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Politics of U.S.-South Korean military relations, 1961–1979

Yoon, Jong Ho, Ph.D.

Rice University, 1989

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POLITICS OF U.S.-SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY RELATIONS, 1961-1979

by

JONG HO YOON

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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1989
ABSTRACT

POLITICS OF U.S.-SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY RELATIONS, 1961-1979

JONG HO YOON

The primary objectives of U.S.-South Korean military cooperation are the defense of South Korea against any possible external aggression and the protection of U.S. national interests in the region. The principal means of their military relations include: (1) a mutual defense treaty between both countries, signed in 1953; (2) U.S. military presence in South Korea; and (3) U.S. military assistance to South Korean armed forces.

This military relationship had been characterized as unequal: South Korea was heavily dependent on the United States. After the mid-1960's, however, the relationship changed toward a self-reliant or partner status of South Korea, while the United States gained more flexibility in its obligations for the security of the country. In this context, this study attempts to analyze the military relations between the United States and South Korea during the period 1961 to 1979, a period that encompasses the most significant changes and issues in military cooperation between the two nations.

In this study, two propositions are analyzed: (1) the unequal military relationship between the United States and South Korea has been dominated by U.S. political interests,
which have motivated changes in their relations; and (2) in its military relationship with the United States, a primary South Korean objective has been to keep a significant number of American troops stationed in its territory.

For analysis, two main categories of military interactions are chosen: combined military operations and cooperation for improvement of South Korean military strength in the context of the U.S. and Korean political environments. The former category includes the structure of the combined command system and the U.S. military posture in Korea. The latter interaction stems from U.S. military assistance to the ROK armed forces.

The analysis focuses military to military relations with an emphasis on the changing characteristics of the relations and the political environments in which those changes have been generated. The results of the analysis seem to support the two propositions of this study.
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This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and the memory of my late father and
sister. I owe a boundless debt of gratitude to my mother. Without her enthusiasm for the education of her son, I could not have had the honor of obtaining a Ph.D. degree. My late sister provided me with an opportunity for higher education at the sacrifice of her own. My late father encouraged me to do my best in every moment of my life, and gave me a strong sense of responsibility.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

American involvement in Korea before WWII was minimal. Following the sudden surrender of Japan in August 1945, however, the U.S. military hastily occupied the southern half of the Korean Peninsula with the primary purpose of preventing Soviet predominance in the region. This was the historical origin of current military relations between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK; South Korea). The South Korean armed forces were created under the leadership of the U.S. occupation forces and were designed basically for internal security, not to a level consistent with the function of defending their country unilaterally against a threat from the Communist North.

Later, the Korean War generated new military relationships between the two nations. This war led the United States to directly commit itself to the security of South Korea by means of the physical presence of its armed forces there. By the same token, the South Korean armed forces have grown substantially under the auspices of the United States in terms of both tangible and intangible military assistance. In return, South Korea has also contributed significantly to the crucial interests of the United States in the Far East and Asia as a whole, particularly by providing its territory for American military use.

The principal objectives of such military cooperation are to defend South Korea
against any possible external attack, specifically from North Korea, and to protect U.S. national interests in the region. To accomplish these primary goals, three basic means have been employed; (1) a mutual defense treaty between both countries, signed in 1953, as the formal basis of military cooperation and more importantly, a guarantee of U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea; (2) the military presence of the United States in South Korea, through a command arrangement for combined military operations and the deployment of American air and ground forces; and (3) U.S. military assistance to ROK armed forces.

At the beginning of the U.S. military commitment to South Korea, their military relationship could be characterized as "unequal." Their relationship was that of "patron-client," or "donor-recipient," and "commander-subordinate" (in military operations). After the mid-1960's, however, some significant changes occurred in these relations. They included changes in command and force structures, the manner of U.S. military protection for South Korea, and the way American military aid was provided to ROK armed forces: for example, the reductions of U.S. ground forces from Korea, the creation of a new combined command structure, and the shift from grant aid to credit sales in military assistance.¹ These changes implied a shift of South Korean status in its military relations with the United States from "dependency or client" towards "self-reliance or partner"

¹In addition, South Korean participation in the Vietnam War upon U.S. request became one of the most important turning points in U.S.-ROK military cooperation.
status. In return, the United States obtained more flexibility than in the past in its obligations for South Korean security.

Needless to say, such changes became sensitive strategic and political issues between the two countries. While there have been extensive studies on U.S.-South Korean relations at the levels of foreign policy and national security both in a much broader context and in a limited perspective, there has been virtually no scholarly analysis exclusively on the military relations themselves. Thus, this study attempts to fill this gap. For this purpose, this study focuses the analysis of military to military relations between the two countries, with an emphasis on political environments in which these relations have been determined. The selected time frame, 1961-1979, encompasses the period in which the most significant changes and issues in military cooperation between the two nations took place.

This study attempts to analyze two central propositions: (1) the unequal military relationship between the United States and South Korea has been dominated by U.S.

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political interests, which have motivated changes in their relations; and (2) in its military relationship with the United States, a South Korean objective has been to keep a significant number of American troops stationed in its territory.

Two categories of interaction -- combined military operations and cooperation for improvement of South Korean military strength in the context of the U.S. and Korean political environments -- are chosen for analysis because they constitute the prominent characteristics of the U.S.-South Korean military relationship. The former category includes the structure of combined military operations and the U.S. military posture in Korea. The latter is primarily characterized by U.S. military assistance to the ROK armed forces.

With a focus on the changing character of these military relations, the analysis of each category of interactions involves a series of questions: What changes occurred in each category of interaction? Were these changes initiated by U.S. military and political interests more than by those of South Korea? If so, were the changes motivated more by American political interests than by military interests? How did political developments in South Korea affect the existing military relations? How did South Korea react to changing situations in its military relations with the United States?

In terms of data collection, there have been certain limitations imposed by security concerns. Nevertheless, sufficient unclassified sources exist to make our analysis possible.
The analysis in this study is primarily based on an intensive examination of public sources, such as public documents and official records of the governments and militaries of both countries, memoirs written by involved persons and statements made by both governmental and military personnel, and other published materials. Some information received in interviews with a limited number of military personnel were especially significant to the analysis of certain issues.

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 examines the historical background of U.S.-South Korean military relations with a focus on the origins of America’s military commitment to Korea: the chapter investigates the evolution of military relations between the two countries. Particular attention is given to the role and efforts of the United States in creating, strengthening and protecting South Korean armed forces in the early stage of their relations.

The third and fourth chapters deal with the first category of U.S.-ROK military relations: combined military operations in Korea. Chapter 3 analyzes the change of command structure to control military operations in South Korea and the role of U.S. forces deployed there, both in the military and political spheres. This analysis is made in the context of the military threat from North Korea.

Chapter 4 analyzes the presence of U.S. military in Korea. In this chapter, two cases of U.S. troop reduction are examined: the withdrawal of the 7th Infantry Division in
1971 by the Nixon Administration; and the Carter troop reduction in 1978. Attention is given to U.S. motivations and South Korean reactions, U.S. global strategy, American security policy toward Asia, and the international situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula.

Chapter 5 is devoted to an analysis of the second category of military relations between the United States and South Korea: cooperation for the improvement of South Korean military strength. Since the interactions of this category primarily involved U.S. military assistance to South Korea, this chapter first analyzes the nature -- role, type, size and changes -- of that military aid. Then, three particular situations are examined: South Korean participation in the Vietnam War, North Korean military provocations (the Blue House raid and capture of the USS Pueblo), and human rights issues in Korea. In each case, some specific political and military issues were raised between the two countries, and U.S. military assistance was used as major leverage to deal with them. Thus, in our analysis of these cases we hope to discover how American military assistance was actually implemented in South Korea to achieve particular U.S. interests.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the research findings and provides a conclusion drawn from the analysis as a whole.

While our analysis is designed to answer some of the specific questions mentioned above, it also touches on a number of much broader issues. Most directly, it
examines the process by which military relations between a large and a small country evolve over time and the forces which generate change in the relationship. It also reveals that there are a number of factors, both internal and external to the relationship, which can alter the apparent asymmetry in influence to the advantage of the smaller country. Finally, it provides some insight into the complex interaction between political and strategic concerns in the formulation and implementation of military policy.
CHAPTER II

GENESIS OF U.S. - SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY RELATIONS:
A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter examines the origins of U.S.-South Korean military relations in a historical perspective to produce the background of the present U.S.-South Korean military relations. The initial armed forces of South Korea were created by the U.S. military government in Korea and their development was fully dependent on assistance from American forces. Thus, the initial phase of the relations had been almost totally led by the United States and its military. In this context, this chapter investigates how America's military commitment to Korea evolved, what roles the U.S. military played in its relation with South Korean armed forces, and what efforts the American military made to protect South Korea and her armed forces against an external attack in the early phase of relations between the two militaries.
1. The United States and Korean Independence

Before World War II, the United States had almost no interests in Korea and thus no clear policy toward Korea. As it was expected that the war would end with the Allies' victory, however, the United States initiated summit meetings to discuss many international problems after the war and began to mention the post-war status of colonial Korea. American policy toward post-war Korea had been developed in three phases: a multipower trusteeship for Korea; the dual occupation of the Korean peninsula; and two Koreas.

A. Trusteeship for Korea

The idea of a trusteeship for Korea originated from President F. D. Roosevelt's vision of a new world order after World War II. During a meeting with British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in March 1945, Roosevelt mentioned that Korea would be an appropriate area for a postwar trusteeship.¹ This idea later became American foreign policy toward postwar Korea in the form of a trusteeship by the four great powers.

The Cairo Declaration

On December 1, 1943, President Roosevelt, Generalissimo Chang Kai-Shek and Prime Minister Churchill declared, as a result of the Cairo Conference, the independence of Korea after the Japanese surrender: "... The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent." 2

Koreans welcomed the Declaration and expected that they could establish an independent government immediately after the Japanese surrender. In the Declaration, however, there was no guarantee to secure an immediate independence of Korea. As a matter of fact, President Roosevelt attempted to make Korea independent "at the proper moment," not immediately after the downfall of Japan. 3 The ambiguity of the time frame -- the provision of "in due course" -- created Korean resentment and it actually appeared in the Moscow Agreement in December, 1945, to mean at least a five-year trusteeship by the four great powers.


3 As for the time limit of Korean independence, the American draft of the Communiqué, made by the staffs on November 24, 1943, said that Korea should become independent "at the earliest possible moment" after the downfall of Japan, but on the next day Roosevelt amended that phrase to "at the proper moment." This meant that Roosevelt had in mind a trusteeship taking precedence over an immediate Korean independence. For the text of the U.S. draft, see Dept. of State, The Cairo Conference, pp. 399-400.
Nevertheless, the Cairo Declaration has a historical meaning as the first pledge by the great powers about the postwar status of Korea. It was a significant turning point in U.S. foreign policy toward Korea.

Emergence of A Multilateral Trusteeship

In February 1945, the leaders of the Allied met again at Yalta to discuss the unsolved international problems. One of the American objectives of the conference was to obtain an agreement among the big powers on the Korean problem. The United States proposed that a trusteeship be established for Korea and the big powers be included in such a trusteeship. The United States also suggested that the Soviet Union could participate in the occupation and military government of Korea if it entered the war against Japan.\(^4\)

In the proposal, the United States emphasized "joint action" in light of adherence to the Cairo Declaration and great powers' political interests. At the same time, it was asserted that the United States should play a leading role in the joint action. The United States, however, did not make an exact plan of the trusteeship because of the lack of enough studies about Korea.\(^5\)

During the conference, the United States tried to persuade the other great powers with its plan for a multilateral trusteeship for Korea. Particularly, it aimed to obtain a Soviet promise to enter the Pacific War even at the price of Russian occupation of Korea. But no written agreement on the postwar status of Korea was made at Yalta. The lack of an exact plan of Korean trusteeship meant that the United States still gave low priority to Korean independence.

In July 1945, the heads of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union had another conference at Potsdam. The primary purpose of the conference was to deal with the European problems arising after the surrender of Germany. The United States also aimed to determine a detailed postwar trusteeship for Korea.

At that time, American leaders seemed to worry about the possibility of Soviet predominance in Korea (and Manchuria) if there were no detailed and written agreements on the postwar status of Korea. In this context, the United States aimed at a maximum to obtain an agreement among three powers, with anticipated cooperation from Chang Kai-Shek, on joint action regarding the postwar trusteeship for Korea, or at the minimum to obtain the adherence of the Soviet government to the Cairo Declaration. The United States

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5Ibid., pp. 359-361. The Dept of State explained that joint action in connection with the establishment of Korean independence was important and necessary because of three reasons: Chinese and Russian traditional interests in Korean affairs; the promise of Korean independence in the Cairo Declaration; and some expected political repercussions in the case of the military occupation of Korea by any single power (p. 359).

6Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, p. 112.
calculated that either objective would prevent unilateral action by any of the three powers, particularly the Soviet Union, to establish a friendly government to only its own nation in Korea.\(^7\)

At the conference, therefore, the United States again insisted on joint action in connection with the establishment of an independent Korea for the same reasons as at the Yalta Conference. The United States also reiterated a multilateral trusteeship for Korea in view of the international character of the Korean problems and of the "probable" inability of the Koreans to govern themselves immediately following liberation. In this proposal, the United States estimated that a multilateral trusteeship for Korea would lessen the international friction that might develop if postwar Korea were left to any single power.\(^8\)

Up until that time, however, the United States itself did not make any progress in preparing the exact structure of the trusteeship and the time when Korea should be granted independence. Also, the conferring powers did not discuss in detail Korean problems during the conference because in the Asian area other agenda were more important than a trusteeship or military occupation of Korea.\(^9\) From these points of view, in the American

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\(^8\)For detail, see Briefing Book Papers prepared by the State Department on July 4, 1945. Ibid., pp. 311-314. In the U.S. proposal for the Korean trusteeship, the two factors, the international character of the Korean problem and probable Korean inabilities, seemed to be considered in view of great powers' interests surrounding the Korean peninsula only with a focus on a new world order after the war, but without deep analysis and exact knowledge of Korea and its people.
proposal of a trusteeship for Korea, the advantages of the great powers might be considered more important than the independence of Korea. At the same time, the United States seemed to insist on a Korean trusteeship for the purpose of preventing the other powers from obtaining a predominant position in Korea.

As a result of the conference, the participants reaffirmed the Cairo pledge (but the Soviet Union only officially joined the other powers in August 8, 1945). Despite American efforts to obtain a Soviet agreement on the trusteeship for Korea, however, Russian attitudes toward this matter were as yet unknown.

B. Dual Occupation of Korea

The 38th Parallel

In June 1945, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) prepared a military plan to invade the Japanese homeland. The American military leaders chose November 1, 1945 as the target date to land in Kyushu. The major purpose of this operation was further reducing Japanese war capabilities by containing and destroying enemy forces and by destroying the

\[9\text{Among the agenda, the Soviet entry into the Pacific War was probably the most urgent issue. Soon Sung Cho, Korea in World Politics, 1940-1950 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 43.}\]
industrial heart of Japan through the Tokyo Plain.\textsuperscript{10}

At that time, the U.S. military estimated strong resistance from Japanese forces and forecast that Japan would not surrender soon.\textsuperscript{11} In planning the invasion of Japan, however, the American military excluded any military operations in Korea largely because American military leaders felt that Korea had no strategic importance to the United States in case of a general world conflict. But the United States would not allow any single country to invade Korea for the purpose of driving out the Japanese. The United States suggested that, if necessary, the invading forces be composed of units from the various interested countries -- i.e., the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union -- under a single over-all Allied command. Although the United States gave several reasons for this position, the most important one might be the American intention to prevent any single great power from acquiring a predominant position in Korea.\textsuperscript{12}

Considering strategic and tactical advantages, American military leaders concluded that the United States needed Soviet cooperation for operations in Japan.

\textsuperscript{10}For detail, see Memorandum by the Secretary of the JCS, 18 June 1945. Dept. of State, \textit{The Potsdam Conference} vol. 1, pp. 903-910; Memorandum by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff, 29 June 1945. Ibid., pp. 910-911.

\textsuperscript{11}The U.S. military estimated that Japan would have approximately 1,800,000 ground troops in Japan proper (including 300,000 in Kyushu), 650,000 in Manchuria and 225,000 in Korea. The Situation Map (The Armed Forces: Ground, 18 June 1945), ibid., vol. 2, p. 346. Also, it was estimated that Japan would continue to fight until the latter part of 1946 and such fighting might produce over a million casualties of American forces. Cho, \textit{Korea in the World Politics}, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{12}For U.S. military opinions on Korea, see Dept. of State, \textit{The Potsdam Conference} vol. 1, pp. 904, 925-926; Cumings, \textit{The Origins of the Korean War}, pp. 118-120.
Strategically, Soviet participation in the war against Japan could be the decisive factor in forcing Japanese forces to give up the war as early as possible. Tactically, if the Soviet Union entered the Pacific War, they could deal with the Japanese in Manchuria (and Korea if necessary) and consequently, it would reduce the American burden. At the Potsdam Conferences, therefore, the United States again requested Soviet participation in the Pacific War. But the Russian attitude was not clear until August, 1945.

On August 8, 1945, two days after the first use of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and only one day before the second one on Nagasaki, the Soviet Union announced its entry into the war against Japan. In its war declaration, the Soviet Union said that the decision was made upon the Allied request. In reality, however, the Soviets might have feared that their interests in Asia would be neglected in the final settlement unless it entered the Pacific War before the impending Japanese surrender. On the following day, Russian troops began to move toward Korea and Manchuria.

With no American preparations for Korean occupation, this Soviet action made the United States realize that the Korean peninsula was left to Soviet occupation. Furthermore, in light of Soviet activities in Eastern Europe after the German surrender, American leaders foresaw that once the Soviet Union occupied the peninsula, it would

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establish a Korean government which would be friendly only to the Soviet Union and a threat to the future security of the Free World in Asia and the Pacific area. The prospect of such a development made American policy makers reconsider U.S. policy toward Korea. Hence, it was urgent for the United States to take action to limit future Soviet activity in the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{15} In other words, the United States had to switch its policy from a multi-power trusteeship to dual military occupation of Korea. Finally, the United States took a new course of action, "occupation first, trusteeship later."

After Soviet forces began to march toward Korea, the 38th parallel was officially selected, as the boundary of U.S.-Soviet occupation, during a night-long session of the State-War-Navy-Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) held on August 10-11, 1945.\textsuperscript{16} The United States explained that the 38th parallel was chosen only for the military purpose of fixing responsibility between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in carrying out the Japanese surrender and it was intended to be temporary.\textsuperscript{17} President Truman wrote in his memoirs:

\textsuperscript{15}In connection with the Russian armies' movement to Korea and Manchuria, Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley (in Moscow), the Presidential Representative on reparation matters, recommended that President Truman "occupy quickly as much of the industrial areas of [North] Korea and Manchuria" as the United States could. Harriman, Ambassador to Moscow, also recommended that U.S. forces immediately "land to accept surrender of Japanese troops at least on the Kwantung Peninsula and in Korea." Harry Truman, \textit{Memoirs} 2 vols., vol. 1, \textit{Years of Decisions} (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc.,1955), pp. 433-434 (hereafter cited as Truman, \textit{Memoirs}, vol. 1). In advance of these recommendations, during the Potsdam Conference, General Marshall and Admiral King suggested to Ambassador Harriman that American forces "land in Korea and Dairen if the Japanese gave in prior to Soviet troops occupying these areas." Ibid.


\textsuperscript{17}Dept. of State, \textit{Department of State Bulletin} 13 (Dec 30, 1945):1035 and 16 (Mar 23, 1947):
"the 38th parallel as a dividing line in Korea was never the subject of international discussions and it was proposed by us as a practicable solution when the sudden collapse of the Japanese war machine created a vacuum in Korea." 18

However, American leaders might have considered their political objective in Korea more important than the military purpose to carry out the Japanese surrender. American leaders considered Russian influence on the Korean peninsula a threat to the future security of Asia and the Pacific region. Thus, the United States needed to draw a line to prevent Soviet occupation of the entire peninsula. Also, to the participants of the SWNCC meeting, it was most important to find a line in Korea that would fulfill their political desire to have American forces receive the Japanese surrender "as far north as possible." 19

From these points of view, America's political interests were more significantly reflected in the selection of the 38th parallel than its military interests. Particularly, the decision was hastily made in response to Soviet action in Korea, without a predetermined plan of dual or single occupation. It was also made without deliberate considerations of the political, economic and social determinants of Korea.

When the United States offered the 38th parallel to the Soviet Union, Stalin accepted it quickly, perhaps with a hope to obtain more concessions from the United States in other settlements such as military occupation of Japan.\(^{20}\)

In short, with the 38th parallel, the United states formally decided to occupy Korea together with the Soviet Union in order to fulfill the military purpose of accepting the Japanese surrender and more importantly, to achieve the political objective of preventing Soviet predominance on the Korean peninsula. That decision, however, provided the Russians with a basis to legitimize their occupation of Korea. In fact, it became the most crucial moment of separating the Korean peninsula into an agricultural south and industrial north. It was a product of the lack of appropriate attention to the political and military consequences.

**The U.S. Military Government and Political Situation in Korea**

Upon the Japanese surrender, General MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), issued the General Order that directed Japanese commanders in China, excluding Manchuria and Formosa, to surrender to Nationalist Chinese forces, those in Manchuria and Korea north of the 38th parallel to the Soviet Union and those in

\(^{20}\)For example, the Soviet Union sought to occupy the Northern part of Hokkaido. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pp. 440-441.
Korea south of the 38th parallel to the United States.\(^{21}\)

Meanwhile, Soviet forces moved into northern Korea about one month before the United States moved into the south. By August 14, they had arrived far inside the Korean-Soviet border and by August 26, reached the 38th parallel. On the other hand, the United States made almost no substantial preparation to occupy Korea during the period of more than twenty months from the Cairo Declaration to the Japanese surrender. It was not until the SWNCC meetings in mid-August, 1945 that the United States formally decided to occupy Southern Korea.

After the Japanese surrender, consequently, an unprepared army corps, the 24th Corps, was assigned to occupy Korea south of the 38th parallel. The Corps consisted of the 6th, 7th and 40th Infantry Divisions under the command of Lt. General John R. Hodge. The occupational forces were charged with three major missions: accepting the surrender of Japanese forces in the American zone; maintaining law and order; and conducting the Korean government in harmony with American policies.\(^{22}\)

On September 8, 1945, the 24th Corps arrived in Korea, following its advance reconnaissance team's arrival on September 4. General Hodge received the formal surrender of Japanese forces in Korea on September 9, 1945. Three days later, he relieved

\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 440.

Japanese Governor General Nobuyuki Abe from authority and appointed Major General Archibald Arnold (Commander, the 7th Division) Governor of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK).

After the Japanese surrender on August 15, most Koreans believed that the Korean Provisional Government (KPG) in Chungking, China, was the legitimate government of Korea and waited for its return. Although being aware of the existence and activities of the KPG in exile, the United States had avoided any official recognition of the KPG. Regardless of Korean desires, the KPG was not allowed to return home and hence its members came back as private citizens.

After the liberation, the political situation in Korea was extremely confused. Political organizations sprang up like mushrooms and Korean society fell into severe political factionalization. Particularly, the leftists and rightists sharply confronted each other. Among numerous political groups, the Chosun Konguk Chunbi Wionhoe (Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence; CPKI), led by the leftists, became one of the strongest political forces, with partial control of the existing administrative system immediately after the liberation. CPKI activists attempted to organize a transitional government prior to the arrival of U.S. occupation forces. On September 6, 1945, two days before the American troops' arrival, they declared the establishment of the

23The CPKI was organized by Lyuh Woon-hyung and other leftists, on August 16, 1945. It controlled, in part, the national press, radio and transportation facilities. For more discussions of Lyuh and this organization, see Cho, Korea in the World Politics, pp. 66-69; Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, pp. 71-92.
Chosun Inmin Konghwasuk (the People's Republic of Korea; PRK), claiming jurisdiction over the entire country. At the beginning the PRK contained all political elements, including both the rightists and the leftists (the rightists later refused to cooperate with the PRK). In fact, there was no strong organization to counter the PRK.24

Like the case of the KPG, however, the military government did not recognize the PRK and refused to utilize any Korean political organization. On October 10, Governor General Arnold announced that the USAMGIK was "the only government in Korea south of the 38th parallel," calling for the termination of irresponsible political groups.25 It primarily aimed to warn the de facto government, the PRK, to stop its challenge to the U.S. military government. But the PRK refused to end its activities as the legitimate government in Korea. Upon the arrival of the civilian affairs units in late October, however, the U.S. military government removed the PRK representatives from the local governments and assumed all governmental functions.

Meanwhile, conservative leaders organized their own political parties as the opposition to the PRK. Two groups, the Hanguk Minchu Dang (Democratic Party) and the Kuk Min Dang (Nationalist Party) were strong among more than fifty rival political parties.26 Both were formed in mid-September, 1945 and gradually became powerful,

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24For details of the PRK, see Meade, American Military Government in Korea, pp. 54-55; Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, pp. 81-91; Cho, Korea in World Politics, pp. 68-73.
25Ibid., p. 71.
26Ki-Baek Lee, Hanguksa Sillon (A New History of Korea) (Seoul, Korea: Il Cho Gak, 1971),
thanks to the anti-left policy of the U.S. military government, splits within the PRK, the conservative tendency of the Korean people, and these parties' own political resources. Nevertheless, the rightists were unable to escape from serious division and thus unable to form a unified force against the leftist groups.27

The factionalized political situation in the early period of the American occupation motivated General Hodge to allow the two leading heads of the KPG in exile, Rhee Syngman and Kim Koo, to return home. It was expected that their return could achieve political unification in South Korea. Rhee arrived on October 16 and Kim returned on November 23, 1945.

After his return, Rhee attempted to form a coalition of all political factions through the Central Committee for the Rapid Realization of Independence (CCRRI). In the beginning, the CCRRI received wide support from a variety of parties including the communists. But the CCRRI could not overcome the basic incompatibility between the leftists and the conservatives and the different purposes of all the factions participating. After the quick withdrawal of the leftists, therefore, the CCRRI became just another conservative organization.

Kim Koo was supported by the Hanguk Dongnip Dang (the Korean

27For more detailed discussions of the rightist groups, see Cho, Korea in World Politics, pp. 71-75; Mead, American Military Government in Korea, pp. 54-56.
Independence Party), formed by himself, and liberal nationalists leaders. Unfortunately, he remained in open conflict with Rhee. Contrary to the expectation of the U.S. military government, therefore, it was impossible for Rhee and Kim to achieve the political unification of South Korea. Consequently, the problem of political disunity -- particularly, the polarization of the left and the right -- remained unsolved.28

The U.S. military government took a series of policies opposing the leftists, while it favored the rightists and was anxious for their parties to obtain strong popular support. On November 3, 1945, General Arnold directed that:

Political parties, organizations, and societies will be placed under control. Those whose activities are consistent with the requirements and objectives of the Military Government will be encouraged. Those whose activities are inconsistent with the Military Government will be abolished.29

That directive apparently aimed to eliminate the leftist groups, targeting the PRK. But the PRK continued the claim that it was the legitimate Korean government. Finally, the military government took another serious measure for the purpose of eventual abolishment of the leftist organizations. On December 12, General Hodge announced that "the PRK was in no sense a 'government' and the activities of any political organization in any attempted
operations as a government are to be treated as unlawful activities." 30

Although the PRK vigorously resisted, it was already dying under American opposition. Consequently, the anti-left policies of the military government caused the decline of left-wing influence in the political sphere and in return, contributed to strengthening the conservative groups.

C. Birth of the Republic of Korea: Policy of Two Koreas

During December 16-20, 1945, the foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union met in Moscow in order to discuss unsolved problems in wartime negotiations, including the problem of Korea.

As it did during the war, the United States proposed a four-power trusteeship for Korea for at least five years and finally obtained Soviet agreement on the plan. The Moscow Agreement read:

(1) . . . There shall be set up a provisional Korean democratic government which shall take all the necessary steps for developing . . . Korea . . .
(2) In order to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government . . . there shall be established a Joint Commission consisting of representatives of the United States command in South Korea and the Soviet command in North Korea. In preparing their proposals the Commission shall consult with the Korean

30 Cho, Korea in World Politics, p. 72.
democratic parties and social organizations.

(3) . . . The proposals of the Joint Commission shall be submitted, following consultation with the provisional Korean government, for the joint consideration of the Government of the United States, the U.S.S.R., United Kingdom, and China for the working out of an agreement concerning a four-power trusteeship of Korea for a period of up to five years.31

To the Koreans, the Agreement was viewed as a postponement of Korean independence. It therefore met strong opposition from the Korean people. Immediately after the Agreement, the Committee for Total National Mobilization Against Trusteeship was organized around KPG leaders. Without delay, the committee launched a nation-wide anti-trusteeship movement.

In Seoul, the whole city held demonstrations in the streets, closing all the stores and businesses. Even the employees of the U.S. military government went out on a protest strike. Demonstrations soon spread throughout the entire country. In fact, the Korean people were then ready to sacrifice their blood to block the trusteeship plan. At first the Communists also joined in the anti-trusteeship movement but later suddenly changed their position to support the trusteeship (this shift of attitude was directed by the Soviets). Thus,

31Communique on the Moscow Conference of the Three Foreign Ministers. Department of State Bulletin 13 (Dec. 30, 1945): 1030; U.S Dept. of State, Moscow Meeting of Foreign Ministers: Dec. 16-20, 1945 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1946), pp. 14-16. The United States aimed to block Soviet domination in Korea through the four-power trusteeship for the country. According to the records of wartime discussions, the Soviet Union was reluctant toward the American-proposed multilateral trusteeship plan for Korea, probably because of its advantage of geo-political location to Korea. In view of this fact, Soviet agreement to the U.S. proposal at Moscow might have been a compromise for the purpose of obtaining American acquiescence or concession to Soviet plans in other areas such as Eastern Europe.
it was impossible to block the implementation of the trusteeship plan through cooperation between leftist and rightist forces.\textsuperscript{32}

The first meetings of the U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission were held in Seoul on March 20, 1946. The key issue was which groups of Koreans should be consulted to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government, in pursuance of the Moscow Agreement. The Soviets insisted that political parties and social organizations opposed to trusteeship should be excluded from that Korean body to be consulted. The Soviet purpose was to exclude democratic nationalists from the consultation and hence to gain communist predomination in the provisional government of Korea. In response, the U.S. delegations contended that the Korean people were entitled to have the freedom of speech and thus even those Koreans who had opposed to trusteeship should be included in the process of consultation. Since both sides failed to agree on this issue, the first round of the Joint Commission talks was adjourned on May 16, 1946.

One year later, the Joint Commission reconvened on May 21, 1947. But the Soviets reiterated their previous position that only those groups which had supported the Moscow Agreement should take part in the consultative process. Again, no agreement was made between the United States and the Soviet Union on the issue of the eligibility of Korean political parties and social organizations for consultation. Thereby, the talks were broken off.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{32}Lee, \textit{Hanguksa Sillon (A New History of Korea)}, p. 396.
The deadlock in the U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission led the United States government to another change in its Korean policy. As an alternative course of action, the United States submitted the issue of Korean independence to the General Assembly of the United Nations on September 17, 1947. In his speech to the General Assembly, Secretary of State Marshall stated, attributing the failure of the Joint Commission to the Soviet Union, that the United States Government intended to present the question of Korean independence to the General assembly because "further attempts to solve the Korean problem by means of bilateral negotiations would only serve to delay the establishment of an independent, united Korea." He continued to say that the issue then required the impartial judgement of the other members of the UN and that the United States did not wish "to have the inability of two powers to reach agreement delay any further the urgent and rightful claims of the Korean people to independence." 34

Despite the Soviet Union's strong opposition, a resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on November 14, 1947. The main provisions of the resolution included:

33For the first and second meetings of the Joint Commission, see U.S. Dept. of State, Korea, 1945-1948: A Report on Political Developments and Economic Resources with Selected Documents (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1969), pp. 4-6. After the failure in the second round of the Joint Commission talks, the United States on August 26, 1947 proposed a four-power conference to resolve the Korean question. China and Great Britain accepted this proposal, but the Soviet Union rejected it on September 4, 1947. Thereafter, the United States decided to bring the Korean problem before the UN. For the context of U.S. proposal, see Department of State Bulletin (September 7, 1947): 473.

34For the full text, see Dept. of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, pp. 47-48.
(1) a general election to be held in Korea not later than March 31, 1948, to choose representatives of a national assembly;
(2) the withdrawal of United States and Soviet troops from Korea within 90 days, if possible, upon the establishment of a national government and its own national security forces; and
(3) the establishment of a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) in order to observe and supervise all these processes.\(^{35}\)

The UNTCOK began its operations in Korea, with the first meeting in Seoul on January 12, 1948. But the Commission was not allowed to enter North Korea because of the Russian boycott. On February 6, 1948, therefore, the UNTCOK decided to ask the Interim Committee of the General Assembly whether the election should be held only in South Korea. To answer this question, the Interim Committee on February 26, 1948 decided that the UNTCOK should observe elections "in all Korea or, if that were impossible, in as much of Korea as was accessible to it." \(^{36}\)

The UN plan of Korean election met with split responses from Korean political groups. The leftists vehemently opposed an election in the South alone. They charged that such election was an attempt by American imperialists to cut through the middle the homogeneous nation of the Korean people. They united under the flag of the National Democratic Front, led by the South Korean Worker's Party (former Communist Party) and tried to block the election by employing violent means such as sabotage, strikes, riots and terror against the rightists.\(^{37}\) Undoubtedly, their real objective was to prevent the

\(^{35}\)ibid., p. 9.
\(^{36}\)ibid, pp. 10-12.
establishment of a democratic, or pro-American, government in South Korea.

Even among conservative leaders, there was a sharp division of opinion toward an UN-observed election. The so-called extreme rightists group, led by Rhee Syngman, feared a delay of Korean independence because they regarded the UN resolutions as another strategy of the great powers to postpone the independence of Korea, condemning both occupation forces for violating the sovereignty of the Korean people. They also became convinced that the Soviet Union would not cooperate with the UNTCOK for implementing the UN resolution. Thus, they decided to support an immediate election in South Korea under UN supervision. On the other hand, other conservative groups around Kim Koo and Kimm Kiux-sic strongly opposed a separated election in the South only. They shared the belief that such a election would result in perpetuating the division of the country. They insisted that Korean problems should be solved by Koreans' self-determination based on a joint efforts between North and South Korean political leaders.38

Whatever the Koreans' responses were, a general election in South Korea was scheduled on May 10, 1948, according to the UNTCOK's decision to observe an election

37 Cho, Korea in World Politics, p. 193.
38 For the positions of conservative groups, see ibid., pp. 192-195; Kang, "Re-evaluation of the American Occupation of South Korea", pp. 126-127. With Kimm Kiux-sic, Kim Koo proposed a joint conference of north-south political leaders being held before any UN-observed election, desiring an election in entire Korea. Although they once participated in the North-South Leaders' Conference for Korean Unification held in Pyongyang in April, 1948, their efforts were not successful.
in the South only, where the UN resolution was welcomed by the U.S. military authorities
in South Korea. Because of the UNTCOK's insufficient manpower, the American military
government was primarily responsible for preparing and conducting the election.

Despite various anti-election activities of the leftist groups, the first general
election in Korean history was successfully carried out on schedule.\(^{39}\) As a result, 198
representatives of the Korean people were selected by the voters, leaving 100 seats allocated
to the North. The first National Assembly convened on May 31, 1948 and adopted the
Constitution on July 12, which was formally promulgated on July 17. Three days later,
Rhee Syngman was elected by the National Assembly as the first president of South Korea.

On August 15, 1948, the third anniversary of the Korean liberation from Japanese
rule, the Republic of Korea (ROK) was formally established. The administration of the
U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) was officially terminated at
midnight on that date. Thus, political and military relations between the United States and
South Korea entered a new phase. Up to this point, however, the Korean people were put
outside the decision of their future. As a matter of fact, the division of Korea was the
product of U.S.-Soviet confrontation in building a new postwar world order.

\(^{39}\) For that election, almost 80% the eligible voters registered and about 92.5% of them
participated in the vote on the election date. In other words, approximately 74% of the total eligible voters
cast their ballots in the election. Dept. of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 15.
2. Establishment of South Korean Armed Forces and Disengagement of U.S. Occupation Forces

A. Foundation of South Korean Defense Forces

In the process of eliminating Japanese influence, American officials first seized the control of police organizations. After deciding to set up a Korean police agency, the military government reopened the old Japanese Police Academy in Seoul on October 15, 1945, which gave a one-month basic training course to new recruits. By November, the Bureau of Police was established. But the Korean National Police could not successfully handle national security problems without assistance from American forces.40

As a matter of fact, almost from the beginning, the American military government recognized that the police force alone would not be adequate to meet the needs of national defense and thus Korea needed more effective means for national security. To meet such a

40 Robert K. Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War, U.S. Army Historical Series, Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962), pp. 7-9 (hereafter cited as Sawyer, KMAG). At the beginning of its administration, the U.S. military government decided to retain the incumbent Japanese officials during the transitional period until the Koreans attained more political maturity sufficient for taking over the administrative responsibilities. That decision was met with intense resentment by the Korean people. The occupation authorities, thereafter, changed the decision to the rapid elimination of Japanese officials as quickly as possible. In that process, the elimination of Japanese from police organizations was the most urgent because the Japanese police in colonial Korea had played the most important role in every area of the society. For example, the scope of police activities included economies, education, welfare, and "thought control", etc.
demand, General Hodge on November 10, 1945 established a board of U.S. officers to study military and political conditions in Korea in order to determine the need for a national defense program. This board recommended the development of Korean national defense forces, supplementing the existing police force, up to the level of 50,000 men consisting of three infantry divisions, two fighter squadrons and naval forces.\textsuperscript{41}

In advance of that recommendation, the military government on November 13, 1945 established the Office of the Director of National Defense with jurisdiction over the existing Bureau of Police and a new Bureau of Armed Forces comprising the Departments of Army and Navy. The primary purpose of the office was to implement the task of creating a Korean defense force.

On November 20, General Hodge approved the plan recommended by the study board of U.S. officers. However, General MacArthur suggested the expansion of the Korean police force by equipping it with U.S. arms and equipment rather than by creating new armed forces. The policy makers in Washington also examined the USAMGIK's proposal to establish Korean national defense forces, but no decision was made.

Without a quick decision from Washington, the Office of the Director of National Defense opened the Military English Language School in Seoul, in order to overcome the language barrier. The first class of this school began on December 5, 1945 with sixty students.

\textsuperscript{41}The Army and Air Force would have the strength of 45,000 men and the Navy and Coast Guard would limited to 5,000 men. The army divisions would be organized in accordance with modified U.S. Army Tables of Organization and Equipment and equipped from U.S. surplus stocks. Sawyer, \textit{KMAG}, pp. 10-11.
officer candidates who had some previous military experience and came from various groups such as former Korean independence fighters, former officers of Japanese and Chinese armed forces, and former police officers, etc. After graduating from this school, they had a very significant impact upon the future of the Korean Army through their careers as army officers.42

In Washington, the State-War-Navy-Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) was also considering a plan to create Korean defense forces. When the committee was informed of the Moscow Agreement, it recommended that the decision of establishing Korean defense forces be postponed until the U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission was held. Instead the committee agreed to furnish the Korean National Police with U.S. arms and equipment. Therefore, USAMGIK's efforts to build Korean defense forces could not be encouraged.

But General Arthur S. Champney, the Director of National Defense, proposed an alternative plan, called "Bamboo," to increase the capabilities of South Korean internal security forces. This plan suggested the creation of a constabulary type police reserve under the Bureau of Police. According to the plan "Bamboo," the strength of a company would be 225 Korean enlisted men and 6 officers. The plan aimed to create in a gradual expansion one regiment in each of the eight provinces. Also, a U.S. Army training team, consisting of

2 officers and 4 enlisted men, would be sent to each province. Their missions were to select initial activation and training areas and to recruit and organize new units.\textsuperscript{43}

Based on "Bamboo," the South Korean National Constabulary was officially established on January 15, 1946 in a chaotic political situation after the announcement of the Moscow Agreement. One day before the formal foundation of the Constabulary, a recruiting station opened at the Military English Language School in Seoul. The result of initial recruiting greatly exceeded expectations. By the end of January, 1946, nearly three companies had been formed in Seoul area alone and consequently, the first battalion of the first regiment was activated. At this time, a basic training program for the newly organized Constabulary units began under the direction of U.S. Army officers. In addition to the regiment in Seoul, by April 1946, seven others were formed at local cities (Pusan, Taegu, Kwangju, Iri, Taejon, Chongju and Chunchon). As the Constabulary rapidly expanded, the South Korean Constabulary Officer Candidate School was established on May 1, 1946 to meet the increased demand for officers. By November 1946, less than one year after its foundation, the South Korean Constabulary had organized nine regiments under the direction of U.S. Army officers, totalling 6,000 men.\textsuperscript{44}

As for the command structure of the Constabulary, American army officers were

\textsuperscript{43}For the plan "Bamboo," Sawyer, \textit{KMAC}, pp. 12-14.
initially appointed to all the high-level command positions. Then U.S. Army personnel assumed advisory status when a Korean general took over the commander of the Constabulary on September 12, 1946. In reality, however, the Korean Constabulary still remained under the actual control of American advisory officers.

At the time of the foundation of the Korean Constabulary, the U.S. military authorities assisted Koreans in establishing a coast guard. On January 14, 1946, the military government transferred the jurisdiction over the existing coast guard organization from the Japanese in Korea to the Director of National Defense. A training station was built at Chinhae, a city on the South Coast, by American army officers, who began recruiting from February 8, 1946. However, the Korean Coast Guard was much slower in developing than the Constabulary because of a lack of equipment (i.e., vessels) and insufficient American advisory service. Particularly, the Coast Guard did not receive appropriate assistance from the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard.\(^{45}\)

In the Spring of 1946, some significant changes occurred in the Korean defense structure. First of all, on March 29, the Bureau of Police was removed from the jurisdiction of the Director of National Defense. Thus the police became a separate organization. On April 8, the U.S. military government redesignated all the major elements of the Korean government as departments. The Office of the Director of National Defense was redesignated as the Department of National Defense. It was renamed the Department

\(^{45}\)For more detailed discussion of the Korean Coast Guard, see Sawyer, *KMAC*, pp. 17-20.
of Internal Security on June 15, 1946. At the same time, the military government abolished
the Bureau of Armed Forces with its subordinate Army and Navy Departments and instead
created the Bureau of Constabulary and Coast Guard.

Another change was made in command structure on September 11, 1946. According to the U.S. military government’s policy that Koreans take over responsibility
for administration, the American Director of the Internal Security Department was replaced
by a Korean Director. Thereafter, American officers working with the Constabulary and
Coast Guard assumed the role of advisor. In reality, however, the control of South Korean
security forces still remained in the hands of American advisors.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to these internal events, some external situations had influenced
changes in the Korean defense scene. First of all, it was clearly anticipated that the U.S.-
Soviet Joint Commission would not contribute to solving the question of Korean
independence. Therefore, the United States brought the Korean issue to the UN General
Assembly in September 1947. Despite the UN resolution to set up a united, independent
Korean government by a general election under UN supervision, the establishment of a
separate government in the South alone was envisaged because of Soviet refusal to
cooperate from the beginning. As the possibility of a separate government increased, the
future of South Korean security became a matter of concern. Thereby the U.S. military
government made further efforts to build South Korean defense forces.

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., pp. 20-22; Dept. of State, \textit{Korea, 1945 to 1948,} p. 121.
Another important factor was the North Korean military buildup. As early in 1946, the Soviet Union created the Inmin Gun (an army) and Boan Dae (a border constabulary) in North Korea, totaling 20,000 men with Japanese rifles. After the rapid increase of those forces, the Korean People's Army of North Korea was formally established on February 8, 1948. They were equipped with Soviet-produced tanks and aircraft and increased to 60,000 men in that year. Among them, about 16,000 men had experience fighting in the Chinese Communist or Soviet armies during the World War II. Under the assistance and supervision of the Soviet Army, North Korean forces were organized and trained for combat. Such a North Korean buildup was considered significant threat to the future of South Korean security and consequently, increased the necessity of armed forces in the south to counter the North.

Presumably, the birth of the South Korean Army was most importantly influenced by the U.S. decision to withdraw its occupation forces. After World War II, U.S. armed forces faced a major problem of manpower shortage because of the rapid demobilization and cutbacks in military expenditures. This problem led to a close reexamination of America's military commitment overseas. Thus, the United States began to consider the withdrawal of the occupation forces and, in return, the foundation of a South Korean army.

\(^{47}\) Sawyer, *KMAG*, pp. 104-105.
In mid-October, 1947, Generals MacArthur and Hodge were asked for their opinions on the creation of Korean armed forces. General Hodge recommended the establishment of the South Korean Army consisting of six complete divisions which could be equipped and trained by American military personnel within one year. However, MacArthur proposed an expansion of the constabulary up to 50,000 men, equipped with heavier infantry-type weapons except artillery. He recommended that the establishment of a Korean Army should be delayed until the UN General Assembly decided on a course of action. On March 10, 1948, two months before the first general election in Korea, the U.S. JCS decided to increase the Constabulary from the strength of about 20,000 men to 50,000 men, supplying infantry weapons such as small arms, cannons (37mm to 105mm), tanks and other armored cars (but the United States did not provide any tanks up until the Korean War broke out). As a result, the Constabulary became army-like forces rather than a police reserve.48

On April 8, 1948, the Department of the Army instructed General Hodge to create conditions in South Korea so that U.S. forces could be withdrawn at the end of the year and thus ending America's military commitment. Subsequently, General Hodge planned to equip and train the South Korean Constabulary primarily for defense and internal security. Hodge's objective in such a plan may have been to prevent South Korea from using its forces in an aggressive manner that would invite American involvement in a future war. In

48Ibid., p. 28-30.
order to improve the training of the Constabulary, General Hodge increased the number of U.S. officers assigned to advisory duty. Also, the occupation forces helped to set up military schools to educate Koreans: the Weapons School was established on July 1, 1948 at Taegu by the 6th Division, and the Artillery Schools on July 10 at Chinhae and Seoul by the 6th and 7th Divisions respectively. As a result of these efforts, the training of the Korean forces significantly improved in both scope and content.\textsuperscript{49}

Meanwhile, the South Korean Government was formally inaugurated on August 15, 1948. Thereafter, South Korean officials called the Constabulary the National Defense Army, though the United States opposed it. On August 24, President Rhee and General Hodge signed the Interim Military Agreement which stipulated "the progressive turning over to the Korean Government of jurisdiction over and command of all Korean Security forces (police, Constabulary and Coast Guard) as rapidly as possible." It was also agreed that the United States Army would continue to assist and equip the Constabulary and Coast Guard until the U.S. troops had withdrawn from Korea.\textsuperscript{50}

On November 30, 1948, the Korean National Assembly passed the ROK Armed Forces Organization Act and thus on December 15, the Republic of Korean Army was officially born, along with other services, under the Ministry of National Defense. But their capabilities were not sufficient to meet overall security requirements of South Korea. In

\textsuperscript{49}Ibid., pp. 30-31.

\textsuperscript{50}Agreement Between the United States and Republic of Korea on Transfer of Jurisdiction over Security Forces, August 24, 1948. Dept. of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, pp. 103-104.
fact, the U.S. military government intended to build South Korean forces primarily for the purpose of internal security. Despite the considerable amount of American military aid, therefore, South Korean forces remained inadequate to protect the country against external attacks.

B. Implementation of U.S. Troop Withdrawal

After World War II, U.S. armed forces had a significant problem with manpower shortage. At the same time, given the priority of the US commitment to Europe rather than Asia, American leaders considered that Korea did not have strategic importance to U.S. national security. President Truman well described the problem: "U.S. commitments were many, but its forces were limited." 51 As mentioned earlier, therefore, the United States began to consider the withdrawal of its forces from Korea.

After a careful study of the military aspects of a troop withdrawal from Korea, the JCS in September 1947 reported to the Secretary of State (he brought it to the President) that they had little strategic interest in maintaining American troops in South Korea. The JCS felt that South Korea would be militarily unimportant in the case of ground operations

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in Asia but she might have a certain strategic value for the defense of Japan. Also, they assessed the occupation of Korea as a military liability in view of cost and effect. With a focus on Europe, therefore, American military leaders might have concluded that the United States could not afford a military commitment in a less important area. The report well summarized U.S. military opinions on the strategic value of Korea. It read:

... In the event of hostilities in the Far East, our present forces in Korea would be a military liability and would not be maintained there without substantial reinforcement prior to the initiation of hostilities. Moreover, any offensive operation the United States might wish to conduct on the Asiatic continent most probably would by-pass the Korean peninsula.

If, on the other hand, an enemy [the Soviet Union] were able to establish and maintain strong air and naval bases in the Korean peninsula, he might be able to interfere with United States communications and operations in East China, Manchuria, the Yellow Sea, Sea of Japan and adjacent islands. Such interference would require an enemy to maintain substantial air and naval forces in an area where they would be subject to neutralization by air action. Neutralization by air action would be more feasible and less costly than large-scale ground operations.

In the light of the present severe shortage of military manpower, the corps of two divisions, totaling some 45,000 men, now maintained in South Korea, could well be used elsewhere [e.g., Europe], the withdrawal of these forces from Korea would not impair the military position of the Far East Command unless, in consequence, the Soviets establish military strength in South Korea capable of mounting an assault on Japan.

At the present time, the occupation of Korea is requiring very large expenditures... with little... benefit to the security of the United States...  

In advance of this JCS's report, Lt. General Albert C. Wedemeyer took a fact-

52JCS Memorandum, September 25, 1947. At that time, the members of the JCS were Admiral Leahy, General Eisenhower, Admiral Nimitz, and General Spaatz. Truman, Memoirs, vol. 2, pp. 325-326.
finding trip to South Korea at President Truman's request in the summer of 1947. He reported that if no Soviet troops remained in North Korea, the United States had "little military interest in maintaining troops or bases in Korea" and that the occupation forces in Korea would be a military liability in the event of general war. He recommended three possible courses of action with respect to U.S. Occupation Forces in Korea: (1) immediate withdrawal, which would abandon South Korea to the Soviet Union and was therefore strategically unacceptable; (2) indefinite stay of the occupation forces in Korea, which would be unacceptable to the American public after Soviet withdrawal and would subject the United States to international censure; and (3) concurrent withdrawal with the Soviet occupation forces. He recommended the last alternative on the condition of the strengthening South Korean forces before the withdrawal of American troops.53

However, Washington officials did not make a firm decision regarding the withdrawal issue until Spring 1948, though the United States had continued to prepare for troop withdrawal from Korea. In April 1948, the National Security Council (NSC) reported to the President three possible options with reference to Korea: (1) abandon Korea; (2) continue U.S. military and political responsibility for the country; and (3) extend to a Korean government aid and assistance for the training and equipping of their own security forces and offer extensive economic help to prevent a breakdown of the nation. The council

recommended the last course of action and the President immediately approved it.\textsuperscript{54} Subsequently, shortly before the South Korean election on May 10, the Department of Army instructed the USAMGIK to prepare for gradual withdrawal of the occupation forces at the end of 1948. In response, the military government continued its plan to strengthen the defensive capabilities of the South Korean Constabulary.

In the meantime, on September 9, 1948 the Communists in North Korea proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, claiming jurisdiction over the entire country. Then, ten days later, the Soviet Government announced that Russian forces would be withdrawn from North Korea by the end of the year. It was approximately one year after the Soviet Union proposed imminent and simultaneous removal of both forces. With the Soviet intention of pushing U.S. troops to withdraw from the South, the rise of North Korea made American policy makers aware of the possibility of the communists using force to unify the peninsula when South Korea was weak.

The American response was that the United States Government regarded with favor the withdrawal of the occupation forces at the earliest practicable date but regarded it as only one part of the entire question of the unity and independence of Korea, expecting further discussion at the UN General Assembly.\textsuperscript{55} Actually, however, US troops began to withdraw from South Korea on September 15, four days in advance of the Soviet notice.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{55} Dept of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, pp. 21-22, 116.
At that time, South Korea suffered from internal armed revolts. In October, 1948, a rebellion within the South Korean Constabulary, led by Communists elements, broke out in Southern Cholla Province. One month later, the second revolt occurred at Taegu among other constabulary units on November 2. Although the revolts were finally suppressed, the incidents were enough to prove the weakness of South Korean security forces. Thus, after those rebellions President Rhee and the Korean National Assembly requested that the United States maintain its forces in South Korea until Korean armed forces were capable of dealing with further internal or external threats.57

Under this situation, the complete withdrawal of American troops would mean giving up the whole Korean peninsula to the Communists. In November 1948, the Department of State concluded that the continued presence of U.S. troops in Korea would stabilize the overall situation in the Far East. Also, the United States was willing to await the UN General Assembly's decision. All these situations resulted in a temporary slowdown in troop withdrawal from Korea.

On December 12, 1948, with its recognition of the Republic of Korea as the only lawful government in the peninsula, the UN General Assembly recommended that both occupying powers completely withdraw their forces from Korea as early as practicable. At


57For detail, see Sawyer, KMAG, pp. 36, 39-40; Cho, Korea in World Politics, pp. 230-232.
this moment, more than 16,000 American troops still remained in Korea. Thus, the JCS directed General MacArthur to reduce this figure as quickly as possible to one regimental combat team of 7,500 men.58

The United States officially recognized the ROK Government on January 1, 1949. On the same day, the NSC recommended that a complete withdrawal by June 30 was politically and military desirable and that a U.S. military advisory group be established. It also recommended continued military assistance to South Korea for FY 1950. The 24th Corps finally left Korea on January 15, 1949, leaving only a small combat unit, the 5th Regimental Combat Team with the strength of 7,500.59

President Truman finally approved, on March 23, 1949, the complete withdrawal of American troops from Korea. On May 28, the 5th Regimental Combat Team began to move from Korea to Hawaii. With the departure of the Team's final increment on June 29, 1949, the debatable withdrawal of U.S. forces was completed, leaving only the US Military Advisory Group to Korea (K MAG) of about 500 men.60

59Finley, US Military Experience in Korea, pp. 51, 53. In reviewing U.S. policy toward Korea in January, 1947, the JCS asked General MacArthur about the future of the regimental combat team retained in South Korea. In his message on January 19, MacArthur replied that the United States would have to abandon active military support of the South Korean forces if a serious threat occurred, because the U.S. could not train and equip Korean forces to the level sufficient to counter any full-scale invasion. Thus, he recommended a complete removal of the remaining U.S. troops in Korea by May 10, 1949. Sawyer, K MAG, p. 37.
60Finley, US Military Experience in Korea, p. 53.
However, the United States did not escape the criticism that it had not paid much attention to the military and political realities of Korea in implementing the troop withdrawal. In fact, the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces raised many problems. First of all, the South Korean Government was not able to deal effectively with domestic and international situations. At that time, the South Korean defense forces were too weak to cope successfully with internal and external security problems. This was partly because of the U.S. military policy of building up the South Korean armed forces at a limited level and partly because of some internal problems within Korean forces such as severe factionalism and Communist infiltration.61

Needless to say, the rise of Communists government in the North and their military build-up became a serious threat to South Korean security. Soon after the initial withdrawal of American troops in September 1948, Communists widely penetrated into the South Korean society including schools, governmental organizations and even the armed forces. Consequently, South Korea had suffered from sabotage, demonstrations, and armed insurrections. After the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops, South Korea had been harassed by frequent North Korean raids along the 38th parallel, including some large-scale assaults and guerrilla attacks.62

Of course, the policy makers in Washington correctly knew the situation and

61 For the internal problems of the Korean forces, see Young-Woo Lee, "Birth of the Korean Army," pp. 654-655.
62 Finley, US Military Experience in Korea, pp. 53, 57.
recognized that the complete withdrawal of American forces from Korea in such situation might lead to the risk of the downfall of the South Korea. President Truman wrote:

We knew, however, that the Russians had built up a "People's Army" in North Korea. We knew that communist infiltration into South Korea was considerable. We knew that the new government of Syngman Rhee would find it difficult to resist effectively if it were attacked. 63

If Washington officials knew the risk, what was their alternative? According to Truman, his Administration concluded that big military and economic assistance to South Korea would be an alternative to the presence of U.S. troops in the country. He continued:

... A careful estimate had been made by our experts of the chances of survival of the new Republic of Korea, and the conclusion had been reached that 'its prospects for survival may be considered favorable as long as it can continue to receive large-scale aid from the United States.' 64

Unlike the Truman Administration's expectation, however, the Korean War revealed that large amounts of American aid alone would not save a militarily weak nation under Communist threat. Then, why did the United States totally remove its combat troops from Korea? To tell the truth, the most important and primary objective of U.S. Korean policy in that period was to terminate its unwanted political and military commitment to

64Ibid.
South Korea as soon as possible.

On the other hand, the retention of only a small combat team would not mean very much to the future of South Korea. To the Korean people, it was more important and necessary to acquire a guarantee from the American Government, in the form of a strong statement or an agreement, of its solid commitment to South Korea in case of external invasion. In May 1949, when President Rhee was informed that the U.S. troops remaining in South Korea were to be withdrawn, he said:

Whether the American soldiers go or stay does not matter very much. What is important is the policy of the United States toward the security of Korea. What I want is a statement by President Truman that the United States would consider an attack against South Korea to be the same as an attack against itself. If that is done, we won't need the soldiers. 65

It was also demanded that before withdrawal of U.S. troops, South Korean forces be build up to the level where they could effectively cope with internal and external security problems. As a matter of fact, a sizable number of South Korean forces were without rifles. By March 1949, the United States transferred infantry-type weapons and equipment for only 50,000 men of 65,000 in the Korean Army. Among 4,000 men in the Coast Guard and 45,000 police, about one-half of them were equipped with American

arms and carbines: the rest carried Japanese rifles.\textsuperscript{66}

Responding to the Korean demand, President Truman recommended that the U.S. Congress continue economic assistance toward South Korea. The Department of State also stated that "this withdrawal in no way indicated a lessening of the United States support in the Republic of Korea".\textsuperscript{67}

However, the American pledge did not guarantee U.S. protection of South Korea by means of its military power in the event of North Korean aggression. To U.S. policy makers, nonetheless, there was nothing more urgent than the removal of their occupation forces from Korea to end unwanted commitment in this less important area.

3. The Korean War and Re-intervention of U.S. Military

A. South Korea in U.S. Security Policy before the Korean War

The United States completed the removal of its combat forces from Korea on June 29, 1949, just a year before the outbreak of the Korean War. The withdrawal of American forces was implemented in spite of the Korean request for their retention and a high possibility of an attack from North Korea if it was done. It clearly seemed that the United

\textsuperscript{66}\textit{Sawyer, KMAG}, pp. 41-42.

States intended to completely terminate its political and military commitment to Korea as soon as possible. If so, how was South Korea important in American security policy before the Korean War?

As explained earlier, American military leaders (the JCS) estimated that South Korea had little strategic importance to U.S. security interests but she might have a certain strategic value, if any, in view of the defense of Japan. They thought that Korea was not vital to American national security.

Politically, however, the survival of South Korea was important to American interests. The Truman Administration considered South Korea as a test case of containment in Asia. President Truman stated that South Korea became a "testing ground of democracy" being matched against the practices of Communism in North Korea and a viable democratic government of South Korea would encourage other peoples in Asia and the Pacific islands to resist and reject the Communist propaganda.68 Probably, the downfall of Nationalist China to the Communists reinforced the significance of viable South Korea to the future success of American containment policy in Asia.

Actually, however, American security policy appeared to be in contrast to this political reality. In his speech before the National Press Club on January 12, 1950, about five months prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, Secretary of State Acheson clarified a

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firm American will to defend Japan under any circumstances and drew a defensive line (Acheson Line) for that purpose. South Korea was obviously excluded from this defensive perimeter. He said that:

... I can assure you that there is no intention of any sort of abandoning or weakening the defense of Japan and that whatever arrangements are to be made either through permanent settlement or otherwise, that defense must and shall be maintained. This defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus... [and then]... to the Philippine islands.  

Perhaps, the Acheson Line was decided on the basis of the American view about Soviet expansionism. In his press club speech, Secretary Acheson said, concerning Soviet behavior, that "the military menace is not the most immediate." In fact, the Truman Administration believed that the Soviet Union would not want to engage in military confrontation with the United States in Asia at least in the immediate future and thus containment policy could be successful without a complete American military commitment in the area. Instead, the administration feared that economic, political and social insecurity would increase opportunities for Communism. Therefore, American strategy for countering Soviet expansionism focused on the means of economic aid, reliance on the UN, and

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increase of local military strength through U.S. military assistance. Its objective was to strengthen self-defense capabilities of local governments to withstand Communist challenge. Particularly, economic assistance was considered more effective than military power in influencing events in Asia. Consequently, American policy makers believed that Asian nations could avoid Soviet domination without the direct application of U.S. military power, but with the development of strong democratic institutions and self-defense capabilities through American assistance. Therefore, they naturally concluded that the defense of South Korea would not require a full commitment of U.S. military power.\textsuperscript{70} The JCS also opposed American involvement in the defense of South Korea by means of U.S. armed forces under all circumstances, but agreed on military and economic assistance to enhance the country's defense capabilities.

Taking all these assumptions and policies into consideration, now we can conclude that the United States did not intend to protect South Korea by using its armed forces in the event of North Korean aggression. The Acheson Line conclusively demonstrated American intentions.

B. The Korean War and U.S. Responses

In the meantime, North Korea had strengthened the offensive capabilities of its forces with Soviet assistance. When the Soviet Union withdrew its occupation forces from North Korea in December 1948, they left about 150 advisors for each North Korean army division (this figure was far greater than that left by the United States in South Korea). Signing a reciprocal aid agreement with North Korea on March 17, 1949, the Soviet Union promised to provide the country with arms and equipment for six infantry divisions and three battalions of mobile border constabulary. In 1949-1950, the Soviet Union furnished North Korea with 180 aircraft (10 reconnaissance aircraft, 100 Yak fighters, 70 attack bombers), 100 T-34 and T-70 tanks and heavy artillery.\(^71\) As a result, North Korean armed forces were well-equipped and -trained offensively.

At the moment of its attack on June 25, 1950, North Korea had strong ground forces of about 136,000 men -- 10 army divisions (7 assault infantry divisions and 3 reserve divisions), 3 special brigades (armored, infantry, motorcycle), and 5 border constabulary brigades -- equipped with Russian tanks, automatic weapons, heavy artillery, anti-aircraft artillery, and other heavy weapons.\(^72\)

\(^{71}\)Ibid.

In contrast to Soviet buildup of North Korean forces, however, the United States was reluctant to strengthen South Korean armed forces. Americans aimed to develop them basically to preserve internal security, not to deter a full-scale aggression from North Korea. Thus, U.S. military assistance was mainly in the form of maintenance materiel and spare parts. The United States did not provide tanks, 155-mm howitzers and other heavy weapons. Americans explained that the main reasons for such limited military aid were dollar limitation allocated to South Korea and terrain factors which roads and bridges in the country were inefficient for tank operations. A important reason, however, might have been American fear that South Korean leaders might use their forces in an offensive manner to unify the peninsula.  

There had been another systematic factor to limit U.S. military aid to South Korea. Because of the priority assigned to Korea by the JCS, American supplies and equipment could not be immediately shipped toward South Korea from the excess of war-reserve stocks. Most of them had to come from commercial sources in the United States by new procurement contracts. Among $10,970,000 appropriated for FY 1950, for example, by the date of the North Korean attack only $340,000 worth of materiel were on the way to South Korea and less than $1,000 worth had arrived.  

Such American military aid consequently left South Korean armed forces too
weak to secure their country against a North Korean invasion. On the eve of the Korean War, the logistical situation of South Korean forces was seriously worsening. According to the Military Advisory Group to Korea (KMAG), at that time, spare parts in all categories were exhausted and 15 percent of weapons and 35 percent of vehicles were unserviceable. Also, the KMAG warned that with the equipment on hand, South Korean forces could resist a North Korean attack for no longer than 15 days.\textsuperscript{75}

At the beginning of the war, the Strength of the South Korean Army was about 98,000 men. The 8 army divisions were under-strength except only one, the Capitol Division. They were equipped with neither tanks nor heavy artillery. The Air Force had only 14 liaison planes and 10 training aircraft, without any fighters.\textsuperscript{76}

With absolutely superior war capabilities, at about 6:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, June 25, 1950 (Korean time), North Korea launched a surprise attack across the 38th parallel. In Washington, at 9:26 p.m. on Saturday, June 24 (Washington time: 14 hours behind Korean time), the Department of State received the first report of the attack from Ambassador John J. Muccio in Seoul, saying that "it constituted all-out offensive against South Korea." \textsuperscript{77}

That night, when he reported it to President Truman (then, in Independence,

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid., p. 104.

\textsuperscript{76}Finley, \textit{US Military Experience in Korea}, p. 56; Appleman, \textit{South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu}, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{77}Truman, \textit{Memoirs}, vol. 2, p. 334.
Missouri), Secretary Acheson did not contend that it was an all-out invasion but he dealt with it as more than one of the usual border clashes which were frequently provoked by North Korea. He recommended the President to bring the matter to the Security Council of the United Nations and Truman immediately approved doing so. On the next day, the UN Security Council was called and the United States proposed its draft resolution to be taken by the Council (more discussion later in this chapter).^78

As the situation in Korea deteriorated, Truman came back to Washington from Missouri on Sunday afternoon. At that time, Truman thought that "if South Korea was allowed to fall, Communist leaders would be emboldened to override nations closer to our own shores." He also considered that "if the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the Free World, no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors." ^79

That evening he called a meeting with his immediate advisors and the top defense chiefs at the Blair House. At the meeting, the following polices were decided and ordered to be put into immediate effect: (1) to evacuate the Americans from South Korea; (2) to provide arms and supplies to the South Korean Army; and (3) to move the Seventh Fleet to


the Formosa Strait to prevent conflict between Formosa and the mainland. To assist and protect American evacuation, General MacArthur was allowed to use his air forces but instructed to retain them south of the 38th parallel. Also, all the participants of the Blair House Meeting shared the view that they were "being tested." 80

It was an obvious fact that South Korean forces were no match for North Korean tanks and heavy weapons. In his report, MacArthur warned that the complete collapse of South Korea was imminent. As the Korean situation was rapidly worsening throughout the third day of the war (the South Korean Government already moved to Taegu, about 150 miles south from Seoul), Truman called another meeting at the Blair House Monday night. At that time, it was seriously considered that the downfall of South Korea would become a great threat to Japanese security. As a result of this meeting, General MacArthur was instructed to support South Korea with air and naval forces, but only south of the 38th parallel.81

On June 27, the United States submitted to the UN Security Council another

80 The participants of that meeting included the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the JCS, the three service Secretaries, Under Secretary of State (James Webb) and other civilian advisors. During the meeting, all of them shared with the view that the Korean War was "the test of all the [American] talk of the last five years of collective security." Among the military leaders, the Navy and Air Force Chiefs suggested that "air and naval aid might be enough," opposing to complete ground combat. But the Army Chief said that "if the Korean army was really broken, US ground forces would be necessary." The Chairman of the JCS opposed the use of ground forces but supported the use of air and naval power. He also recommended to draw the line somewhere, considering Russian action in Korea. Ibid., pp. 333-335; James I. Matray, "America's Reluctant Crusade: Truman's Commitment of Combat Troops in the Korean War," Historian 42 (May 1980): 446-447.

proposal calling for all members of the UN to give assistance to South Korea and it was accepted. On the same day, Truman had a meeting with congressional leaders. His action was fully supported by them, with a recommendation that the United States act "as a member of the UN" rather than as a single nation. At this time, the United States considered the Korean situation vital as a "symbol" of the strength and determination of the Free World. American leaders judged that if the United States failed to protect South Korea, created under American auspices and recognized by the UN, it would have a negative impact upon the confidence of the peoples adjacent to the Soviet Union, in Asia, the Middle East and Europe.\(^{82}\)

In lengthy discussions with the NSC on June 28 and 29, President Truman clarified his intention to limit American involvement in the Korean War. He did not want the United States to become so deeply committed in Korea that Americans could not take care of such other situations as might develop. He also made clear that U.S. operations in Korea would be designed to restore peace there and to restore the border.\(^{83}\)

The United States apparently worried about escalating the war to an all-out war with the Soviet Union. From the beginning of the war, American leaders paid considerable attention to the possibility of Soviet military intervention in the Korean War. Although they had thought that the Soviet would not desire a direct military clash with the United States, it

\(^{82}\)Ibid., pp. 338-340.
\(^{83}\)Ibid., p. 341.
was not until June 29 that the top-level policy makers made sure the Soviet intention of non-involvement in Korea. On that day, the Soviet Union stated that it would remain uninvolved in the Korean War.84

After discussions with the NSC in the evening of the same day, President Truman approved air strikes north of the 38th parallel and the use of ground forces to protect a port and air base in the area of Pusan-Chinhæ (cities on the south coast). Early in the next morning (June 30), however, MacArthur reported that South Korea was in danger of complete collapse and that only American ground troops could stop the North Korean advance. Thus he asked for permission to move immediately one regimental team toward Korea and to send additional two divisions from Japan as rapidly as possible. Truman immediately approved the use of a regimental combat team, but postponed his decision about the two combat divisions. Finally, in the late morning of that day, U.S. military involvement in the Korean War was decided. After a careful review and discussion with his major advisors about the MacArthur's latest request, President Truman authorized MacArthur to dispatch two combat divisions to the Korean battle zone. General MacArthur promptly ordered the 24th Infantry Division to move to Korea.85


In conclusion, the U.S. decision to enter in the Korean War was a deliberate choice based on various political and military considerations. When the Korean War broke out, the United States considered South Korea the first of a series of dominoes extending from Asia to Europe. At the same time, the possibility of Soviet involvement in the Korean War was significantly considered. In actuality, General MacArthur was allowed air strikes in North Korean territory after the Soviet announcement of uninvolvemement. Under no circumstances, did the United States intend to escalate the war to all-out hostilities with the Soviet Union. Another important consideration was American prestige as the world leader. If U.S.-sponsored South Korea fell, it would damage American leadership in the West. It would also have a negative impact on the will of the Free World to resist the Communists. An additional strategic consideration was the defense of Japan. Without a noncommunist South Korea, the security of Japan would be under a serious threat from the Communist powers. All these considerations determined America's three-year long fighting against the Communists.
C. UN Forces in Korea

As mentioned above, on June 25, 1950 (U.S. time), the United States brought the matter of the North Korean invasion before the UN Security Council, with a draft resolution. The Council immediately adopted the American draft proposal as its resolution with minor changes. It aimed to end hostilities and to restore the status quo ante. Determining the North Korean aggression as a breach of the peace, the resolution called for: (1) the North Korean authorities to cease hostilities immediately and to withdraw their armed forces to the 38th parallel; and (2) all Members of the UN to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution, and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities.86

A reason why the United States took the issue to the UN Security Council might be in part that there was no treaty or agreement insuring U.S. military intervention in South Korea even in the event of attack by North Korea.87 At the same time, American policy makers might consider that a collective action would be important for the solidarity of the Free World against Communism. Therefore, they might want to avoid an unilateral


application of U.S. military power to the Korean peninsula. In either case, the United States could legitimize its military operations in Korea through the United Nations' decision. At that time, the United States could dominate the UN Security Council because of the Soviet absence from the council's meetings.

As North Korea continued to advance, the Security Council met again on June 27. The United States proposed another draft resolution, which was adopted by the Council. In addition to the Council's demands on June 25, this resolution recommended that "the members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area." 88

To achieve the objectives in the Korean War, the Security Council adopted another resolution on July 7, 1950, which recommended that "all members providing military forces and other assistance pursuant to the aforesaid Security Council resolutions [of June 25 and June 27] make such forces and other assistance available to an unified command under the United States." The resolution requested that the United States designate the commander of such forces. It also requested that United States provide the Security Council with appropriate reports on the course of action taken under the unified command.89 On the following day, President Truman designated General MacArthur as

the commanding general of the United Nations forces fighting in Korea. During the Korean War, sixteen members of the UN participated in fighting against the Communists and many others provided food, hospitals, and other materials.90

Considering the joint military efforts of the U.N. forces on behalf of South Korea, President Rhee concluded that the establishment of the unity of command would be essential to win the war. On July 14, therefore, he transferred to General MacArthur, the Commanding General of UN Forces, command authority over all the South Korean forces "during the period of the continuation of the present state of hostilities."91 In Rhee's decision, the most important consideration was to win the war and consequently to unify the country.

However, the UN forces had different goals from Korea. Both the UN and America aimed to restore the status quo ante in the Korean peninsula, not to unify the peninsula. Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations, explained that the objectives of UN military action in Korea were to repel the North Korean aggression and to restore international peace and security.92 Secretary of State Acheson also stated that the purposes of collective action in Korea were solely to restore South Korean status prior to

90The sixteen countries included the United states, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Greece, Australia, New Zealand, Turkey, Philippines, Thailand, Colombia, South Africa, and Ethiopia.
92Goodrich, Korea, p. 182.
the North's invasion and to re-establish the peace broken by this attack.\textsuperscript{93} This difference in goals caused a dispute between the United States and South Korea in the process of the armistice, which was eventually resolved by the Mutual Defense Treaty.

On July 24, 1950, when General MacArthur established General Headquarters, United Nations Command (GHC, UNC) in Tokyo, utilizing SCAP/Far East Command Headquarters staffs to carry out UNC tasks, the United Nations Command was officially formed and MacArthur became Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command (CINCUNC). Since then, the UNC played significant roles in maintaining military and political stability in the Korean peninsula. Most importantly, the U.S. military had the command authority of operational control over South Korean armed forces.

4. The Mutual Defense Treaty

A. The Negotiations

From the establishment of the UNC, the operations of UN forces were successful. Particularly, after the successful amphibious landing at Inchon in September, 1950, the U.N. forces continued to push the Communist forces northward, until reaching Chongjin on the northeast coast, the Apnokgang River (Yalu River) in the areas of

\textsuperscript{93}Department of State Bulletin 23 (Jul. 10,1950): 46.
Hesanjin and Chosan in north-central Korea, and Sonchon in the northwest. The defeat of North Korea seemed to be imminent. It was seen that the unification of Korea was near at hand. The fighting, however, took a sharp turnabout with the intervention of Chinese Communist armies in November, 1950. The war became a completely new one. U.N. forces retreated to the south of Seoul, but again drove back Communist forces above the 38th parallel inflicting huge losses on them. After that, the war gradually fell into a stalemate.

By June 1951, it became clear that a military victory for either side would not be possible and thus a political solution would have to be found. Under that situation, Jacob Malik, Soviet Ambassador to the UN, proposed a cease-fire discussion, on June 23, 1951. Two days later, Peking endorsed Malik's proposal by using an editorial in The People's Daily advocating the withdrawal of all foreign troops.

In response to the Soviet proposal, the UN empowered the United States to conclude the armistice without any additional instructions, with a limitation to military matters only. On June 30, General Ridgway, CINCUNC, proposed to the Commander of Communist forces a meeting between representatives of both sides on a Danish hospital ship in Wonsan harbor (on the northeast coast above the 38th parallel), with a date to be determined. On the following day, the Communists accepted Ridgway's proposal, offering to meet UNC representatives at Kaesong on the 38th parallel between July 10 and
15. The first meeting of liaison officers was held at Kaesong on July 8 (the place of meeting was moved to Panmunjom in October 1951). After that, the armistice negotiations were protracted for more than two years until it was signed on July 27, 1953.

Needless to say, the opening of armistice talks made the South Koreans unhappy. To them, there was nothing more important than the unification of the country. They wanted to achieve it at any cost. At that time, the South Korean people thought that the unification could be accomplished through military means. They wished not to lose the very best opportunity to do that. They considered that, if agreed upon, the armistice would perpetuate the division of Korea. Accordingly, President Rhee and his people strongly opposed the truce negotiations. They wanted the United States and U.N. allies to win the war and thus to reunite their country.

In addition to the desire for unification, the uncertainty of the future might reinforce President Rhee's attitude not to accept a truce agreement. In the opening meeting at Kaesong, the Communist delegation insisted that all foreign troops should leave Korea in connection with an armistice. Of course, the United States responded by asserting that such a political question could not go into the negotiations on the battle-field. But the actual American position was that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea would "naturally follow a satisfactory peace settlement."^94 Anyhow, it was clear that the United States and

other U.N. forces would be withdrawn after an armistice which would eventually be
agreed to. What did it mean to South Korea? It might mean a repetition of the national
disaster. They knew that a series of pre-Korean War American policies -- the hasty troop
withdrawal in 1949 and the defense perimeter in Asia excluding Korea, announced in
January, 1950 -- invited the North Korean attack. Therefore, they wanted a firm guarantee,
before an armistice, to prevent another aggression by North Korea in the future. This
demand later appeared in Rhee's request for a mutual security pact between South Korea
and the United States.

From the beginning of the armistice negotiations, President Rhee had tried to
block the talks. As the negotiations proceeded between the UNC and the Communist
forces, he repeatedly threatened to withdraw his troops from the UNC and to go on
fighting the Communists by his forces alone if the negotiations continued. His efforts
attempting to block the armistice was strongly supported by his people and the Korean
National Assembly. The National Assembly passed a resolution to support Rhee's position
on the military unification of Korea by an advance to the North. Concerning this matter, the
United States worried about the possibility that Rhee would try to continue the war
independently.

Having serious troubles with President Rhee, American military leaders planned
to overthrow him by a South Korean military coup. The plan was called "Ever Ready"
which was created by General Clark and endorsed by the JCS. As a matter of fact,
President Eisenhower himself considered it as a possible course of action when he felt some problems with the Korean President. However, his Administration took the path of negotiations with the South Korean Government instead of an American-led coup.95

In Spring 1953, a prospect of settlement was seen. On April 3, 1953, Korean Foreign Minister Pyun told Ambassador Briggs that the South Korean Government would cooperate with armistice efforts if a bilateral security pact with the United States was established. American responses to this request were split. While the U.S. military leaders in Korea favored the pact as a means of resolving the post-armistice status of South Korean forces, policy makers in Washington wanted to defer the issue until the armistice was concluded.96


96On April 8, 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told the Korean ambassador that the United State would consider a bilateral pact after a peaceful settlement was achieved at the political conference following the armistice. On April 14, General Herren, Commander of the Korean Communications Zone (rear support area), suggested to General Clark that the United States should accept the Korean request for a security pact with America, considering South Korean domestic situations such as an anti-armistice campaign and mass demonstrations denouncing the truce negotiations in favor of armed unification. General Clark shared with General Herren's anxiety about Korea. Although he felt that the U.S. needed further study before accepting an offer of a bilateral pact under pressure, General Clark believed that it would be essential to resolve the post-armistice status of South Korean forces as quickly as possible. On the other hand, the JCS thought that it was better to defer the issue of a bilateral security pact until after the armistice was nailed down. Kotch, "The American Security Commitment to Korea," pp. 242-243; Walter G. Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, U.S. Army in the Korean War Series, Office of the Chief of
By April 30, President Rhee suggested some conditions for the armistice and the withdrawal of U.N. troops from Korea. The conditions included: a bilateral defense pact between the United States and South Korea; American guarantee of immediate help in the event of Soviet aggression; the continuance of the naval blockade and air defense until peace was firmly established; and the expansion and strengthening of South Korean armed forces. He also proposed the simultaneous withdrawal of Chinese Communist and U.N. forces with a bilateral defense treaty.97

President Eisenhower rejected a security treaty with South Korea and instead proposed alternatives such as: a promise of economic, political and military assistance including support for a twenty-division ROK army; a "greater sanctions" statement for the future security of South Korea which would be issued by the UN countries participating in the Korean War immediately after the conclusion of the armistice; and a promise to secure the rapid withdrawal of Chinese Communist troops at the political conference following the armistice.98

But this American counter proposal did not please President Rhee. To him, an American promise of economic support and military assistance in case of a future

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97Ibid., pp. 443-444.
98Ibid., p. 446; Kotch, "The American Security Commitment to Korea," p. 244. The reasons for Eisenhower's rejection included: (1) the treaty would detract from UN efforts in Korea; (2) it might invite similar action by North Korean allies; and (3) recent ROK action in opposing the armistice would make it difficult to explain the treaty to the American people.
Communist aggression could not be accepted as a firm guarantee, unless a formal security treaty was concluded. With the U.S. rejection of a mutual defense pact and the simultaneous withdrawal of all non-Korean troops, President Rhee continued to threaten the UNC and America by announcing that he would remove his forces from the UNC's operational control and continue the war independently if an armistice were agreed without accepting Korean demands.

In handling the Korean leader, high-level defense policy makers in Washington considered as alternatives not only conciliation but threats to him. By the end of May 1953, they recommended that President Eisenhower accept the Korean request for a bilateral security pact in exchange for Korean acceptance of the armistice agreement, and Eisenhower approved it. As a result, General Clark as CINCUNC was authorized to offer South Korea a bilateral defense treaty if it was necessary to stave off a dangerous situation. But the United States still persisted in its position that the simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign troops should be discussed in the political conference following the armistice.

President Rhee, however, insisted that South Korea could not accept any possibility of the treaty without American acceptance of other Korean demands. Also, he

99 American means of threat included termination of military assistance, unilateral withdrawal of U.N. forces (including American forces) and the deposal of President Rhee by a military coup (Plan "Ever Ready") if Rhee continued to refuse cooperation with the UNC or took an independent military action.

100 Hermes, Truce Tent and Fighting Front, p. 447.
did not end his efforts to block the armistice talks in order to push the United States to accept his demands. On June 18, 1953, he suddenly released approximately 25,000 anti-Communist POWs, for the purpose of disruption of the truce negotiations. It raised the fundamental question of the UNC's operational control over Korean armed forces. Eisenhower strongly protested Rhee's unilateral action by accusing him of violating the authority of the UNC. Eisenhower also threatened Rhee by saying that the United States would make necessary arrangements against him -- probably, the deposal of Rhee based on the Operation "Ever Ready" -- unless he immediately accepted the authority of the UNC.

President Rhee reiterated that if the United States signed the armistice without acceptance of Korean requests, he could not leave Korean forces under UNC control. Although President Rhee finally agreed not to repeat such unilateral actions, the release of anti-Communist POWs made American officials more seriously worry about Rhee's future behaviors which would influence the truce negotiations.

By late June, thereafter, the United States pressed the Korean President to accept the U.S. position that it could sign the armistice under honorable terms and would not attempt to drive out Chinese Communist troops from Korea by force until the aforesaid political conference would be held, suggesting a bilateral pact to be signed.\textsuperscript{101}

In response to that, on June 22, President Rhee suggested the following conditions for South Korean adherence to American plans:

\textsuperscript{101}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 453.
(1) If, after ninety days the political conference fails to obtain an agreement on Chinese withdrawal, within the following sixty days, the armistice shall be declared null and void, and ROK troops will advance north with air and naval support by the United States.

(2) The United States will enter into a mutual defense pact with the ROK before signing the armistice.

(3) The United States will give this Government adequate military aid to build up ROK land, sea and air strength and economic aid to rehabilitate the economy with a view toward eventual self-sufficiency.\(^{102}\)

The first and second conditions apparently gave the United States difficulties because they implied America’s automatic involvement in a future war in Korea. Thus, the United States again sought to defer the discussion of the issues until after the armistice was concluded. But the United States quickly accepted the last condition of economic and military assistance to Korea.

President Rhee of course had persisted in his position to withdraw his troops from the UNC and to block the armistice as long as it would be determined against South Korean interests. On July 12, 1953, however, the negotiations between Seoul and Washington finally came to a close when both sides made some concessions to each other. President Rhee dropped many of his previous requests as the conditions of accepting the armistice and promised President Eisenhower that he would not obstruct the implementation of the armistice. In return, South Korea obtained the following:

(1) the promise of a US-ROK mutual security pact after, not before, the armistice.

(2) long-term economic aid and the first installment of $200 million.
(3) an agreement that both South Korea and the United States would withdraw from the postarmistice political conference after 90 days if no concrete achievements resulted.
(4) agreement to expand the ROK Army to 20 divisions as early planned, with appropriate increase of the navy and air force.

In short, as the result of his long fighting against the armistice, President Rhee succeeded in acquiring a post-armistice security guarantee from the United States at the price of the unification of the country. On the other hand, the United States could end the war as it desired. To Americans, the objectives of their Korean operations were accomplished: North Korean forces were repelled and peace would be re-established.

B. The Treaty

The Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Korea and the United States (MDT) was signed on October 1, 1953 and was approved by the U.S. Senate and Korean National Assembly on January 26, 1954.

In fact, the treaty was a product of President Rhee's opposition to the armistice.
It was also a product of the change of U.S. interests in Korea. The Korean war made American policy makers realize the strategic importance of Korea to U.S. national security. In retrospect, the Korean War came largely because of postwar U.S. security policies which produced the unbalance of military power between North and South Koreans by the hasty troop withdrawal and put South Korea outside the U.S. defense zone in Asia (the Acheson Line). Therefore, the treaty attempted to demonstrate America's firm intention to militarily defend South Korea from any future aggression by the Communists.

The MDT has two major objectives: (1) to prevent any renewal of Communist attack on South Korea and (2) to provide South Korea and its people with formal assurance of American commitment in the event of external aggression.\textsuperscript{104} Articles 2, 3 and 4 are the core of the treaty consisting of six articles.

\textit{Article 2:} The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of either of them, the political independence or security of either of the Parties is threatened by external armed attack. Separately and jointly, by self-help and mutual aid, the Parties will maintain and develop appropriate means to deter armed attack and will take suitable measures in consultation and agreement to implement this Treaty and to further its purposes.

\textit{Article 3:} Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties in territories now under their respective administrative control of the other, would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

Article 4: The Republic of Korea grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right to dispose United States land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement.

Without doubt, the MDT showed the U.S. intention to protect militarily South Korea against future Communist aggression. But the treaty itself contained some limitations in terms of the extent of American military commitment to Korea. First, the treaty specified that U.S. obligation would be limited to only the event of external armed attack on South Korea. It implied that any aggressive military action initiated by South Korea would be excluded from American assistance. In other words, the United States aimed to prevent South Korean forces from advancing north in pursuing the goal of unification by force.

Second, U.S. involvement in a future Korean war is uncertain. The provision of "in accordance with its [each Party's] constitutional processes" implies that there will be no complete guarantee of congressional consent with the President.\textsuperscript{105} In this sense, American participation in another Korean war is not automatic. Therefore, it has been questioned whether the United States has the genuine will to come again to defend Korea in a renewed war.

Whatever ambiguities it had, the MDT provided South Korea with significant benefits from American military protection. For the United States, the treaty legitimized the

\textsuperscript{105}For example, the War Powers Act of 1973 restricts the president's authority to involve the United States in armed conflicts. Also, the U.S. combat forces in Korea are not directly under the command of the UNC or now the ROK-US Combined Forces Command. An additional process of approval is needed in order to put them into Korean battlefield.
continuation of U.S. military presence in Korea. In a word, the mutual Defense Treaty of 1953 provided the fundamental basis for military cooperation between the two countries and the American forward base in Korea.

5. Summary

Before World War II, the United States had almost no political and military interests in Korea. But the Cairo Declaration in December, 1943 was a significant turning point in that the United States formally committed itself to the Korean peninsula. Since then, U.S. foreign policy toward postwar Korea had developed in three phases: (1) a policy of trusteeship for Korea; (2) a policy of the dual military occupation of Korea with the Soviet Union; and (3) a policy of two Koreas, creating the separate South Korean Government.

In the pursuance of these policies, the United States did not allow the other great powers to obtain a dominant position in Korea, though it did not intend to occupy the whole peninsula unilaterally. In this sense, the U.S. proposal of a four-power trusteeship for Korea might have attempted to reduce Soviet claims to a leading role in post-war Korea. In short, the primary objective of the United States was to maintain its predominant
position in Korea.

Perhaps, the most important political interest of the United States in South Korea was to prevent the country from communization. After the Soviet Army occupied North Korea, South Korea became a bulwark against Soviet expansionism. Needless to say, the survival of South Korea was important to American containment policy in Asia.

Another important political interest of the United States in Korea was to maintain American prestige as the world leader. American leaders thought that if the United States lost South Korea to the Communists, it would have a negative impact upon the solidarity of the Free World and thus weaken the will to fight against Communism. Consequently, it would damage U.S. leadership in the West. Particularly, this was greatly considered in the U.S. decision to participate in the Korean War.

In this context, American policy makers recognized the political importance of Korea in the postwar era. Given the low priority of Korea in its foreign policy agenda, however, the United States did not pay much attention to political and military realities on the Korean peninsula and hence took no deliberate considerations of political and military consequences in deciding some specific courses of action regarding Korea; especially the selection of 38th parallel and the Acheson Line. The changes of U.S. policies toward Korea were actually made in response to Soviet activities in that country. Thus, the division of Korea was a product of U.S.-Soviet conflict in the peninsula.
Militarily, the United States had little interest in the Korean Peninsula before the Korean War. The U.S. military maintained the opinion that Korea would have no strategic importance to American national security in the event of general hostilities in Asia and thus rejected a direct use of U.S. armed forces for the country. American forces, however, were used for political purposes. After the surrender of Japan, the U.S. Army was assigned to occupy the southern half of the Korean peninsula. Of course, it was primarily charged with a military task of accepting the Japanese surrender in the U.S. zone. But its more important tasks were political: to fulfill a political objective to occupy as far north as possible in order to reduce Soviet influence in Korea; and to establish a democratic Korean government in harmony with American policies. Even when the Korean War broke out, American military interest in Korea was still small. In fighting against the Communist forces in the Korean peninsula, the U.S. military played the most important role as a means of containment policy. From these points of view, American military operations in Korea were essentially political. After the Korean War, however, South Korea also became strategically important to U.S. national security in the light of a forward base and the defense of Japan.

Historically, U.S.-South Korean military relations were created through American commitment to Korea upon the end of WWII and their development was almost fully led by the U.S. military. In the period of the military occupation, as the rise of the Communist regime in North Korea and its military buildup became a significant threat to
South Korean survival, the future of her security became a matter of concern. Accordingly, the U.S. occupation forces sought to build South Korean defense forces. But this effort was insufficiently encouraged because Washington officials were reluctant to create them. As an alternative, therefore, the U.S. Army in Korea planned, organized and trained the South Korean Constabulary supplementing police force. The Constabulary was armed and equipped by American military assistance. The U.S. decision to withdraw its occupation forces actually accelerated the increase of the defense capabilities of South Korea. Consequently, the Korean Constabulary grew as a de facto army. It became the South Korean Army after its government was formally inaugurated in August 1945.

With the creation of initial defense forces of South Korea under the U.S. military government, American army officers assumed all the major command positions of Korean defense forces until they turned over the command authority to South Korean officers in September 1946. But South Korean forces were still under the actual control of American officers as military advisors. During the Korean War, the U.S. military created the United Nations Command (UNC) and South Korea transferred to General MacArthur, CINCUNC, the command authority over all the Korean armed forces. Thereafter, the authority of operational control over South Korean forces remained in the hands of American generals as CINCUNC. In return, the South Korean military could obtain the guarantee of U.S. military protection.
From the beginning, the American military furnished Korean forces with a considerable amount of arms and equipment. It provided South Korean forces with advisory services, education and training, too. However, South Korean forces could not be built up to the level where they were able to deter an aggression from North Korea by themselves, largely because the U.S. occupation forces aimed to strengthen South Korean forces primarily for the purpose of internal security. In such a plan, the most important consideration of the United States was perhaps American fear about a possibility that South Korea might use its forces against North Korea in order to unify the country, which would demand U.S. military involvement.

In its relations with the South Korean military, in short, the U.S. military performed three major roles: the creator of South Korean defense forces; the commander of South Korean armed forces; and the supporter of the Korean military providing tangible aid (arms, equipment, other materiel) and intangible assistance (education, training, advisory services).

In conclusion, the origins of U.S. military commitment to South Korea goes back in history to the military occupation of Korea after the Japanese surrender, the creation of South Korean defense forces and American military assistance, U.S. involvement in the Korean War, and the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT). Particularly, the Korean War was the most important turning point that the two countries were bound with common security interests. The Korean War changed American beliefs in the importance of Korea to
U.S. national interests. In other words, American policy makers recognized the importance of South Korea to their security as well as political interests. As a result, the war produced new relationships between the United States and South Korean militaries. These new military relations formally began after the MDT was signed in October 1953. Based on this treaty, both countries assumed reciprocal defense obligations. Also, South Korean forces received American military support and the U.S. military was given the right to stay on Korean soil. Put another way, the United States directly committed itself to South Korean security by its military power and in return, South Korea contributed to U.S. security objectives by providing its territory for American military use.
CHAPTER III

COMBINED COMMAND AND FORCE STRUCTURE IN KOREA

After the Korean War, the U.S. military presence in South Korea has remained as one of the major elements of U.S.-ROK military cooperation, in the manner of U.S. operational control over ROK armed forces and deployment of a sizable number of its forces there. In the 1970's, however, significant changes occurred in the command system, which had controlled U.S.-ROK combined military operations in Korea, and the physical presence of American forces in the country.¹ On the other hand, North Korea remained as an unchanged military threat to South Korean security.

In this context, this chapter analyzes the structural change in the command system, North Korean military strength as the key source of threat, and finally the role of U.S. forces in Korea. The analysis will answer the following main questions: What changes occurred in the command structure and what implications did they have in ROK-U.S. military relations? How strong and serious were North Korean military capabilities? And what roles have American forces in Korea performed both in military and political terms?

¹The latter will be discussed in the following chapter.
1. Change of Command

A. The United Nations Command (UNC)

Immediately after the North Korean invasion on June 25, 1950, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) decided to help South Korea repel the Communist aggression and a number of anti-Communist UN members provided combat troops and other military assistance (the Security Council resolutions of June 25 and 27, 1950). On July 7, 1950, the Security Council decided to establish a unified command, led by the United States, under the authority of the United Nations. Pursuant to this resolution, the UN Command was created under General MacArthur's command.

A week later, the operational control of the South Korean armed forces was transferred to the Commanding General of UN Forces, then General MacArthur, by President Rhee's letter dated July 14, 1950. At that time, of course, the South Korean President intended to place his armed forces under the UN Command only "during" the war, for the purpose of the unity of command.

After the armistice, however, the South Korean armed forces remained under UNC's operational control based on the agreement at a U.S.-ROK senior military meeting in July 1954, concluding that the arrangement would be more effective in defending South
Korea. A year later, the ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and U.S. Ambassador signed an agreement stating that the ROK armed forces would be placed under UNC's operational control as long as the UNC was responsible for the defense of South Korea.\(^2\)

The 1961 coup, led by General Park Chung Hee, raised a question of command authority between the UNC and the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) -- the ROK military junta. But on May 26, 1961, the UNC, then under General Carter B. Magruder's command, and the SCNR finally issued a joint statement, announcing the return of operational control of the ROK armed forces to Commandeer-in-Chief, UNC (CINCUNC) who would use the operational control "only to defend South Korea from a Communist aggression." \(^3\)

In the post-Korean War era, the UNC's role was political rather than military. The UNC became a symbol of UN collective security, technically placing the ROK armed forces under its operational control. More important, the UNC, as a party to the Armistice Agreement, was charged with enforcement of that agreement.\(^4\) In other words, through

\(^2\)This was prescribed in the agreements on military and economic assistance to South Korea signed by them in August 1955.


its function of implementation and supervision of the armistice, the UNC was responsible for maintaining peace on the Korean peninsula and hence preserving South Korean security.

As Chart 3-1 shows, the UNC Commander is directly responsible to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, as the executive agent for the United Nations, which stems from the UN Security Council resolution of July 7, 1950. Actually, however, he has no U.S. forces under his operational control. He cannot use any American forces in Korea, including the 8th U.S. Army, of which he is Commander, before those forces are released to him by the JCS and the President.⁵

After a company of Thai troops, stationed as a member of the UNC since November 1950, left Korea in June 1972, no foreign troops remained under the UNC except a small contingent of the UN Honor guard.⁶ Therefore, UNC's military function for the security of South Korea is almost nominal.

⁵Pursuant to the Armistice, the UNC became a party to the Military Armistice Commission (MAC), consisting of equal numbers of senior officers appointed by the UNC and North Korean sides respectively. The primary function of the MAC is to deal with all violations of the Armistice Agreement. At the same time, the UNC, as a party of the MAC, is responsible for the implementation and supervision of the armistice in the area south of the Military Demarcation Line, including an attack on the North by South Korea. Kie-Pyung Oh, "The United Nations Forces in Korea," pp. 18-19.


Chart 3-1
UNC/USFK Command Structure*

In the mid-1970’s, furthermore, a significant change in the life of the UNC occurred. On June 27, 1975, shortly before the 30th UN General Assembly, the United States introduced a resolution that the UNC would be voluntarily dissolved as of January 1, 1976, on condition that North Korea and Communist China consented to the transfer of UNC’s functions and responsibilities to the ROK and U.S. armed forces.7

At the same time, the United States notified the UN Security Council that the United States (and South Korea) were ready to limit the use of the UN flag and to reduce the UNC. The latter process had already begun in July 1974 by integrating the functions of the UNC into those of US Forces in Korea. The former proposal was also put into action. From August 16, 1975, the UN flags were withdrawn from all ROK and U.S. military facilities except the UNC HQ and the UN Military Armistice Commission at Panmunjom.8

Although the U.S. resolution of 1975 was not accepted by either the UN or Communist side,9 these events implied the de facto deactivation of the UNC, leaving only its functions in connection with the armistice.

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7Ibid., p. 377.
8Ibid., pp. 376-377.
9In response to U.S. and South Korean proposals providing for the dissolution of the UNC conditioned on alternative arrangements, which would replace the existing armistice, for permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea and its Communist allies continued to reject them, instead demanding the unconditional abolition of the UNC and the immediate and complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea. John B. Kotch, "America in Korea: The End or a New Beginning?" Foreign Service Journal 55 (March 1978): 15; Stilwell, "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces in Korea," p. 143.
B. The Establishment of the ROK - US Combined Forces Command (CFC) and its Implications

As it became clear that the UNC was not capable of effectively accomplishing the missions to deter the renewal of war on the peninsula and to repel a Communist aggression if the deterrence failed, there arose a need for an alternative arrangement in order to increase the efficiency of military operations in Korea. Coupled with the U.S. offer to dissolve the UNC if a suitable peace treaty was concluded, President Carter's plan in 1977 to withdraw all U.S. ground forces from Korea further increased the necessity of an alternative command structure to the UNC. In other words, the establishment of a new command structure was required for the joint control of military operations if the UNC was disbanded.10

To meet this demand, at the 10th Annual U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in July 1977, the U.S. and ROK defense Ministers agreed to establish a combined U.S.-ROK Command to improve operational efficiency for the defense of South Korea.11

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Based on the agreement between President Park and Cyrus R. Vance, the Special Presidential
At the next SCM in San Diego, California in July 1978, both sides reached final agreements on the organization and functions of a new joint command, the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC), to be set up in Korea within that year.\(^\text{12}\)

According to this agreement, on the day following the SCM conferences, the ROK-U.S. Military Committee, co-chaired by Chairmen of the JCS of the two countries, designated General John W. Vessey, Commander, UNC/USFK, as the first Commander-in-Chief, CFC (CINCCFC) and ordered him to take over the operational control of the ROK armed forces and U.S. forces in Korea from the UNC in accordance with the Military Committee Strategic Directive No. 1, which defined the missions, organization, and the concept and operational guidance of the CFC for the defense of South Korea.\(^\text{13}\)

Subsequently, the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command was formally activated in Seoul on November 7, 1978. This command assumed the principal missions of deterring an external aggression against South Korea and repelling the invasion if deterrence failed.\(^\text{14}\) Thus, the UNC remained only as the signatory of the armistice


agreement, the mission of which was to maintain the armistice.

In addition to this adjustment of missions, the creation of the CFC led to two significant changes in military cooperation between the two countries. First, the channel of command was changed. The UNC is in the U.S. channel of command. It exercises operational control over the ROK armed forces in accordance with the strategic directive ordered via the U.S. JCS from the U.S. President. However, the CFC receives strategic guidance and operational directive only from the ROK-U.S. Military Committee. The Military Committee consists of the Chairmen of the JCS of both countries, the Commander-in-Chiefs of the Pacific Command and the CFC, and another representative of the ROK military. Each Chairman of the JCS, as the Co-chairman of the Military Committee, is given directives from his own President respectively and then jointly formulates strategic directives to be passed on to the CFC Commander (Chart 3-2).15

15Ibid., pp. 10-11; Seoul Sinmoon Sa, The 30 Year History of USFK, p. 403. The Military Committee had its first regular meeting on July 29, 1978, and have since met once a year simultaneously with an annual SCM. In the period between the regular meetings, the Standing Council, consisting of the Chairman of ROK JCS and a senior U.S. officer representing the Chairman of U.S. JCS (actually, the CFC Commander), implements the missions of the Military Committee. Dong-A Annual, 1979 [Seoul], p. 134.
Chart 3-2
CFC Command Structure*

The second significant change stemmed from the organization of the CFC. Unlike the UNC, the CFC is jointly composed of both U.S. and ROK officers. The Commander of the CFC is a U.S. four-star general, who also serves as the head of all U.S. forces in Korea and of the UNC. The Deputy Commander of the CFC is a ROK four-star general. All staff members are equally divided between the two militaries: if the head of a staff element is an American, his deputy is a Korean, and vice versa. This principle is also applied to lower levels of the CFC organization.\textsuperscript{16}

These changes in the channel of command and organization mean the substantial joint participation of both militaries in the defense of South Korea. Particularly, it implied increased South Korean participation in strategic and operational decision-making to a significant extent.

C. The Implication of the Change of Command Structure

The increasing uncertainty of the future of the UNC and US forces in Korea generated South Korean concerns about the erosion of deterrence power against a North Korean aggression. Under such uncertainty, therefore, a new command arrangement

might be considered as an instrument to retain America's commitment and to guarantee immediate U.S. involvement (without UN decision) in the defense of South Korea by the continuation of U.S. operational control over ROK armed forces.

Also, the CFC was apparently designed to improve operational efficiency for the defense of South Korea against the North Korean threat in connection with the withdrawal of U.S. ground combat forces in the late 1970's. At the same time, it was a symbol of assurance to the South Korean people of America's strong intention of meeting its security commitment to the country.\(^{17}\)

Despite the fact that both UNC and CFC are under the command of one U.S. general, the latter is independent of the former. They are in different channels of command and have different missions. More importantly, the establishment of the CFC implied a change from America's absolute operational control to "joint" operational control of the ROK military.

Through the balanced division of responsibility in organizing the CFC, the role of ROK armed forces was enhanced in making operational decisions. It enables top ROK


In his address at the inauguration ceremony of the CFC, President Park said that the establishment of the CFC was the expression of a firm determination of both countries to deter the recurrence of war on the Korean Peninsula, in spite of the withdrawal of American ground forces in Korea. Secretary of Defense Brown also said that the United States decided to remain strongly in Korea, recognizing its obligation for deterring another war on the peninsula.
military officers to take part in the operational control over combined forces to a much greater extent than in the past.

However, the CFC has no substantial American ground, naval or air forces under its control. The U.S. Forces in Korea (USFK) are under the direct control of the Pacific Command in Hawaii. As Commander of USFK, the CFC Commander has only planning and coordinating functions, but has no operational control over any U.S. forces in Korea. The Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command exercises operational control over these forces through his service component commanders for the Army, Navy and Air Force.\(^{18}\) According to the wartime plan, of course, all U.S. forces in Korea and those to be reinforced will be placed under the CFC's operational control.\(^{19}\) But this is totally dependent upon Washington's decision.

From these points of view, despite the creation of the CFC, the United States still has significant military and political flexibility in committing itself to the defense of South Korea. From the South Koreans' perspective, however, the continuation of U.S. operational control over the ROK military through the combined command structure would mean a guarantee to some degree of America's automatic involvement in the event of an armed attack on their nation. As another significant indication, it is assumed that from a

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\(^{19}\) Yoon, "The ROK-U.S. CFC and Team Spirit Exercise," p. 11; *Dong-A Annal, 1972* [Seoul], p. 134.
long-term perspective, the CFC can serve as an interim mechanism of returning operational control to South Korea.

2. Military Threat from North Korea

The military threat of North Korea remained undiminished following the end of the Korean War. No change occurred in North Korean policy to unify the divided nation under a Communist system. To accomplish this objective by force, the North Koreans continued to build a strong military. As a result, they posed a significant threat to South Korea with their growing and well-equipped army, air force, and naval forces.

As shown in Table 3-1, by 1970, North Korea had achieved quantitative superiority in almost all categories of military equipment. Particularly, it had significant advantages in artillery, combat aircraft and vessels. The only significant shortfall of the North Korean military was the number of total active forces.

Although the ROK armed forces were numerically larger than North Korean forces in terms of manpower, by that time they had serious problems with the modernization of their military equipment. The bulk of their equipment was of Korean War vintage and moreover, some equipment still in use was of WWII vintage. More than two
thirds of ROK combat aircraft were obsolete F-86's designed two decades earlier.\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Table 3-1}

\textbf{Military Balance between North and South Korea, 1970 and 1977}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1970</th>
<th></th>
<th>1977</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total active forces</strong></td>
<td>401,000</td>
<td>634,250</td>
<td>520,000</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reserve forces</strong></td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>360,000</td>
<td>560,000</td>
<td>430,000</td>
<td>560,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total maneuver divs</td>
<td>20 (incl 1)</td>
<td>19 (incl 3 mot)</td>
<td>25 (incl 1 inf, 2 tk divs)</td>
<td>20 (incl 1 mech div)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored divs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>1,100\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>750\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>400\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-tank guns</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-aircraft guns</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>5,000\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>1,000\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery and Rocket</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>4,200\textsuperscript{a} (incl 1,200 RL's)</td>
<td>2,000\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortars</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSM</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4 - 6\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{20}The ROK Air Force had less than 20 F-4 aircraft, while the North had 100 MIG-21's. Also, virtually all South Korean ships were WWII vintage. At that time, North Korean soldiers equipped with AK-47 rifles were provided considerably more firepower than ROK soldiers equipped basically with M-1 rifles. Only ROK soldiers deployed in Vietnam were equipped with M-16 rifles, which were equivalent to Communist AK-47's. Kim, \textit{Documents}, p. 395.
(Table 3-2 cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>16,750</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat vessels</td>
<td>190 (incl 2 subs)</td>
<td>60 (incl 10 subs)</td>
<td>425 - 450a</td>
<td>80 - 90a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marines</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>24,500</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat aircraft</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>630a</td>
<td>320a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(\text{a}\) Actual figures may be greater.

By the beginning of 1970's, it was estimated that North Korea already had an ability to initiate an attack at any time and to sustain a war for several months with its own war reserve stockpiles. Particularly, North Korea seemed to have the capacity to wage a rapid attack on a limited area without assistance from its two major allies, the Soviet Union and China.\(^{21}\) In a prolonged war, however, North Korea would have the additional

\(^{21}\)U.S. Senate, *Korea and Philippines*, p. 23.
advantage of sharing borders with its potential major supporters, while the United States is located 9,000 miles away from South Korea by sea.

Therefore, as long as an armed aggression remained as the major means of North Korea for achieving the unification of the peninsula under its rule, South Korea seriously needed to strengthen its military capability to defend itself. This requirement was further intensified by the rapid application of the Nixon Doctrine to Korea in 1971 (Chapter 4).

In order to redress its imbalance with the North's military strength, the South Korean armed forces launched a five-year plan to upgrade their military equipment in 1971 and another five-year force improvement program in 1976 (Chapter 5). As a result of these efforts, they achieved significant improvement in the areas of armor and anti-armor, air defense equipment, field artillery, naval vessels, missiles and munitions, combat aircraft, and communication equipment, etc.\(^{22}\)

However, South Korea could not catch up with the North. Rather, by 1977 when President Carter decided to withdraw all U.S. ground forces from Korea, the gap between North and South Korean military power had widened compared to seven years earlier.

---

(Table 3-1). By that year, North Korea gained definite superiority in every category except for total manpower. As General Stilwell pointed out, the most significant categories of disparity included artillery, armor, combat aircraft and naval combatants.²³ North Korea had about 2-to-1 advantages in the former three areas and 5-to-1 in naval vessels.

In early 1979, however, a new intelligence estimate revealed that North Korean armed forces were much greater than previously estimated.²⁴ According to the new estimate, the North Korean armed forces totaled 632,000 to 672,000 men, about one-third larger than earlier believed.²⁵ This number was believed, for the first time in recent history, to have become larger than that of South Korea (Table 3-2).

In terms of maneuver units, North Korea had a great advantage over South Korea. The North Korean Army had 40 divisions, including 3 motorized infantry divisions and 2 tank divisions, in contrast to the previous estimate of 29 division equivalents. In addition, it had 12 independent and light infantry brigades, 3 reconnaissance brigades, 5 independent tank regiments, and 5 airborne battalions. But the South Korean Army had only 20 divisions, including one mechanized division, with 2 armored brigades, 5 special

²⁴Since the Spring of 1978, this reassessment was conducted by the CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, Army Intelligence and Security Command, and other intelligence organizations of the United States.

As for para-military forces, unlike the South Korean Homeland Reserve Force, the North Korean Laborer Farmer Red Guard were well-trained and armed with basic infantry and crew served weapons. Statement by Gen. Michaelis. Kim, Documents, p. 401.
forces brigades and 7 tank battalions.\textsuperscript{26}

Table 3-2
North and South Korean Military Strength, 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total active forces</strong></td>
<td>632,000-672,000</td>
<td>619,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total reserve forces</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Army</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry divisions</td>
<td>560,000-600,000</td>
<td>520,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorized inf divs</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tank divisions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 mechanized division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry brigades</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 special forces brigades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light inf brigades</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7 tank battalions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconnaissance bdes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airborne battalions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent tk regts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(350 T-34; 1,800</td>
<td>(all M-47/-48)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-54/-55 &amp; Type 59;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 PT-76; 50 T-62)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-tank guns</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table 3-2 cont'ed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-aircraft guns</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>2,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocket Launchers</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortars</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>5,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSM</td>
<td>9 (FROG-5)</td>
<td>N/A (Honest John)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>250 (SA-2)</td>
<td>125 (HAWK, Nike Hercules)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total combat vessels</td>
<td>456-466:</td>
<td>95:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 submarines</td>
<td>9 destroyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 frigates</td>
<td>7 frigates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 large patrol craft</td>
<td>6 corvettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 FAC(^a) with SSM</td>
<td>33 patrol craft (10 large)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303 FAC (Guns, Torpedo)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 FAC (8 SSM, 1 Patrol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-100 landing craft</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 minesweepers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22 landing craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marines</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20,000 (1 divis &amp; 2 bdes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Force</strong></td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total combat acrft</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(340 MIG-15/-17/-19;)</td>
<td>(50 F-86F; 135 F-5E;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120 MIG-21; 20 SU-7)</td>
<td>37 F-4D/E)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^a\)FAC: fast attack craft.
Other significant advantages of North Korea in ground forces came from tanks and artillery. The North Korean Army numerically had a 2.7-to-1 advantage over the ROK Army in tanks, with a sizable number of comparatively modern Soviet-designed tanks.\(^{27}\)

The northern Army also significantly increased its field artillery, including multiple rocket launchers that South Korea did not yet have. In this category, the North had advantages in number (almost 2.3-to-1) and range over South Korean artillery. Furthermore, a sizable number of North Korean guns were in protected emplacements. All these facts represented "a triple advantage" which made South Korea's counterbattery activities very difficult.\(^{28}\)

The North Korean Air Force had a more than 2.2-to-1 advantage over the South Korean's in the total number of combat aircraft. Operating from their southernmost bases, those aircraft could reach the Seoul area in 3 minutes after crossing the DMZ and the southern area of South Korea in less than 25 minutes.\(^{29}\) Even if the ROK Air Force could

\(^{27}\) In 1979, North Korea had 2,300 tanks in total: 350 T-34; 1,800 T-54/-55 and Type 59 medium tanks; 100 PT-76 amphibious tanks; and 50 T-62 light tanks, while South Korea had only 860 M-47/-48 medium tanks. Ibid., p. 68.


neutralize to some degree the quantitative advantage of the North by the quality of relatively larger number of newer aircraft (Table 3-3), North Korean air power appeared to represent another major threat to the security of South Korea.\textsuperscript{30}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Table 3-3}

\textbf{North and South Korean Air Force: Major Combat Aircraft, 1979}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\hline
 & North & South \\
\hline
Older Model & MIG-15/-17/-19 : 120 & F-86F : 50 \\
 & & F-5A/B : N/A \\
\hline
 & MIG-21 : 120 & F-5E : 135 \\
Newer Model & SU-7 : 20 & F-4D/E : 37 \\
 & 140 & 172 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}


As for naval power, North Korea had a 4.6-to-1 advantage in the number of combat vessels. Particularly, the South Korean Navy fell short in its ability to cope with the

\textsuperscript{30}In this regard, the presence of three squadrons of U.S. F-4 Phantom aircraft in Korea would considerably contribute to offsetting North Korea's numerical advantage. U.S. Senate, Foreign Relations Committee, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea}, p. 31.
North's infiltration capabilities, missile boat and submarine forces.\textsuperscript{31}

With such tremendous increase in offensive weapons, North Korean military posture represented additional aspects of serious threat to South Korea's security. According to earlier estimates, the bulk of North Korean ground forces had been concentrated in the front along the DMZ with fewer reserve units in rear areas. By 1979, however, North Korea had deployed substantial operational reserve forces along the coast and around Pyongyang in the central part of the country. Those forces might make North Korea capable of launching a major aggression, retaining sufficient forces to defend their country against a counterattack by the South Korean side in a "worst case." \textsuperscript{32}

Also, the North Korean Army had a great number of maneuver units, more than double the South Korean totals. This implied that North Korea had an ability "to tie up" South Korean units near the DMZ and then to launch a major attack on Seoul from another direction with its remaining forces.\textsuperscript{33}

An additional worrisome aspect stemmed from North Korea's significant special warfare capability. By 1979, the North Korean Army had deployed one corps size of special forces, 8 light infantry brigades and 5 airborne battalions tailored for infiltration and

\textsuperscript{31}\textit{Army Times}, Mar. 20, 1978, p. 26. Particularly, North Korea's submarines posed a serious threat to South Korea's sea lines of communications, which the country is entirely dependent upon.


\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Army Times}, Jan. 3, 1979. Seoul, the heart of South Korea, is located only 30 miles, less than one hour by tanks or mechanized units, from the DMZ.
commando operations. These forces would infiltrate deeply into South Korea's rear areas by "difficult-to-detect" aircraft and by sea to attack tactical and strategic targets such as command posts, lines of communications, logistic depots, airfields, and industrial facilities, etc.\textsuperscript{34} If such an attack occurred, it would force South Korea to divert its war resources from the primary mission of repelling an attack in the forward area to counter those special warfare activities.

Moreover, it was believed that with its adequate stockpile and indigenous defense production base, North Korea had made further progress in the capability to sustain an aggression for several months without external support. This might be another source of threat, coupled with the unpredictability of North Korean leaders.\textsuperscript{35}

In sum, all these facts suggested that North Korea had enlarged its armed forces on an increasingly offensive stance. Compared to South Korea, North Korean military strength went far beyond requirements for defensive purposes. It was apparently believed that by the end of the 1970's, North Korea already had substantial capabilities for a

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{Army Times}, Mar. 20, 1978, p. 26. It was also assumed that those special North Korean forces would be deployed through the DMZ, particularly through tunnels from north to south beneath the DMZ. The North Koreans began secretly digging such tunnels in late 1971 when the North-South talks were beginning. U.S. and ROK intelligence estimated that more than 15 tunnels had been started. Although the tunneling later was discovered and three of them were physically intercepted by the ROK Army on the South Korean area of the DMZ, it was believed that North Korea continued the digging operations (and some of them had successfully been completed). \textit{Washington Post}, Jan. 14, 1979, p. A9.

\textsuperscript{35}Stilwell, "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces in Korea," p. 148. General Stilwell warned that this capability gave Kim Il-Sung, the North Korean leader, an ability "to execute a wide variety of military options without the concurrence of or aid from his allies."
surprise attack undertaken simultaneously in the front and rear areas of South Korea, with little or no warning. To the contrary, South Korea had lacked the military capability to successfully halt North Korean aggression by itself. Even though South Korea's quality of weapon systems in some categories could offset to a degree the North's quantitative advantages, it would be uncertain. This situation has not fundamentally changed in the 1980's.

Table 3-4

Military Strength of North and South Korea, 1979 and 1986a

(Ratio)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1979</th>
<th></th>
<th>1986</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manpower</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy and Marine</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFVb</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery and MRLb</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortars</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSM</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5.8(69)c</td>
<td>1(12)c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat vessels</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat aircraft</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aData from Table 3-2 and Appendix 2.

bAFV: armored fighting vehicle. MRL: multiple rocket launcher.
cFigures in parentheses represent the quantity of missiles.
As Table 3-4 shows, by 1986, South Korea had slightly reduced the military disparity in some major weapon systems such as tanks, artillery, combat vessels and aircraft, while the North-South gap became greater than that in 1979 in some other categories such as armored fighting vehicles, mortars, SSM's and SAM's. Particularly, North Korean military personnel levels became far higher than those of the South: in the North, 840,000 men in total and 750,000 in Army; in the South, 601,000 men in total and 520,000 in Army.\(^{(36)}\)

Some aspects of the North Korean build up after 1979 should be noted. First of all, the North Korean Army has significantly increased its armored fighting capabilities: the North added a sizable number of newer model of tanks such as T-62's, Type-59's and Type-62/-63's, while the South Korean Army still has M-47's and M-48's, some of which have been improved by remodeling their main guns and other fire systems; the North also doubled the quantity of armored fighting vehicles (AFV), to a level two times greater than that of the South.

Also, North Korea's sharp increases in multiple rocket launchers (MRL), SSM and SAM resulted in a much greater superiority over South Korea in those areas. In naval vessels, the North Korean Navy considerably increased the quantities of submarines, fast attack craft (FAC) and landing craft, while the South mainly augmented patrol craft. In

\(^{(36)}\)For the military strength of North and South Korea in 1986 hereunder, see Appendix 2.
combat aircraft, North Korea also acquired a considerable number of newer models: for example, 40 new MIG-21's and 50 new MIG-23's. But the South Korean Air Force was augmented by only 28 F-4D/E's and some F-5E/F's.

Another significant change involves maneuver units. Compared to 1979, the South Korean Army increased by only one mechanized division and 2 special warfare brigades. However, North Korea significantly reorganized its army by either creating or converting 11 infantry divisions to other types of units: the North Korean Army increased its mechanized divisions by 2, independent infantry brigades by 5, independent tank regiments by 2; and perhaps most significantly, the North reorganized or established 25 special operations brigades, including 3 commando, 4 reconnaissance, 1 river crossing regiments, and 3 amphibious brigades.

Taking all these aspects of North-South military buildup into consideration, the "uncertainty" of South Korean military capabilities to halt a North Korean attack remains unchanged in the 1980's.
3. U.S. Forces in Korea (USFK)

A. USFK as Additional Military Capabilities

Until the 7th U.S. Infantry Division was withdrawn in 1971, about 60,000 U.S. military personnel were stationed in South Korea. After that, the United States maintained approximately 40,000 troops in Korea until President Carter brought 3,400 men of them home in 1978. These U.S. forces consisted of air and ground forces: the latter numbered more than three-fourths of the total. There were no U.S. naval forces based in South Korea.\textsuperscript{37}

The major ground force components were the 2d Infantry Division, an air defense artillery brigade, and a missile command.\textsuperscript{38} The ground forces also included other supporting elements such as logistics, communications, aviation, and intelligence units. The U.S. Air Force in Korea consisted of three squadrons of F-4 tactical fighters, an air force support squadron, and warning/control communication units.\textsuperscript{39}

In light of the serious disparity in military power between the two Koreas as seen

\textsuperscript{37}Stilwell, "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces in Korea," p. 150.

\textsuperscript{38}This command was deactivated on June 30, 1978. Finley, \textit{U.S. Military Experience in Korea}, p. 205.

above, these U.S. forces had complemented and reinforced the capabilities of the ROK armed forces in specific categories and thus partially offset South Korean deficiencies in those areas. These particular areas included:

- Air power to significantly affect the on-peninsula air balance and tactical air support.
- Air defense artillery units to perform important functions in the defense of South Korean territorial air space.
- Artillery, armor and anti-armor capabilities added to those of the ROK Army.
- Intelligence gathering and analysis to provide timely strategic and tactical information, including the maximization of early warning, to the command echelons of both armed forces.
- Effective communications and logistics operations.\(^{40}\)

In these ways, American forces in Korea provided South Korea with additional military capabilities which would considerably redress the military disparity between the North and South.

B. USFK as a Deterrent

In addition to the fact that North Korea had definite superiority to South Korea in military power with its offensive posture and strategy, it was generally believed that the North Koreans remained both belligerent and unpredictable. In order to prevent another war on the Korean Peninsula, therefore, a deterrent had to remain credible. In this sense, the U.S. forces in Korea remained an essential element for stability in the peninsula.

As long as the 2d U.S. Division is positioned between Seoul and the DMZ along the most important invasion routes, the North Korean Army will hardly reach Seoul without a confrontation with American troops.\textsuperscript{41} In other words, such a deployment of the 2d Division implies almost automatic U.S. involvement in the very early stage of a renewed war. Therefore, it is believed that as long as the presence of U.S. ground forces is perceived by the North Koreans as a "trip wire," North Korea would not be able to invade South Korea. Thus, American soldiers on the ground in Korea have an irreplaceable deterrent power.\textsuperscript{42}

Also, it would be hard for North Korea to successfully launch an surprise attack

\textsuperscript{41}For anticipated invasion routes and the deployment of the 2d Division, see William V. Kennedy, "Yankee, Don't Go Home," \textit{Army} [US], March 1977, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{42}Former UNC/USFK Commander General Stilwell argued that no additional South Korean division -- even four or five divisions -- could assume this role of U.S. ground troops. Stilwell, "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces in Korea," pp. 152-153. Also, the 2d Division defined by itself that its most important mission was to deter war (the author received a briefing at this division in November 1982). For more discussions, see Joo-Hong Nam, \textit{America's Commitment to Korea} (Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 74-80.
without a first strike against ROK and U.S. aircraft deployed in South Korea. Such an attack would probably trigger a U.S. decision to commit its forces to battle the attacker.

From the beginning of the American military presence in South Korea, deterrence has remained as one of the principal U.S. concerns or the overarching objective of U.S. military policy toward Korea.\textsuperscript{43} Furthermore, although America's future role in Asia was one of the most controversial issues in the United States throughout the 1970's, it was generally agreed that a primary U.S. interest was to prevent further destabilization of the Asian situation.\textsuperscript{44}

From these points of view, the U.S. forces in Korea served to maintain stability in Northeast Asia and consequently to prevent an armed conflict which might lead to a confrontation between major powers in the region. In this context, these U.S. forces have been a means of implementing a U.S. security policy objective in the region, by deterring a new aggression from North Korea.

Particularly, as the South Korean Army improved its military equipment, the presence of U.S. forces became more important in terms of deterring the recurrence of war than simply reinforcing the military capabilities of the ROK armed forces.


C. The USFK as a Symbol

In addition to its role of deterrence, the U.S. forces in Korea served as a representation of U.S. commitment to the security of South Korea and Asia as a whole. President Nixon defined the U.S. forces stationed in Korea as a symbol of America's commitment to defense of the country. He also argued that, to a considerable extent, "the symbol had become more important" than the actual military capabilities of those forces, for the situation in Korea had greatly changed since 1954 when the United States decided to maintain its military presence there.\(^{45}\) A senior State Department official also stated that the U.S. ground troops in Korea served a political role to demonstrate the U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea.\(^{46}\) Many other U.S. governmental officials endorsed this role of U.S. forces in Korea.\(^{47}\)

In this sense, the United States maintains its forces in South Korea as a means of expressing American commitment to honor the Mutual Defense Treaty with South Korea.


\(^{47}\) For example, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Abramowitz said that the presence of U.S. forces in Korea served "as a manifestation of U.S. commitment to the mutual defense treaty." Kim, Documents, pp. 467-468; Secretary of State Vance explained America's treaty commitment in the same vein. Department of State Bulletin (April 1979): 25.
Furthermore, the U.S. forces stationed in Korea serve to assure other regional allies, particularly Japan, of American determination in its security commitment to Asia. Without these U.S. forces, doubts about American intentions to remain as a strong ally in Asia would greatly increase.

In short, the presence of U.S. forces in Korea serves as a symbol of U.S. fulfillment of treaty commitments to the defense of South Korea and of an unchanged U.S. security commitment to Asia as a whole.

4. Summary

After the Korean War, North Korean military strength continued to pose a serious threat to the security of South Korea. Starting with the modernization of its armed forces as early as the beginning of the 1960's, North Korea had enormously strengthened its armed forces both in quantity and quality. As a result, by 1970, North Korea achieved significant military superiority over South Korea in every category.

The most serious aspect of the North Korean military buildup was probably its offensive posture. All evidence revealed that North Korea already had sufficient

48For this aspect of North Korean forces, see Stilwell, "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces In Korea," pp. 147-148; Statement by General Robert W. Senewald, CINCUNC/CFC. Studies of Communist
capability to launch a surprise attack combining regular and irregular warfare with little or no warning, and to sustain its aggression for several months with its own stockpiles of war supplies.

South Korea also began to modernize its armed forces in 1971, about 10 years behind North Korea, followed by a series of force improvement programs after 1976. Consequently, the military capabilities of South Korea were considerably increased. However, South Korea could not match the North in terms of military buildup. By the end of the 1970's, the South Korean armed forces were outnumbered in all areas by the North's. 49

Although South Korean forces had some qualitative advantages in specific categories of weapon systems, it would be uncertain to what extent the South's quality could neutralize the North's quantitative advantages. Coupled with the military superiority of the northern side, moreover, the unpredictability of North Korean leaders further intensified ROK and U.S. concern about the recurrence of war on the peninsula.

Area [Seoul] 5 (June 1983): 137-138. General Senewald also noted that in addition to its military modernization with an emphasis on offensive posture, North Korea had given priority to the offensive exercise of its armed forces (p. 143).

49 A ROK general suggested that, considering the current tendency, by the late 1990's the South Korean armed forces would be able to defend their country against a North Korean attack without assistance from U.S. forces. BG. Suk-Bok Lee, "The National Interests of Korea and the U.S.A.," Paper Presented to CIDCM, University of Maryland, May 1988, p. 10; Another estimate suggested that South Korea would reach self-reliant defense capabilities by the beginning of the 2000's. The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "The Future of U.S. Forces in Korea," p. 9. (Typewritten.)
To cope with the threat from North Korea, the United States and South Korea maintained close military cooperation, primarily through the arrangement for joint, or combined, military operations. Following the wartime arrangement on July 14, 1950 between President Rhee and General MacArthur, then Commander of the UN forces, the South Korean armed forces had been placed under UNC's operational control. In actuality, they were technically under U.S. control of military operations for the defense of their country. Under the UNC structure, the UNC Commander was directly responsible to the U.S. JCS and President, and South Korean officers could not participate in operational decision-making.

As the situation changed, however, the military function of the UNC for South Korean defense became almost nominal. In the 1970's, moreover, uncertainty over the future of UNC and U.S. forces in Korea triggered a reassessment of the existing command structure. In 1977, particularly, the U.S. decision to withdraw all its ground forces from Korea expedited the establishment of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC), which was officially inaugurated in early November 1978 as an alternative to the UNC.

This development became another significant moment in the history of military cooperation between the United States and South Korea. In the CFC system, the South Korean role in operational control over its own armed forces has been considerably enhanced through participation in operational decision-making. In the future, it would significantly contribute to the smooth transfer of the operational control over ROK armed
forces to their own government.

Needless to say, in pure military terms, the CFC was created to improve the efficiency of military operations in defending South Korea. By the same token, the establishment of this command implied a guarantee of America's continued commitment to the defense of South Korea. Put another way, it was the manifestation of U.S. determination to remain as an unweakened ally, regardless of its policy of phased disengagement of its physical military presence from Korea. In short, the CFC was a product of both South Korean concerns to keep a U.S. commitment and American needs to alter its military policy toward Korea.

Despite no direct operational control of U.S. forces in Korea by the UNC or CFC, those U.S. forces have performed indispensable functions for South Korean security. One of the principal roles of U.S. forces in Korea is to help South Korea defend itself against any possible aggression from North Korea. They have provided ROK armed forces with additional military capabilities to partially neutralize North Korean advantages over the South in particular areas such as combat aircraft, air defense and field artillery, tanks and anti-tank capabilities, command/control/communications and intelligence, etc. Should South Korea be attacked by North Korea, U.S. forces in Korea would probably be asked, on the basis of the Mutual Defense Treaty with South Korea, to repel the aggression.50
More importantly, the U.S. forces in Korea have been maintained for political reasons. By deploying ground combat units along critical invasion routes north of Seoul and maintaining a considerable level of air power, U.S. forces in Korea have served as the essential means to deter the renewal of war on the Korean Peninsula.

They also served as the symbol of American intentions to remain as a strong ally in Asia as well as South Korea, despite the changing situation. Particularly, after the fall of South Vietnam, these political roles became more important than military ones.⁵¹

Although the United States has deployed a significant level of its forces in South Korea and has controlled military operations there under its own command, it maintains military and political flexibility in involving itself in the defense of that country. Nevertheless, the U.S. military presence itself has been an essential instrument for the security of South Korea.

⁵⁰In that case, the character and level of U.S. participation will be determined according to the type of war, namely whether it is an unaided North Korean attack or one in which Soviet or Chinese forces participate.

CHAPTER IV

CHANGES IN U.S. MILITARY POSTURE IN KOREA

This chapter analyzes changes in the U.S. military presence in South Korea. The two cases of U.S. troop withdrawals from Korea are examined: one in 1971 by the Nixon administration and the other in the late 1970's by the Carter administration. The analysis focuses on four major questions: How were the U.S. troop withdrawal policies developed? What military and political interests of the United States motivated these changes in the American military posture in Korea? How did South Korea react to them? What impact did those changes have on both sides and their military relations? In the analysis, particular attention will be given to the U.S. rationale for changing its military presence in Korea and the South Korean response to this changing situation.

1. Nixon Troop Withdrawal

A. Emergence of the Nixon Doctrine

In the 1968 presidential election, President Nixon promised to end the Vietnam War. He also spoke out for a new era, i.e., a time for rapprochement between the major powers and a termination of the Cold War. These concerns later appeared in the so-called
Nixon Doctrine or Guam Doctrine, when he declared new American foreign policy principles in his informal remarks with newsmen at Guam on July 25, 1969. The key elements of the Guam declaration included:

(1) The United States will keep all of its treaty commitments.
(2) We shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security.
(3) In cases involving other types of aggression we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense.\footnote{1}{Nixon, \textit{1971 Report}, pp. 12-14.}

Three days later, he reiterated these new principles in his address at Bangkok, Thailand:

Our determination to honor our commitments is fully consistent with our conviction that the nations of Asia can and must increasingly shoulder the responsibility for achieving peace and progress in the area. The challenge to our wisdom is to support the Asian countries' efforts to defend and develop themselves, without attempting to take from them the responsibilities which should be theirs. For if domination by the aggressor can destroy the freedom of a nation, too much dependence on a protector can eventually erode its dignity.\footnote{2}{Department of State Bulletin (August 25, 1969): 154.}

An important logic behind the Nixon Doctrine was that the defense and progress of other countries must be first their responsibility; without the foundations of self-help,
American help would not succeed. Therefore, President Nixon concluded that the United States must avoid a policy that would make countries in Asia so dependent on America that the United States would be dragged into regional conflicts such as the Vietnam War.

On February 18, 1970, President Nixon officially enunciated these principles as a new American foreign policy in his State of the Union address. There were two distinctive factors which brought about this significant change in U.S. foreign policy: the international situation and America's domestic circumstances.

First, the international factor. President Nixon defined the 1970's as "a period of transition" from the cold war to a new era, suggesting that the post-WWII order of international relations was gone. He explained that this was the result of cumulative changes since the end of WWII including:

- The recovery of Western Europe and Japan from the war. They had regained their economic vitality, social cohesion, and political self-assurance.

- The increase of the new nations' capacity. They became to shoulder more responsibility for their own security and well-being.

- The change in the nature of the Communist challenge. The communist bloc had fragmented into two competing centers of doctrine and power after the Sino-Soviet dispute. Now the most prevalent Communist threat was not massive military invasion, but a more subtle mix of military, psychological, and political pressures.

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These developments complicated the patterns of diplomacy, presenting both new problems and new prospects.⁴

- The Soviet expansion of military power on a global scale which had changed both defense doctrines and the context of diplomacy.

- The change in the international system. The rigid bipolar system of 1940's and 1950's had given way to the fluidity of a new era of multilateral diplomacy. The world became increasingly heterogeneous and complex.

- The increasing expansion of interdependence which called for a new dimension of international cooperation.⁵

President Nixon insisted that America's role in the international community must be altered to meet these changing circumstances, stating that:

In the era of American predominance, we resorted to American prescriptions as well as resources. In the new era, our friends are revitalized and increasingly self-reliant . . . Failure to draw upon the growth of others would have stifled them and exhausted ourselves.⁶

Put another way, the President envisaged the United States playing a major and

⁴In the cold war era, the principal basis of America's Asian policy was the Domino Theory of Communist expansionism. The Americans had considered the USSR and PRC as a monolithic Communist force threatening to engulf the whole of Asia and Western Europe. But the Sino-Soviet split in 1960's changed this belief into a new reality that the two Communist powers would no longer be a monolithic Communist threat.

⁵Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁶Ibid., p. 6. In 1967, Nixon already argued that the role of the United States as world policeman would be limited in the future, calling for the primary responsibilities of the nations in the region for containing the threat by themselves and a request to the United States for assistance if their efforts failed. Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Viet Nam," Foreign Affairs (October, 1967): 114.
active role in world affairs, but it would ask allies for their increased strength and their own
determination to become more self-reliant. In sum, President Nixon argued that all
these changes in the international environment called for the United States to adjust its role
and to develop a new policy to lead a new era.

The other factor was the domestic situation of the United States. The American
public's reaction to the Vietnam War prompted a reassessment of U.S. security policy
toward Asia. In late 1967, Nixon foresaw that one of the legacies of Vietnam would be "a
deep reluctance of the United States to become involved once again in a similar intervention
on a similar basis." 8

In fact, as the Vietnam War became a case in which the United States would not
be able to solve the problem by using military means, it produced a change in the mood of
the U.S. public. The American people were becoming impatient with the continuation of
the U.S. military burden for the security of Asian countries. They asked those nations to
help themselves and to share more of the burden for their security. The American people no
longer wanted to be involved in a war in Asia. In order to meet this demand, therefore,
the United States might need a new policy which would decrease the likelihood of U.S.
troop involvement in Asian conflicts in the future.

9For example, Edwin O. Reischauer argued that: "it was not worthy of defense at the cost of
Needless to say, the Nixon Doctrine became a basic theme of the Nixon administration's security policy toward East Asia. This new policy ultimately aimed to strengthen "an enduring structure for peace." Nixon's three basic principles for peace were: (1) a partnership with friendly nations sharing equal obligations for peace; (2) a sufficient overall military strength of both the United States and allies in relation to that of potential adversaries; and (3) a willingness to negotiate [with Communists] in order to remove the underlying causes of conflict. In order to assure "enduring peace" in Asia, the Nixon Administration believed that these principles could be realized through an effective and reliable Security Assistance Program, expanding cooperation with Japan and negotiations with the Communist powers, particularly with China.

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B. The Implementation of the Nixon Doctrine in South Korea and Korean Reaction

**U.S. Decision**

After the declaration of the Nixon Doctrine, the South Koreans were deeply concerned about the doctrine. Their primary concern was whether the United States would remain the strong ally it was in the past.

The South Koreans did not anticipate the application of this doctrine to their country at that time. Despite the fact that the United States began to implement the new doctrine in Vietnam by withdrawing its troops, the ROK government thought that South Korea would be exempted from the new American policy because of its special relationship with the United States, particularly the Korean contribution in Vietnam and its historical ties with America.\(^1\) From the Johnson period, as a matter of fact, the U.S. position was that no troop withdrawal would be implemented prior to consultation with the ROK government. Therefore, the South Koreans felt that any reduction of U.S. forces from Korea was unthinkable at that time, and believed that the then present level of 62,000

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American troops were necessary to protect South Korea from a North Korean invasion.

Also, when President Nixon and Park met in San Francisco in late August, 1969, less than a month after the Guam declaration, the two Presidents agreed that ROK forces and U.S. forces stationed in Korea must remain strong to meet an armed attack against South Korea. However, they had no specific discussions on the implementation of the Nixon Doctrine in Korea.\textsuperscript{12}

Actually, however, the United States began to plan a reduction of its troops in Korea. In a private meeting with Mr. Porter, U.S. Ambassador to Seoul, prior to the summit with the South Korean President in late August 1969, President Nixon asked him if a troop cutback from South Korea was feasible. Ambassador Porter replied that provided the United States did not proceed too rapidly, a troop reduction would be manageable. At the end of the meeting, Nixon told Porter that the Embassy would be given instructions from Washington on the issue. But nothing was said publicly at that time.\textsuperscript{13}

Later, the U.S. plan to implement the Nixon Doctrine in Korea appeared in a recommendation to the President by the National Security Council (NSC) in early 1970. The recommendation proposed three options: (1) remove both the 2nd and 7th infantry divisions; (2) remove one division; or (3) leave only several brigades. President Nixon

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12}Joint Communiqué between President Park and Nixon, following the summit in San Francisco, August 22, 1969. Kim, Documents, p. 364.
\item \textsuperscript{13}U.S. Congress, House, Com. on International Relations, Investigation of Korea-American Relations, Hearings before the Subcom. on International Organizations, 95th Cong., 2d Sess., Part 4 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1978), p. 38. President Nixon also said that he would have to consider removing American troops from Korea because he was under great pressure from Congress.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
decided to adopt the second option, a removal of one division. This decision was issued as
National Security Decision Memorandum 48 (NSDM 48) on March 20, 1970. It became
the official document to conduct a troop withdrawal from Korea.\textsuperscript{14} NSDM 48 spelled out
four related actions:

(1) To inform President Park of the decision and explore with him the timing and
conditions of withdrawal;
(2) To submit a proposal to Congress for the modernization program for the Korean
military, and assurance that the United States would not further reduce its forces
until ROK troops had returned from Vietnam;
(3) To order the Department of State to consult with Congress on the aid increase and
the Department of Defense to develop plans for carrying out the troop reduction
and redeploying the remaining U.S. forces away from the DMZ;
(4) To develop a long-range plan for the U.S. presence in Korea.\textsuperscript{15}

It seemed that this U.S. decision was made primarily based on the following
major considerations: (1) American domestic pressure to bring their soldiers home; (2)
American belief of strengthened ROK defense capabilities; and (3) the legitimization of the
Nixon Doctrine.

First, the Nixon administration was under growing pressure from anti-war
domestic unrest and a public feeling that the United States should "get out of Asia." In this
climate, Congress had strongly pressed the administration to "bring the boys home,"

\textsuperscript{14}U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korea-American Relations}, p. 62.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid. In late March 1970, Ambassador Porter was informed of this decision on troop
particularly to avoid a trip wire effect in order to reduce the likelihood of automatic involvement in another war in Asia.\textsuperscript{16}

For example, Senator Joseph Tydings criticized the Nixon administration for failing to apply the Nixon Doctrine quickly to South Korea. He argued that more U.S. troops were deployed in South Korea than needed and thus they should be reduced. He insisted that at least one of two U.S. divisions in Korea could be withdrawn, at a potential saving of numerous American lives, without significantly weakening either the defense of South Korea or the U.S. ability to deter a possible attack from North Korea. In conclusion, he urged the President to order the withdrawal of one U.S. division currently stationed along the DMZ in Korea.\textsuperscript{17} Thus, as President Nixon told Ambassador Porter (supra footnote 13), the decision to remove American troops from Korea came about in part because of strong pressure from Congress.

A second factor was the American belief in the defense capability of South Korea. The Americans thought that the South Korean armed forces were larger and more powerful

\textsuperscript{16}Adm. Thomas Moorer, Former Chairman of the JCS in 1970, also acknowledged that the timing of the U.S. withdrawal was based on two reasons: congressional pressure to bring the boys home and Nixon's desire to implement the Nixon Doctrine. U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korea-American Relations}, p. 6.

in many ways than North Korea's. But this view seemed to focus on the manpower of the
ROK military. The ROK armed forces, of course, had larger personnel than North
Korea's. However, South Korean forces were far inferior to the North's in terms of
military equipment and overall fire power (Chapter 3).

Nevertheless, the United States believed that South Korean forces would be
adequate to deter a North Korean attack. President Nixon explained that one of the
rationales for the withdrawal of 20,000 American troops was the strengthened capabilities
of South Korean armed forces.\(^\text{18}\)

The third rationale stemmed from American efforts to disengage from Vietnam.
An American general said that the Nixon Doctrine had to be applied to all Asian countries in
order for the United States to disengage itself from Vietnam without appearing to retreat.
He said that the foremost reason for the timing of the troop reduction was to legitimize the
Nixon Doctrine.\(^\text{19}\)

It was clear that South Korea was considered the best possibility for
implementing the doctrine outside of Vietnam. Henry Kissinger, the President's National
Security Advisor, also acknowledged that the decision to withdraw U.S. troops from
Korea was fully consistent with the implementation of the Nixon Doctrine.\(^\text{20}\)

\(^{18}\)President Nixon's World Message, Feb. 25, 1971. Kim, *Documents*, p. 392. However, President Nixon actually expected that the ROK armed forces would be able to share a larger burden of Korean defense, "if modernized."


\(^{20}\)Ibid, *Hearings*, Part 4, p. 239.
John McCain identified South Korea as a "trial ground" for the Nixon Doctrine.\textsuperscript{21} Secretary of Defense Laird also said that South Korea was an "excellent example" of the Nixon Doctrine in action.\textsuperscript{22} The American position was that since South Korea had the necessary manpower, the United States could help South Korean defense by providing the tools for improving ROK armed forces' capabilities, through security assistance with a reduced military deployment in the country.

According to Ambassador Porter in Seoul, President Nixon wanted the troop reduction in order to show the American people that he would fulfill his pledge to cut down troop deployments in Asia.\textsuperscript{23}

From these points of view, it seemed that the United States apparently considered South Korea as the best case, after South Vietnam, to legitimize the Nixon Doctrine by withdrawing a significant level of U.S. ground troops from Korea.


\textsuperscript{22}Statement by Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 14, 1971. Ibid., p. 407; also, Mr. Kissinger's statement. U.S. House, Investigation of Korea-American Relations, Hearings, Part 4, p. 239.

\textsuperscript{23}Ambassador Porter was told at his private meeting with President Nixon during the San Francisco summit in August, 1969. U.S. House, Investigation of Korea-American Relations, p. 61.
South Korean Reaction and U.S. Compensation

When the U.S. decision on troop withdrawal was released in early 1970, President Park responded with displeasure, refusing to accept any reduction of U.S. troops in Korea. Stiff resistance from the ROK government continued for several months. The most prominent concern of the South Koreans was that the removal of a U.S. Division from the DMZ meant losing the "trip wire" that would involve the United States automatically in the case of an all-out North Korean attack.

When it was felt that some U.S. troop reduction was imminent, the South Korean press argued that any withdrawal prior to a modernization of ROK forces was undesirable "if North Korea was not to misjudge U.S. intentions" and asserted that revision of the U.S.-ROK defense treaty was necessary to provide for automatic U.S. involvement in the event of an attack.  

During interpellation in the National Assembly on May 16 and 19, 1970, the Korean Defense Minister refused to accept U.S. troop reduction as an official U.S. policy, because the ROK government had not received any proposal for withdrawal from the U.S. government. The Korean Foreign Minister also made the same statement before the

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24 Ibid., Hearings, Part 4, p. 41. At that time, however, no public announcement of the troop reduction was made by the United States and also, no formal notification was given to the ROK government.

25 Cable from U.S. Embassy, Seoul, to Secretary of State, May 19, 1970. Ibid., p. 497.

26 Ibid., p. 498.
Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, and argued that the U.S. government would not cut its forces without ROK agreement.27

The South Koreans also argued that since the U.S. military presence had been "more than symbol," the withdrawal of any elements of American forces in Korea would create a significant power gap which would encourage North Korea to renew war.28 The South Koreans believed that the U.S. withdrawal in 1949 caused the North Korean invasion. Thus, they were deeply concerned that the U.S. decision might be seen by North Korea as a signal of lessened American interests in Korea.

In his interview with the press on June 17, 1970, Mr. Kim Dong Jo, ROK Ambassador to the United States, linked the question of U.S. troop reduction to a withdrawal of ROK forces from Vietnam. He argued that South Korea might consider bringing ROK troops in Vietnam home if U.S. forces in Korea were quickly withdrawn. However, he believed that the United States would not seriously think of reducing its forces in Korea as long as the Vietnam War was being fought. He also indicated that South Korea had never been informed or consulted either formally or informally about a reduction of U.S. forces in Korea.29

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27Cable from U.S. Embassy in Seoul to Secretary of State, June 18, 1970. Ibid., p. 502.

28In addition to operational control over the ROK armed forces, U.S. ground forces in Korea provided substantial support for the ROK Army: the U.S. divisions had guarded a main invasion route; and the 4th Army Missile Command provided long-range artillery support for the First ROK Army, while the 38th Artillery Brigade served air defense by operating surface to air missile batteries throughout Korea. Cable from U.S. Embassy, Seoul, to Secretary of State, June 4, 1970. Ibid., p. 499.

29Cable from U.S. Embassy, Seoul, to Secretary of State, June 19, 1970. Ibid., p. 504. The
In this situation, the United States intended to set a firm date for the troop reduction before the upcoming annual U.S.-ROK Defense Ministers' Meeting in late July, 1970. Thus, on July 6, 1970, Ambassador Porter officially notified South Korean Prime Minister Chung Il-Kwon of the U.S. plan for troop reduction.\footnote{During their meeting in Saigon on July 5 and 6, 1970, Secretary of State Rogers also informed Korean Foreign Minister Choi Kyu-Ha of U.S. intentions to initiate a partial troop withdrawal. \textit{Dong-A Ilbo}, July 8, 1970, p. 1.}

This formal notification of U.S. troop reduction met strong resistance by the South Koreans. When Prime Minister Chung was informed of the U.S. plan, he expressed strong opposition, warning that he would resign with his whole cabinet if the United States carried out the plan. He also said that: "we are not against the Nixon Doctrine in principle, but if North Korean Kim Il-Sung miscalculates, the South Korean people will wonder if America will abandon its security treaty or come to our defense." \footnote{U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korea-American Relations}, p. 65.}

President Park also emphasized the necessity of American forces in Korea. He said that:

\begin{quote}
[The South Koreans] are not asking the United States to keep its troops here indefinitely. However, the continued presence of the U.S. troops is absolutely necessary until we have developed our own capability to cope successfully with North Korea which has completed war preparations and is attempting to provoke a war.\footnote{New York Times, June 24, 1970, p. 3.}
\end{quote}
Immediately after the public announcement of U.S. troop reduction, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the South Korean National Assembly convened and urged that the ROK government should not discuss any reduction of U.S. forces unless the United States assured the modernization of the ROK armed forces and set up a stronger long-range defense commitment before the troop reduction was implemented. Particularly, the committee requested that the ROK government refuse any cutback of U.S. forces at least until the end of 1971, recalling the statement by the Secretary of State in April 1970 that no troop withdrawal would be made from South Korea and NATO areas at least until FY 1971.\textsuperscript{33}

Also, the Assembly leaders, from both the ruling Democratic Republican Party and the opposing New Democratic Party, requested their government to revise the existing U.S.-ROK Defense Treaty to include provisions which would obligate the United States to take immediate and automatic military actions in the case of external attack on South Korea. On July 16, 1970, the Assembly adopted a message to the United States, saying that it opposed the U.S. plan, because any reduction of American troops would weaken the defense ability and deterrence power against a North Korean invasion and because such a reduction would encourage a North Korean miscalculation. In that message, the Assembly also urged that the self-defense of South Korea and the elimination of tension in the Far East should be achieved prior to a U.S. troop withdrawal.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Dong-A Ilbo}, July 9, 1970, p. 3.
Although the Americans explained that U.S. forces in Korea could be reduced because of the strengthened defense capabilities of South Korea, the South Koreans had a different view of this matter. From the South Korean perspective, their armed forces alone were still inadequate to halt a North Korean invasion. Despite their larger manpower, the South Korean armed forces had greater disadvantages in many ways when compared to North Korean forces.

A U.S. general also acknowledged the weakness of South Korean forces. Although the ROK Army had larger manpower, the North Korean Army had more modern weapons than the South’s. North Korean artillery outgunned and outranged South Korean’s. ROK Army’s transportation and communication equipment was mostly out of date and too unreliable to support combat activities. The North Korean Air Force was two times larger than the ROK Air Force and was much more modern. About a half of the ROK jet fighters were obsolete F-86 aircraft designed 20 years previously. On the other hand, the North Korean Air Force had dozens of the modern MIG-21 aircraft. The ROK Navy also needed fast patrol boats to counter North Korean infiltrations.35

Therefore, it was apparent that the ROK armed forces needed to be modernized in order to have deterrent ability against any North Korean attack. As a matter of fact, ROK armed forces were not ready to adjust themselves to such a rapid change of U.S. policy,

when they were first informed of the U.S. intentions. The South Korean military thus opposed the U.S.-planned troop reduction. At a series of U.S.-ROK senior officers' meetings held at the HQs of the UNC in Seoul in mid-July, 1970, the U.S. representative suggested that the U.S. troop reduction could be implemented "simultaneously" with the modernization of the ROK military. However, the Korean representatives rejected any discussion on the issues unless the modernization were guaranteed prior to the reduction of U.S. troops in Korea.36

In response to South Korean opposition, Secretary Rogers reaffirmed that the United States would maintain a strong defense capability in Korea in spite of a partial withdrawal and the reduction would not mean the lack or weakening of U.S. intentions to honor the defense treaty with Korea.37 However, the Koreans worried about further developments in the future. The U.S. Embassy in Seoul accurately described South Korean concerns about the issue:

At the innermost ring of their concern is the fear that the announced American plan to reduce some troops from the ROK will lead to a total withdrawal, despite U.S. reassurances that a strong force will remain; that, although the Nixon Administration wishes to implement a long-term and massive program of modernization for their armed forces, the American Congress will trim this program so drastically as to render it meaningless; and that these early moves at troop reduction by the United States precur [sic] an eventual American desire to retreat from the terms of the defense security pact between the two countries on which the Koreans have based nearly

everything.  

Under these circumstances, the third annual U.S.-ROK Defense Ministers' Meeting was held in Honolulu on July 21-23, 1970. The Korean delegates, led by Defense Minister Jung Nae Hyuk, wanted to "paper over" the troop reduction issue. But the American delegation led by Deputy Defense Secretary Packard, refused.

The primary Korean position was that the modernization of the ROK military should come first and troop reduction later. However, the Americans did not agree, though they recognized the urgent need for improving ROK armed forces. Because of this disagreement, the troop reduction issue was not settled at the conference but was left to further consultations.

Although the conference failed to produce concrete U.S. guarantees of a modernization prior to troop reductions, both delegations agreed that:

- Forces defending the Republic of Korea must remain alert and strong to deter North Korea from renewed aggression.

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39The South Koreans had three major concerns: the threat from North Korea; the question of whether the modernization program could be implemented quickly enough to compensate for the loss of U.S. troops; and the psychological effect. U.S. House, Investigation of Korea-American Relations, p. 66.

For the North Korean threat, including the anticipated types of its attack, see Ch. 3, footnote 21 (p. 86). The Korean delegates felt that in this situation, a U.S. troop reduction would encourage North Korea's miscalculation. In this regard, they opposed the U.S. plan. Dong-A Ilbo, July 22, 1970, p. 1.

- United States military assistance must be maintained at a substantial level to strengthen and modernize the defense capabilities of the Republic of Korea.

- It would be desirable to develop additional defense industries in Korea and that this should be a subject of continuing consultation.

- [The United States] assured [South Korea] of the readiness and determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance in accordance with the Mutual Defense Treaty in the event of an armed attack against the Republic of Korea.

- The delegations agreed to develop a plan under which certain U.S. aircraft could be shifted to bases in the Republic of Korea from other U.S. Pacific bases. In addition, the delegates agreed that the United States would provide the Republic of Korea with S-2 naval patrol aircraft as soon as possible.\(^\text{41}\)

But South Korea was disappointed with the result of the Honolulu conference. Regardless of the ROK position, however, the United States intended to implement the troop reduction as soon as possible. In late July 1970, Ambassador Porter in Seoul was instructed to inform the South Koreans that, if necessary, the United States intended to withdraw 20,000 troops from Korea by the end of June 1971 and that the U.S. decision was firm. It was also stressed that the withdrawals would proceed as planned pursuant to the Nixon Doctrine.\(^\text{42}\)

In this situation, in late August, 1970, Vice President Agnew visited Seoul for direct talks with President Park. At a meeting on August 25, 1970, President Park


requested of the United States the following:

(1) Reassurance of immediate U.S. involvement in the case of North Korean attack on South Korea.
(2) Guarantee of no more reduction of U.S. forces in Korea beyond the pending level (i.e., 20,000 men).
(3) Guarantee of the modernization of ROK armed forces (particularly before withdrawal).
(4) U.S. recognition of the reality of the threat from North Korea.\[^{43}\]

In response, Vice President Agnew explained that a troop reduction would be inevitable because of the U.S. domestic situation and reemphasized that the United States would faithfully implement its obligation based on the existing defense treaty with South Korea. He made an offer of additional military assistance to substantially modernize the defense capabilities of ROK military establishments, including the movement of a wing of F-4 Phantom fighters to stations in Korea.\[^{44}\]

However, they failed to reach an agreement on the implementation of a troop reduction. They only agreed to discuss simultaneously the two issues, modernization and withdrawal, and to step up negotiations between the two countries for upgrading the military equipment of the ROK armed forces.\[^{45}\]

\[^{43}\text{Dong-A Ilbo, Aug. 25, 1970, p. 1. Especially, the South Koreans tried to obtain a written agreement from the United States on this matter, perhaps because of their concern about the "weakness" of the existing Mutual Defense Treaty.}\]

\[^{44}\text{Dong-A Ilbo, Aug. 25, 1970, p. 1; Arrival Address by Vice President Agnew, Aug. 24, 1970. Kim, Documents, p. 385.}\]
Regardless of South Korean opposition, it seemed that U.S. troops had already been reduced by 10,000 by the time of Agnew's visit to Seoul. On August 27, 1970, the Department of Defense disclosed that the U.S. troop level in Korea was already 10,000 below the 63,000-man ceiling. It was also revealed that this reduction started in January, 1970 but it had been confidential. The Pentagon reiterated the U.S. intention of reducing its troops in Korea by 20,000 men in total by June 30, 1971.\textsuperscript{46}

On August 31, Korean Defense Minister Jung Nae Hyuk wrote a letter to General John Michaelis, Commander of UN/US Forces in Korea, asking if the reduction had already taken place. General Michaelis did not reply for almost one month. Then, on September 28, he explained the missing 10,000 troops with a description of attrition rates, reassignments, and distinctions between temporary and permanent personnel.\textsuperscript{47}

Nevertheless, it was clear that the United States had already begun to reduce its troops in Korea.

By the end of 1970, however, Korean opposition to the troop reduction had mitigated, partly as a result of congressional approval in December of a large loan for the construction of an M-16 rifle factory in Korea. At that time, the U.S. government also indicated it was not inclined to reduce the troop level beyond 20,000.\textsuperscript{48}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{46}Dong-A Ilbo, Aug. 27 and 28, 1970, p. 1. The modernization of ROK forces was concluded at a joint U.S.-ROK committee in 1970 (see Chapter 5).
\item \textsuperscript{47}Dong-A Ilbo, Aug. 28, 1970, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{48}U.S. House, Investigation of Korea-American Relations, p. 67.
\item \textsuperscript{48}Ibid., p. 68.
\end{itemize}
After 8 months of negotiations, the two countries finally reached an agreement on the conditions for the reduction of U.S. forces and modernization of ROK armed forces. On February 6, 1971, the two governments announced that the U.S. forces in Korea would be reduced by 20,000 by June 30, 1971, and that the United States had agreed to assist the modernization of ROK forces through a long-range assistance program on the basis of joint ROK-U.S. military recommendations.49

It was also agreed that annual security consultative meetings (SCM), to be attended by high ranking foreign and defense officials of both countries, would be held to assess the nature of the military threat directed against South Korea and to evaluate overall defense capabilities against the threat.50

Finally, the reduction of 20,000 U.S. troops, the 7th Infantry Division, was completed on March 27, 1971. Following the departure of the 7th Division, the 2nd Division was redeployed away from the DMZ to the reserve position south of the DMZ, leaving a small unit to guard the Panmunjom area.51 As a result, the South Korean

49ROK-U.S. Joint Statement, Feb. 6, 1971. Kim, Documents, p. 391. The modernization plan over the period from 1971 to 1976 called for $1.5 billion and the U.S. government agreed to support it through a five-year military assistance package. For details, see Ch. 5.

50Ibid.

51According to the initial plan, the 2d Division, which had occupied a portion of the DMZ on the most vulnerable invasion route, was to be removed from Korea and replaced by a Korean division. The 7th Division, the other U.S. division in Korea at that time, was to remain in a reserve position south of the DMZ. When the plan was actually implemented, however, the 7th Division was withdrawn from Korea, while the 2d Division was relocated from the DMZ to a reserve position south of the DMZ.
military assumed full responsibility for defense of the entire length of the 155-mile border except for a small sector around Panmunjom.

2. Carter Troop Withdrawal

The planners of the 1971 troop reduction had contemplated a second reduction, to take place as early as 1973. However, the delayed modernization plan of ROK armed forces and the fall of South Vietnam resulted in postponement of further reductions. When President Ford visited South Korea in late 1974, he assured the Koreans that the United States had no plan to reduce the present level of American troops in Korea. It was not until the inauguration of President Jimmy Carter that the issue of additional troop withdrawals from Korea was again taken up.

A. The Carter Decision on Troop Withdrawal

During his election campaign in 1976, President Carter had promised a phased withdrawal of all ground forces from Korea over a time span "to be determined after consultations with both Korea and Japan."  

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53Address by President Carter before the Foreign Policy Association, June 1976. U.S. House,
This concern appeared in a formal U.S. policy declaration shortly after President Carter's inauguration. At a press conference in May, 1977, President Carter officially announced his decision to withdraw U.S. combat forces—the 2d Infantry Division and its support units—from South Korea by 1982. His plan called for a phased removal of all ground forces within a 4 to 5 year period, with the first segment returning home by the end of 1978. But U.S. air and naval units would remain in Korea, together with some intelligence and logistics support elements. Discussing his decision, the President explained that:

... It is accurate to say that the time has come for a very careful, very orderly withdrawal over a period of four or five years of ground troops, leaving intact an adequate degree of strength in the Republic of Korea to withstand any foreseeable attack and making it clear to the North Koreans, the Chinese, the Soviets, that our commitment to South Korea is undeviating and is staunch.

We will leave there adequate intelligence forces, observation forces, air forces, naval forces, and a firm, open commitment to our defense treaty, so there need not be any doubt about potential adversaries concerning our support of South Korea.

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Before Carter's official announcement, Vice President Walter Mondale revealed the administration's intention to withdraw American troops from Korea at a news conference in Tokyo on February 1, 1977. He stated:

"With respect to Korea, I emphasized our concern to maintain a stable situation on the Korean peninsula. I cited that we will phase down our ground forces only in close consultation and cooperation with the Governments of Japan and South Korea. We will maintain our air capability in Korea and will continue to assist in upgrading Korean self-defense capabilities" (U.S. Senate, U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea, p. 20).
President Carter's position on troop withdrawal was articulated in a Presidential Review Memorandum 13 (PRM 13) dated May 5, 1977. PRM 13 called for a phased withdrawal in three stages: first, one brigade would be removed by the end of 1978; second, the support troops; and finally, the last combat brigades and U.S. headquarters by 1982.56

According to this plan, all 33,000 men of the 2d Infantry Division would be withdrawn by 1982: 3,400 men in 1978; 2,600 in 1979; and eventually the whole division by the end of 1982. After that, the U.S. troops to remain might include 7,000 air force personnel and about 5,000 men in communication, logistics, and intelligence areas.57

In his decision, President Carter did not hold prior consultations with the ROK government, nor even with U.S. military leaders. A congressional report revealed that:

No evidence [was found] that the President had sought any advice, assistance, recommendations or estimates of probable impact of his withdrawal decision on U.S. security considerations or stability in the Far East from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, his senior military advisors, or from any other knowledgeable military sources prior to making his decision to withdraw all ground troops from Korea. The only professional advice solicited from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or from the responsible senior military officers in Korea, came after the decision had been made, and even that was limited to recommendations dealing with the precise timetable for withdrawal.58

55Ibid.
56PRM 13 was primarily an implementation document concerned simply with how to reduce U.S. ground forces in Korea, not with the question of whether to withdraw them. It indicated that North Korea had an important firepower advantage over South Korea. U.S. Senate, U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea, p. 20.
The manner in which Carter's decision was reached implied that he did not pay much attention to the major problems involved in troop withdrawals, but was more concerned with sticking to his campaign promise to reduce America's military presence in South Korea. Thus, his decision invited sharp internal and external criticism, even from the U.S. military.

**U.S. Military Reaction**

As pointed in the congressional report above, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were asked to advise the President about U.S. troop withdrawals from Korea after the decision had already been made by President Carter. The JCS recommended a phased reduction of only 7,000 troops instead of all ground forces over five years in order to avoid seriously degrading deterrence, adversely affecting the military balance on the Korean peninsula or disrupting regional stability.⁵⁹

However, President Carter rejected the advice, stating that in five years, "the Republic of Korea should be able to defend itself successfully against a North Korean

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attack without the involvement of U.S. ground combat forces if adequate and timely U.S.
air, air defense, naval and logistic support was provided." 60

With some reluctance, the JCS eventually decided to support the President's plan.
But they felt certain conditions should be met: the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty
should be reaffirmed; sufficient military assistance should be provided to South Korea; and
U.S. air and naval units should remain in South Korea after the removal of ground
forces. 61

However, a number of senior U.S. military leaders were reluctant to support the
presidential decision of troop withdrawal from Korea and criticized the plan. For example,
General John W. Vessey, Commander of the UNC/USFK, was very reluctant to accept
the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Korea, fearing that the withdrawal would
considerably increase the risk of a North Korean attack. 62 He also noted that North Korea
had two powerful allies less than 500 miles from Seoul, while the United States, the only
country committed to the ROK's defense, was 8,000 miles away. 63 Admiral Maurice

60U.S. Senate, U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea, p. 20. Although South
Korea's self-defense was a rationale of the Carter's withdrawal policy, in reality it was unlikely this could be
accomplished within a short period of five years.

61Ibid.; U.S. House, Review of the Policy Decision to Withdraw United States Ground Forces
from Korea, Hearings, pp. 75-81.

General George S. Brown, then Chairman of the JCS, later stated that the JCS supported the
President's withdrawal plan because, under it, the ROK forces were to receive increased military assistance,
including tanks, tactical aircraft, antitank weapons, and artillery in order to compensate for the removal of

62U.S. Senate, U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea, pp. 231-256; Washington
Post, Jan. 9, 1977.
Weisner, Commander-in-Chief Pacific, also said that from a purely military viewpoint, the U.S. troop withdrawal would reduce the deterrent to North Korea.\footnote{Finley, The U.S. Military Experience in Korea, p. 198; Washington Post, Jan. 9, 1977.}

Public criticism against President Carter's decision came from Major General John K. Singlaub, Chief of Staff of U.S. Forces in Korea. He criticized the Carter withdrawal plan, saying that if U.S. ground troops were withdrawn on the schedule suggested, it would lead to a war in Korea.\footnote{U.S. House, Review of the Policy Decision to Withdraw United States Ground Forces from Korea, Hearings, 1978, pp. 430-448.} General Singlaub was recalled by President Carter for publicly criticizing a matter of policy. After meeting with the President, he was transferred from his Korean assignment to a new position. Carter's withdrawal plan received greater public attention following this event. Thereafter, however, no significant criticism came from the U.S. military side.

\textbf{B. U.S. Considerations}

A variety of political and military factors which motivated the U.S. decision of its troop withdrawal from Korea had been explained by President Carter and other senior U.S. officials. First of all, the Carter administration justified its withdrawal plan by changes in

the international environment of the Korean Peninsula. President Carter pointed out that overall strategic considerations had drastically changed since the early 1950's when the Korean question came into most prominence in the international scene. Among other things, U.S. relationships with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and the Sino-Soviet relationship had all changed in the last decades. This brought about a dramatic change in the major powers' interests in the area. All of these powers shared a common interest in avoiding a renewal of conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Particularly, the United States believed that neither the Soviet Union nor the PRC would encourage or underwrite military adventures on the Korean Peninsula because of Sino-U.S. rapprochement and the Sino-Soviet conflict.66

Among these developments in Asia, the improvement of relations with the PRC was one of the most important events which led to a re-examination of the U.S. military presence in Korea. It enabled the United States to change its assumptions about the PRC: Communist China was no longer considered a principal adversary.67 Although significant


67Nam, America's Commitment to Korea, pp. 3-4.
differences remained with China, this development diminished U.S. concern about the possibility of Chinese military intervention in Korea, and thus weakened a rationale for keeping U.S. forces in Korea.

The Carter Administration's position was that since the situation in Asia had changed, the U.S. role must change as well. From the outset, therefore, the Carter Administration had tried to shape U.S. policy to accommodate the new environment in Asia. The administration defined American involvement in the internal affairs of Asia in the past as inappropriate, and thus redefined a new U.S. role as one of reducing the improper level of earlier involvement in the region.68

In order to achieve this policy objective, the Carter Administration needed to reassess the presence of the 2d Division, the only U.S. ground combat forces stationed in Asia. In short, Carter's withdrawal plan was a product of the changing environment in East Asia, particularly change in the major powers' interests in the region.

The second rationale of the Carter plan stemmed from changes in U.S. foreign policy toward Asia, reflecting the American experience in Vietnam. Although the United States emphasized that its involvement in Asia would be "timeless" in playing a major economic role and in helping maintain the strategic balance for prosperity and stability of


U.S. policies and actions were to seek to maintain the current equilibrium and not to allow any single power to achieve a preponderance of influence or military superiority in the region.
Asia, it was a fact that the United States had tried to adjust the nature of its future involvement in the region.

The Vietnam War generated questions about the U.S. role in a future Asian war. Congress (pro-withdrawal members) asked the administration to take prompt and decisive action to reduce the risk of automatic combat involvement in Korea, in order to obtain freedom of political and military action while continuing to honor U.S. commitments to deterrence and defense of that country. Another Congressional position was that after the Vietnam War, the American people would not tolerate U.S. combat involvement in another land war in Korea and any automatic involvement in future war on the Korean Peninsula would be particularly dangerous.\(^69\)

Without doubt, U.S. involvement in Vietnam raised strong sentiments against future American involvement in any land war in Asia. In fact, successive U.S. administrations had been under strong pressure to downgrade American military commitment to Asia. After the U.S. failure in Vietnam, this pressure eventually led to a re-examination of the risk of automatic involvement of the United States in a renewed Korean war.

This domestic climate in the United States probably motivated President Carter to re-think the existing U.S. military commitment to South Korea. In Korea, there had been

\(^{69}\)Statement by Congressman James P. Johnson (R Colo.). Towell, "Should the U.S. Withdraw Troops from Korea?," p. 1108.
no American troops in the DMZ since 1970, but the 2d Division was still deployed on a major invasion route to Seoul. Therefore, the only answer to the perennial question of avoiding the "trip wire effect" in Korea would be to withdraw the entire American ground forces from the dangerous place.

From these points of view, it seemed clear that behind the U.S. decision on the withdrawal of all ground forces, there was a strong desire to avoid the likelihood of almost automatic involvement in another Korean War, reflecting the general American feeling of "getting out of Asia" as a legacy of the Vietnam War.

Thirdly, the Carter administration explained that the U.S. forces in Korea could be withdrawn because of the improvement of the South Korean economy. As Secretary of Defense Brown explained, a basic position of the Carter Administration was that where U.S. allies had developed the necessary strengths, the United States would adjust the collective burdens to assure that America's long-term security arrangements remained commensurate with the capabilities and stakes of the partners; otherwise those arrangements could not endure. 70

When President Carter announced his troop withdrawal plan, he described the South Korean economy as "one of the most strong economies in the world," which made it possible for the South Koreans to defend themselves. 71 After that, State Department

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71 President Carter's News Conference, May 26, 1977 (supra footnote 54).
officials at higher levels repeatedly explained that South Korea's economic growth was a basis for President Carter's decision to carefully withdraw all American ground troops from that country.72

The basic logic behind these explanations was that South Korea could assume a greater proportion of its defense burdens due to its growing economic and industrial strength and thus the South Korean armed forces could now look forward to a more self-reliant defense posture.73 In short, one of the fundamental bases of the withdrawal decision was American recognition of South Korea's economic growth and the consequent growing capability of Korea to defend itself.

Although President Carter and his officials did not publicly mention it, a change in U.S. war strategy might have also had an impact on the U.S. determination to withdraw American ground forces in Korea. In 1970, the United States adjusted its strategic concept


73 Although South Korea achieved impressive economic progress with higher growth rates over the previous decade, the country still had some serious problems in its economy. Because of the lack of domestic resources, South Korea's export-oriented economy was particularly vulnerable to the international markets of raw materials, including crude oil. Another significant problem stemmed from the heavy dependence of South Korean exports on both U.S. and Japanese markets, more than 60% of total exports. Aside from its 5-year economic plan, at that time, South Korea needed a great deal of funding in order to improve its armed forces, since U.S. grant material aid for the ROK military was terminated after FY 1976. In addition, the South Korean economy had suffered from heavy foreign debts, overall trade deficits and higher inflation.
for general purpose forces from the so-called "two-and-one-half" to the "one-and-one-half" war strategy. In subsequent years, the United States reduced its baseline active ground, naval, and tactical air forces in accordance with the change in strategic concept.74

This change was made on the basis of the assumption that the Sino-Soviet split would preclude the need for the United States to be prepared at all times to fight a conventional two-front war on the ground.75 Thus, the United States needed to prepare its general purpose forces to deal simultaneously with one major war and one half war.

In the past, a war in Korea was viewed as one of the two major contingencies. Under the new strategic concept, however, Korea was considered as one of the most likely alternatives for a half war, while a war between the NATO and Warsaw Pact was defined as a major contingency which received primary emphasis in U.S. military planning.76 In Northeast Asia, therefore, the United States needed to maintain a limited presence to guard U.S. interests and keep watch over the sea lanes, while in Europe it was needed to maintain some forces in order to hold positions, tie down Soviet forces in the area, and protect essential sea lines of communication.77

With this strategic concept, the United States considered redeploying the 2d

75FY 1978 DOD Report, p. 54.
76FY 1979 DOD Report, pp. 80-81.
77FY 1978 DOD Report, p. 99. Also, the peace time location of U.S. forces in the Western Pacific did not necessarily indicate their use in that area in wartime.
Division in Korea for its NATO contingency. In his report to Congress in early 1978, the Secretary of Defense announced that the withdrawal of the 2nd Division was appropriate because of the U.S. need for "greater flexibility" in the allocation of America's limited number of divisions.\textsuperscript{78} At the same time, he revealed that the United States intended to convert the mission of the 2d Division by mechanizing the division upon its return home to be more suitable for the NATO contingency.\textsuperscript{79} The Secretary of Defense also indicated that the principal forces immediately available for supporting South Korea to deter a North Korean attack would include air and naval elements deployed in and around the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{80}

In light of the new concept in U.S. war strategy and the plan of using units, it was learned that the United States might conclude that given its air and naval support, no U.S. ground forces needed to be maintained in Korea.

Another element of Carter's determination to go forward with troop withdrawal might have stemmed from his concern about human rights abroad. Although President Carter did not directly stated that his withdrawal decision was based on the human rights

\textsuperscript{78}\textit{FY 1979 DOD Report}, p. 91.


President Carter also said that the 2d Division would be used as a reserve for a NATO conflict. \textit{Washington Post}, Jan. 15, 1978.

\textsuperscript{80}\textit{FY 1979 DOD Report}, p. 91. These forces were 9 squadrons of land-based fighter/attack aircraft, including 3 squadrons stationed in Korea, the two brigades of the 3rd Marine Amphibious Force in Japan (Okinawa), and the 20-25 combatants of the Seventh Fleet which would include two aircraft carriers. But these elements were also subject to use in other areas if necessary.
status of South Korea, this issue seemed to be associated with the decision. When he called for a phased withdrawal of all U.S. ground forces from South Korea during his presidential campaign in 1976, President Carter put the human rights practices of the ROK government into the question of troop withdrawal, saying that:

I believe it will be possible to withdraw ground forces from South Korea on a phased basis over a time span to be determined after consultation with both South Korea and Japan. At the same time, it would be made clear to the South Korean government that its internal oppression is repugnant to our people and 'undermines the support for our commitment' there.81

Also, in light of his emphasis on human rights in U.S. foreign policy and his repeated criticism of human rights conditions in South Korea, it undoubtedly seemed that President Carter might take this issue into consideration in deciding on troop withdrawal.

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81 Address by President Carter before the Foreign Policy Association on June 23, 1976.
C. South Korean Reaction and U.S. Compensatory Efforts

The announcement of the Carter withdrawal plan of all ground forces from Korea further intensified South Korean doubt about the credibility of American commitment to the defense of Korea, which was generated by the Nixon Doctrine and the subsequent withdrawal of a division in 1971 and reinforced by the U.S. retreat from Vietnam.

When debates about a withdrawal of all U.S. ground forces from Korea were reported, the ROK government tried to create an environment to maintain peace on the peninsula, while it made efforts to postpone the implementation of such a withdrawal. For example, on January 12, 1977, President Park announced that he would not oppose a withdrawal of U.S. troops in Korea if North Korea accepted his proposal for a non-aggression pact between North and South Korea. In response, in late January 1977, North Korea rejected President Park's call for a non-aggression treaty, requesting unconditional withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea and a repeal of anti-communist laws in South Korea. Thus, a South Korean effort to prevent war through a bilateral arrangement with the North again failed.82

82Dong-A Ilbo. Jan. 12, 1977, p. 1. Previously, in January 1974, President Park had proposed a non-aggression treaty with North Korea. But North Korea rejected that proposal in favor of peace treaty with the United States, bypassing South Korea. The North Korean suggestion was refused by the United States.
A prominent factor underlying the reaction of the South Koreans was their
perception of U.S. security policy toward their country. They regarded Carter's plan of removing all U.S. ground forces as an American move to abandon South Korea or seriously weaken the American defense commitment to the country, particularly in light of what had recently occurred in Vietnam. They also felt that the withdrawal would threaten the military balance between North and South Korea, which might encourage miscalculation by the North.

In order to remove the South Korean impression that the United States was abandoning Korea and to secure the ROK government's acceptance of the U.S. withdrawal plan, President Carter personally assured President Park in a letter that:

Planned U.S. ground combat force withdrawals signify no changes whatsoever in the U.S. commitment to the security of the Republic of Korea . . . and the U.S. determination to provide prompt and effective support to assist the Republic of Korea to defend against an armed attack in accordance with the [U.S.-ROK Mutual Defense] Treaty remains firm and undiminished. 83

Despite U.S. reassurances of its commitment to the security of South Korea, the South Koreans reacted to the withdrawal plan with a feeling of insecurity. They felt that particularly in the post-Vietnam era, any verbal commitment could not substitute for a physical presence and that the U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea would be seen by

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North Korea as a U.S. intention not to become involved in another Korean war.\textsuperscript{84}

Although there had been warnings of a possible withdrawal of U.S. troops, the South Koreans did not anticipate that it would come so early because the United States pledged, at the ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meetings in 1975 and 1976, that the U.S. forces in Korea would be maintained at the present level.\textsuperscript{85} Thus, the South Koreans wondered why President Carter was in such a hurry to remove American ground forces.

The South Koreans also thought that the ability of South Korea to defend itself did not necessarily mean that North Korea was deterred. The North Koreans remained aggressive and unpredictable. More fundamentally, it was felt that South Korean forces would not, in fact, be able to adequately repel a North Korean attack, in light of the military imbalance between North and South Korea -- North Korea had an almost 2-to-1 advantage in military strength over South Korea.

Despite American emphasis on the remaining U.S. air forces, the South Koreans argued that in Korea, ground troops were more important. Because of the Korean terrain and the short distance between Seoul and North Korea, it was not believed that U.S. firepower alone would provide deterrence.\textsuperscript{86} Therefore, they felt that U.S. withdrawals would invite another war on the peninsula.

\textsuperscript{84}U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea}, p. 40.
\textsuperscript{86}Kennedy, "Yankee, Don't Go Home," p. 15.
The South Koreans thought that their economic growth could not be a real explanation of the U.S. withdrawal policy, since West Germany had a much stronger economy than South Korea but U.S. troops would remain there.\textsuperscript{87} Also, in light of the inherent problems of the South Korean economy, the U.S. explanation of troop withdrawal in terms of Korea's economic progress was hardly acceptable to the South Koreans.

The South Koreans were also frustrated by the timing of the U.S. decision. At that time, Congress was investigating alleged Korean influence-buying activities in Washington, the so-called Koreagate affair, while the Carter administration stressed human rights conditions abroad in U.S. foreign policy, speaking out against human rights practices in South Korea. Thus, the South Koreans thought that the U.S. decision on troop withdrawal represented an American rebuke of the Park government.\textsuperscript{88} But they hoped that it would not cloud Congress' decision on military aid for Korea.

In addition, the South Koreans were displeased with the U.S. withdrawal plan because it was formulated without prior consultations with South Korea despite previous agreement. Although President Carter had repeatedly pledged that the U.S. forces in Korea would gradually be removed after close consultation with the ROK government, he actually informed South Korea of his withdrawal plan without prior consultations.\textsuperscript{89} There was

\textsuperscript{87}U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea}, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{88}Sungjoo Han, "South Korea 1977; Preparing for Self-Reliance," \textit{Asian Survey} 18 (January, 1978): 46.

\textsuperscript{89}As for the term consultations, the United States might have felt consultations meant
no formal discussion with South Korea until Mr. Philip C. Habib, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and General George S. Brown, Chairman of the JCS, visited to Seoul at the end of May 1977 to plan the implementation of the U.S. withdrawal.

In this regard, the ROK National Assembly passed a resolution calling for closer U.S.-ROK ties and opposing the "one-sided withdrawal" of U.S. ground forces.\textsuperscript{90} As well, the South Koreans criticized the United States for failing to use its troop withdrawal to obtain a \textit{quid pro quo} from the Communist powers. President Park already announced that his government would not oppose the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from its soil if North Korea agreed to conclude a non-aggression pact with South Korea. Thus, the South Koreans did not understand why President Carter was in a hurry to unilaterally withdraw American troops without any bargaining with the Communists.

Of course, the South Koreans did not expect to have American troops stationed permanently in their country. They thought that U.S. forces in Korea would inevitably be reduced, but felt such reductions should not be implemented in the 1970's because South Korea needed time for modernizing its armed forces.\textsuperscript{91} Therefore, the Koreans argued that there must be a reassessment of the Carter plan. What South Korea needed was more time for preparations to make the necessary changes.

\textsuperscript{90} U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea}, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Hankook Ilbo}, February 20, 1977, p. 1.
However, when the ROK government concluded that America's military disengagement from Korea was a firm decision of the Carter administration, it reluctantly accepted the U.S. plan, seeking to obtain, before withdrawals were implemented, appropriate measures to compensate for the vacuum created by the withdrawal.

When Carter's withdrawal plan was formally delivered to the ROK government in late May, 1977, it was accompanied by no tangible safeguards for South Korea to compensate for the withdrawal. After two months of working level negotiations, Minister of National Defense Suh Jong Chul and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown met in Seoul for the 10th Annual Security Consultative Meeting in late July 1977, accompanied by their Chairmen of the JCS and other senior defense and foreign affairs officials of both countries.

At the meeting, in connection with the planned withdrawal of U.S. ground forces, the United States reaffirmed that American air, naval, intelligence, logistic and other support elements would remain available to South Korea. The American delegation also promised that the U.S. Air Force units remaining in Korea would be augmented. In order to assist South Korea in further improving its military capabilities, the United States also agreed on the following compensatory measures:

(1) To transfer at no cost to the Republic of Korea certain equipment now in the inventory of United States forces in Korea;
(2) To provide supplementary foreign military sales credits to help the Republic of
Korea improve its defense force capabilities;
(3) To continue support for general Korean force improvement;
(4) Within the context of the United States Government's worldwide arms transfer policy, to make available appropriate weapons on a priority basis to insure that the Republic of Korea is capable of deterring North Korean aggression;
(5) To make special efforts to support the Republic of Korea's self-sufficient projects in the defense industry field, together with related defense technology, within the context of the United States Government's arms transfer policy; and
(6) To continue and expand joint military exercises with the forces of the Republic of Korea to maintain the readiness of combined United States and Republic of Korea forces to resist any renewed aggression against the Republic of Korea.  

As a partial fulfillment of these agreements, the Carter Administration offered to provide $275 million annually in FMS credits for South Korea for a few years from 1978 in order to assist the ROK Force Improvement Plan which began in 1976 (further discussions in Chapter 5). It also proposed the transfer of approximately $800 million worth of military equipment to be left behind by leaving American troops, including tanks, TOW anti-tank missiles, long-range artillery, and surface-to-air missile batteries. However, about 100 M-60 tanks of the 2d Division were scheduled to be returned with the units, while the ROK Army would be given some 200 older M-48 tanks which would be modernized and equipped with bigger guns.  

From the South Korean perspective, the most important result of the meeting was the agreement that these compensatory measures would be implemented in advance of, or

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in parallel with the withdrawals. Considering that the measures were subject to consultations and the approval of the U.S. Congress, this agreement implied that the U.S. withdrawal plan would be reexamined if Congress failed to allocate necessary funds and other resources in time.

From the American perspective, this special military assistance in connection with the U.S. troop withdrawal had two significant purposes: first, it might compensate for any loss in military capabilities caused by the U.S. withdrawal and thereby stabilize the military balance between North and South Korea; secondly, it might serve as a political signal that the United States remained firmly committed to the defense of South Korea.\textsuperscript{94}

Another important agreement was to establish, prior to the completion of withdrawal of the first increment, a combined U.S.-ROK Command to improve operational efficiency for the defense of South Korea. In addition to its operational purpose, this command would "symbolize" U.S.-ROK joint determination to maintain peace and security on the Korean Peninsula.\textsuperscript{95}

Finally, South Korea accepted the U.S. withdrawal plan. The United States subsequently completed the withdrawal of the first segment--3,400 troops consisting of a combat battalion of 800 men and 2,600 noncombat personnel--by the end of 1978.

\textsuperscript{94}Ibid., p. 5.

The ROK-U.S. Combined Force Command was formally established in November 1978.
D. The Suspension of Withdrawals

After President Carter announced his decision to withdraw all U.S. ground forces from South Korea, there had been considerable debate over the impact of this decision on the security of South Korea and Northeast Asia as a whole. In addition to U.S. military reluctance to support President Carter's decision, two decisive factors caused a suspension of the U.S. troop withdrawal plan: one was strong resistance from Congress; and the other was a new North Korean threat which had been reassessed by American intelligence community.

The U.S. Congress

The troop withdrawal issue was entangled with another political issue between the two countries. At that time, the U.S. Congress was investigating a South Korean influence buying scandal, the Park Tongsun or Koreagate incident. Despite American requests, the ROK government was unwilling to make Park Tongsun and Kim Dong Jo, Former Ambassador to Washington, testify before the U.S. Congress in connection with the event.

Because of this lack of cooperation from the ROK government, in November
1977, the House Committee on International Relations refused to consider the administration's request for military assistance to South Korea to offset the withdrawal of U.S. troops, including $800 million worth of equipment transfer. Thus, the administration's withdrawal plan was impeded by congressional action, aimed at obtaining cooperation from the South Korean government in investigating the scandal, which killed the administration's compensatory measures.\(^{96}\)

Meanwhile, in their report on U.S. troop withdrawal from Korea, Senators Humphrey and Glenn were very critical of the withdrawal plan. Although the Senators did not ask to reverse the withdrawal plan, they insisted that the planned U.S. troop withdrawal should be implemented most cautiously because of the current military imbalance between North and South Korea. They called for legislation requiring the President to submit to Congress a report of justification before the implementation of each withdrawal phase, in order to assure Congress that withdrawals could proceed with minimum risk.\(^{97}\) In short, their position was that U.S. troop withdrawal should be implemented cautiously, based on an assessment of the military balance between North and

\(^{96}\)U.S. House, *Investigation of Korea-American Relations*, p. 72; *Department of State Bulletin* (June 1978) :36. At the end of December 1977, the ROK government agreed to allow Mr. Park to testify under a grant of immunity. The U.S. Congress eventually approved the transfer of $800 million worth of military equipment to the ROK forces.

\(^{97}\)The requested Presidential report was to include: (1) assessment of the military balance on the Korean Peninsula; (2) the impact of withdrawal on that balance; (3) the adequacy of U.S. military assistance; (4) the impact of withdrawal on the UN and ROK command structure; (5) the U.S. reinforcement capability; and (6) the progress of diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions in the area. U.S. Senate, *U.S. Troop Withdrawal from the Republic of Korea*, p. 5.
South Korea, not on an arbitrary timetable.

The Senate Armed Services Committee also expressed congressional concerns about the possible risk of any further withdrawals to the current military balance. In its report attached to the FY 1979 Defense Authorization Bill, the Committee requested that the Secretary of Defense provide an analysis to the Committee prior to any future withdrawal of ground combat troops. That analysis was to include information such as: the effect of any proposed withdrawal on preserving deterrence in Korea; anticipated North Korean reactions; the effect of the withdrawal on America's long-term military and economic partnership with Japan; the effect of the proposed withdrawal on the military balance between the United States and the two major communist powers; and so forth.98 A more significant challenge to the President came in April 1978 when the House Armed Services Committee voted 24 to 12 to prevent the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Korea.99

In response, on April 21, 1978, President Carter announced that the number of the first segment initially scheduled to be withdrawn in 1978 -- 6,000 men, including one brigade of the 2nd Division -- would be reduced. According to this revised timetable, 3,400 troops, consisting of one combat battalion of 800 troops and 2,600 noncombat personnel


were scheduled to leave in 1978. But the withdrawal of the remaining 2,600 personnel would be postponed until 1979. Thus, the initial withdrawal plan was temporarily slowed down.

In mid-1978, President Carter implied a possibility of revising his withdrawal plan. In his letter, dated June 20, 1978, to Senator Robert C. Byrd and House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, President Carter prudently noted that:

Should circumstances affecting the balance change significantly, we will assess these changes in close consultation with the Congress, the Republic of Korea, and our other Asian allies. Our plans will be adjusted if developments so warrant.

In December 1978, a senior State Department official endorsed a possibility of changing the timetable of U.S. troop withdrawal, reiterating that the administration would adjust the withdrawal plan, if necessary, according to the developments of security circumstances.

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101 U.S. Senate, Korea: the U.S. Troop Withdrawal Program, pp. 6-7; U.S. House, Impact of Intelligence Reassessment on Withdrawal of U.S. Troops from Korea, p. 3.
102 Address by Assistance Secretary Richard C. Holbrooke. Department of State Bulletin (February 1979): 29 (supra footnote 73).
New North Korean Threat

In this situation, in early January, 1979, a new estimate of North Korean military strength was reported as a result of U.S. intelligence reassessment. The estimate revealed that the North Korean military posture was substantially larger and more offensive than heretofore believed (Chapter 3).

As Table 3-2 shows, the North Korean Army had definite advantages in every category, even in military personnel. The North Korean Navy had a about 5-to-1 advantage over the ROK Navy in the total number of vessels. The North Korean Air Force also had a 2.2-to-1 advantage over its southern counterpart in total aircraft.

As explained in the previous chapter, a significant aspect was that North Korea had capabilities for a massive attack with little or no warning. More important, North Korea seemed to have a capacity to launch a successful attack with no direct participation or support from its two major allies, Peking and Moscow.

This new threat from North Korea directly challenged the U.S. assumptions that were the basis of the decision to withdraw all U.S. ground forces from Korea. When the

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103 However, if the operational capacity of North Korea's 20 submarines is included (South Korea had none), then North Korean advantages are even greater than this ratio.

Carter administration decided on its troop withdrawal plan, it was assumed that if ROK
ground forces were properly supplied and equipped by the United States and supported by
U.S. tactical air and naval forces, they could adequately halt a North Korean attack initiated
without the direct participation of Communist China and/or the Soviet Union.105

This new intelligence estimate put the administration under strong congressional
pressure to reverse the withdrawal plan. On January, 3, 1979, the Investigations
Subcommittee -- chaired by Samuel S. Stratton -- of the House Armed Services Committee
sent a letter to President Carter requesting that any further withdrawal of U.S. combat
troops from Korea be deferred until the subcommittee could evaluate the full significance
and the long-range implications of the new information on the U.S. security posture in the
Far East.106

Based on the intelligence reassessment, the Pacific Study Group of the Senate
Armed Services Committee pointed out that even the planned improvements of South
Korean forces (FIP) would not compensate for loss of the 2d Division. At the same time,
this group argued that under current circumstances, the implementation of additional
withdrawals would neither serve U.S. security interests nor stability in Northeast Asia. The
group concluded that under the present conditions, the maintenance of U.S. combat troops
in the Korean peninsula appeared more appropriate than any other option.107

105U.S. Senate, Korea: the U.S. Troop Withdrawal Program, p. 3.
In this situation, in February 1979, President Carter announced that withdrawals of U.S. ground combat forces from South Korea would be held in abeyance pending the completion of a reassessment of North Korean military strength and the implications of recent political developments in the region.\textsuperscript{108}

In the meantime, another congressional pressure pushed the President to adjust the withdrawal plan. In his updated report on the U.S. troop withdrawal plan, Senator John Glenn concluded, on the basis of North Korean military strength, that the continuation of the planned troop withdrawal would be dangerous and raise questions about American will and the strength of its security commitment in Asia, issues that had been so worrisome to allies in the region, particularly South Korea and Japan. Thus he asserted that the United States should reverse the troop withdrawal policy to maintain its ground combat forces in Korea.\textsuperscript{109}

Of course, Congress -- more exactly, the opponents to the troop withdrawal policy -- did not insist on the permanent stationing of American ground forces in Korea. Their position was that a withdrawal should be primarily based on the maintenance of a


stable military balance between the two Koreas and its overall impact on U.S. interests in the region. In this sense, Congress insisted that it was not the time to remove U.S. forces from Korea, because the military balance on the peninsula and U.S. interests were presently threatened by larger North Korean armed forces.\textsuperscript{110}

On July 20, 1979, shortly after his visit to Seoul, President Carter finally made a formal announcement of his intention to maintain U.S. forces in Korea at the existing level until at least 1981. The President explained that his decision was made primarily on the basis of the intelligence re-evaluation of North Korean military strength. He also said that the decision was in part shaped by recent political and military developments in the region such as Sino-U.S. rapprochement, the buildup of Soviet military power in East Asia, and new uncertainties in Southeast Asia. President Carter concluded that under these circumstances, the adjustment of the withdrawal plan would serve wider U.S. strategic security interests by reassuring America's principal allies of U.S. steadiness and resolve.\textsuperscript{111} Thus, the controversial plan to withdraw all U.S. ground forces in Korea was finally frozen.

\textsuperscript{110}Ibid., p. 1; U.S. Senate, Korea: the U.S. Troop Withdrawal Program, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{111}Department of State Bulletin (September 1979): 37. In addition, the U.S. decision was probably influenced by the conclusion of a 25-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and Vietnam in November 1978 and Moscow's increasing use of the former American bases in South Vietnam, Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang.
3. Impact of U.S. Troop Withdrawals

The withdrawals of U.S. ground forces from Korea had some significant military and political impacts on both countries and their military posture in South Korea. First, needless to say, the Nixon and Carter withdrawals changed the U.S. military posture in South Korea. As a result of the withdrawals, by the end of 1978, the level of U.S. troops in Korea had been reduced by about 40%, compared to the 1970 ceiling (Table 4-1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Ceiling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>39,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While it was reducing its ground forces, the United States emphasized its air power in South Korea in terms of deterrence and the symbol of its security commitment. As a result, the U.S. Air Forces in Korea had been significantly augmented. For example,
the United States promised to increase the number of tactical aircraft in Korea by 20 percent in return for the withdrawal in 1978.\textsuperscript{112} In November 1978, an additional 12 U.S. F-4 aircraft were added to the 60 F-4s already stationed in Korea.\textsuperscript{113}

In terms of deterring a North Korean invasion, the most important role of U.S. forces in Korea, there was perhaps no significant difference between one U.S. division and two divisions, or between 63,000 and 39,600 men. In the light of the unique relationship between the two nations since 1945, however, the reductions of U.S. troops had a significant "psychological" impact on the South Koreans and their military because of the "timing" of the withdrawals.

Secondly, in addition to these changes in the U.S. force structure in Korea, the U.S. withdrawal brought about a significant change in ROK- U.S. joint force deployment for South Korean defense. In 1971, the United States withdrew one division from Korea and relocated its remaining ground troops away from the DMZ to the reserve position. Thus, South Korean forces assumed total responsibility for their defense, for the first time in their history. In return, this adjustment gave some "operational flexibility" to the U.S. forces in Korea.

Thirdly, a new command structure and cooperation mechanism between both militaries was developed. The Carter troop withdrawal led to the establishment of the

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid. (August 1978), p. 2.
\textsuperscript{113}Ibid. (April 1979), p. 26
ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC) in November 1978. The Nixon troop withdrawal led to the creation of a new system of cooperation between both militaries, the Annual ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM). As discussed in the previous chapter, these developments signalled a important momentum in the history of military relations between the two countries, which had a significant impact on joint military operations and the characteristics of overall relations between the two militaries.

Fourth, the U.S. troop withdrawals led to a South Korean reevaluation of its defense policy. When the Nixon Doctrine was announced as a new U.S. foreign policy direction, followed by a hasty withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea, the South Koreans perceived an erosion of the strength of U.S. military commitment to the defense of their country. They felt that it would be no longer wise to depend heavily on the United States, as they had in the past, for their own security in the future. Thus, the South Koreans recognized the need for a self-reliant defense capability. Consequently, with considerable U.S. support, South Korea launched a 5-year modernization plan of its armed forces in 1971, followed by another 5-year force improvement program in 1976, aiming to reach a rough parity with North Korean military strength by 1980 (further discussions in Ch.5).\textsuperscript{114}

These efforts forced the ROK government to considerably increase its defense budget.

\textsuperscript{114}In addition to these efforts to enlarge its own military strength, the ROK government made a great deal of effort to develop a defense industry, starting with the construction of M-16 rifle plant by contract with an American company.
From 1976, particularly, the South Korean defense budget increased to more than 6% of GNP with a peak of 6.5% in 1978, compared to 4 - 5% in previous years (Table 4-2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>71</th>
<th>72</th>
<th>73</th>
<th>74</th>
<th>75</th>
<th>76</th>
<th>77</th>
<th>78</th>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Economic Planning Board, the Republic of Korea.

In short, South Korea adjusted its defense policy in the direction of accepting the changing U.S. military policy toward Korea, by assuming more responsibilities for its own defense. In fact, the loss of U.S. troops in Korea caused South Korea to increase its own defense burden earlier than was anticipated.

Fifth, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea had a significant impact on South Korea's domestic politics. Coupled with increased military provocations by North Korea in the late 1960's, the declaration of the Nixon Doctrine intensified the South Korean
feeling of insecurity. Furthermore, the quick application of the Nixon Doctrine to South Korea, the withdrawal of one U.S. division and the disengagement of the remaining division from front line defense, reinforced this Korean feeling.\footnote{In this situation, the announcement of President Nixon's intention to visit Communist China in July 1971 further reinforced the South Korean perception that its security was seriously threatened.}

In part, this feeling of insecurity provided the ROK government with a rationale for the declaration of a state of national emergency in December 6, 1971.\footnote{Under this state of national emergency, freedom of the press and other civil liberties stipulated in the constitution were curtailed to some degree. For example, the South Korean people were not allowed to engage in group assembly or meetings or to participate in discussions of national security issues which might be interpreted to be beneficial for the Communist cause. The press was restricted from any irresponsible comments on national security. \textit{Hankook Ilbo}, Dec. 7, 1971, p. 1; also, \textit{Korea Annual}, 1972, p. 21.} As President Park explained in his declaration, the most fundamental rationale of the declaration was the perception that South Korean security was seriously threatened by the North Korean military buildup and rapid changes in the international situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula, particularly the changes of U.S. foreign policy toward Korea as well as Asia.\footnote{It was believed that North Korea had completed its preparations for launching another attack, seeking an appropriate opportunity. \textit{Hankook Ilbo}, Dec. 7, 1971, p. 2.} Since then, this feeling of insecurity became a most prominent issue, having a significant impact on South Korean politics throughout the period of President Park's rule.

Sixth, changes in American military posture in Korea gave the United States some "political flexibility". From 1970, the United States maintained no troops on the Korean border line. The only ground combat unit, the 2d Division, was deployed in the reserve position south of the DMZ. This meant that the trip wire role of U.S. forces in Korea was
reduced to some degree, if not removed completely. In the event of a North Korean attack on South Korea, the Washington government would decide on U.S. action in accordance with the existing Mutual Defense Treaty. Despite its position north of Seoul, therefore, the 2d Division was not designed to automatically intervene in another war in Korea. In this sense, the U.S. disengagement from the Korean DMZ provided the United States with more "flexibility" to determine whether or not to involve itself against an invasion from North Korea.

4. Summary

Ever since American participation in the Korean War, the South Koreans thought of the United States as a special ally, an ally "tied with blood," and viewed the U.S. military as the protector of their country. When the Nixon Doctrine was announced in mid-1969, however, the South Koreans perceived that U.S. security policy toward Korea was changing. This concern soon appeared in reality when the Nixon Doctrine was applied to Korea, which resulted in the withdrawal of one U.S. infantry division from Korea and redeployment of the remaining division (the 2d Infantry Division) from the DMZ area to a reserve position. These events increased South Koreans' doubt about the credibility of
U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea. In the late 1970's, this Korean feeling was further intensified by President Carter's policy to withdraw all American ground forces from South Korea.

It is found that a number of political and military interests of the United States were associated with those changes in American military presence to Korea. Major U.S. considerations were:

- The legitimization of implementing the Nixon Doctrine;
- Strong domestic pressure from Congress and the general public to downgrade America's military commitment to Korea as well as Asia as a whole;
- Change in the U.S. perception of principal adversaries in the region, particularly China;
- Change in U.S. global war strategy from two-and-a-half war to one-and-a-half war strategy;
- American recognition of (increased) ROK defense capabilities based on its economic progress.

With respect to the withdrawal issue, the most prominent American interests were the reduction of U.S. forces' physical presence in Korea in order to downgrade the likelihood of automatic involvement in another Korean war and more realistic sharing of Korean defense burdens between ROK and U.S. militaries.

The three basic means of the Nixon Doctrine were partnership, military power (combined U.S. and allies' conventional military strength), and negotiation. In

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118The partnership was defined as more equal sharing of burden for the defense of Asian allies in the direction of Asian manpower with American military assistance.
implementing the Doctrine, the first two were successfully applied to South Korea to a degree. The United States withdrew about one third of its troops, leaving the whole responsibility for defending the Korean border line to ROK forces. In return, the United States increased its air power in Korea and military assistance for overall improvement of the ROK defense capabilities. Consequently, the United States achieved to some extent its objective of sharing more balanced obligations for ROK security.

However, a question rose about the third means, negotiation. Although the Nixon Doctrine intended to willingly negotiate with Communists to remove causes of conflict, the United States made no negotiations with North Korea in connection with its troop withdrawals. This could mean that the U.S. policy of negotiation was principally directed to major communist powers within the more broad context of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

When the Nixon Doctrine was announced and it was rapidly applied to Korea, the South Koreans were deeply worried about whether the United States would remain as a strong ally as it had been in the past. One of the most prominent Korean concerns was the "timing" of the U.S. decision to withdraw 20,000 American troops from Korea. It took place when the South Koreans felt that their national security was seriously threatened by increased infiltrations and border clashes provoked by North Korea, and by the North's completion of preparations for launching another attack (Ch. 5). At that time, as a matter of
fact, South Korean armed forces alone were not considered adequate to halt a North Korean attack.\footnote{President Nixon acknowledged this point by saying that the ROK armed forces would be adequate to deter a North Korean invasion, "if modernized."} Also, South Korea still maintained about 50,000 troops in Vietnam, including two infantry divisions which were previously deployed in the Korean DMZ area. The South Koreans believed that the United States would not reduce its troops in Korea as long as ROK forces remained in Vietnam.

The Carter administration also seemed to choose inappropriate timing in deciding on its troop withdrawal plan. When Carter's troop withdrawal plan was announced in 1977, the ROK armed forces had not yet achieved self-reliant defensive capabilities. They were about to complete the first 5-year plan of upgrading their military equipment and had just launched another 5-year force improvement program in the previous year. Furthermore, as discovered later, in actuality the North Korean military was absolutely more powerful than the South's in almost every category. Also, the South Koreans did not expect any withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea because both countries agreed to maintain U.S. forces in Korea at the current level (43,000 men ceiling) in the 1975 and 1976 annual SCMs.

From these points of view, the U.S. troop withdrawals of both cases seemed to be decided without careful considerations about South Korea's situation and its actual defense capabilities.

Of course, the South Koreans did not ask U.S. troops to permanently stay in their
country. But they needed to keep U.S. forces on their soil until they could develop their own self-defense capabilities. They thought it would be a lengthy process. Therefore, the hasty withdrawals of U.S. forces were hardly understood by the Korean people.

South Korea also sought another condition to allow the U.S. troop withdrawal: the establishment of a permanent system to preserve peace in the Korean peninsula. As with the Nixon administration, the Carter administration also did not intend to use the U.S. troop withdrawal as a bargaining chip against North Korea. North Korea repeatedly requested a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea as a precondition for talks with South Korea to solve pending problems between the two Koreas. On the other hand, South Korea had made considerable efforts to reduce tensions between the North and South and eventually to prevent another war in the peninsula, including the proposal for a non-aggression pact with the North. Thus, the U.S. troop withdrawal issue could have been used to induce some concessions from North Korea and its two major allies for that purpose. In this sense, the U.S. withdrawal decision appears to have been made without a deliberate consideration of all the problems and possibilities involved in the issue. Such U.S. action raised the possibility that the United States might have different goals from South Korea in the peninsula.

In a sense, the U.S. military presence in Korea was a "symbol" of American determination of its commitment to South Korea and Asia as a whole. Particularly, as the
only ground forces stationed in Asia after the end of the Vietnam War, the U.S. forces in Korea became more important in this sense.

To South Korea, however, the U.S. forces in Korea were more than a symbol. They significantly reinforced South Korean military capabilities in relation to that of North Korea and more importantly, provided an actual deterrent against another North Korean invasion. The United States considerably increased its air power in South Korea in return for the reduction of ground troops. In Korea, however, ground forces were considered more important than air power in deterring a North Korean attack. Recalling that the 1949 U.S. withdrawal caused the Korean War, therefore, the South Korean people worried that the U.S. withdrawals of its ground forces might encourage North Korean miscalculation and thus lead to a risk of war.

Perhaps, the most important concern of the South Koreans was the American intention to involve itself in the case of an attack on South Korea by the North. The U.S. withdrawals were seen by the South Koreans as a lessened American commitment to prompt and effective reaction against a North Korean attack. What the South Koreans worried about was that the U.S. withdrawals would become a starting point for further American retreat and eventually total disengagement from Korea.\(^{120}\) Therefore, South Korea tried to change the existing Mutual Defense Treaty to guarantee America’s automatic

\(^{120}\)In light of the American retreat from Vietnam and the fate of Taiwan in the international community, South Korea was greatly concerned about the American mind in connection with the troop withdrawal issue.
involvement in renewed war in Korea. However, the South Koreans thought that the physical presence of U.S. forces in Korea was more important than any paper obligations.

In both cases, when the South Korean government recognized that the U.S. troop withdrawals were inevitable, it decided to accept the changing U.S. policy, seeking appropriate measures from the United States to compensate for the security gap created by the loss of U.S. troops. At the same time, South Korea made a great efforts to reach self-reliant capacity for its own defense by improving its military capabilities and developing defense industries. In this regard, America's supplemental military assistance for ROK forces was the key part of the strategy of the United States to get South Korean agreement on the U.S. withdrawal decisions.

The withdrawals of U.S. ground troops from Korea produced had a significant military and political impact on both sides: the South Korean armed forces assumed more responsibilities for the defense of their country; South Korea also stepped up its efforts to acquire self-defense capabilities; the United States changed the emphasis of its military presence from ground forces to air power; and a new joint command structure (CFC) and new mechanism of military cooperation (SCM) were created.

In addition, as a result of these withdrawals, the United States obtained some military and political flexibility with respect to its commitment for Korean defense, in terms of certain freedom of military and political actions in connection with another Korean war.
On the other hand, the withdrawals led the ROK government to give top priority to policies of national security, which thereafter had a significant impact on most political spheres.

In dealing with the issue of U.S. troop withdrawal from Korea, there was a fundamental difference between the two nations. The United States viewed the issue in a broader context of its foreign policy objectives and thus was more concerned about its relations with its two major Communist rivals in the region. On the other hand, South Korea dealt with the issue in the context of the more immediate problem of a direct threat from North Korea.
CHAPTER V

U.S. MILITARY AID AND THE SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY

U.S. military aid to South Korea has been an essential means of cooperation between the militaries of both countries. Its primary purpose is to improve South Korean military capabilities against external aggression. It was also used for achieving certain political interests. In this context, this chapter analyzes U.S. military assistance as a means of cooperation with a focus on answering the following questions: What changes occurred in U.S. military assistance for the South Korean Armed Forces? What military and political interests of both sides were associated with the U.S. military assistance for Korea? How was American military aid used in connection with certain important political and military issues between the two nations? And what impact did U.S. military assistance have on the ROK armed forces, and subsequently, on their relations with the U.S. military?

1. An Overview of U.S. Military Assistance

Since the end of WWII, military assistance has been an essential element in U.S. efforts to help build a more secure and peaceful world order. Military assistance is defined as a part of security assistance. Security assistance, which consists of Military Assistance
and Security Supporting Assistance (SSA), refers to U.S. loans and grants provided in order to "assist other countries in meeting their security requirements and to contribute to the U.S. worldwide defense posture through a stronger collective security framework."\(^1\)

The SSA, a distinctive form of economic aid which is administered by AID, is grants and loans provided "to promote economic and political stability in areas where the United States has special security interests," through balance-of-payments support and short-term project assistance.\(^2\)

Military assistance consists of grant aid programs providing defense materiel and services for which the United States receives no reimbursement and credits and sales carried out under Foreign Military Sales programs. There are three primary means by which the United States provides allies and friendly countries with military equipment and services; Military Assistance Program (MAP), Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program.

The Military Assistance Program (MAP) is a grant aid program which, under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, provides defense articles and services to eligible recipients. The United States does not receive any reimbursement from the recipient

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countries. This program requires annual legislative authorizations and appropriations.³

**Foreign Military Sales (FMS)** are government-to-government sales. A foreign government contracts with the Department of Defense for defense articles and services. The Department of Defense is responsible for procurement services such as procuring, delivering, accounting, billing, collecting payments, and paying the American contractors. Sales under this program may be paid in cash or financed with credits provided by the U.S. government in the form of either direct loans or guaranty to lending institutions. The purchasing government pays all costs associated with a particular purchase, including a general administration surcharge to meet U.S. costs of operating the FMS system.⁴

**The International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program** is another grant aid program in which foreign students are trained in U.S. military schools and facilities with U.S. military personnel.⁵ This program is implemented through U.S. military service schools, professional military education institutions such as war colleges, command and staff colleges, and temporarily assigned training teams.

These military assistance programs primarily aim to strengthen America's security by enhancing the defense capabilities of nations in which the United States has interests. Their major objectives include:

- To deter aggression and to reduce the attractiveness of force as an instrument of

⁴FY 1978 DOD Report, p. 245; FY '79 DOD Report, p. 244.
⁵Ibid.
- To use U.S. security posture and relationships to provide positive incentives for negotiation as a means of settling major unresolved issues.
- To reassure allies and friends of America's continuing interest and determination to play a major role in world affairs.
- To encourage allies' self-help efforts which will eventually raise the threshold and limit the scope of potential U.S. involvement in any future conflict.  

With these goals, an underlying principle of U.S. military assistance is that the security of friendly foreign countries is essential to the security of the United States. An important aspect of this principle is anti-communism. Military assistance has been used primarily to increase the capabilities of U.S. allies to resist Soviet and Soviet-backed Communist expansionism. For example, the MAP initially focused on helping Western Europe, including Greece and Turkey, to rebuild their defense establishments to counter the Soviet threat and on supporting U.S. commitments in Asia against Communist expansionism.

In fact, in the post-WWII period, military assistance has been an effective instrument in maintaining the strength of U.S. alliances, primarily by improving the conventional capabilities of recipients' forces. It has also been an important means to encourage people and governments of recipient countries to defend themselves, particularly

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7FY 1977 DOD Report, pp. 186-87. Although some security assistance was extended to non-aligned countries, such as Egypt and Indonesia, the primary emphasis was on constructing collective security arrangements in the context of East-West confrontation.
against Communist-inspired aggression or subversion. In this sense, an important aspect of U.S. military assistance is its contribution to regional stability in some areas. Thus, the military assistance reduces the need for the direct involvement of the United States by means of armed forces in local conflicts, and consequently, it can save American lives and resources.⁸

In terms of collective security, the strong military capabilities of allies provide the United States with a direct benefit: without it, the U.S. armed forces would have to carry a far heavier load at higher costs in both money and manpower. Particularly, in an era of devastating nuclear weapons and strategic nuclear balance between the superpowers, the conventional forces of friendly nations are indispensable to deter potential adversaries from taking a risk.⁹

In addition, military assistance enables the United States to maintain important strategic capabilities through overflight and base rights abroad. With them, the United States is able to gain access to strategic locations and to move its forces to vital areas more quickly and less expensively than if it had to deploy directly from U.S. territory. Without them, the United States would need additional ships, planes and equipment which would require a significant increase in its defense budget, and the U.S. national security might be subject to greater risk.¹⁰

By the same token, U.S. military assistance can enhance bilateral cooperation with the recipient countries across a broad range of foreign policy issues and, to a degree, increases American influence on recipient governments in this area.\textsuperscript{11}

Most U.S. military assistance began as grant aid for American allies under circumstances where, without U.S. grants, they could not equip their forces adequately by themselves. However, the United States did not aim to continue providing its grant assistance indefinitely. Rather, the United States intended to shift MAP recipient countries from dependent status to self-sufficiency as soon as possible.

As allies recovered economically, many of them eventually became capable of purchasing necessary military equipment and services, both through credits and for cash. Accordingly, significant efforts have been made to reduce the country-by-country levels of grant aid, based on the recipients' abilities to pay cash for their defense materiel or to effectively use FMS credits.\textsuperscript{12} Furthermore, as political and military situations in the international community changed, American military assistance significantly changed in its size and composition in accordance with U.S. objectives and strategies to meet the changing environments. As a result of these trends, the U.S. military assistance program has shifted from a predominance of grant aid to a predominance of cash and credit sales of

\textsuperscript{11}U.S. Senate, International Security Assistance, pp. 4-5.

\textsuperscript{12}By the late 1960's, these efforts were successful in most European allies and some other countries, such as Japan. By the mid-1970's, many other countries had made the transition from MAP to FMS, including Greece, Brazil, Argentina, Pakistan, Peru, Taiwan, Spain, Turkey and Korea. FY 1976/1977 DOD Report, p. IV-28-29.
U.S. defense materiel and services.

Whatever its form, military assistance has been an indispensable element in U.S. national security policy in the post-WWII era: a policy of "global engagement and collective security" and a military strategy of "deterrence and forward defense."

2. U.S. Military Assistance to South Korea

A. Three Means and Trends

The Military Assistance Program (MAP)

In line with U.S. foreign policy interests, the regional emphasis of U.S. military assistance had been changed from Europe to the Asian and Pacific regions, and then to the Middle East. In the period from the end of WWII to the Korean War, the principal MAP program was directed toward Europe to contain the challenge of the Soviet Union. The Korean War made the United States modify this emphasis to some extent because that war was recognized as a direct military challenge by Communist forces to the United States in Asia.
Although the Korean War shifted the U.S. focus in military assistance to Asia to some degree, MAP aid continued to be directed primarily toward Europe until U.S. attention was drastically changed to Indochina in the early 1960's. During this period, the East Asia and Pacific areas ranked second in receiving MAP assistance, next to Europe. South Korea was one of the key MAP recipients in East Asia, receiving the second highest amount of U.S. MAP dollars behind Taiwan.\textsuperscript{13}

The Vietnam War had a profound effect on U.S. military assistance programs. From 1964 through 1974, the East Asia and Pacific region accounted for the greatest percentage of MAP assistance because of that war. Needless to say, South Vietnam received the largest amount of MAP aid. In this region, South Korea still remained the second highest recipient nation.

In the post-Vietnam period, the security assistance program was reevaluated, particularly by the Congress. As a result, various modifications were made in legislation and thus, in overall program levels for particular countries and specific accounts. Perhaps, the most significant change was the shift of emphasis to the Middle East. The 1973 Arab-Israeli War and Arab oil embargo, followed later by the downfall of the pro-western Shah of Iran in 1979, led the U.S. to give greater emphasis to the Middle East and the Persian

Gulf. Consequently, there were tremendous increases in military assistance for that area. During this period, the Middle East ranked first in the amount of both U.S. MAP and FMS. There was no change in the relative position of South Korea among East Asian countries in receiving MAP dollars.

Another important change came in 1976 when Congress called for the termination of MAP aid to all the countries. At the same time, the IMET program was created to take over the training assistance which was previously conducted through the MAP program. Consequently, grant aid under the MAP declined remarkably, and FMS sharply increased. In this period, South Korea became the second greatest FMS customer behind Australia in the East Asia and Pacific region.

In the history of U.S. MAP assistance, South Korea remained one of principal MAP recipient countries until its MAP aid was officially terminated after 1976. During 1950's and 1960's, the MAP accounted for the bulk of U.S. military assistance to South Korea. Thus the MAP remained a key instrument for building stronger Korean armed forces by the early 1970's. After 1976, the MAP became the smallest element of the overall U.S. military assistance to South Korea (Appendix 1).

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In general, U.S. MAP assistance for Korea had a trend of gradual decline since 1960. While Korean forces participated in the Vietnam War from 1966 to 1973, however, it considerably increased with peaks in 1968 and 1971 (Figure 5-1).\textsuperscript{15} As Table 5-1 shows, the amount of MAP aid during the 8-year Vietnam period was more than 1.5 times

\textsuperscript{15}To some degree, the dollar amount of these two peaks was added by U.S. supplemental MAP support after a series of military provocations by North Korea in the late 1960's and U.S. support for the five-year modernization program of ROK forces beginning in 1971 (further discussions below).
greater than that for the other eleven years in the pre-and post-Vietnam War period (1961-65 and 1974-79): $1.4 billion for the Vietnam period, compared to $909.9 million for the other years. In terms of annual average, Korea received $176.7 million per year during the Vietnam period, but $137.2 million per year during the other period.

Table 5-1
Grant Aid: Korea, 1961-1979
(thousands of dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAP</td>
<td>685,919</td>
<td>1,413,966</td>
<td>223,974</td>
<td>2,323,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASF</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,424,668</td>
<td>10,595(^a)</td>
<td>1,435,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAP Excess</td>
<td>167,479</td>
<td>377,004</td>
<td>28,257</td>
<td>573,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>685,919</td>
<td>2,838,634</td>
<td>234,569</td>
<td>3,759,122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)It was provided in 1979 when American troops were withdrawn by President Carter.

During the Vietnam period, there was another type of grant aid, Military Assistance Service Funds (MASF), which was created in 1966 to supplement the regular MAP in support of the allies' war efforts in Vietnam. The MASF recipients were South
Korea, Laos, Philippines, Thailand, and South Vietnam. South Korea received the greatest amount of the MASF except South Vietnam. This special program continued until 1973 when Korean forces were withdrawn from South Vietnam. The total amount of MASF for Korea was greater than that of the regular MAP during the same period (Table 5-1).

With the end of Korea's Vietnam participation, however, MAP assistance began to decline sharply from $147.5 million in 1973 to $57.4 million in 1976. Finally, grant material assistance was terminated after FY 1976. Until that time, that assistance made a significant contribution to strengthening and maintaining Korea's military capabilities by providing defense articles and services.\textsuperscript{16}

However, it should be noted that U.S. MAP assistance had a limitation in terms of investment. In the earlier years, MAP dollars were spent mainly to purchase operations and maintenance (O & M) items. After 1960, South Korea began to use this money to invest in procuring up-to-date equipment that could modernize its forces, spending its own funds for O & M purchases.\textsuperscript{17} Nevertheless, most MAP dollars had been used to buy O & M items until South Korea initiated its force modernization program in the early 1970's.

\textsuperscript{16}In addition to this direct military contribution, U.S. grant aid also freed Korea to use its foreign exchange for economic purposes. Without grant aid, South Korea would have had to divert scarce domestic resources from economic development to purchasing military equipment. It consequently resulted in increasing national defense power of South Korea.

\textsuperscript{17}U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korean-American Relations}, p. 173.
Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program

In the early 1960's, an important change occurred in U.S. military assistance programs. By 1963, with the economic recovery of allies in Europe and Asia, grant aid programs began to shift to the cash and credit FMS program. By that time, in East Asia, Japan and Taiwan moved in the direction of purchasing U.S. military equipment. These trends accelerated into the early 1970's and were reinforced by the Nixon Doctrine. Beginning in the mid-1970's, the FMS program grew rapidly and came to dominate the entire U.S. military assistance program.  

In the case of Korea, the FMS program was practically nil until the late 1960's. As grant aid to South Korea began to decline sharply after 1971, the FMS program for Korea rapidly increased and in 1974, it exceeded the MAP for the first time. The FMS rose remarkably in the mid-1970's, reaching a peak in 1976 (Figure 5-1).

During the period 1971 to 1979, FMS agreements for South Korea totaled approximately $2 billion, compared with $ 808.3 million for the MAP. As the MAP was ended, credits sales increased for South Korea. From 1971 to 1979, Korea received about $1.1 billion of both direct and guaranteed FMS credits, about a half of the total FMS agreements over the period. Particularly, there were tremendous increases after 1975:

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$912.5 million from 1976 to 1979, compared to $120.7 million from 1971 to 1975 (Table 5-2). This probably reflects U.S. support for the Five-Year Force Improvement Plan of Korean forces beginning in 1976.

Table 5-2
FMS Programs: Korea, 1971-1979

(millions of dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FMS Agreements</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>180.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMS Credits:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guranty</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1976</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FMS Agreements</td>
<td>593.6</td>
<td>561.8</td>
<td>330.6</td>
<td>229.9</td>
<td>1,999.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMS Credits:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guranty</td>
<td>260.1</td>
<td>152.4</td>
<td>275.0</td>
<td>225.0</td>
<td>1,022.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>260.1</td>
<td>152.4</td>
<td>275.0</td>
<td>225.0</td>
<td>1,084.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department, DSAA, Fiscal Year Series, September 30, 1984.
The FMS program was designed primarily for those countries that could financially support a larger share of their own defense burden, but did not have sufficient or modern defense articles available in country. Thus, this program, through both direct credits and credit guaranty, played an important part in supplementing or eventually replacing grant aid.19

From the American perspective, the economic development of MAP recipient countries was probably the most important reason for the United States shift from the grant aid program to the FMS program.20 Thus, when the United States terminated grant material assistance for Korea in FY 1977, they argued that Korea's economic development would permit an end to such grant aid. Although the South Korean economy had rapidly developed prior to that time, the country still faced some serious economic problems, such as high foreign debts, an overall trade deficit, and the lack of domestic resources. Moreover, South Korea could not complete the 5-year modernization plan of its forces as scheduled due to the shortage of necessary funds (it was completed in 1977, two years later than the initial plan). Furthermore, Korea began another five-year force improvement plan in 1976. At that time, therefore, Korea needed a great deal of funding in order to finish the first force modernization plan and to put the new force improvement plan to effect. From

this point of view, the shift to FMS from MAP aid for Korea seemed to come earlier than it was expected.

Nevertheless, FMS assistance made a significant contribution to strengthening South Korea's defense capabilities by providing U.S.-origin military equipment. It consequently contributed to military stability in the Korean peninsula.

Also, the change in the nature of U.S. military assistance brought about changes in the characteristics of relations between both militaries. The shift to FMS from the MAP changed donor-recipient to seller-customer relations. In other words, Korean status was shifted to self-reliance or partner from dependence or client.

**International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program**

The IMET program is a grant aid, which provides instruction and training to military and related civilian personnel of friendly countries. In 1976, the Congress provided separate legislative authority and funds for the IMET program. Prior to that year, it was conducted as a part of the overall MAP grant program.

The basic purposes of the IMET program are two. One is to improve the ability of participating foreign militaries to use their resources, including defense articles obtained
from the United States, with maximum effectiveness, thereby contributing to greater self-reliance on their defense. The other is to enhance effective and mutually beneficial relations and understanding between foreign militaries and the U.S. military in furtherance of international peace and security.²¹

Figure 5-2

IMET Program to Korea, 1961-1979*

$ million


During the 1960's and 1970's, the IMET program for South Korea had a trend of gradual decrease (Figure 5-2). From 1961 to 1979, South Korea received an IMET assistance to totalling approximately $108.1 million. From 1961 to 1969, 18,793 Korean

military personnel were trained and educated under this program. But this number was sharply reduced in the 1970's. From 1970 to 1979, the number of students trained in the United States was 5,024 (Appendix 1). Besides the problem of reduction of funds, this probably resulted from the fact that the South Korean military had enhanced its ability to educate and train itself.

Compared to the regular MAP and FMS programs, the IMET program has provided a small amount of dollars: from 1961 to 1979, more than $2.3 billion for the MAP; about $2 billion for the FMS; but only $108.1 million for the IMET program. Regardless of the dollar amount provided, however, this educational assistance had significant effects on the Korean military. First of all, the IMET program improved the professional quality and performance of the trainee. The newly acquired or improved knowledge and skills of the returning students were well utilized in their military career. Also, U.S. training helped the Korean armed forces become more self-sufficient in training. Consequently, the IMET program significantly contributed to improving the military proficiency and readiness of the Korean armed forces to support specific professional military requirements.

In addition to teaching professional military skills and U.S. military doctrine, the IMET provides significant opportunities for communication between both militaries. Particularly, the U.S. military has important opportunities for future access to the military
leadership of South Korea. IMET-trained personnel held such leadership positions, including chiefs of military services, commanders at the various levels of units, and a number of generals. In other words, the IMET program established a continuing rapport between actual or potential leaders of U.S. and Korean militaries.\footnote{22}

Korean student officers were also exposed to U.S. foreign policy goals and the American political system. They also had an opportunity to learn the U.S. tradition of civilian supremacy and the non-political role of the U.S. military.\footnote{23} Besides, English language training, which is essential to training in the United States, contributes directly to a greater understanding of U.S. society, institutions and ideals, during the education period and thereafter.

As with the MAP and FMS programs, the IMET program also served as a means to support U.S. security policy objectives. The IMET-training enhanced the professional military efficiency and performance of the South Korean forces. This increased proficiency of the Korean military resulted in improving its capabilities to deter external attack. Consequently, the IMET program for Korea contributed to achieving America's security objective by promoting stability within the Korean Peninsula and throughout Northeast

\footnote{22}For example, many of retired Korean officers, who had an experience of education in the United States, held political responsibilities during 1960's and 1970's.

Asia.

In the light of all these aspects, the IMET program is a "low-cost" security policy instrument of the United States that provides a valuable channel of communication with and influence on the Korea military.

B. U.S. Military Assistance and Force Improvement of the South Korean Military

The Five-Year Modernization Plan of the Korean Armed Forces

In 1970, a five-year plan was established to modernize the Korean armed forces over the period 1971 to 1975.\textsuperscript{24} This Five-Year Modernization Plan (MOD Plan) aimed to increase the capabilities of the South Korean military in order to deter North Korean aggression and to reach eventual military self-sufficiency. The MOD plan called for the expenditure of $1.5 billion for the five year period, which was expected to be provided by U.S. military aid in grants and excess defense articles.

This plan was South Korean reaction primarily to North Korea's military buildup

\textsuperscript{24}In 1970, a list was drawn up by Koreans indicating what they needed based on their assessment of external threat and their military capabilities. It was finally decided with some modification at a joint U.S.-Korean committee. U.S. Senate, \textit{Korea and The Philippines}, p. 24
and the necessity for self-reliance in national defense, as the Nixon Doctrine was applied to South Korea in an attempt to reduce U.S. troops there.

The Nixon administration recognized that the South Korean forces needed better equipment, since they still had the WWII vintage weapons and most of the previous U.S. military aid had been spent for operations and maintenance with very little devoted to new equipment. The United States thus decided to support the MOD plan. The Nixon administration planned $1.25 billion in new obligation authority and $0.25 billion in excess defense articles.\textsuperscript{25}

There was another significant reason, perhaps more important, why the United States supported the MOD plan. When the Nixon administration asked Congress for a supplemental $150 million in FY 1971 MAP funds for Korea to initiate the first phase of its five-year modernization program, the Department of State emphasized that such support would be necessary in order to carry out the Nixon doctrine in Korea and in the East Asia, saying that "the dollar cost of the supplemental request is high, but the potential savings involved in both dollars and American lives through the successful implementation of the Nixon Doctrine are far high." The Department of State also argued that if the supplemental assistance funds were not provided, the United States would have serious difficulties in carrying out further withdrawals of its forces in Korea and burden-sharing with American allies, including Korea.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{25} Department of State Bulletin (Jun. 18, 1973): 76.

\textsuperscript{26} Statement by Marshal Green, Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, before the
The Department of Defense shared the State Department view that the supplemental request of $150 million MAP for South Korea was keyed to implementation of the Nixon Doctrine. The Pentagon estimated that total net savings, resulting from the withdrawal of 20,000 American troops from Korea, would run about $450 million over a five year period. President Nixon also felt that the costs of military assistance would reduce the political and economic costs of maintaining U.S. forces overseas, and thereby avoid a possible cost of American lives.

There was an additional consideration for supplemental MAP assistance to South Korea. As an American division departed from the frontline of Korea, the South Korean Army had to assume responsibilities for the whole Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Thus, the United States needed to assure South Korea and other Asian allies that the withdrawal of a U.S. division from Korea did not signal any withdrawal of America’s defense commitments to the region. And it needed to make clear, particularly to the North Koreans, that the U.S. would not allow the weakening of South Korean defense capabilities because


27The testimony of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on November 25, 1970. Ibid, pp. 754-755. At that moment, the United States had a plan to withdraw 20,000 U.S. troops from Korea by the end of FY 1971. Thus Secretary Laird calculated that the United States could save $450 million over a five period from the withdrawal and deactivation savings of 20,000 troops, subtracting incremental American support for the Korean MOD plan.

of that withdrawal. 29

In short, the Nixon Administration decided to provide supplemental grant military aid for the modernization of Korean forces as a means of enabling the withdrawal of American troops from Korea without weakening the defense posture of South Korea essential to deter North Korean aggression. In other words, the United States intended to offset the removal of a U.S. division by strengthening the capabilities of the South Korean forces, which would assume greater responsibilities for defending their country after Americans left. At the same time, the administration considered that supplemental assistance was necessary in order to carry out further withdrawals in the future.

When the MOD plan was presented to Congress in the fall of 1970 as a supplemental five-year package, therefore, it was emphasized that the American funds for the plan would enable the United States to reduce its ground forces in Korea by 20,000 in the next year. But Congress did not see the plan as a five-year commitment and thus approved $150 million of the first allotment for the MOD plan, as a part of regular military aid. 30 Such congressional attitudes gave South Korea serious difficulties in implementing the MOD plan because it caused a delay of U.S. funds.

29 Department of State Bulletin (Dec. 21, 1970: 754 and 757.
Table 5-3
U.S. Assistance for the MOD Plan of ROK Forces, 1971-1977
(in millions of dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>1971-75</th>
<th>1976-77</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAP</td>
<td>749.0</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>807.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMS</td>
<td>171.9</td>
<td>412.5</td>
<td>584.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>920.9</td>
<td>470.9</td>
<td>1,391.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(66.2)</td>
<td>(33.8)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In addition, during that period, a number of factors, which affected U.S. support for the MOD plan, arose. First, the overall Congressional cuts in U.S. military assistance led to proportionate cuts for Korea. Secondly, the Congress legislated a specific limitation on military aid to South Korea because of Korea's human rights record (further discussion later). Thirdly, the United States changed the nature of U.S. military assistance to all countries from grants to direct and/or credit sales of military equipment. This change in U.S. policy caused South Korea to assume an unexpected burden of $412 million through the FMS, as shown in the Table 5-3.31

31When Koreans planned the MOD plan, they believed that the necessary funds would be
All these political currents caused a delay in the completion of the MOD plan. Thus the plan was concluded in 1977, two years behind the initial schedule.

The Force Improvement Plan of Korean Armed Forces

With the delay of the MOD plan, the downfall of South Vietnam in 1975 increased Koreans' suspicion about the credibility of U.S. commitment to their security. Under the threat of North Korean military adventurism, these security concerns led South Korea to develop another five year plan to improve its armed forces, the Force Improvement Plan (FIP) over the period 1976 to 1980.

The FIP was designed to make the Korean military self-sufficient for defense, provided there was a significant level of air, naval and logistical support from the United States. Supplementing the 1971 MOD plan, this plan aimed to reach a rough parity with North Korean military capabilities. It planned to accomplish the goal primarily by increasing the purchase of arms from abroad, mainly from the United States, and by expanding an infrastructure which, if necessary, could meet the requirement of manufacturing conventional weapons.\(^\text{32}\)

According to the FIP, ground forces were to be improved by the acquisition of equipment for six divisions in the rear areas and of additional incountry-produced artillery pieces; increasing air mobility; upgrading tank forces and acquiring anti-tank systems; and increasing air defense systems. The Air Force would sharply increase the number of modern fighter aircraft to reduce the disparity with the North Korean Air Force. The Navy focused on increasing coastal defense capabilities by acquisition of new patrol craft and suitable missile systems.\textsuperscript{33}

To achieve these goals, the FIP initially called for roughly $5 billion. Approximately two-thirds of the funds had to come from Korea's own foreign exchange reserve. To obtain the necessary financing, the ROK Government instituted a national defense tax.\textsuperscript{34}

The U.S. role in the FIP was entirely different from that in the MOD plan. The 1971 MOD plan was initially funded largely by U.S. grant aid, for example, 95 percent in 1971, though the grants declined to a small portion later.\textsuperscript{35} In the FIP, however, the United States provided only FMS credits to help Korea obtain the necessary foreign exchange to meet financial requirements for the plan. From 1976 to 1980, the United

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.; U.S. Cong., Senate, Com. on Foreign Relations, \textit{U.S. Foreign Policy Objectives and Overseas Military Installations} (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1979), p. 205; The defense tax is a ten percent surcharge on income.

\textsuperscript{35}U.S. Senate, \textit{International Security Assistance}, p. 105.
States provided FMS credits slightly more than $208 million per year on average.

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<td>120.7</td>
<td>1,041.5</td>
<td>1,162.2</td>
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However, South Korea had some difficulties in obtaining U.S. support. The problem stemmed from the arms transfer policy of the Carter administration. The Carter administration attempted to reduce foreign arms sales by setting severe restrictions on most sales. As a notable example, the United States rejected the South Korean request for M-60 tanks to replace the older M-48s, stating the need of U.S. forces for the M-60s. But the

36 Among them, the following significantly influenced on the implementation of the FIP: (a) Limits on the levels of arms transfers; (b) Prohibition of the introduction of advanced weapon systems that would raise regional combat capabilities; and (c) Prohibition of coproduction agreements between U.S. arms manufacturers and the South Korean government for local production of major weapon systems.
"need of U.S. forces" did not prohibit the United States from providing 64 M-60s to North Yemen in early 1979.\textsuperscript{37}

This restriction had a serious impact on the implementation of the FIP because the plan was established based on the assumption that the United States would continue to provide weapons, particularly major sophisticated weapon systems, which were required to counter North Korea's offensive capabilities and could not be produced in country.\textsuperscript{38}

In sum, despite some restrictions, the United States had significantly contributed to modernizing ROK armed forces and promoting Korea's military self-sufficiency through providing necessary funds and arms for the planned force improvement of South Korea. As a matter of fact, a fundamental motivation of U.S. support was to increase Korean military capabilities in order to implement U.S. policy objectives such as reducing U.S. ground forces in Korea, maintaining military stability in the Korean peninsula after that reduction, thereby eliminating the need for further U.S. involvement in an armed conflict, and keeping South Korea and other Asian allies' confidence in U.S. commitments to their security.

\textsuperscript{37} SIPRI Yearbook, 1980, p. 162.

\textsuperscript{38} According to the Department of State, only 39 percent of the planned projects had been completed by the end of 1979, just a year before the end of the initial schedule.
3. THREE CASES

This section examines three cases in which American military assistance was provided to South Korea in connection with particular issues between the two nations. The cases are analyzed based on three major questions: How did each issue develop? What specific political and military interests were associated with each issue? How was U.S. military aid used as leverage to achieve those interests?

A. The Vietnam War and Military Assistance

U.S. Request for ROK Participation in the Vietnam War

Before U.S. solicitation for combat participation in the Vietnam War, South Korea had already dispatched a 130-men hospital team (MASH) and a small group of Taekwondo instructors in September 1964 upon the request of the South Vietnam Government.\(^{39}\)

In January 1965, when the South Vietnam Government requested South Korea to send additional non-combat troops including engineering and construction units, there was

\(^{39}\)Taekwondo is a martial art of Korean origin.
opposition within the South Korean National Assembly to the government's attempt to dispatch additional Korean troops to South Vietnam because of two major reasons: (1) it might weaken the security of South Korea and (2) it might lead to further involvement in the war overseas.

In response, President Park explained that:

... Such action would not only solidify our own national security but also contribute toward strengthening the anti-communist front of the free world. ... The action is part of our moral responsibility in furtherance of Asia's collective security. ... It would be almost inevitable if Vietnam were to succumb to communist infiltration, that the entire Asian region would be subject to growing communist threats. ... In view of this, the proposed military assistance is an indirect national defense of this country. ... When we were confronted with the communist aggression fourteen years ago, the fate of this country was saved by sixteen Free World allies headed by the United States. We ... cannot sit on our hands and see one of our friendly allies become prey to communist invasion.  

Finally, the National Assembly approved the dispatch of 2000 non-combat troops (the Dove Unit) consisting of transportation, engineering and construction units. This unit left Korea for South Vietnam in February 1965.  

In April of that year, the United States asked South Korea to send a full-strength combat division to South Vietnam. Upon receiving the U.S. request, the ROK Government

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41 At that time, there was no specific agreement on ROK dispatch of noncombat troops to Vietnam between the U.S. and South Korea.
faced strong opposition from National Assemblymen to the dispatch of any combat troops primarily for security reasons. In order to dispatch forces to South Vietnam, South Korea had to withdraw a combat division from the front line because the divisions in the rear areas were undermanned and underequipped compared to regular combat divisions in the forward areas. Such a reduction of ROK forces along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) was considered dangerous to the nation's security in the face of the North Korean military threat. The opposition parties also insisted that their nation was not ready to engage in any foreign war because of heavy economic burdens at home.\footnote{For example, maintenance costs of the preceding noncombatant units in South Vietnam. Se-Jin Kim, "South Korea's Involvement in Vietnam and Its Economic and Political Impact," \textit{Asian Survey} 10 (June 1970): 525.}

Responding to them, President Park reiterated to the National Assembly the same reasons that he made when he asked for its approval for the dispatch of the noncombat Dove Unit about three months earlier. He additionally explained that the dispatch of combat troops to South Vietnam would strengthen alliance relations with the United States, with an expectation of changing the existing U.S.-R.O.K. Mutual Defense Treaty into a stronger NATO-type treaty which would guarantee automatic U.S. response in case of any external aggression to South Korea.\footnote{\textit{Chosun Ilbo}, Mar. 10, 1966, p. 1. Article 5 of the NATO Treaty says: "The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all. . . . If such an attack occurs, each of them . . . will assist the party or parties . . . by taking forthwith . . . such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed forces . . ."} He also argued that this military assistance to South Vietnam would enhance the international prestige of South Korea as well as strengthen
diplomatic ties with Southeast Asian countries.\textsuperscript{44}

However, the National Assembly, around majority party leaders including the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, still opposed the dispatch of any combat troops unless the United States Government agreed to the following conditions, which adopted these conditions as a resolution and recommended it to the President.

(1) To agree to a rewording of the United States-South Korea mutual defense treaty [so as to create a pact such as that of NATO];
(2) To stop the U.S. MAP Transfer Program;\textsuperscript{45}
(3) To step up the modernization of the South Korean armed forces;
(4) To increase American military procurements from South Korea in connection with the Vietnam War.\textsuperscript{46}

Under these conditions, at the invitation of President Johnson, President Park visited the United States in May, 1965. At the meeting, Johnson requested the dispatch of a ROK combat division to South Vietnam. In return, he assisted Park in gaining the National Assembly's approval with a commitment to maintain powerful U.S. forces in Korea, a revision of the Military Assistance Transfer Program, and promise of $150 million in economic development loans. President Park agreed in general with Johnson

\textsuperscript{44}Lyman, "Korea's Involvement in Vietnam," pp. 564-565.

\textsuperscript{45}The MAP transfer program was enacted in 1965 for the purpose of transferring the costs of military maintenance and operational programs to the ROK defense budget. It was designed to lead ultimately to a termination of U.S. military aid to South Korea.

and pledged his intention to continue to cooperate with the United States in support of South Vietnam.\textsuperscript{47}

In dealing with this matter, the ROK Government sought to insure that the troop dispatch would not jeopardize Korea's defense and would not adversely affect the level of U.S. military assistance. It also sought certain agreements on the terms of U.S. support for Korean troops in Vietnam.

In the followup negotiations with General Howze, the Commander of the U.S. Forces in Korea, to settle in detail the problems connected with deploying a ROK combat division, Korean Defense Minister Kim Sung Eun requested U.S. support of the following items:

(1) Maintenance of current U.S. and Korean force ceilings in Korea;
(2) Equipment of the three combat-ready reserve divisions to 100 percent of the table of equipment allowance and the 17 regular divisions, including the Marine Division, with major items affecting firepower maneuver and signal capabilities to avoid weakening the Korean defense posture;
(3) Maintenance of the same level of Military Assistance Program funding for Korea as before the deployment of the division; and
(4) U.S. support for Korea's Vietnam operations including logistical support, communication equipment, transportation for the movement of Korean troops, financial support for Korean soldiers in South Vietnam such as combat duty pay and other allowances, and other necessary combat support.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{47}Joint Communiqué Issued by President Johnson and President Park on May 18, 1965. U.S. House, Appendixes, pp. 176-178.
Although the United States could not agree with all of the Korean demands, in mid-July, 1965, it agreed to the following commitments in order to ensure the prompt deployment of the ROK troops.

(1) No U.S. force reductions in Korea without prior consultation.
(2) MAP level for FY 66 not be affected by the deployment.
(3) MAP level for FY 66 to include a $7 million add-on to provide active division equipment status for the three ready reserve divisions.
(4) MAP transfer program to be suspended for FY 66 and transfer items in the program to be procured by MAP in Korea.
(5) South Korean forces [in Korea] to be modernized in fire power, communications and mobility.
(6) The U.S. will provide equipment, logistical support, construction, training, transportation, subsistence, overseas allowances, funds for any legitimate noncombatant claim which may be brought against ROK Forces in South Vietnam (ROKFV), and restitution of ROKFV cash losses not resulting from ROKFV negligence.49

With these U.S. offers, on August 13, 1965, the South Korean National Assembly authorized the ROK Government to send combat troops to South Vietnam. Subsequently, the ROK Capital Infantry Division (Tiger Division) and a Marine Corps Brigade (Blue Dragon), totaling 18, 212 , were dispatched to Vietnam during the period from September to November, 1965.

49U.S. Senate, U.S. Security Agreement and Commitment; the Republic of Korea, p. 1569.
The Second ROK Combat Division to South Vietnam

In February, 1966, the ROK Government again received a formal request from the U.S. and South Vietnam Governments to send another combat division to Vietnam. This time, the issue in Korea was the conditions to be negotiated with the United States, not the question of whether troops should be sent or not.

The National Assembly requested some security measures to compensate for the lack of another combat division to be withdrawn from the DMZ, such as a U.S. guarantee to equip and maintain a new combat-ready division in South Korea which would replace the division to be sent to Vietnam. 50

The Assembly also demanded that the treatment of Korean troops in Vietnam be improved in equipment and financial benefits. For example, American troops in Vietnam were equipped with modern equipment such as M-16 rifles, while Korean soldiers in the same battlefield were fighting with old equipment like M-1 rifles and other WWII remnants. Another example was that aside from the treatment of American soldiers, military allowance for Korean combat troops was far less than that for the non-combat personnel from the Philippines and even less than that given to Vietnamese soldiers. 51

50 At that time, South Korea deployed 18 combat-ready divisions along the front line, and 10 reserve divisions in the scattered rear areas. The 10 reserve divisions were manned and equipped far less than the regular combat divisions and thus could not replace regular combat divisions in the front line without substantial reinforcement in manpower and equipment. Stateman's Year-Book, 1967/68, p. 1214.

51 For example, the monthly allowances for sergeant rank for American soldiers was quoted at
In this situation, Vice President Humphrey visited Seoul in February 1966, for the second time, in order to expedite the negotiations to dispatch another ROK combat division to Vietnam. He reaffirmed a strong U.S. commitment to Korean security, saying:

The United States Government and the people of the United States have a firm commitment to the defense of Korea. As long as there is one American soldier on the line of the border, the demarcation line, the whole and entire power of the United States of America is committed to the security and defense of Korea... We are allies, we are friends, you should have no questions, no doubts.\(^52\)

However, verbal pledges by American officials were not sufficient to persuade South Koreans to dispatch their combat troops to the Vietnam battlefield. On Mar 7, 1966, after months-long negotiations over the conditions for dispatching another ROK combat division to South Vietnam, U.S. Ambassador Winthrop G. Brown finally agreed to issue a written note, the so-called "Brown Memorandum," at the request of the ROK Government for use in answering questions of the National Assembly on the status of its own security if Korea dispatched additional combat troops to South Vietnam.\(^53\)

According to the Brown Memorandum, it was recognized by both sides that the

\(^{52}\)U.S. Senate, U.S. Security Agreement and Commitment: the Republic of Korea, p. 1725.

\(^{53}\)Ibid., p. 1532. The Brown Memorandum is a letter from U.S. Ambassador Winthrop Brown to Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Lee Tong Won, outlining the various types of economic and military assistance that the U.S. would provide as compensation for Korea's participation in the Vietnam War.
decision of the ROK Government on the deployment of additional combat forces to South Vietnam should in no way affect Korea's security. In order to insure it, the United States agreed to provide, among others, the following military support for South Korea:

- the equipment of three ROK reserve divisions in order to replace the security gap created by the lack of combat divisions deployed in Vietnam;
- the suspension of MAP transfer program;
- the substantial modernization of ROK forces;
- the improvement of the anti-infiltration capability of South Korean forces.⁵⁴

Although the Brown Memorandum outlined the various types of military assistance for the compensation of Korea's participation in the Vietnam War, the United States did not agree to change any wording in the existing Defense Treaty with South Korea. Responding to Korea's fear of an increased threat due to the dispatch of its combat divisions to Vietnam, the United States simply reiterated its defense commitment to South Korea under that Treaty.

Finally, on March 30, 1966, the National Assembly approved the dispatch of the second combat division to South Vietnam. In the following month, the 9th Infantry Division (White Horse Division) began to deploy in South Vietnam.

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⁵⁴Korea Herald, Mar. 8, 1966; For full text of the Brown Memorandum, see U.S. Senate, U.S. Security Agreement and Commitment; the Republic of Korea, pp. 1533-1534.
Reasons for the U.S. Request of South Korean Troops

The United States needed South Korean troops not only for military reasons but also for political reasons. First of all, the United States needed Korean troops to demonstrate the solidarity of the free world. The United States considered the Vietnam War as "another testing ground" in addition to the Korean War for containing Communist expansionism. Therefore, the United States had endeavored to involve the Allied Forces in resisting Communist aggression in South Vietnam, as in the Korean War.\textsuperscript{55}

Another reason was connected with public opposition to U.S. participation in the Vietnam War. Worried about public support, the Johnson Administration intended to make allies participate in the Vietnam War as a proof of the important concerns of the free world. In other words, the U.S. government needed to demonstrate other non-communist nations' interests in South Vietnam's fate and their willingness to sacrifice lives.\textsuperscript{56} In this sense, it might be considered that the entry of South Korean armed forces into the Vietnam War would contribute to reducing domestic opposition in the United States.

The United States also needed Korean troops to assist in military operations. In a sense, the United States wanted Korean forces in order to reduce its combat burden. According to President Johnson, Secretary McNamara recommended that the number of

\textsuperscript{55}Larson and Collins, \textit{Allied Participation in Vietnam}, pp. 1 and 6.

U.S. battalions in South Vietnam be increased to 34, with an expectation that South Korea would send 9 battalions (a Korean Army division had 9 battalions). McNamara said that if Korea failed to do so, the United States would be responsible for all requirements -- a total of 43 battalions in that case -- and would have to raise the level of U.S. forces to 175,000, or 200,000 men.\textsuperscript{57} From 1966 through 1973, South Korea actually maintained a force level of about 50,000 in Vietnam.\textsuperscript{58}

In short, there were important political and military reasons behind the U.S. request of South Korean combat forces for the Vietnam War: first, to demonstrate the solidarity of the free world; second, to minimize domestic opposition in the United States; third, to reduce the American combat burden. Among them, political reasons were more important than military ones in soliciting Korean troops.

\textit{South Korean Considerations}

There were significant military and political reasons why South Korea accepted the U.S. request of dispatching combat troops to South Vietnam. Among them, the national security of South Korea was most important. First of all, South Korea sent its troops to Vietnam in order to prevent a weakening of the defense capability in Korea,


\textsuperscript{58}U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korean-American Relations}, p. 53.
particularly the possible reduction of U.S. forces in Korea.

From the beginning of America's active involvement in the Vietnam War, South Korea had been deeply concerned about the possibility of U.S. troops in Korea transferring to Vietnam. On January 8, 1965, Korean Defense Minister Kim Sung Eun asked General Hamilton H. Howze, Commander of U.S. Forces in Korea, for a formal guarantee in any form for maintaining U.S. forces in Korea at the current level before the deployment of South Korean troops (the Dove Unit) to Vietnam. On January 11, 1965, in reply to Minister Kim, General Howze wrote that "I cannot provide you a formal guarantee for continued maintenance of the U.S. forces in Korea at current level." This event intensified Korean concern about possible reduction or transfer of U.S. troops from Korea to Vietnam.

According to an aide to McNamara, as early as 1963, the Pentagon discussed troop reduction in Korea. In 1966, moreover, Secretary of Defense McNamara proposed a reduction of U.S. troops in Korea. But the plans were not carried out because of President Johnson's overriding interest in enlisting allies for combat in Vietnam.

Accordingly, South Koreans were deeply concerned about the possibility of withdrawal of U.S. forces and worried about the security of their country. In response, the

United States stated many times in negotiations that no U.S. troops would be withdrawn from Korea without prior consultation with the ROK Government.

In addition, President Park believed that the security of South Vietnam was closely related with that of Korea. In his address at a farewell rally for ROK troops going to Vietnam in February 1965, he said that this military assistance for South Vietnam was an indirect national defense of South Korea.

Another important consideration for South Korea was its expectation of a NATO-type defense treaty with the United States. Ever since the existing defense treaty with the United States had been signed in 1953, South Koreans had been concerned about future American commitment to the defense of their nation because the treaty did not guarantee automatic U.S. involvement in a renewed Korean War. Thus, South Korean leaders had sought to amend the existing treaty into a stronger one which would guarantee America's coming back with its automatic response provision in the case of an external attack on South Korea. Furthermore, such a Korean concern was deepened after North Korea signed mutual defense treaties with the USSR and PRC in 1961, which guaranteed automatic Soviet and Chinese assistance in the event of North Korea being an object of armed attack.62 In these circumstances, South Korean leaders might consider that support


Article 2 of the North Korea-PRC Mutual Defense Treaty (signed in July, 1961) said: "the contracting parties undertake jointly to adopt all measures to prevent aggression against either of the contracting parties by any state. In the event of one of the contracting parties being subject to armed attack
for American war efforts in Vietnam by means of combat troops would be a good opportunity to request the United States to change the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty.

Politically, it was thought that if ROK combat troops participated in the Vietnam War, South Korea could strengthen its relations with other anti-communist countries in the Free World, particularly in Southeast Asia. Given its experiences with North Korea, Korea wanted "a dramatic demonstration of its determination to join in the resistance against Communist aggression." 63

As President Park said, another important political reason was the desire to repay the national debt to the United States and other allies stemming from the Korean War. Also, Korean leaders probably sought to gain international prestige by showing that South Korea was no longer simply the dependent recipient of outside aid (especially, from the United States) but was making a substantial contribution itself to a common effort. Dispatching combat troops abroad itself would be a sign of growing national maturity, strength and self-confidence.64

In negotiations to settle the problems relating to the dispatch of combat troops, it appeared that the Korean government considered its national security more important than

political concerns. Also, it should be noted that although U.S. military aid had played a conclusive role in the negotiations, it was not the initial objective of Korea to obtain such assistance in exchange for the troop dispatch but a compensation to replace the security gap created by the lack of combat divisions deployed in South Vietnam. However, from the American perspective, military aid was used as strong leverage by the United States to induce Korean participation in the Vietnam War.

Impact

South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War had a significant impact on its armed forces and military relations with the United States. The Korean forces obtained substantial tangible and intangible military benefits which contributed to the improvement of their capabilities.

First of all, South Korea received a considerable amount of additional military aid. From 1961 to 1965 (the pre-Vietnam War period), the annual average of regular MAP aid for Korea amounted to $137.2 million. During the Vietnam War period (1966-1973), however, that amount increased to about $176.7 million. As well, Korea received about $142.5 million under the MASF Program for its war efforts in South Vietnam. Also, the
suspension of the MAP Transfer Program from 1966 through 1970 resulted in Korean savings of $93.2 million (Table 5-5).  

Table 5-5
MAP Transfer Suspended: Korea
(In millions of dollars)

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<td></td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<td>18.4</td>
<td>27.1</td>
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Source: U.S. Congress.

The ROK forces in South Vietnam brought home their weapons and equipment used in Vietnam. They received a number of new types of advanced weapons and equipment, including M-16 rifles, more sophisticated anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank guns, and new communication systems. A significant portion of the Korean armed forces could be equipped with these new weapons and equipment. All this assistance in grants and equipment contributed considerably to the modernization of the South Korean armed forces.

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In 1971, despite the continuing presence of two ROK divisions in Vietnam, the U.S. resumed the MAP transfer program. It cost Korea a total of $210 million for materials from 1971 through 1975. But the U.S. provided indirect military budget support: the U.S. helped Korea absorb this extra cost by increasing the PL 480 program by $125 million over 5 years from 1971 to 1975. For detail, see U.S. House, Investigation of Korean-American Relations, p. 204.
forces.

The Korean armed force also gained important intangible benefits, i.e., combat experience. A total of over 300,000 Korean soldiers served in the Vietnam War, where they were trained in fighting a real war.\textsuperscript{66} Besides combat experience, they obtained important training in handling more than 50 types of modern military equipment. All these war experiences contributed significantly to the improvement of the combat capabilities of the Korean military.

In addition, the combat-ready divisions of the Korean Army were increased in number by one. The United States agreed to equip three reserve divisions up to full strength in order to replace the divisions deployed in South Vietnam. But in actuality, only one combat division was replaced. As a result, South Korea deployed 19 combat divisions in 1973, compared to 18 prior to 1966.\textsuperscript{67}

Another important effect was the U.S. decision to maintain the existing troop level in Korea. The dispatch of Korean combat troops to South Vietnam contributed to solidifying American commitment to Korea’s defense, and strengthened military relations between the two nations. Many statements confirming U.S. support for South Korean security had been made by American officials including the President and Vice President from time to time. President Johnson himself promised that the United States would

\textsuperscript{66}Korea Week, 6, No. 3 (Feb. 15, 1973).
\textsuperscript{67}IISS, Military Balance, 1973/74, p. 53.
continue to maintain" powerful forces in Korea" to insure Korea's security.\textsuperscript{68} Whenever he met the Korean President, President Johnson reaffirmed prompt and effective U.S. assistance to defeat an armed attack against South Korea, based on the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty.\textsuperscript{69}

South Korean military support for American war efforts in Vietnam had another important impact on political arena. In the pre-Vietnam War period, it was generally seen that South Korea was largely dependent upon the United States in the area of foreign policy. Korean participation in the Vietnam War, however, created a momentum for change in its relations with the United States. It brought an enhancement of Korea's independent role in foreign policy. The relationship between the two countries began to change toward partnership from a client or dependent relationship.

In short, by providing additional military assistance to meet the security needs of Korea, the United States was successful in persuading South Korea to dispatch combat troops to South Vietnam. In return, South Korea obtained significant military benefits from participation in the Vietnam War. But in dispatching combat troops to Vietnam, it was not the initial objective of Korea to obtain those benefits. Rather, they were outcomes of military activities in battlefield and compensatory measures provided by the United States in order to cope with the security gap created by the dispatch of combat troops to Vietnam.

\textsuperscript{68}U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Security Agreement and Commitment: the Republic of Korea}, p. 1719.
\textsuperscript{69}For example, see the joint communiques issued after the Presidential meetings of 1965, 1966, 1968, and 1969.
B. North Korean Provocations and Military Assistance

Blue House Raid

In the early morning on January 21, 1968, a group of 31 armed North Korean commandos attempted to raid the Blue House, the South Korean presidential residence in Seoul. On January 16, 1968, the North Korean regime dispatched this specially trained team of agents, who were armed with submachine guns, grenades and explosives, through the DMZ into South Korea with orders to attack the residence of President Park and to assassinate him. Dressed as South Korean soldiers, the team crossed the DMZ undetected and successfully moved to within 800 meters of the Blue House before they were halted.\(^70\)

In the ensuing gunfight and subsequent search for the agents who fled, 28 North Korean commandos were killed; two escaped; and one was captured. South Korea and the United States also had many casualties: two American soldiers, 26 South Korean soldiers, one police officer, and six civilians were killed; and 56 people were wounded, including four civilians.\(^71\)


The primary purpose of the commando attack was to kill President Park and important South Korean officials. U.S. Ambassador Porter was also a target. Through interrogation of the captured commando, 2d Lt. Kim Shin Jo, it was learned that the North Korean Army had trained 2,400 similar agents to deliberately attack South Korea.\(^72\)

The incident was a great shock to the South Korean people and their government. It was particularly a serious incident to the South Korean military, since the North Korean agents were able to come within 800 meters of the presidential residence. At the same time, it raised significant questions about the national security of South Korea and the anti-infiltration capability of the ROK armed forces.

Immediately after the attack, the South Korean Government wanted to retaliate with force, but the United States was opposed to such a Korean reaction. On the night of the incident, Lt. Gen. Robert Friedman, the UNC Chief of Staff, told, as instructed, Korean Defense Minister Kim Sung Eun that the United States would not consider any attempt at military retaliation.\(^73\)

South Koreans were very upset by the failure of the U.S. to react strongly. In Washington, however, fearing that any military retaliation would prompt North Korea to consider a more serious attack on South Korea, American policymakers worried about the

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\(^73\)U.S. House, *Investigation of Korean-American Relations*, p. 55. At a meeting immediately after the attack, President Park told Ambassador Porter that ROK forces could be in Pyongyang within two days. Porter replied that President Park would have to do it with South Korean forces alone, without U.S. support.
possibility that President Park might launch a unilateral attack against the North. For a couple of days after the raid, no agreement was reached between South Korea and the United States on how to react against the North Korean challenge.

The Capture of the U.S.S. Pueblo

With no clear decision of the United States on response against the Blue House attack, North Korea made another military provocation against the United States. On January 23, 1968, only two days after the Blue House raid, the U.S.S. Pueblo, an intelligence collection ship of the U.S. Navy, was captured with her 83 crew members by North Korean forces in the Sea of Japan while gathering information on North Korea and the movement of Soviet Submarines. One soldier was killed and the other 82 were captured without a fight, having spent most of their available time destroying sensitive materials.74

North Korea claimed that an "American imperialist ship" intruded in the territorial waters of North Korea and was carrying on hostile activities and conducting espionage. Of course, the United States denied North Korea's charge and insisted that the Pueblo was unlawfully captured in international waters.75

75According to the DOD, the Pueblo's position was approximately 25 miles from the North
At this time, the United States reacted promptly, employing some military actions as well as diplomatic efforts. Immediately after the capture of the Pueblo, the United States responded with urgency. It took military measures such as:

- 350 American warplanes were flown into South Korea without prior approval by the South Korean Government;
- The U.S.S. Enterprise was positioned off the North Korean coast;
- President Johnson activated over 14,000 Air Force and Navy reservists as a military backdrop to diplomatic efforts.\(^7^6\)

Fearing the opening of a second front in Asia, President Johnson said that the United States had to prepare for any contingency that might be raised by North Korea and support the defense of South Korea.\(^7^7\) However, it was clear that the United States preferred a peaceful solution rather than a military one. The basic position of the U.S. was to solve the problem through diplomatic efforts.

On the same day of the incident, the United States asked the Soviet Union to convey to North Korea an urgent request for the immediate release of the ship and crew. The United States also brought the problem before the Security Council of the UN, with an attempt to press North Korea to safely return the American ship and her crew.\(^7^8\)


\(^7^7\)Johnson, \textit{The Vantage Point}, p. 538.

\(^7^8\)Statement by the Dept. of State Spokesman, Jan. 23, 1968. \textit{Department of State Bulletin}
Pueblo incident quickly overshadowed the Blue House raid in Washington and at the American Embassy in Seoul. The United States gave priority to the safe return of the Pueblo and her crew.

The United States began direct, secret negotiations with North Korea at Panmunjom. During the negotiations, North Korea insisted that the Pueblo and her crew would not be released unless the United States made a formal written apology for the trespassing of its spy ship in North Korean territorial waters and a pledge to promise not to continue such hostile activities against North Korea.79

South Koreans strongly opposed U.S. efforts for secret negotiations with North Korea, alienating South Korea from the talks. When South Korea was informed of such negotiations, it requested that;

(1) the Blue House Raid and the Pueblo incident should not be separated in any international negotiations;
(2) the two incidents should be given the same priority;
(3) the United States should not negotiate South Korean problems directly with North Koreans.80

Despite South Korea's displeasure, however, the United States finally agreed to make a written apology as demanded by North Korea in order to secure the return of the

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79Seoul Sinmoon Sa, The 30 Year History of USFK, p. 346.
80Ibid., p. 344.
Pueblo and her crew members. With the U.S. apology, U.S.-North Korean negotiations concluded and all of the Pueblo crew members, including one dead crewman, were returned to the U.S. Forces Command in Seoul on December 23, 1968, eleven months after their capture.

**Impact of the Incidents on U.S.-ROK Military Relations**

North Korea had various strategic and political purposes in making these military challenges. First of all, by the commando attack on the President of South Korea and the capture of a U.S. naval ship, North Korea aimed to undermine the political stability of South Korea. It also intended to interrupt the economic development of South Korea by discouraging foreign investment. In the late 1960's, North Korea tremendously increased border provocations and infiltrations. In 1968 alone, such incidents reached 761, compared with 473 in 1967 (Table 5-6). The primary objective of those incidents was to intimidate and disrupt South Korea, and thereby undermine political stability as well as economic development in South Korea.  

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81 For the purposes of North Korean provocation, see Korean Frontier 2 (Jan, 1971); Department of State Bulletin (Feb. 12, 1968): 189; U.S. Senate, U.S. Security Agreement and Commitment: the Republic of Korea, p. 1731.
Table 5-6
North Korean Provocations, 1967-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1967</th>
<th>1968</th>
<th>1969</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of incidents</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1,372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The UN Command in Korea.

Another objective of the incidents was to divert the United States and South Korean resources which were together successfully resisting communist aggression in Vietnam.\(^{82}\) Particularly, the incidents were coincident with the U.S.-ROK discussions over dispatching more ROK troops to Vietnam. On one hand, North Korea apparently undertook these incidents to prevent South Korea from sending more troops to South Vietnam and on the other hand, to distract American attention from Vietnam to the Korean Peninsula.

In addition to these external objectives, the incidents might have been planned to distract North Koreans' attention from their domestic situation, particularly the failure in economic development. For this purpose, North Korean leaders might be able to use the incidents for propaganda. In other words, they propagandized that there was a serious

\(^{82}\)Department of State Bulletin (Feb. 12, 1968): 189.
external threat to the security of North Korea from "American imperialists" and South Korea, with the hope of reducing the attention of their people and Communist party dissidents to the failure in economic policy of the North Korean leadership.\textsuperscript{83}

In viewing the incidents, however, there was a serious perception gap between the South Koreans and Americans. The United States primarily viewed the incidents in light of its global strategic perspective, interpreting North Korea's tactics in connection with the Vietnam War. That is to say, U.S. officials felt that the incidents were North Korean tactics to divert American attention to the Korean Peninsula while the Tet offensive was being mounted in early 1968 and to discourage South Korea from sending more troops to South Vietnam.\textsuperscript{84} On the other hand, South Koreans viewed the incidents as a signal of further developments in the context of North-South Korean confrontation.

This gap resulted in different reactions against the same incidents and thus a temporary strain between South Korea and the United States. Immediately after the Blue House raid, South Korea called for a joint retaliation against North Korea, insisting that the North Korean attack on the Blue House be regarded as an external armed attack on South Korea as stipulated in the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty.\textsuperscript{85} South Korea suggested

\textsuperscript{83}For more discussions of North Korean motives, see B.C. Koh, "The Pueblo Incident in Perspective," \textit{Asian Survey} 9 (April, 1969): 275.


that preemptive strikes on one or several strategic targets in North Korea would be a better means of coping with future aggression.\textsuperscript{86}

However, the United States refused the South Korean request for armed retaliation. The most important U.S. concern was to avoid opening a second front in Asia. Thus, the United States sought direct negotiations with North Korea to solve the Pueblo problem.

Opposing U.S. emphasis on the Pueblo over the Blue House raid and secret negotiations between the United States and North Korea, the South Korean Government warned that if the United States gave in to the North Korean request for an apology, it would not only damage U.S. prestige but invite further Communist provocations in the future.\textsuperscript{87}

On the other hand, the United States worried about the possibility of South Korean unilateral military action against the North, even a limited retaliation with force. The entire South Korean armed forces were already at maximum alert. Thus the Americans thought that the situation in Korea was extremely volatile with South Korea speaking of military retaliation against North Korea.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{86}Soon Sung Cho, "North and South Koreas," \textit{Asian Survey} (January 1969): 30. President Park pointed out that "similar incidents would take place in the future unless the United States takes some tough countermeasures," and asked for U.S. military assistance on an increasing scale to keep military supremacy over North Korea. \textit{Korea Herald}, Apr. 20, 1969, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{87}\textit{Dong-A Ilbo}, Feb. 1, 1968.

In this situation, in February, 1968, President Johnson sent his special envoy, former Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance, to meet President Park for the purpose of avoiding another front in Asia. The Vance mission had four objectives:

(1) To get South Korea to agree that it would take no independent action against North Korea;
(2) To persuade President Park that the United States stood with him and to reassure him of the strong mutual alliance between the two nations;
(3) To try to dampen the desire for retaliatory action; and
(4) To get South Korea to consent to U.S.-North Korean bilateral negotiations on the release of the crew of the Pueblo.\textsuperscript{89}

As a result of the meeting between President Park and Mr. Vance, the United States succeeded in avoiding military retaliation against North Korea and restoring confidence in the solidarity of the alliance.\textsuperscript{90} In return, the United States promised to provide South Korea with an additional $100 million of military assistance, recognizing the necessity of strengthening the South Korean armed forces. The two governments also agreed to hold annual defense minister conferences to discuss and consult on defense and security matters.\textsuperscript{91}

However, this U.S. support did not satisfy the South Koreans. Because of the relatively mild reaction of the United States to the incidents and its secret bilateral

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
negotiations with North Korea, South Koreans had suspicions about the strength of U.S. commitment to the defense of Korea and began to reevaluate military relations with the United States. Particularly, President Park doubted the Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States.92

Under these circumstances, in April 1968, President Park and Johnson met in Honolulu for further discussion on South Korea's defense problems. At the meeting, Johnson tried to persuade Park to send additional combat troops to Vietnam as a "price for a firm U.S. military commitment to Korea," but he was unsuccessful. President Park replied that Korea's self-defense issue was as critical as the war in Vietnam. He also said: "the United States should not become disinterested, turning its eyes far from the mounting threat being posed by the Communists in Korea." 93

At that time, President Park emphasized an increase of military capabilities rather than retaliation against North Korea, saying that "strengthening military capabilities is the only way to stem the North's provocations in advance." 94

As a result of the summit, the United States reaffirmed its promise to render "prompt and effective" assistance to repel North Korean armed attacks on South Korea based on the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty. It was also promised that the United States

92 Hak-Joon Kim, The Unification Policy of South and North Korea, p. 201. Those suspicions led South Korea to seek self-reliance on national defense.
94 Ibid., pp. 26-28 and 46.
would continue and increase its military assistance to modernize the ROK armed forces and to strengthen effective counter-infiltration programs which had already been developed by South Korea. These matters were further discussed at the First Defense Ministerial Meeting in May 1968 in Washington.95

In sum, the Blue House raid and the Pueblo incident caused a temporary strain in U.S.-ROK relations. This strain mainly resulted from the South Koreans' frustration over the failure of U.S. to respond more forcefully to North Korean aggression in Korea; U.S. preoccupation with the Pueblo incident over the Blue House attack; and America's secret bilateral negotiations with North Korea. The United States deeply worried about a further development of armed confrontation between the two Koreas because it did not want to open another front in Asia. The problem was settled with an increase in U.S. military assistance for South Korea. As a result, the United States provided additional military assistance for strengthening South Korean military capabilities, including counter-infiltration ability. The United States also promised support to arm the Homeland Reserve Force of South Korea activated in April 1968, which increased the internal security of South Korea.96

In addition, the capabilities of the U.S. Air force in Korea were reinforced by

95For the full text of the agreement, see Ibid., pp. 31-33.
96South Korea activated this force of 2.5 million men in April 1, 1968 as a counter-force against North Korean infiltration. At the Honolulu summit in April 1968 shortly after the activation of the ROK Homeland Reserve Force, President Johnson promised to assist in arming this force.
moving the Forward Command Base of the 5th U.S. Air Force in Japan to Osan Air Force Base in Korea and by deploying a F-4C Phantom fighter-bomber squadron in Taegu, Korea.\textsuperscript{97} Through the Vance mission, the United States also offered South Korea a squadron of F-4C Phantom fighters and 25 helicopters for use in anti-infiltration operations.\textsuperscript{98}

In a word, the two cases of the Blue House raid and the Pueblo incident became another example of U.S. military assistance being successfully used to solve problems in political and military affairs between South Korea and the United States.

C. Human Rights in South Korea and U.S. Military Assistance

\textbf{Human Rights as a Factor in U.S. Foreign Policy}

In 1973, the U.S. Congress acted to tie American military aid with human rights issues. The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1973 prescribed that the President should deny any military assistance to any foreign country which practices "the interment or

\textsuperscript{97}\textit{Korea Annual 1969}, p. 110; These deployments might have resulted from a tactical consideration that the U.S. Air force in Korea and Japan could not reach the Pueblo in time for a rescue.

\textsuperscript{98}Erik Amfitheatrot, "The Forgotten Front at the 38th Parallel," \textit{Reporter}, Apr 18, 1968, p. 23.
imprisonment of that country's citizens for political purposes" (Section 32).

Since that year, a foreign government's eligibility for U.S. military assistance has been conditioned on its human rights records.

In the following year, Congress added a new Section 502B to the FAA. This section prohibits military aid to any foreign government which consistently violates "internationally recognized human rights," and requests that the President advise Congress of any "extraordinary circumstances" necessitating the assistance if military assistance were to be provided despite human rights violations. Section 502B of the 1974 FAA states;

...Except in extraordinary circumstances, the President shall substantially reduce or terminate security assistance to any government which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; prolonged detention without charges; or other flagrant denials of the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person.

This provision became the basic rule of U.S. human rights policy in providing military assistance to foreign nations. However, the Executive Branch had a somewhat different view on human rights in applying the issue to other countries.

Although the Nixon and Ford administrations respected the principle of human

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rights and recognized the need to improve human rights conditions in all countries, these administrations seemed to treat human rights as an internal matter of foreign governments and as a matter in which the United States had no business meddling. The Nixon and Ford administrations felt that the United States could have greater influence over other countries when military ties remained close. Thus, they believed that withdrawal of military assistance would harm other American objectives and weaken the strength of the mutual defense relationship with U.S. allies and encourage counteroffers by potential U.S. enemies. The two administrations believed that "quiet but forceful diplomacy" were the best means to further respect for human rights in the international community.  

In a word, during the Nixon and Ford years, the administrations were apparently unwilling to take human rights conditions in other countries into significant consideration in U.S. security assistance policy. Therefore, Congress was unsuccessful in influencing the Executive to implement Section 502B.

In contrast to its immediate predecessors, the Carter administration had committed itself to the improvement of international human rights. During his presidential campaign, Jimmy Carter had strongly advocated an emphasis on human rights in U.S. foreign policy and he reaffirmed this position in his inaugural address. In his address, President Carter proclaimed: "Our commitment to human rights must be absolute . . . Our moral sense

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dictates a clear-cut preference for those societies which share with us an abiding respect for individual human rights." 102

Although President Carter did not mention specifically how he would relate human rights issue to U.S. military aid, the address implied his intention to follow legislation guidelines concerning this issue, those in the Section 502B. Subsequently, the Carter administration announced that human rights conditions should affect decisions on U.S. security assistance and enacted a cut in military assistance for some countries for FY 1978, applying Section 502B to their human rights violations. 103

In actuality, however, the Carter administration had frequently applied the exception of "extraordinary circumstances" to many countries which from the perspective of Congress, were subject to a cutoff of military assistance under Section 502B, arguing that military assistance to those governments should be continued because of other American interests. It was specifically pointed out by members of Congress that the Carter administration had failed to reduce military aid for the Philippines, South Korea and Iran, etc. 104

103 They were Ethiopia, Uruguay, and Argentina. Washington Post, Feb. 25, 1977, p. A6, col. 4.

104 For more discussion of this matter, see Stephen B. Cohen, "Conditioning U.S. Security Assistance on Human Rights Practices," American Journal of International Law 76 (April, 1982): 270-272 and 276. The administration judged that: Iran was critical to the united States because of supplying oil to the free World and depending U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East and Persian Gulf; the Philippines was also critical because of keeping U.S. bases there; and military ties with South Korea were essential to deterring an invasion from North Korea.
In short, although human rights became a central concern of the Carter administration, the administration showed considerable flexibility in linking human rights conditions overseas to U.S. decisions on military assistance. In spite of President Carter's emphasis on the issue, therefore, only a very small number of countries were cut off from military assistance because of their human rights conditions.

**Human Rights Conditions in Korea and U.S. Criticism**

Since the U.S. Congress acted in 1973 to limit military assistance in connection with human rights violations, South Korea had received a lot of attention on this matter. American criticism against South Korea's human rights record had centered around the so-called Yushin Constitution amended in 1972, and followed by a series of emergency measures taken by the President in the interest of national security under that Constitution.

In late 1972, the Korean Constitution was amended by a national referendum held under martial law. In his declaration of the imposition of martial law on October 17, 1972, President Park explained that this measure was needed because of "profound changes" in the international situation and the need to protect "against the possibility that the interests of the third or smaller countries might be sacrificed for the relaxation of tension between big
powers." He also explain the importance of the North-South talks as a means of avoiding another war and achieving reunification of the nation.\textsuperscript{105} He continued to say that in order to proceed effectively with those talks, South Korea's political institutions should be readjusted because "disorder and inefficiency were still rampant around South Korea" and because "the political circles in the country were obsessed with factional strife and discord." Therefore, Koreans needed "a series of revitalizing reforms which could not be achieved by ordinary means but only by extraordinary measures" including the suspension of certain articles of the Constitution, the dissolution of the National Assembly, the suspension of the activities of all political parties, and new amendments to the constitution to be affirmed by a national referendum.\textsuperscript{106}

In those days, South Koreans had great doubts about the strength of U.S. commitment to the defense of Korea, which increased with the enunciation of the Nixon Doctrine followed by the withdrawal of 20,000 American troops from Korea and the ROK Army's assumption of total responsibility for the DMZ in 1970. President Park himself had a feeling, shared with his people, that Korea would not be able to rely on the United States for its security in the future as it had in the past. This feeling was intensified by the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam and the new U.S. policy toward

\textsuperscript{105}In 1972, the two Koreas started their talks in order to resolve pending problems between both sides, with the Director of South Korean CIA's visit to Pyongyang followed by a series of representative conferences held in Seoul and Pyongyang.

\textsuperscript{106}U.S. Senate, \textit{Korea and Philippines}, p. 5.
Communist China revealed by Nixon's visit to Peking.

Within the Korean Peninsula, there was a serious threat from North Korea. In the late 1960's, military provocations by the North Koreans had increased dramatically, including the Blue House raid and the capture of the U.S.S. Pueblo in January 1968; the landing of 120 North Korean armed infiltrators on the east coast of South Korea in October 1968; and the shooting down of an EC-121, U.S. naval intelligence plane, by the North Korean Air Force over the Sea of Japan in April 1969. In addition, the South Korean leadership perceived an imminent all-out attack from North Korea in 1970 and 1971, based on their intelligence.\footnote{For the internal and external environments of the Korean Peninsula, see Chong Sik Lee, "Human Rights in South Korea and United States Policy," \textit{Journal of Korean Affairs} 5 (1975): 28; U.S. Senate, \textit{Korea and Philippines}, p. 5; U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal From the Republic of Korea}, pp. 57-58.}

All these facts led President Park to take new measures: internally, an effort to put South Korea's domestic political situation in order, and externally, an effort to begin a dialogue with North Korea in order to reduce the likelihood of war. President Park believed that the "Yushin reforms" were necessary in order to achieve these goals successfully.

Despite this rationale of President Park, the Yushin Constitution became the center of American criticism against human rights conditions in South Korea. First of all, the Yushin Constitution was criticized in connection with the process by which it was born.
Critics argued that although the Yushin Constitution was adopted by national referendum, the referendum was held under martial law, which prohibited any political activity or discussion of the new constitution other than officially sponsored explanations. In other words, the criticism was that the martial law was imposed as a means of insuring no resistance to the change of Korea's political system.\textsuperscript{108}

Another area of criticism concerned the contents of the Yushin Constitution. It was argued that all effective power was given to the President under the new amendments.\textsuperscript{109} The President was given a wide range of new powers, including the following:

- to dissolve the National Assembly;
- to take necessary emergency measures for national security, public safety or in case of other national calamities [emergency powers];
- to suspend temporarily the freedom and rights of the people in national emergency circumstances;
- to proclaim martial law under certain circumstances;
- to nominate one third of the membership of the National Assembly.\textsuperscript{110}

Among these, the emergency powers of the President were most important and became the heart of the criticism. These powers covered a whole range of state activities, including internal and foreign affairs, national defense, economic and judicial affairs in

\textsuperscript{108}U.S. Senate, \textit{Korea and Philippines}, pp. 7-8. Martial law was lifted on December 13, 1972 after the national referendum held on November 29, 1972, approved the new constitution.

\textsuperscript{109}Ibid., p. 9; U.S. Senate, \textit{International Security Assistance}, p. 86.

\textsuperscript{110}For more detail, see U.S. Senate, \textit{Korea and Philippines}, pp. 8-9.
emergency circumstances including national calamities, grave economic crises, and situations that the national security or the public safety was threatened or anticipated to be threatened.\textsuperscript{111}

Based on his emergency powers, President Park issued a series of emergency decrees in 1974. The main features of those decrees were:

- The prohibition of advocating amendment of the existing Yushin Constitution, with up to 15 years imprisonment for violation;
- The prohibition of student engagement in political activities and/or communication with a member of the National Federation of Democratic Youth, with punishment by death, life imprisonment or no less than 5 years imprisonment for violation.\textsuperscript{112}

Shortly after the enactment of the 1974 emergency decrees, about 200 persons were convicted of violating their provisions. But by early 1975, nearly all had been pardoned, except for 35 persons who had violated other laws.\textsuperscript{113}

In May, 1975, President Park issued another emergency decree, Emergency Decree No.9, which prohibited "fabricating or disseminating false facts" and advocating any change in the Yushin Constitution. Violations could be punished by indefinite detainment and no less than 1 year imprisonment.\textsuperscript{114} Under this decree, many individuals,

\textsuperscript{111}But these emergency measures were supposed to be lifted by the recommendation of more than one-half of the National Assembly members, unless there were any special reasons. Martial law also was to be lifted upon the request of more than one-half of the National Assembly members.

\textsuperscript{112}U.S. Senate, \textit{International Security Assistance}, p. 86. The National Federation of Democratic Youth was a well-known anti-government organization.

\textsuperscript{113}Ibid., p. 87.
including a well-known opposition party leader and a former president, were indicted.

To the government and its supporters, all these legal measures were necessary in order to guard their country and people from internal and external threats. They felt that the punishment of indicted persons was not unfair because they had violated "laws". To Americans and the opposition, however, all these legal measures were seen as moves to repress the opposition and as the cause of abuses of internationally recognized human rights.

Nevertheless, it was true that most social and economic freedoms remained intact, though there was criticism that there had been few political freedoms in South Korea since the Yushin Constitution was adopted in late 1972. As a matter of fact, the majority of Koreans were primarily concerned with economic and social freedoms. But a small group of dissidents, consisting primarily of opposition political party members, students, religious groups (esp., church groups) and the press, continued to demand more political freedoms and improvement of overall human rights.\textsuperscript{115}

As a matter of fact, it was these types of people who had been convicted of violating the various legal measures imposed in the interest of national security.\textsuperscript{116} The ROK Government had been criticized in terms of human rights violations because of its

\textsuperscript{114}Ibid. The 9th Emergency Decree had been effective throughout President Park's rule until he was assassinated in October, 1979. This decree was abrogated by the new government in 1980.

\textsuperscript{115}U.S. Senate, \textit{U.S. Troop Withdrawal from Korea}, p. 58.

\textsuperscript{116}American critics questioned whether those governmental measures were legal.
treatment of these people.

In April, 1975, the report of the Amnesty International Mission to Korea said that since the Yushin amendment in 1972, there had been systematic human rights violations in South Korea. The report concluded that these violations were conducted in an attempt to intimidate rather than to gather information.\textsuperscript{117}

The U.S. Congress also criticized President Park for political repression of the press, opposition party leaders, intellectuals, religious leaders, students and other opposition groups.\textsuperscript{118} In its reports to the Congress, the Department of State pointed out that in South Korea, there had been some restrictions on political freedom and freedom of speech and physical abuses against certain groups of persons; for example, those who violated the Anti-Communism Law or emergency measures imposed by the President.\textsuperscript{119}

The roots of all these criticisms were the 1972 Yushin Constitution and the series of emergency decrees issued in 1974 and 1975. From the perspective of the ROK government and its supporters, it was necessary to take those emergency measures for the purpose of protecting the Korean people and their fatherland because the national security


\textsuperscript{118}For detail, see U.S. House, Investigation of Korean - American Relations, pp. 40-41.

\textsuperscript{119}(a) The Department of States had to submit to the Congress a report on human rights practices in foreign countries in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act; (b) The Anti-Communism Law of 1961 was designed to block the activities of Communist organizations.
and public safety and order were seriously threatened. The persons convicted of violating these emergency measures were a very small group of people who had rejected the existing government and attempted to overthrow it. Therefore, the government and its supporters believed that those persons deserved punishment.

U.S. Human Rights Policy toward Korea and Military Assistance

From the American perspective, human rights conditions in South Korea were perceived to be important to the United States for two reasons. First, America had deep humanitarian interests in improving the freedom of people worldwide. Because of this "American ideal", a great deal of attention had been paid to military aid provided to the repressive government. The other, perhaps more important reason, was related with the America's own security interests. Americans felt that continued political oppression could divide the country and eventually lead to a major domestic disorder which North Koreans could exploit either military or politically. Although it was uncertain what level of domestic violence would encourage a North Korean invasion, this possibility remained a major concern for the United States in light of its commitment to the defense of South Korea.\textsuperscript{120}

Despite criticism against the repressive nature of the ROK government, the Nixon

\textsuperscript{120}U.S. Senate, \textit{International Security Assistance}, p. 84.
and Ford administrations had done little with respect to the human rights conditions in South Korea. These administrations seemed determined not to intervene in the domestic affairs of Korea.\textsuperscript{121} In fact, the Nixon and Ford administrations limited themselves to occasional mild public statements expressing American concern about the human rights status of Korea. This implied that the Executive Branch would not take any measures to reduce U.S. military assistance to Korea because of human rights violations. Despite congressional pressure, the Nixon and Ford administrations did not change their decision not to link human rights in South Korea with military assistance for the country.

In contrast, it was well known that President Carter had an emphasis on human rights in other countries in American foreign policy. President Carter himself had been critical of the human rights practices of Park's administration. After his inauguration, he criticized human rights violations in South Korea and some other countries. During his visit to South Korea in July, 1979, President Carter expressed his persistent concern for human rights in Korea, calling for the release of political prisoners and an improvement in overall human rights to match Korea's dramatic economic progress.\textsuperscript{122}

This administration, however, was not much different from the Nixon-Ford

\textsuperscript{121}For example, President Nixon reiterated his policy when he met Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil in January 1973, very shortly after the Yushin reform, saying that "unlike other Presidents, I do not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of your country." U.S. House, \textit{Investigation of Korean-American Relations}, p. 39.

period, with respect to the position of linking human rights issues to military assistance for
Korea. Although the Carter administration had a strong desire for further improvement in
the human rights practices of the ROK government, it seemed to deal with those issues
without jeopardizing important U.S. security interests and without undermining Korea's
confidence in U.S. commitment to the security of the country.\footnote{123}

The Department of State held the position that military assistance decisions should
be made on a case-by-case basis and in each case the United State had to "balance a political
concern for human rights against economic or security goals." This department also felt
that the reduction or termination of military assistance might not be the correct means for
changing human rights conditions in other countries.\footnote{124}

The Department of Defense held a similar position. The Pentagon did not approve
of authoritarian governments and, in principle, any military assistance for them. In certain
cases, however, U.S. assistance was necessary because some of those nations were
strategically important allies and without U.S. help their ability to respond in a crisis would
be critically curtailed.\footnote{125}

In the case of Korea, military ties with South Korea were considered essential to
deterring the threat of an invasion by North Korea. Thus, despite its deep concerns for

\footnote{123}{\textit{Department of State Bulletin} (April, 1978), p. 32.}
\footnote{125}{\textit{FY 1978 DOD Report}, p. 241.}
human rights in Korea, the Carter administration in practice did not want to link human rights issues to military assistance for the country.

Contrary to the President, Congress was very active in exerting U.S. influence on promoting human rights problems in South Korea. In 1974, the Congress designated Korea as one of the countries subject to limited military aid because of its human rights violations.\textsuperscript{126}

Accordingly, Congress cut by $93 million the administration's request for $238 million in military assistance to South Korea for FY 1975. Consequently, $145 million was provided to Korea, on the condition that an additional $20 million could be provided for the country if the President submitted to Congress a report stating that "substantial progress in the observance of internationally recognized standards of human rights" had been made in South Korea. But the President did not submit such a report.\textsuperscript{127}

In 1976, Congress also expressed its concern for the erosion of civil liberties in South Korea and requested that the President communicate American concern in forceful terms to the ROK government.\textsuperscript{128} At this time, however, there was no cut in military aid for South Korea in connection with its human rights status. Congress also criticized the

\textsuperscript{126}The other countries included Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, and the Philippines.
\textsuperscript{127}Sec 26 (a), Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, Public Law 93-559; U.S. House, Investigation of Korean-American Relations, p. 45.
President for having little concern for human rights in Korea. It pointed out that the President had greatly increased FMS credits for Korea, instead of reducing it.\textsuperscript{129}

In response to American criticism, President Park made some conciliatory gestures. For example, the Korean government released 31 of some 200 political detainees in 1977.\textsuperscript{130} In fact, American military aid was important to South Korea, both militarily and politically. Militarily, U.S. aid was necessary to strengthen the Korean armed forces. Politically, continuing American military assistance symbolically represented U.S. support for President Park and his government and thereby contributed to enhancing the regime's image. Therefore, cutting military aid might have been a means to press the Park Government to change its human rights practices.

However, it is hard to determine the extent to which U.S. pressure had an impact on the Korean government's attitudes toward human rights issues. Nevertheless, this case was another notable example of U.S. military assistance being politically used as a means of influence on the Korean government.

\textsuperscript{129}U.S. Senate, \textit{Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Assistance}, p. 89.

\textsuperscript{130}Sungjoo Han, "South Korea 1977: Preparing for Self-Reliance", \textit{Asian Survey} 18 (Jan, 1978): 53. This was taken as a conciliatory gesture to the Carter Administration's criticism against human rights conditions in Korea.
4. Summary

Since the end of WWII, U.S. military assistance has been an essential element of American national security policy. The primary purpose of military assistance is to strengthen U.S. national security by increasing the defense capabilities of allies and friendly nations. Strong military capabilities of those countries are indispensable to American security in terms of conventional deterrence and collective security. Also, military assistance enables the United States to have access and base rights overseas. All these aspects of military assistance provide the United States with considerable benefits in terms of money and manpower. In addition, the United States could achieve some political interests by using military assistance.

Within this broad context, U.S. military assistance to South Korea has been provided based on a belief that a stable, militarily strong, and pro-American government in Korea is essential to U.S. national interests. Under this principle, in assisting the South Korean armed forces, American military aid programs fulfilled specific military and political objectives such as: strengthening South Korean defense capabilities in order to minimize the likelihood of a North Korean invasion; helping to maintain stability and peace in Northeast Asia; and implementing certain policy objectives of the United States. To achieve these goals, the United States had provided a sizable amount of military assistance.

to South Korea since the end of the Korean War. From that time, South Korea remained one of the key recipients of U.S. military assistance.

During the period 1961 to 1979, South Korea received about $3.8 billion in grant aid consisting of MAP, MASF and IMET assistance and approximately $2 billion in FMS. In this period, however, some significant changes occurred in the means of assistance, not in the goals of assisting the Korean armed forces.

First of all, the size of MAP aid began to decline sharply after 1961 (Figure 5-1). But this trend reversed while South Korean troops participated in the Vietnam War. This was because the United States provided considerable amounts of supplemental assistance in order to make up for the security gap created when Korean combat troops were deployed in South Vietnam. The dollar amount of MAP for Korea in the 8-year Vietnam period was far greater than that for the other 11 years (1961-1965 and 1974-1979): $1.4 billion for the former, and $909.9 million for the latter. After the Korean forces in Vietnam were withdrawn in 1973, however, MAP assistance was sharply reduced again and finally, the United States terminated its grant material assistance to Korea after 1976.

Another important change was the shift from MAP to FMS. In contrast to the reduction of the MAP, FMS assistance to Korea increased after 1971, with a peak in the period 1976-1977. After 1976, FMS became the only way to provide defense materials to South Korea. As the United States terminated grant material assistance and in response to
the South Korean armed forces improvement plan in 1976, the United States dramatically increased FMS credits for Korea, from $24.1 million per year before terminating the MAP (1971-1975) to $228.1 million per year after that (1976-1979).

This shift to FMS from the MAP brought about a change in the relationship between the two militaries. While U.S. military assistance to Korea relied on the MAP, both sides were characterized by "donor-recipient" relations. However, as military assistance shifted to FMS, relations changed to that of "seller-customer." In other words, American status changed from "donor to seller," and Korean status changed from "dependency or client" to "self-reliance or partner."

As explained earlier, military assistance has been an essential instrument of U.S. foreign policy. In this sense, U.S. military assistance played two distinctive types of roles in assisting the Korean armed forces: "compensator" and "influencer."

The compensatory military assistance was provided to make up for security needs of South Korea created by the implementation of specific U.S. policy objectives. When the United States requested that South Korea send combat troops to Vietnam, Koreans refused primarily because of security reasons. In order to dispatch troops to South Vietnam, Korea would have to withdraw necessary combat divisions from the front line. If this was done, it would have created serious security problems in the face of the North Korean military threat. In response, the United States decided to provide a considerable level of
supplemental military assistance for Korean forces in order to meet the security needs raised by the Vietnam dispatch. By providing such compensatory assistance, the United States could be successful in appeasing the Korean opposition and finally in persuading the ROK government to send its combat divisions to South Vietnam.

In doing so, the United States had both military and political concerns. Militarily, it might invite Korean troops to the Vietnam battlefield in order to reduce the American combat burden to some degree. More importantly, the United States requested Korean armed forces participation in the Vietnam War in order to demonstrate the solidarity of the Free World and thereby to minimize both international and domestic criticism against American activities in Vietnam. In short, by using military assistance to compensate for Korea's security requirements, the United States was successful in involving Korean combat forces in the Vietnam War to achieve its military and political purposes relating to that war.

When a North Korean commando team raided the South Korean Presidential Mansion in Seoul and the U.S.S. Pueblo was captured by North Koreans in early 1968, relations between the United States and South Korea were temporarily strained.

South Koreans viewed the North Korean military challenges from the perspective of North-South Korean confrontation, signaling further provocation by the North. Thus, they suggested a joint retaliation by U.S. and ROK forces against limited military targets in
North Korea. But Americans viewed the incidents based on their global strategic perspective, interpreting North Korean tactics in connection with the Vietnam War. Fearing an outbreak of another front in Asia, the United States rejected the South Korean suggestion of limited armed retaliation against North Korea. Rather, America began to negotiate secretly and directly with North Korean in order to solve the Pueblo problem, excluding the Blue house incident and South Koreans from the negotiations.

These developments resulted in increased resentment and suspicion on the part of the Koreans about American commitment to their security. To get South Korea to consent to U.S. actions and to avoid opening a second front in Asia, the United States recognized the need for strengthening the South Korean armed forces, including counter infiltration capabilities, and suggested supplemental military assistance including an additional $100 million in the MAP.\(^{132}\) Finally, South Korea agreed with the United States, but remained suspicious of the strength of American commitment to its security in the future. Again, military assistance was successfully used in achieving important American interests, in this case avoiding further armed confrontation between the two Koreas and thereby another front in Asia, and the safe return of the Pueblo crew.

Another example stems from U.S. support for the force improvement of the Korean military. In the early 1970's, the Nixon Administration agreed to support the 5-year

\(^{132}\text{Immediately after the incidents, President Park insisted that limited military retaliation would be the best way to prevent further North Korean military provocation. Later, he changed his position to support strengthening Korean military capabilities to deter future North Korean challenges.} \)
Modernization Plan of South Korean forces largely based on grant military aid from the United States. At that time the United States was about to apply the Nixon doctrine to South Korea.

The Nixon administration explained that U.S. assistance for the plan was necessary in order to implement the Nixon Doctrine which resulted in the removal of 20,000 American troops from South Korea. This reduction led Korean forces to assume total responsibility for their front line along the DMZ. In light of this situation, the United States recognized that the Korean armed forces needed to strengthen their capabilities in order to maintain military stability within the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia after the American withdrawal. Also, the United States needed to assure South Korea and other Asian allies of the continuing U.S. security commitment to their region in spite of the withdrawal. A more important concern of the Americans was that such supplemental assistance would reduce the likelihood of the involvement of American forces in a regional conflict in the future by strengthening the Korean armed forces.

These concerns led the United States to support improving ROK armed forces by providing additional military assistance required for the MOD plan. In short, the United States decided to provide such supplemental military aid for Korean forces in order to implement the Nixon Doctrine.

On the other hand, military assistance as an "influencer" was provided in order to
induce or change the attitudes of the ROK government toward specific issues. Immediately after the successful coup by General Park Chung Hee in 1961, the United States suggested that if the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) would restore representative government, recognize the UNC's operational control over the Korean armed forces and make certain economic reforms, the United States would willingly release $28 million in remaining military assistance for FY 1961.\textsuperscript{133}

To General Park and his military government, U.S. military assistance was important both militarily and politically. Militarily, U.S. assistance was still essential to Korean forces because it accounted for more than 72% of the total defense budget at that time.\textsuperscript{134} Politically, the military aid would be a symbol of American support for the military revolution and consequently the legitimacy of the military government. Partly in response to the U.S. suggestion, on August 12, 1961, General Park, Chairman of the SCNR, announced that the government would be returned to civilian control in May 1963.\textsuperscript{135} It was the first case that American military aid was politically used to influence the Korean government to adopt a particular policy during Park's rule.

Another case where military assistance was used as an influencer, came when the U.S. Congress cut by $93 million the Executive request for the MAP for Korea for FY 1975. The reason for that action was the human rights violations of the ROK Government.

\textsuperscript{133}U.S. House, \textit{Appendixes}, pp. 34-35.
\textsuperscript{135}Ibid., p. 234.
In fact, American military assistance was still important to the Korean government because of two crucial concerns: maintaining firm military strength and enhancing the image of the Park government by acquiring U.S. support for it. Thus, cutting military assistance implied significant negative impact on these vital Korean concerns. From this point of view, Congress tried to press the ROK Government to change its attitudes toward internationally recognized human rights by cutting military aid. In this sense, although later military assistance for Korea was not cut because of its human rights status, this was a significant case of Americans politically using military assistance as a means to influence the Korean government in the area of domestic affairs.

In light of these realities, U.S. military assistance had been provided in general to strengthen the capabilities of the Korean armed forces based on American strategic interests in Korea. At the same time, it was provided as a means to accomplish certain political goals of the United States: on one hand, to implement specific U.S. policy objectives; and on the other hand, to induce the Korean government to change or adopt certain policies. In each of these cases, particular political interests were considered more important than military concerns and military assistance was used as a supplemental means to achieve those political interests.

In responding to the U.S. strategy of using military aid as a leverage to achieve certain political interests, Koreans enhanced their bargaining power by using the
"weakness"- of their security in order to maintain U.S. military aid for strengthening their armed forces. But American leverage was enhanced by Korea's security requirements and the Korean government's need for good relations with the United States as a "symbol of legitimacy" both internally and externally. Accordingly, South Korea tended to react with accommodation to the U.S. strategy, yet was able to gain considerable concessions from the United States.

In short, in addition to its contribution to the force improvement of the Korean military, continuing U.S. military assistance also represented, to some degree, U.S. support for the Park Government. Also, American military assistance significantly contributed to the maintenance of the strong, pro-American military of South Korea.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Before WWII, American interests in Korea were almost nil, both in the military and political spheres. However, the victory over Japan led the United States to commit itself to the Korean Peninsula in pursuance of its policy of preventing the other great powers, particularly the Soviet Union, from obtaining a predominant position in Korea.

In actuality, the U.S. military occupation of Korea in the southern half of the peninsula was undertaken hastily in response to Soviet occupation of the other half, without well-prepared, workable and long range plans. While the basic objectives of the American occupation forces were to receive the Japanese surrender and carry out the repatriation of Japanese forces and nationals, the most important U.S. concern was to occupy the peninsula as far north as possible in order to limit Soviet influence in Korea.

In this process, the 38th parallel was chosen as a means to achieve the political objective of "anti-predominance," which consequently allowed Moscow to establish a hostile Communist regime north of the parallel. Although the United States attempted to establish a four-power trusteeship for Korea after the war under its leadership, the failure of negotiations with the Soviets finally resulted in the birth of the Republic of Korea (South
Under the leadership of the U.S. occupation forces, the South Korean armed forces were created. But these forces were not adequate to meet necessary security requirements, both internal and external, for the survival of the new republic, without assistance from U.S. forces. When the occupation government recommended the creation of a South Korean army, Washington responded with reluctance. Contrary to Soviet efforts in the north, moreover, the occupation government itself did not intend to establish a strong South Korean army sufficient to defend their country by themselves. South Korean forces were basically built up for the purpose of internal security. As a result, the South Korean armed forces could not match the well-equipped and -trained North Korean armed forces under strong Soviet support.

In this situation, the withdrawal of American occupation forces in 1949 and the announcement of the so-called Acheson Line in the following year, excluding South Korea from the American defensive perimeter, apparently reflected the lack of U.S. interests in Korea: specifically, it could be viewed as a signal of no American intention to protect South Korea by means of its armed forces in the event of North Korean aggression.

These U.S. policies have been blamed by some as a cause of the North Korean invasion in 1950. The United States promptly reacted to the North Korean attack by sending its combat troops and making collective war efforts through the United Nations. In
deciding to intervene in the war, the primary concern of the United States was to contain Communist expansion, considering South Korea as the "first domino" in Asia. Another important U.S. concern was to maintain the solidarity of the Free World in resisting the Communists by demonstrating American strength and determination to protect the infant ally which was born under its auspices.

The Korean War led American policy makers to change their assumption of the importance of South Korea: they recognized its importance to U.S. national interests, politically as well as strategically, which most significantly stemmed from its geopolitical location. As a result, new military relations between the two countries were generated.

The ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty, which was concluded immediately after the Armistice Agreement in 1953, has been the fundamental basis of these relations. While this treaty has some uncertainties in terms of prompt and automatic American involvement in a future war in Korea, it provides South Korea with a formal assurance of U.S. commitment in the event of an external aggression. At the same time, the treaty provides the United States with a formal basis for the continuation of maintaining a significant level of its forces in South Korean territory. Based on this treaty, the United States directly committed itself to the defense of South Korea.

In addition to its military presence, the United States had provided the South Korean armed forces with a great deal of support in the form of tangible and intangible
military assistance, in order to strengthen Korean military capabilities.

All these means -- a mutual defense treaty, the presence of U.S. military forces, and American military assistance -- had been employed to accomplish the primary objectives of defending South Korea against an external aggression and protecting American interests in the region. These principal goals of ROK-U.S. military cooperation have remained unchanged for more than three decades. However, some significant changes occurred in the means of their military interactions during the 1960's and 1970's.

This study has analyzed those military interactions in two categories: combined military operations; and cooperation for the force improvement of the South Korean military. As mentioned in the beginning of this study, the first category includes the command structure which has controlled ROK-U.S. combined military operations in Korea and the U.S. military presence in South Korea.

The first important change occurred in the U.S. military posture in Korea. It was generated by the Nixon Doctrine, which suggested a new direction in U.S. security policy toward Asia, and its hasty implementation in South Korea. Thus, the first adjustment in U.S. military commitment to South Korean security came in 1971 when the Nixon Administration withdrew one of the two U.S. infantry divisions which had been stationed there for two decades since the Korean War, accompanied by a U.S. disengagement from the Korean DMZ through the relocation of the remaining division to a reserve position.
south of the DMZ.

At that time, however, South Korea had some significant security problems. At the request of the United States, it had deployed more than two divisions of its combat troops in South Vietnam since the mid-1960's, which generated a security gap in the front lines, since these troops were previously deployed in the DMZ. The South Korean armed forces also suffered from insufficient and obsolete military equipment, which put them in the position that could not match North Korean military strength. Furthermore, these problems coincided with increased North Korean military provocations, including the Blue House raid and the capture of the U.S.S. Pueblo in early 1968.

In pursuing the policy of troop withdrawal, the most important American considerations were the legitimization of implementing the Nixon Doctrine -- South Korea as the "best case" outside Vietnam for that purpose -- and strong domestic pressure from Congress and the general public to downgrade America's military commitment to Asia, specifically South Korea. Also, change in American perceptions of Communist China perhaps strongly influenced this development: China (PRC) was no longer viewed as a principal adversary in the region. This change of assumption led the Americans to perceive a lower possibility of Chinese military intervention in future Korean affairs and hence weakened to a degree the reason for maintaining two U.S. divisions there.

After that, the United States continuously pledged not to reduce its forces in Korea below the current level of 43,000 men, including one ground division. However,
the policy of troop reduction was resumed in the late 1970's by President Carter. He planned to bring all U.S. ground forces home in the manner of phased-withdrawals by 1982, leaving only U.S. Air Force components and communication, logistics, and intelligence elements.

President Carter justified his plan in terms of the changing strategic environment in the region. He believed that the Sino-U.S. rapprochement and Sino-Soviet split would preclude the two Communist powers from encouraging or underwriting North Korean military adventures on the peninsula. These concerns apparently weakened the U.S. rationale for maintaining its troops in Korea.

Another important rationale of Carter's decision stemmed from an adjustment of the U.S. role in future Asian wars. It reflected the U.S. domestic climate which was asking for decisive action to reduce the risk of further combat involvement in Asia, a sentiment generated by U.S. experiences in Vietnam. After the Vietnam War, particularly, the American public demanded the avoidance of any automatic involvement in a future war on the Korean Peninsula.

Also, Carter's decision seemed to be influenced to some degree by his concerns about human rights conditions in South Korea and his presidential campaign promise to withdraw U.S. forces from Korea. Despite U.S. military leaders' reluctance to support Carter's plan of withdrawal because of security reasons, President Carter's political
concerns overrode those military concerns.

At the time of Carter's decision, however, South Korea was still experiencing severe problems with the modernization of its armed forces. Particularly, the South Korean armed forces were far inferior to the North's in terms of military strength. By 1979, the North had definite advantages -- more than 2-to-1 in every category -- including military personnel (1.2-to-1 advantage). All evidence suggested that with an offensive posture, North Korea already had strong military capabilities sufficient to sustain a short war without external support and that contrary to the North, it would be hard for South Korea to halt a North Korean aggression without significant assistance from the U.S. military.

In this situation, it was believed that Carter's withdrawals might increase the likelihood of the recurrence of war on the Korean peninsula, in light of the fact that the U.S. forces had performed its most important role as a deterrent and additional war-fighting capabilities to the South Korean armed forces.

This meant that the United States again indicated a policy with poor timing, as it had in the Nixon era. In both cases, by giving priority to its political concerns, the U.S. decisions on troop reduction were made and implemented without a deliberate consideration of the security realities of South Korea.

The second important change stemmed from the combined command structure. The United States had exercised its operational control over the ROK armed forces,
through the United Nation Command. As the UNC became inadequate for South Korean defense in pure military terms, however, the necessity of a new command arrangement arose. Furthermore, President Carter's decision on the complete withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Korea was decisive in the creation of the CFC, as an alternative command structure to the UNC, which assumed operational control over the ROK armed forces and took over the entire responsibility for South Korean defense from the UNC.

Although the CFC was established in a sense to improve the efficiency of combined military operations between the two militaries, perhaps more importantly from the U.S. standpoint, its establishment implied the demonstration of American intentions to remain a strong ally to South Korea and Asia as a whole, despite its policy of withdrawing all ground forces, the only ground troops in Asia, from Korea.

As the major means of the second category of military interaction, U.S. military assistance had been provided primarily to strengthen the ROK armed forces. The principal logic behind this military aid is the American belief that a stable, militarily strong pro-American government in Korea is essential to U.S. national interests in the region. Especially, a strong military capability of ROK forces would help to maintain stability in Northeast Asia.

During the time frame of this study, South Korea received about $4.9 billion of U.S. military assistance in total: $3.8 billion in grant aid, and $1.1 billion in FMS credits.
Although more than three-fourths of U.S. military assistance had been given in grant aid during the whole period, military assistance shifted from grants to FMS credits, as the former was formally terminated after 1976.

Of course, the U.S. administration justified this shift in terms of Korea's advanced economic development. However, the South Korean economy still had some serious weakness in terms of its structure and necessary funding for steady economic development and the completion of planned force improvement. In making that decision, therefore, the U.S. administration seemed not to pay much attention to the reality of Korea's economic situation. Rather, it was more likely decided in accordance with the U.S. domestic political situation, particularly Congressional pressure to end all grant aid soon.

U.S. military assistance also had been used as a means to achieve certain policy objectives of the United States. When the United States requested South Korea to send its combat troops to Vietnam, military assistance was used as the main leverage to persuade South Korea and consequently, to achieve to a degree the U.S. political concern of legitimizing its activities in Vietnam as a collective effort of the Free World.

Again, U.S. military assistance was successfully used as a final resort of dealing with political and security problems between the two nations which were raised by the North Korean attack on the Blue House and the capture of the U.S.S. Pueblo early in 1968. In this case, the primary concerns of the United States were the safe return of the
American crew with the ship and the avoidance of further armed conflicts, regardless of the South Korean position favoring limited military retaliations as a means of preventing future provocations.

In the other two cases, the military assistance was used to directly influence the ROK government to take certain policy options. In these cases, the United States attempted to induce or change the attitudes of the ROK government toward specific political issues by cutting or threatening to cut a significant level of its military assistance to South Korea.

In 1961, immediately after the coup, the United States asked the coup leaders to restore a civilian, representative government by threatening to cut $28 million in remaining military assistance in that year. The other example was the Congressional cut by $93 million of the Executive request for the MAP to South Korea in 1974. In this case, Congress attempted to improve human rights practices by the ROK government. Although it was uncertain to what extent U.S. military assistance was successful as a means of achieving these political concerns, both cases represented a significant aspect of U.S. military assistance practices.

As seen in our analysis above, all these major changes -- the reductions of the physical presence of U.S. forces, the change of command arrangements, the shift from grant aid to FMS credits -- and U.S. military assistance practices (supplements or cuts) were primarily motivated by specific U.S. interests rather than by those of South Korea.

Initially, our proposition suggested that U.S.-South Korean military relations had
been controlled more by U.S. political interests than by military ones. In general, the cases examined in this study seem to support this proposition. In some specific areas, however, it may be difficult to differentiate between political and military interests. For example, when the U.S. Congress pressured the administration to reduce its overseas military commitments in the hopes of avoiding U.S. troop involvement in future conflicts, there are several possible interpretations of the interests at stake. First, the decision could be motivated by a desire to avoid the domestic political upheavals generated by involvement in an unpopular overseas war, in short, by isolationism. Second, the decision could stem from a perception that militarily the U.S. no longer had the capacity to "win" the types of wars similar to that fought in Vietnam. While the former could be classified as political, the latter appears to be military. In these cases, it seems almost impossible to make a clear distinction between the two.

The next question concerned South Korean reactions to these changing situations. Worrying about an erosion of the strength of U.S. security commitment to their country, the South Koreans intended to maintain the status quo and thus, initially resisted any change which would endanger their security or downgrade the U.S. military commitment to their defense.

When the Koreans perceived that such changes would be unavoidable because of their lack of influence on the Americans, however, they made efforts to obtain significant
countermeasures to fill the security gap which would be created by those changes. Provided compensatory measures by the United States, in the end, South Korea reluctantly accepted the changes.

Particularly, the South Koreans had attempted to maintain a significant level of U.S. forces, especially ground forces, in their territory as a reliable deterrent against the North Korean military threat. Needless to say, they did not intend to permanently keep such forces in their country. But they felt that South Korea would need those American forces at least until alternative systems to the existing armistice agreement could be arranged for maintaining peace on the peninsula.

With respect to this issue, three possible options could be considered: (1) as South Korea already proposed in the early 1970's, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the two Koreas, replacing the existing armistice agreement; (2) any international system which was firmly guaranteed by all concerned powers in the region, including the four major powers; and (3) South Korean military buildup to the level where it would be sufficient to deter, or repel if deterrence fails, a possible North Korean aggression without assistance from U.S. forces.

From the South Korean perspective, the former two might be less reliable, if they were established, than the third. Thus, the South Koreans would prefer the last option as a more reliable deterrent than the other two. Considering the current tendency of both
Korea's military build up, South Korea would be able to obtain such a deterrent power by around the turn of the century.

Considering some of political currents in both countries (for example, America's domestic pressure to reduce its defense budget and South Korean nationalism, partially directed against the U.S. military presence there), a possibility of limited changes in this matter before that time can not be precluded. Such changes might include a rearrangement of the command structure or a partial reduction of U.S. ground forces from South Korea. At any rate, the South Koreans would not want a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from their territory unless they can reach self-deterrent power. Until that moment, therefore, keeping a significant level of U.S. forces in Korea would remain as a primary objective of South Korea in its military relations with the United States.

Our final question is the impact of such changes on the existing military relationship between the United States and South Korea. All evidence suggests that these changes have been implemented in the direction of reducing American obligations or burdens for Korean defense and instead, toward more balanced sharing of those burdens with South Korea.

Particularly, those changes, including the establishment of the CFC and the shift from grant aid to the FMS in military assistance, altered the basic characteristics of military interactions between the two nations. By giving South Korea more autonomy in military
planning and operations, these changes shifted Korean status from "dependency or client" towards "self-reliance or partner." In return, the United States acquired more "flexibility," both militarily and politically, in its obligations for the defense of South Korea than in the past.

The propositions initially stated in this study were: the unequal military relationship between the United States and South Korea has been dominated by U.S. political interests, which have motivated changes in their relations; and in its military relationship with the United States, the South Korean objective has been to keep a significant number of American troops stationed in its territory. The results of this analysis would appear to support these propositions.
### Appendix 1

**U.S. Military Assistance to South Korea, 1961-1979**

(dollars in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FMS Agreement</th>
<th>FMS Credits</th>
<th>MAP Program</th>
<th>MSAF (incl. Trng)</th>
<th>IMET Program</th>
<th>IMET Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>.003</td>
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<td>112,889</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>105,169</td>
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<td>6,511</td>
<td>1,676</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>155,505</td>
<td>36,849</td>
<td>6,253</td>
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<td>164,091</td>
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<td>.393</td>
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<td>10,595</td>
<td>1,765</td>
<td>.236</td>
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Appendix 2
North and South Korean Military Strength, 1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total active forces</strong></td>
<td>840,000</td>
<td>601,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total reserve forces(^a)</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>3,300,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Army**
- Infantry divisions: 750,000
- Mot and mech inf divs: 24
- Tank divisions: 5
- Independent inf bdes: 2
- Independent tk regts: 9
- Special Ops bdes: 7
- 1 river crossing regts; 3 amph; 5 AB bns[80,000-100,000]

**Tanks**
- 3,275 (300 T-34; 2,800 T-54/-55/-62; 175 Type 59; 50 Type-62;100 Type-63)
- 1,300 (350 M-47; 950 M-48A)

**AFV\(^b\)**
- 1,690 (incl 1,400 APC)
- 850 APC

**Anti-tank guns**
- N/A
- N/A

**Anti-aircraft guns**
- 8,500
- 600

**Artillery**
- 4,750
- 3,300

**Multiple rkt launchers**
- 2,100
- 140

**Mortars**
- 11,000
- 5,300

**SSM**
- 69(54 FROG-5/-7;15 Scud B)
- 12 (Honest John)

**SAM**
- 830 (800 SA-2; 30 SA-3\(^b\))
- 210 (110HAWK; 100 Nike Hercules)
(Appendix 2 cont'ed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total combat vessels</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>573</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 submarines</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 destroyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 frigates</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 frigates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 patrol craft (35 large)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 corvettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167 FAC&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>136 patrol craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 FAC(G) with SSM</td>
<td></td>
<td>(89 large; 47 coastal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152 FAC(Torpedo)</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 FAC(G) (3 Std SSM;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128 landing craft (6LSM;</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 Harpoon; 1 Asheville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 LCU; 18 LCM)&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Wildcat w/ Exocet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 landing craft (8 LST;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 LSM; 5 LCU; 7 LCM)&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASW&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;:</td>
<td>2 sqns (1 ac;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 hel[500MD]; 11 flts)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marines</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>23,000(2 divs &amp; 1 bde)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Force</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total combat acrf</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>854 (440 MIG-15/</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-17/-19; 20 SU-7;</td>
<td>(260 F-5A/B/E/F;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>160 MIG-21; 50 MIG-23)</td>
<td>65 F-4D/E)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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