even Korean experts in town were portraying Roh as an anti-American, radical leftist, and populist politician. I've heard all kinds of negative remarks on him. Bias and preconception were pervasive in town. I think you need to come up with a more objective assessment of Roh Moo Hyun.

On Alan's another point, yes, there were some

mistakes. We cannot be a neutral, objective, third-party mediator to the North Korean nuclear problem. We are with the United States. Roh made it clear. But he doesn't want war on the Korean Peninsula. He does not want military actions and options in resolving the North Korean nuclear problem. There comes the major difference.

And without the U.S., nothing can be done on the Korean Peninsula. We know that, and we are not in the position of taking leadership and initiative. Why? The North Korean nuclear problem is an American problem and it is the U.S. which can solve the problem. North Koreans are extremely worried about a military threat from the U.S. The U.S. is the only country that can handle and resolve the problem of North Korea's threat perception. Therefore, the American initiative is vital to the resolution of the North Korean problem. The center of gravity is in Washington, D.C., not in Seoul.

And Roh has declared the three principles of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. Number one, "no nuclear North Korea." Number two, a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear problem through diplomacy. He believes that military options, including surgical strikes, can lead to a major conflict escalation in the Korean Peninsula, and that is why he wants negotiated settlements through dialogue. Number three, the resolution of the problem through close cooperation and coordination between Washington and Seoul. Therefore, there is room for cooperation, and I want to be more optimistic.

## Q&A

**Ikenberry:** With that, we will open things up and we've got some microphones. Give us your name and affiliation and comment or question and then we'll throw it back to the panel.

**Questioner:** Chung In, you mentioned the task force that had been established as a result

of, I guess, they call it defense consultative talks. Is that the right name for them, Bill?

**Moon:** SCM, the ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting.

**Questioner:** I've heard something of that work happening at the Pentagon and I wonder what's going on or do you know if anything's going on in South Korea with respect to moving forward on a study of the future of the alliance or is it all one hold as things are waiting to sort out for the inauguration? What can you say about that?

**Moon:** Eric, apart from the SCM, that is very formal, there is a project called the Kyungjoo Process which has been initiated by the Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security, which is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It involves a 1.5 track formula in which leading experts and opinion leaders from the U.S. and South Korea are invited to discuss the future of the ROK-U.S. alliance in a very candid manner. Therefore, every year, IFANS will be inviting American experts and South Korean experts to Kyungjoo or Seoul to have discussions on shaping the future of the alliance.

There is another project. Mitchell Reiss at the College of William & Mary is planning to start a new project, a task force on ROK-U.S. alliance. That will be a track-two approach.

**Questioner:** But will this thing that you described, the one that the Pentagon is working on, will it be a bilateral task force or will it be a task force in Washington and a task force in Seoul?

**Moon:** All bilateral, even the Kyungjoo Process will be bilateral.

**Questioner:** I cover this for Interpress Service and I also have written about Korea for *The Nation Magazine*. I was struck by, Mr. Drennan, your comment that you think that this is the worst crisis in U.S.-South Korean

history. I just find that a little bit amazing because there's been some incidents in the past. For example, in December 1979 when then General Chung Du Yuan diverted troops from the combined forces command, attacked the Seoul garrison, and took over the Korean military; this seemed to be a rather serious crisis. Kim Dae Jung is called anti-American by Robert Novak, the most anti-American president in Korean history and it's an absolutely ridiculous comment because I've never heard Kim Dae Jung say anything resembling anti-American.

Clearly, his policy on economics, finance, trade has been very, very pro-American, more than any other president in the past I would think. There were very bitter disputes between the Chung government, Park Chung Hee government with the U.S. on economics and trade business, investment, and so on; very incredibly bitter disputes. And from what I read by these conservative columnists, recently, it seemed that what they're really upset about is the fact that South Korea is a democracy now.

In the past, it was a police state. It was a military dictatorship until the late 1980s and so a lot of these problems could be not reported on. The December incident in 1979 was hardly discussed here; it got very little notice in the press and was not talked about in the Korean press because the press was under control. So maybe the problem is South Korea is a full democracy and a lot of Americans just don't appreciate a partner of ours taking their own independent positions. I'd like you to comment on that.

**Drennan:** One, it's a pleasure to meet you. I'm aware of your work for the *Journal of Commerce* and *The Nation* and your investigations of Kwangju in the 12/12, about something that I'm to talk tomorrow at Georgetown, as a matter of fact. I take your point that there have been terrible periods in the 50-year alliance and I mentioned some of them and I alluded very inadequately to your observations about 12/12 and Kwangju.

I kind of assumed that when I said that Park Chung Hee was, certainly, anti-U.S., his whole history demonstrates that. His favorite expression was, "what do American bastards know." And so somebody who is writing on the period that you've researched, actually I think it was Richard Holbrooke when he was the assistant secretary, and I know one of your favorite people as well, said that 1977-1979 time frame was as difficult a period in alliance history as could be measured. It was a difficult period between allies as could be imagined.

### **Mainstreaming of Anti-Americans**

But, again, the distinction that I draw is, not to be flip about it, that was kind of inside baseball. This is government to government, policymakers to policymakers, military to military and the difference that I see now is what I refer to as the mainstreaming of anti-Americans. Chung In does a wonderful job at dissecting the various flavors and branches of anti-Americanism and the motivations for them and I take that. It is a complex phenomenon and it's more complex even than anti-Americanism as a belief system, which was resident on the college campuses.

Certainly in the 1980s, Mingjung ideology, Chamintu, Minmintu, Sanmintu, all of these far, far left organizations that dominated the student organizations and the campuses and that were leading the demonstrations.

But in my remarks, I attempted to point out that just as in 1997 when the middle-class came out and demanded reforms, political reforms, it was the beginning of the democratization that you saw adequately described. I'm seeing the same phenomenon in a negative sense where the middle-class is, again, joining the radical organizers for whom the death of those two school girls was a Godsend and who have used that to prolong this seven plus months of anti-Americanism for their own political purposes.

But they have been joined by the middle-class,

some of them just strictly for social occasions, I admit. They're out on a night on the town and they stop off at the latest rally and burn an American flag or sing the words to that hit song, which I won't repeat, but it's "f\*\*\*ing USA," but this is troubling.

Families are going to these things, grade school girls are writing letters in blood against the unfair SOFA, this whole thing seems to have leached into the society at-large. So it's the peoples now who are involved on both sides, much more so in Korea, but beginning here in the United States that makes it different from when it was government to government, military to military, policymakers against policymakers.

I don't know if that's an adequate answer to your comment but you did inject a necessary corrective. I still think it's the worst outbreak because of the middle-class but it's certainly not the only one.

**Moon:** I think Bill has been portraying all of these anti-American rallies in downtown Seoul in a very graphic manner, but I was there, too. But the whole point is this: I would say that is one of the amazing legacies of the World Cup. People expect events, events in front of Seoul's City Hall. People came there to watch the rallies and to be part of those rallies. Among the audience, there are two groups: one group is ideologically charged, and use the rallies to advance their political agenda, calling for the withdrawal of American forces. I would say they are a very small minority. The majority of the audience is the candlelight protestors mourning those two little girls and calling for peace and no war.

And the anti-American rallies became weaker as a result partly of President-elect Roh's intervention. He persuaded organizers of the rallies by saying "the North Korean nuclear first, and SOFA later." Though limited, his appeal was effective. And then there were pro-American rallies, more than 50,000 organized by the National Federation of Christian

Churches. That was bigger than those candlelight rites in size; then now, afterwards, no demonstrations, no candlelight protests.

**Drennan:** After seven months of candlelight demonstrations.

**Moon:** What is important is now.

**Questioner:** Getting away from these demonstrations, per se, but Chung In you made a comment, which bothered me a bit. You said that at some point there may be a choice between democracy and the alliance and I guess I would say in response to that if that's the case, that's a failure of leadership. So I think if that choice really does exist and I think that that's an enormous challenge or if the potential for that choice to exist is there, I think that's an enormous challenge to a leadership.

I would argue, primarily, in Seoul in this case but I don't absolve the U.S. government from responsibility for addressing issues and the relationship, in a way, which has got to take that choice off the table. They have to go together.

**Moon:** No, precisely, Dave, why we need such nurturing of common values that can sustain alliance ties between the two countries. Here comes the importance of a capitalist peace and a democratic peace. I believe we can convince South Korean as well as American citizens of the importance of continuation of the bilateral alliance when we share a common goal of enlarging a free market and democracy as well as building the community of common security. When South Koreans are convinced of such importance, the trade-off between democratic governance and alliance would disappear. But for that, we need new bold initiatives to preach the critical importance of the alliance and education and sharing of knowledge on the alliance.

**Drennan:** I'd just like to pose a question to Professor Moon and you've heard this before when we were sharing a podium earlier but it

wasn't in the form of a question, it was more in the form of my introduction to the topic of the election victory of Roh Moo Hyun. In the past, Roh Moo Hyun said many things that he's now distancing himself from, certainly on the future of USFK. But he has characterized the republic of which he is now the president-elect as the product of divisionists; that's one thing.

And the second point is that on his Website, during the campaign, you could access an article that, in so many words, put forth the proposition that the most important thing on the question before the Korean people was reunification. And that after reunification, they could figure out how they were to be governed. They could decide whether it was going to be democratic or not, implying that the only value is reunification or a valueless reunification; and, again, for a democratically elected president I find that interesting.

### **Roh Values Unity of Nation**

**Moon:** Bill, I think you are getting sharper and sharper, getting into Roh Moo Hyun's Website. Roh Moo Hyun had written a biography on Abraham Lincoln and it's called *Abraham Lincoln: Whom Roh Moo Hyun Encountered* and if you read the biography, it's very, very interesting. Roh criticized James Buchanan for his cowardice; he chose division of the union in fear of war. Roh admires Abraham Lincoln since he chose the path to unity of the union even risking the civil war. When I read the book, I could see his orientation. For him the unity of nation will be much highly valued than any other issues.

Regarding the second question, please remember one thing: he's not a dictator, he's not an authoritarian leader. He's a democratically elected leader. He will be subject to checks and balances by the legislative branch, political parties, media, and all of the forces in a democratic society. During the election campaign, candidates can promise lofty goals. But once elected, they face constraints and

oppositions, and end up with amendment and revision of their policy goals. What is the beauty of democracy? Piecemeal engineering, piecemeal tinkering, and you learn from trial and errors.

**Drennan:** That's a beautiful spin.

**Ikenberry:** Can I ask a question? One of the frustrations I have in trying to sort out what's causing this new turn in Korea and rethinking of the relationship and the decline of opinion in favor of the alliance and trying to sort out long-term structural changes with short-term reactions to American policy. And the short version of my question is, is it American power or is it American policy because it was just a couple of years ago when we had Albright in Pyongyang? How did we get so far away from that feeling of congruence and synchronicity of our policies to where we are today? Or, to put it differently, is this partly a problem that is coming from such radical shifts in American policy, both from Clinton to Bush, but then within Bush, shifts as well? Is this something that's more of a cycle or is it a trend?

One could make the argument, I guess, or propose the question that if American policy had remained continuous with Clinton, if Powell's first statement when Kim Dae Jung came to Washington actually had come to past, that we will build on the positive steps that Clinton had been making. Would this fluid moment, this moment of being in this great crisis really be as severe as has been characterized today? Chung In.

**Moon:** John is liberal, and therefore his question is very much weighed in that direction. Yes, I think so. According to a recent opinion poll, again by the *Joong Ang Ilbo*, American unilateralism was perceived of being the most important factor shaping anti-American sentiment in South Korea.

I don't see any discord between the U.S. and South Korea on fundamental core values.

South Koreans share American values: liberty, freedom, democracy, and human rights. But they differ in policy orientations. As you pointed out, if the Bush administration continued positive aspects of the Clinton policy on North Korea, there would have been no serious policy differences between the two countries, and the situation on the Korean Peninsula should have become much more manageable.

**Ikenberry:** Bill, do you want to...

**Drennan:** I'd just like to pick on part of your question. You drew the distinction between the Clinton approach and the Bush approach and I think there we could talk forever about this, the subject of a couple of his conferences easily. But my personal reading of the situation is that the current administration has had a negative reaction to the Sunshine Policy; not the philosophy, not the concept, and certainly not the motivation behind it, which I think marks Kim Dae Jung as a statesman of the first order. But the sunshine as it has been practiced and as it has been implemented, and here I think the fundamental dividing line sort of comes around to our differences in the threat where the United States clearly emphasizes the capabilities that North Korea has and the ROK administration have imputed a benign intent to a North Korea post-Pyongyang summit.

Clearly, you can find evidence to argue either point of view. But what I think is missing from the Korean position about a benign intent is a standard against which to judge success or failure of the policy. I think that the policy has become too personalized, the policy is Kim Dae Jung, Kim Dae Jung is the policy, and he has single-mindedly stuck to it, at least partially, because to admit that the policy is a failure, is to admit that he has failed. I'm playing pop psychologist here but I do not see compelling evidence that North Korea has benign intent.

I suspect that the administration in Seoul is not

seeing what it wants to see. It's seeing what it needs to see in order to continue the policy. Now that's a very harsh criticism of it but I think that also, and I don't know this for a fact, that there are administration officials who share something close to that view.

**Romberg:** I think that, Chung In, your view of transformation of North Korea is quite a bit more optimistic than mine would be whoever was president in the United States and whatever policies were followed. But I think that the differences between the administration on sunshine are more profound than Bill Drennan suggests.

In my view, Kim Dae Jung came into his presidency with having thought for a very long time about how to deal with North Korea. I don't think with a lot of illusions, maybe some, maybe some hopes that certainly went beyond what maybe others had. But I think he developed an approach to North Korea which said we've got to take steps and count on their having an affect over time, not right away, and we can work it that way and it's not a tit-for-tat sort of thing.

### **Bush Skeptical About Sunshine Policy**

And I think that when this administration came in in Washington, two things were true. One, it didn't share that view and two, it rejected what Clinton had done, both for political reasons and I think for conceptual analytical reasons. And so I think there was a total divide and when President Bush said he was skeptical about North Korea, I think he was saying he was skeptical about sunshine and meaning more than skepticism. He really was very down on it and, obviously, the result of that visit showed that.

I agree, even in my ignorance of South Korean society, that unilateralism is a problem. It's not just a problem in South Korea, it's a problem in a lot of places or, at least, the perception of U.S. unilateralism. Personally, it's a matter of style. Americans often are not very con-

sensus building as they are perceived even though, I think, in fact, there's more to it even in this administration than is generally seen.

But on my listening to John's question, is it policy or power, I'd say, yes. Where does unilateralism come from? It comes from power and so it's a partially resentment that, and I think it goes back, as I said in my remarks earlier, the U.S. is in charge or has been in charge or perceived to be in charge of South Korea's fate on the nuclear issue. And, yet, this is the Korean Peninsula and there was the sense going back into the 1990s that it was managed too much by the United States and I think that's carried over.

**Questioner:** You took an issue with South Korea's government's effort to define its role as mediating a few months ago. However, I think there is a background to it because the sunshine by a conditioned government had a very important property in it. That is, South Korea would play a leading role and it was actually received quite well by the Clinton administration.

But when the Bush administration came in, they didn't like it. And it was well shown in President Kim Dae Jung's visit in Washington two years ago. So I think the South Korean government came up with mediating a plan, which was not received very well in Washington and then recently, Assistant Secretary Kelly defined South Korea's role as active. I wonder what would be your definition of South Korea's role? That's my first question and the second one is, speaking of allies/alliances between South Korea and the United States, I think the allies should maximize the sharing of information between themselves.

But according to the book written by William Perry and Ashton Carter, it documents in detail the process of deliberation of a surgical air strike in the summer of 1994, but there is no single reference to the consultation with the South Korean government. I know this for a

fact because I personally confirmed with these major level officials in South Korea. What would be the implication of that kind of thing for the alliance between the U.S. and South Korea?

**Drennan:** They're both very good questions. Regarding the context in which the comment about mediating the nuclear dispute between Washington and Seoul, the backdrop to that, as I remember it, that followed immediately or shortly after either candidate Roh or President-elect Roh had indicated that if there was a war with North Korea, that South Korea may sit it out, that it would not participate in this and it was then followed thereafter by wanting to play a mediating role which, in combination, I think let loose the notion that somehow South Korea, to use the American expression, didn't have a dog in its fight, that this was divorced somehow from the security dilemma that the South sees itself in. It was a sea change from the alliance solidarity; again, going back to the foundation for the alliance that we see that threat broadly understood in identical ways.

Now we may tinker on the margins but that's the whole foundation for the creation and the sustaining of the alliance. Those kinds of comments brought that into question in ways that are unique in the relationship as far as I understand it. I take your point about Bill Perry and Ash Carter's revelations about the planning in 1994 concerning contingency plans to strike Yongbyon.

All I can say is that my understanding is the same as yours. I'm not aware of any consultations on that issue. Maybe there were, and they're classified but I have not seen them in an unclassified context and that's the world in which I live now. Alan, maybe you know.

**Romberg:** I don't know but what I would say is my sense is that, at some point, there would have had to have been that consultation. I cannot imagine that the U.S. would have launched an attack on Yongbyon without making a

plan for it. But actually executing it, I think, would have been a totally different matter.

I'm not talking about going and saying by the way, at 10:00 a.m. we're about to drop a weapon, no. People are not ignorant of the consequences of this for South Korea itself, for the alliance, for the U.S. position in the region. These are all very serious issues which gets me back to one other comment I wanted to make on something that you said, Chung In, earlier about how South Korea wants no nuclear and North Korea wants no military option and wants to negotiate its settlement.

That's fine if it works out. But it may work out that if North Korea, in fact, is either bound and determined to have a nuclear option or it isn't satisfied that it's getting enough to abandon the nuclear option, then again, the military option, as Secretary Powell has made clear, isn't off the table. It's not something we're thinking about but it's not entirely off the table. The president has this option.

I would say, again, that is not a time when the U.S. will act without real consultations with its allies, not just South Korea but also with Japan and I'm sure there would be consultations with others, but those would be the two key ones. So I take your point also that this was done by -the planning that you're talking about-the U.S., but I don't think that equates to saying that the U.S. would have acted without real in-depth consultation with its allies; that's much too serious an issue not to have done that.

**Moon:** In fact, I had an opportunity to have a lengthy conversation with William Perry on that issue. What Dr. Perry told me was that the surgical strike was the last option. At the time, the U.S. was not deliberating on the surgical strike. But North Korea made a statement that if the United Nations Security Council passes a resolution sanctioning North Korea, it will consider the sanction an act of declaration of war. The U.S. was taking precautionary measures such as preparation for deployment of

forces from the mainland and evacuation of non-essential personnel. Thus, we need to make a distinction between an American plan to engage in surgical strikes and taking precautionary measures to prepare for North Korea's military moves. Apparently, there seems to be no prior consultation with South Korea on the evacuation of non-essential personnel.

### **Cannot Put Military Options on the Table**

And going back to Alan's comments, yes, we cannot rule out military options, but you cannot put military options on the table. Because North Korea already thinks and behaves as if military options were the first choice to be made by the U.S. President-elect Roh made it very clear that he cannot accept the military options. But if North Korea does not cooperate on the nuclear issue, he would consider much tough measures. In the case of non-cooperation from the North, he will consider joining the United States in undertaking even economic sanctions. He could suspend existing projects such as the Kaesung Industrial Complex and Mt. Kumgang project. North Korea should make a choice between nuclear weapons or economic survival.

Here comes the importance of the alliance: there's got to be close consultation, there's got to be a formulation of joint strategies, and joint formulation of indicators of red lines and whatever. But I don't see any close coordination/cooperation between Washington and Seoul. I hope that on the occasion of the first summit talk between Bush and Roh, they would share that kind of understanding, so that they can really strengthen the U.S.-ROK alliance. I believe they can really take advantage of the current crisis for the betterment of U.S.-ROK relations.

**Ikenberry:** One more question before we break for the reception.

**Question:** As the Bush administration mentions, I think there is an option of preemptive attack to DPRK. In that case and missile

defense, the Roh Moo Hyun government is going to support missile defense. The second question is, if North Korea complies with international rule, what kind of big carrot does the Roh Moo Hyun government provide to DPRK or the United States? Thank you very much.

**Moon:** By the way, I'm not speaking for President-elect Roh, I have nothing to do with it, and I'm not going to join his government. If I join the government, I cannot speak as I'm doing right now; and therefore, for the sake of my freedom of speech, I won't be joining the government. But it is very, very unlikely that President-elect Roh's government will make any major policy changes and the new government will continue the policy of the Kim Dae Jung government. But I think they will want to come up with an appropriate response if the North's actions get intensified, and they could do it within the existing alliance framework.

Now we have a medium-term acquisition plan. We are planning to acquire SAM-X (surface to air missile defense system), namely the Patriot 3, E-X (airborne warning and control system) and AEGIS. If you look at this medium-term acquisition plan, it can be said that South Korea has already joined the missile defense system. SAM-X for active defense, acquisition of F-15 for offensive defense, and E-X and AEGIS for battle management, all of which constitute component parts of the missile defense system. Therefore, we have existing components. Therefore I think the new government's policy would be to pursue MD without pursuing MD; it's a very oriental, holistic way.

**Romberg:** What I would say about dealing with North Korea is that there is no carrot for coming back into compliance with the things

they are out of compliance with. What I was trying to say is that there is, however, to be successful in negotiating, you've got to have a context which gives them a sense of what they can get if they do that; not for doing it but for other things. That's tricky and that's where the administration is really quite concerned that the perception will be that if you approach this and are willing to talk about the issues down the road, that it'll look like you're paying them to come back into compliance with their previous commitments and it's perceived as a slippery slope.

### **Negotiations Have to Be Largely Bilateral**

And that's hard but I would argue to you that that's what they get, and as we say it facetiously, paid those high salaries to do. I think it is the responsibility to find a way to get a negotiated settlement on this and my judgment while an international context is a useful thing to have, that the reality is that the negotiation on the hard issues is really going to have to be, largely, bilateral.

I totally support the administration not paying them not to do the things they shouldn't do, to stop doing what they shouldn't be doing. But I think that it's got to be handled in a way other than saying, first, you act; here's my phone number, give me a call when you've acted. My assessment of North Korea is that doesn't work.

**Moon:** My understanding is that North Korea is keeping calling the U.S., but the U.S. is not answering the calls.

**Ikenberry:** On that note, we will end and I would like to see if you would join me in thanking our panelists for a great discussion. (End)

## About the Panelists

**Main Speaker** **Dr. Chung In Moon** is Professor of Political Science at Yonsei University and an Adjunct Professor at Duke University. He currently serves as an advisor to South Korea's National Security Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Ministry of National Defense. He has taught at the University of Kentucky, Williams College, and the University of California, San Diego. He also is vice president of the International Studies Association (North America). Professor Moon accompanied President Kim Dae Jung to the Pyongyang Korean summit in June 2000. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, College Park. Professor Moon has published 19 books and over 190 articles in edited volumes and scholarly journals. Recent publications include *Kim Dae Jung Government and Sunshine Policy* (1999) and *Arms Control on the Korean Peninsula* (1996).

**Discussants** **Mr. William Drennan** is Deputy Director of the Research and Studies Program at the United States Institute of Peace. A retired Colonel in the United States Air Force, he was also an analyst at the National Defense University's Institute for National Security Studies. He has taught at the National War College, was a military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and served as the Air Force aide to President Ronald Reagan. Mr. Drennan graduated from the USAF Academy, holds an M.A. from Georgetown University, and is a doctoral candidate at Catholic University. He has published "The United States and Asia in 2000: Forward to the Past?" in *Asian Survey* (co-authored with Richard Solomon, 2001), "Mistrust and the Korean Peninsula: Dangers of Miscalculation," *U.S. Institute of Peace Special Report* (1998), and "The U.S. Role in Korean Unification," *Korea and World Affairs* (1998).

**Mr. Alan Romberg** is a Senior Associate and Director of the China Program at The Henry L. Stimson Center. Prior to that, he was Principal Deputy Director of the U.S. Department of State Policy Planning Staff, Senior Advisor and Director of the Washington office of the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Romberg also has been Director of Research and Studies at the United States Institute of Peace and C.V. Starr Senior Fellow for Asian Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. At the Department of State, he has served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Deputy Spokesman, Director of the Office of Japanese Affairs, and Staff Member for China at the National Security Council. Mr. Romberg received a B.A. from Princeton University and an M.A. from Harvard University.

**Moderator** **Dr. G. John Ikenberry** is the Peter F. Krogh Professor of Geopolitics and Global Justice at Georgetown University. In addition, he was a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. Dr. Ikenberry is the author of numerous publications, including, *State Power and World Markets: The International Political Economy* (2002), *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (2000), and *Reasons of State: Oil Politics and the Capacities of American Government* (1988).