

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

SECURITY OF JAPAN AND KOREAN UNIFICATION

by

Colonel Takayuki Onozuka
Japan Ground Self-Defense Force
Engineer

COL Jiyul Kim
Project Adviser

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ABSTRACT

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Korea is a dagger pointed at Japan's heart as well as a bridge to the Asian mainland. Stability and non-hostility on the peninsula are critical for maintaining Japan's security. Many had predicted the collapse of North Korea. It is a safe assumption that unification will be achieved in the long term.

A Korean unification has implications for Japan's security as follows. First, a U.S.-leaning Korea is favorable for Japan. Second, a neutral Korea is unfavorable for Japan, but not critical to Japan as long as ties between Japan and the U.S. are firm. Third, a China-leaning Korea is unfavorable. If China becomes aggressive with Korea, it may be critical to Japan's security.

The character of a unified Korea will be a complex functional equation. Japan hopes a new Korea is friendly if making efforts to support the project to unify the two Koreas is successful. Japan should also strengthen ties with the U.S. and build mutual understanding and trust with China.

SECURITY OF JAPAN AND KOREAN UNIFICATION

The end of the Cold War replaced the Soviet Union with Russia and Mongolia gained independence from being a satellite state of the Soviet Union in East Asia.¹ However, the end of the Cold War did have a major impact on Japan's security calculus. The situation on the Korean Peninsula has increasingly become a key issue for the security of Japan. In particular, North Korea's activities and its future have become critical issues for Japan. Furthermore, as the Kim Jong Il regime will collapse sooner or later, it is important for Japan to consider what Korean unification implies, in the long run, beyond the elimination of North Korea.

The View for Korean Unification

Many predicted the collapse of North Korea, but it has not yet happened. Michael Horowitz, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C., stated at the end of 2004 that "North Korea will internally explode before next Christmas, and Defense Chairman Kim Jong Il won't be able to enjoy next Christmas."² But Kim Jong Il enjoyed it, though the Kim Jong Il regime will be gone sooner or later.

According to a poll of 1,000 people by the South Korean local research group Matrix in December 2005, 64.2 percent said they would rather see a gradual unification of the Koreans, up from 53.4 percent a year before.³ Another survey by the JoongAng Ilbo and the East Asia Institute was placed on a website on October 2005. According to this article, 17 percent said unification must come as soon as possible, while 30 percent of Koreans said unification was the top national priority to be achieved at any cost in a 1996 survey by the Sejong Institute. The article also showed certain poll analysts' comment that these South Korean's sober attitudes reflected the fact that unification now seemed more possible than it had in the past, and they were beginning to appreciate the crucial realities of the North Korean regime.⁴ The latest figure available is quite old, but it shows 6 percent expected unification within five years, 24 percent in the next six to 10 years, and 28 percent in the next 11 to 20 years. Approximately six out of ten South Koreans thought unification would take place within 20 years.⁵

Dr. Kyung-Won Kim, President of the Institute of Social Science and the Seoul Forum for International Affairs, said, "The most fundamental fact concerning the Korean peninsula is that North Korea cannot remain as it is. The only question is whether it will change suddenly and abruptly or gradually and incrementally. In either case, Korea will be unified."⁶ There are many views on the unification process taking time, but few if any experts show the perspective that North Korea can unify the peninsula under "Juche." It does seem accurate to think North Korea will collapse and the two Koreas will be unified some day.

A lot of processes of unification have been drawn. For example, the report *Preparation for Korean Unification: Scenarios and Implications* by the RAND organization puts three scenarios of unification. These are 1) integration and peaceful unification, 2) collapse and absorption, 3) unification through conflict.⁷ There are also many other variations such as scenarios including coup, civil war, or a transitional dual system in one country. It is a safe assumption that unification will be achieved in the long term. This change will influence the security environment around Japan, because it is close to Korea and has deep relations with the peninsula.

The Korean Peninsula and Japan

Briefly, the following is a short history about the Korean peninsula and Japan prior to a study on unification. Derek J. Mitchell, a senior fellow in the International Security Program at CSIS, characterized Korea from an historical and a geographical point of view.

Korea has long served as a strategic battleground for regional powers who desire to safeguard their security by providing a buffer zone against the aggression of others. Because Korea is a traditional pathway into China, Japan, and the Russian Far East, each surrounding actor perceives the strategic importance of the Korean landmass. China, Japan, and Russia can each point to moments in history in which their territory was threatened by vulnerabilities from the Korean periphery. The history will continue to inform their future strategic perspectives.⁸

Throughout its history, Japan has always been interested in and concerned about the Korean Peninsula, politically, economically, and culturally.

Japanese have lived on rice that was brought from Korea in the Yayoi period (ca 300 BC-ca 300 AD) following the Jomon period (ca 10,000 BC-ca 300 BC), both prehistoric eras in the history of Japan. The basic elements of the culture of the Yayoi period, bronze and iron as well as rice cultivation, were most likely brought to Japan by immigrants from Korea in the three kingdom period.⁹

Buddhism, Confucianism, and Chinese writing were also transmitted to Japan through Korea during the Kofun period (ca 300 AD-710). According to the *Yearbook of Religions 2003* edited by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Japan, 95.55 million of Japanese believe in Buddhism.¹⁰ The influence of Confucianism still remains in today's Japan society. Written Japanese is the combination of the Japanese alphabet with Chinese characters. The fundamental elements of Japanese culture today were transmitted through the Korean peninsula in pre-historical and early historical periods.

Politically, during the Kofun period, the Yamato court or other power clans based on western Japan tried to dominate southern parts of the Korean peninsula and some battles occurred. Iron resources in the southern Korean peninsula were the likely reason why the

number of conflicts increased in the early Kofun period.¹¹ One of the famous naval battles known as “Hakusukinoe no Tatakai” took place in 662 (or 663) at the mouth of the Paegchon River in Korea between the Silla kingdom and Tang Dynasty of China (618-907) forces and the Japanese fleet sent by Emperor Tenji to secure the Paekche government.¹² This battle resulted in the defeat of the Japanese fleet. After this battle, a fort and government headquarters were built at Dazaihu, a town in northern Kyushu, in 664 to prevent Korean incursions.¹³

Mongol invasions of Japan and the Toyotomi Hideyoshi invasions of Korea drew vividly the role of the peninsula for security or interests of Japan. Mongols launched a massive invasion against Koryo in 1231 and began to dominate in 1259. The Mongol Empire under Khbilai Khan enlisted Koryo in its expeditions against Japan in 1274 and 1281. It mustered thousands of Korean men and ships for these invasions. Fortunately, seasonal typhoons forced Mongol fleets to withdraw, but the Kamakura shogunate declared a state of emergency for more than 30 years.¹⁴

Toyotomi Hideyoshi tried to expand his power to Korea and China soon after his unification of Japan in 1590. He executed invasions twice, in 1592 and 1597, but ended in defeat at the hands of a combined force of the Yi Dynasty of Korea and Ming Dynasty of China. But these invasions caused widespread desolation in Korea and some 50,000 to 60,000 Koreans were forcibly moved (including a number of artisans) to Japan.¹⁵

The Korean peninsula is characterized as a pathway from the Asian landmass to Japan as well as from Japan to the landmass in these invasions. Korea is a dagger pointed at Japan's heart as well as a bridge to the Asian mainland. History shows the same perspective through the mid nineteenth century to mid twentieth century, 350 years withdrawn because of national isolation in both countries.

The Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1868: Edo period) had taken a national seclusion policy since 1639. Japan was threatened in the nineteenth century when Russian, British, and American vessels began to appear in Asian waters and press for trade with Japan. After the arrival in Japan of Commodore Matthew C. Perry and his four-ship squadron in Edo Bay in July 1853, the Tokugawa shogunate abandoned national isolation by signing the Treaty of Peace and Amity between the United States and Japan. Under these circumstances, some Japanese nationalist thinkers in those days had an idea that Japan should conquer Korea as a counter to the looming threat from the Western powers.¹⁶ After the Meiji Restoration, the leaders of the government believed that a weak, Chinese-dominated Korea made the whole area vulnerable to Western encroachments and posed a strategic danger to Japan itself.¹⁷ Prime Minister

Yamagata Aritomo mentioned Korea in a policy speech in the Diet in 1890 where he regarded Korea as a critical line of interest for Japan's sovereignty.¹⁸

As Japan took gunship diplomacy against Korea and grew stronger, friction between Japan and China increased (friction also increased between pro-China and pro-Japan factions in Korea), with each seeking to dominate Korea and brought out the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). Russia's occupation of Manchuria after the Chinese 'Boxer' Rebellion caused the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05). Japan as the clear winner had a free hand in Korea and annexed it in 1910.¹⁹

Japan's surrender in 1945 might have brought independence to Korea, but it was divided at the 38th parallel and the Korean War broke out in 1950. If South Korea had been defeated by North Korea, the communist bloc would have pursued a more ambitious policy against Japan. Japan has been concerned about the Korean peninsula after the Second World War, especially a Soviet/China lead (anti-Japan) North Korea. This was symbolized by a "Korean clause" in 1969. It was mentioned in a Joint statement of Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and U.S. President Richard Nixon as follows, "[T]he security of the Republic of Korea was essential to Japan's own security."²⁰ Now nuclear and missile programs in North Korea and abductions by North Korea are focused on as Japan's security issues.

Four points are evident about the value of the Korean peninsula for Japan's security from a historical perspective. First, Japan has been worried about the situation on the Korean peninsula. Mongol's invasions were the only actual invasion from peninsula, but the fear that Western powers might conquer the peninsula was realistic to some leaders at the end of the Edo period. Japan was also anxious about North Korea's invasion against the South and a possible unified red Korea. Second, regardless of Japan's worry, powers originating in the Korean peninsula have never tried to invade Japan alone. Again, only once did this occur supported by the Mongol's and under their authority. Third, confusion or disruption on the peninsula has attracted Japan to intervene. Finally, the Korean peninsula has been one of the objectives as well as a pathway to the Asian mainland when Japan attempts to invade it like Toyotomi Hideyoshi or imperial Japan.

Thus it is reasonable to conclude that as long as Japan does not intend to invade the peninsula or mainland, stability and non-hostility in the peninsula are critical for maintaining Japan's security.

Korean Unification and the Great Powers

What are the national interests or goals of great powers in Korean unification? Key actors are the U.S., China, and Russia instead of Japan. What policies for unification do South and North Korea have? The intentions of each of these countries on Korean unification will be discussed.

U.S.

The U.S. does not seem to have a specific policy about Korean unification. Dr. Edward A. Olsen, a Professor of National Security Affairs with a specialization in Asian Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School, pointed out, "The U.S. policy toward Korean unification has a much lower profile in the Bush administration, as it has had for preceding administrations."²¹ The U.S. has held the policy "one-Korea with Seoul as the winner" since the first North Korea nuclear crisis in 1994.²² When the U.S. government uses "one Korea," the definition is unclear and the purpose is ambiguous.²³ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS), launched on September 2002, said that "To enhance our Asian alliances and friendships, we will; ... work with South Korea to maintain vigilance towards North Korea while preparing our alliance to make contributions to the broader stability of the region over the longer term;" and did not say anything about Korean unification.²⁴

What is the U.S. interest in Korean unification? Nicholas Eberstadt, who holds the Henry Wendt chair in political economy at the American Enterprise Institute, mentioned as follows.

The central challenge in any post-DPRK reconfiguration of the Korean Peninsula is how afterward to ensure a stable Northeast Asia that is as democratic as possible, that is open to free trade and international investment, that participates constructively in world organizations, and that is friendly to the United States.²⁵

He also said that maintaining a Mutual Defense Treaty between South Korea and the U.S. or pursuing a revised treaty and retaining some U.S. forces on the Korean peninsula as a symbol of its commitment are among long term U.S. objectives.²⁶ The interest corresponds with the NSS that puts political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignities as U.S. goals to progress,²⁷ though it is disputable whether it is possible to retain a similar treaty or not, and whether it is possible to retain U.S. forces after unification.

South Korea and the U.S. talked about future United States Forces in Korea (USFK) as the "Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative" (FOTA) launched in April 2003. They have already reached an agreement on some points as follows. First, Yongsan Garrison in Seoul will be relocated to the Pyeongtaek area about 60 kilometers south of Seoul by the end of 2008.

Second, the number of bases will be reduced from 43 to 16 including the redeployment of the second U.S. Infantry Division while concentrating the bases in two core areas. Third, the number of U.S. military personnel will be reduced by 12,500 by 2008. The U.S. has decided to transfer missions in the Joint Security Area in Panmunjom and develop combined military capabilities including a US\$ 11 billion investment.²⁸

This change implies not only abandonment of USFK's role as a "trip wire," but also a change in the nature of the alliance. USFK is less useful today to overall U.S. strategy in East Asia, because of its single mindedly focused on the deterrence mission alone.²⁹ Moreover, the U.S. wants to change the alliance in quality. The first session of the U.S.-ROK Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership that was agreed at the Gyeongju Summit in November 2005 was held January 19, 2006. According to the joint statement, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and South Korea Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon confirmed the understanding of both governments regarding the issue of strategic flexibility of USFK.³⁰

South Korea reconfirmed the strategic flexibility of USFK, but South Korea should not be involved in a Northeast Asian regional conflict unconditionally, while both reconfirmed the alliance to contribute to peace and stability in the region.

It is wrong to say that the change in the alliance must take account of post unification. But the expansion of its role may be effective to maintain U.S.-ROK alliance in the future as well as to make it much useful today. Without any efforts, the value of a Mutual Defense Treaty will be reduced when peace comes on the peninsula. In addition, neighboring countries may criticize it and anti-U.S. feelings in the Korean people may deny it as mentioned in detail below. In this case, the only problem remaining is the timing of the withdrawal.

China

The U.S. evaluates China's unique potential to influence North Korea based on its historic ties and geography³¹ as well as politically, militarily, and economically. But China does not want to see a sudden or sharp change in the peninsula, because it recognizes North Korea as a useful buffer zone. Therefore, China has not been able to influence North Korea as strongly as the international community would expect.³²

On the other hand, China established diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992. Now, South Korea has taken forth place in exports (4.7%) and fourth place in imports (11.1%) among countries in 2004.³³ From an economic point of view, China prefers to keep the status quo.

Bong Hyon Park, a senior columnist at *The Korea Times*, said that China feels a unified Korea in an alliance with the U.S. will pose a greater challenge than the status quo. But China

can not easily take risks by using military power to expand its influence on a Unified Korea; even after unification, Korea will remain one of its important partners for economic growth.³⁴

Contrary to Park, Eberstadt warned against China because it has not only capabilities and measures, but also a lot of reasons for intervention. China will feel so uncomfortable with the presence of U.S. power on the peninsula after unification that it will intervene to prevent the establishment of a U.S. leaning unified Korea.³⁵ China has published a defense white paper named "China's National Defense" every two years since 1998. It warned against a U.S. military bloc or its strengthening in each edition implicitly or explicitly. For example, the 1998 edition said as follows.

Hegemonism and power politics remain the main source of threats to world peace and stability; cold war mentality and its influence still have a certain currency, and the enlargement of military blocs and the strengthening of military alliances have added factors of instability to international security...³⁶

The latest version said as follows. Changing phrases, China continued to express complaints against the U.S. and its allies.

The United States is realigning and reinforcing its military presence in this region by buttressing military alliances and accelerating deployment of missile defense systems.³⁷

According to Eberstadt, the fact that China still has a substantial ground force and border with North Korea means that China retains the option of intervention on the peninsula directly. China has had a "Treaty in Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" with North Korea since 1961. However, China told South Korea "it is invalid," when they established diplomatic relations in 1992. Eberstadt also pointed out that China has diverse measures for "intervention" such as a direct military attack, a bargaining card of Taiwan (withdrawal of U.S. security guarantees for Taiwan), crisis coordination on Iran, and so on. Thus, China fears a unified Korea that hosts U.S. forces and has numerous ways to prevent it.³⁸

What has been going on between China and South Korea since Eberstadt's work was written in 2001? Anti-Americanism has spread in South Korea and some South Korean people have started to show their preference of China to the U.S.

As memories of the Korean War fade and the threat from North Korea diminishes, resentment over USFK only grows stronger. Especially, anti-Americanism was exacerbated rapidly after a U.S. military vehicle ran over and killed two schoolgirls in 2002.³⁹ According to the poll that *JoongAng Daily* commissioned on the newspaper's 40th anniversary, 54 percent of respondents wanted USFK out. Only 16 percent of them wanted USFK to stay permanently.⁴⁰

According to the survey of 1,270 college students across the nation, conducted by the public opinion poll specialist Poll Ever at the request of the Advisory Council on Democratic and Peaceful Unification in May 2004, 49.1 percent responded that among the four neighboring great powers (U.S., Russia, China, and Japan), the U.S. would most oppose the reunification of Korea, while 38.3 percent of respondents picked China as the country that supports reunification the most.⁴¹

As far as pro-China sentiment is concerned, Chan Yul Yoo, an associate political science professor at Duksung Women's University, explained Korea's pro-China proclivity with three points. First, Chinese economical success has been remarkable as to record 9-10 percent of annual growth. Second, Chinese political influence has also increased, especially in the current Six-Party Talks. Third, historically, the peninsula has been under the influence of China for the last two thousand years and feels its geographical pressure.⁴² Anti-Americanism is enhanced by pro-China proclivity in South Korean, but it is not the only explanation for it.

This atmosphere would let China win on the peninsula with its soft power. China might be able to exclude U.S. influence over a unified Korea without fighting against the U.S. This means the execution of Sun Tzu's strategy; "Generally in war the best policy is to take a state intact; to ruin it is inferior to this."⁴³

Russia

Russian foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region has focused on strengthening its economic tie with countries. It regards the Asia-Pacific region as "the most dynamic center of world economic development" and it recognizes that deepening relations with this region is important for the recovery of the national strength.⁴⁴

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the former Soviet Union and South Korea in 1990, the economic tie between Russia and South Korea has deepened. The trade turnover in 2003 was twice that in 1998 (US\$2.11 billion in 1998, US\$4.18 billion in 2003).⁴⁵ At a summit meeting between President Putin and President Roh Moo-Hyun held in Moscow on September 21, 2004, they agreed to close economic cooperation and to elevate relations between the two countries from a "constructive and mutually complementary partnership" to a "comprehensive partnership based on mutual trust." This was developed into a "mutual trust based and multifaceted partnership" at a summit meeting in Pusan on November 19, 2005.⁴⁶

In the meantime, President Putin visited Pyongyang in July 2001 and this led to the development of "traditional friendly and cooperative relations" between Russia and North Korea.

Putin repaired the political animosity of the post-Cold War era dividing Russia and North Korea. Russia sees no hostility in the Korean peninsula and pursues a well-calibrated two-Korea policy, while it seems to favor South Korea.⁴⁷ Moscow enjoys the status-quo.

What kind of policy for Korean unification does Russia have? Russia may welcome unification. If a unified Korea allies with China or the U.S., Russia will be rarely influenced by unification based on the present friendly relationship between Russia and China as well as that between Russia and the U.S. Russia might regard a unified Korea as a stabilizing factor in the region, helping to balance the powers of China or the U.S., if a united Korea becomes strong and independent power: it will be a logical ally both against an aggressive China or imperious U.S.⁴⁸

Russia could accept both alternatives, unification and maintenance of the status-quo, or it could also tolerate a variation of unification. The case for North-South reconciliation is rapidly intensifying and U.S. influence is increasingly marginalized and neutralized, Russian influence will be preserved both in North and South Korea, while either China or the U.S. will not be able to establish its dominance over the entire peninsula. Russia could be a strategic player with low economic stakes in the two Koreas.⁴⁹

Two Koreas

What policies for unification do South and North Korea have? The following will discuss the policy toward unification of each country.

South Korea

The policy for Korean unification of South Korea is known as "The Policy for Peace and Prosperity," which "aims to lay the foundation for a peaceful unification of Korea through the promotion of peace on the Korean peninsula and to achieve mutual prosperity of South and North Korea."⁵⁰ This policy was initiated by President Roh Moo-hyun, continuing his predecessor, President Kim Dae-jung's "Sun Shine Policy."

The government states its "Implementation Strategy by Stages" as follows.⁵¹

Stage I: Resolution of the North Korean nuclear issues and promotion of peace

Stage II: Expansion of inter-Korean cooperation and laying of the foundation for a durable peace

Stage III: Conclusion of an inter-Korean peace agreement and creation of a durable peace regime

There are two points in the background of this reconciliatory policy toward North Korea. First, the fear that heightened tension on the Korean peninsula could lead to an economic crisis

in South Korea. Second, the people, especially the young people, who are the president's base of support, have a tendency to regard North Korea as compatriots rather than an enemy.⁵² According to a survey by Gallup Korea of 833 individuals born between 1980 and 1989 in August 2005, some 65.9 percent responded they would take North Korea's side if it was at war with the U.S., while 21.8 percent said South Korea must stand with the U.S.⁵³ Public opinion also shows an affinity for North Korea even though it is not to the extent of the young people. According to the poll by the research group Matrix, more than 55 percent of the public consider North Korea as a partner that the country must embrace, up from 34.5 percent last year. It also showed the number of people who view the communist state as the country's enemy decreased to 25.7 percent from 50.1 percent in the previous year.⁵⁴

Based on the "Sun Shine Policy" and "The Policy for Peace and Prosperity," South Korea has supported sightseeing tours to North Korea's Mt. Kumgang Tourist Zone by ship and bus since 2000. South Korean businesses also began to make preparations to build their factories in the Kaesong Industrial Zone in 2004. The latest Defense White Paper was published in December 2004 after an interval of four years and attracted people's attention, because North Korea was no longer named as the "main enemy."⁵⁵ Both South Korea's and the U.S.'s attitudes toward North Korea appear to be a reversal of the positions they took in the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994. South Korea is now the soft-liner while the U.S. is the hard-liner.⁵⁶

Recent polls showed South Koreans' anti-U.S., anti-Japan, pro-China, and pro-North Korea tendencies. The survey regarding anti-American, pro-North Korea, and pro-China was referenced before. As far as anti-Japan sentiment is concerned, according to the survey of the Japan Research Center with Gallup Korea in July 2005, 79 percent of respondents in South Korea said they do not have favorable view of Japan, while 18 percent do have a favorable view.⁵⁷ According to a poll of 800 Koreans in April 2005 by Research and Research, a survey company, 37.1 percent of respondents said they feel Japan is the greatest threat to Korea. North Korea is the second most threatening country at 28.6 percent, followed by the U.S. at 18.5 percent and China at 11.9 percent.⁵⁸

How about affinity to North Korea? Hahn Chaibong, a professor in the department of political science at Yonsei University in Seoul, points out that North Korea is clean unlike South Korea. It thoroughly purged the Japanese collaborators who are now being identified now in South Korea. It steered an independent course in foreign policy between the Soviet Union and China during the Cold War. It did not allow foreign forces to stay. It did not compromise with Japan.⁵⁹ Some people are attracted to North Korea for its nationalism.

The South Korean Presidential Committee on Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative reported that South Korea can play a role as a 'Bridge Building' state; a mediator between maritime powers and land powers.⁶⁰ This report accords with the tendency of the Roh administration to adopt neutrality in the question of U.S.-China relations, but the administration has also steadily maintained the course of its policy toward supporting the U.S. like dispatching its troops to Iraq over widespread opposition.⁶¹

On the one hand, the tide that is anti-American/Japan, pro-North Korea/China in large may not change quickly. On the other hand, public opinion is always wavering and it reacts to occurrences sometimes widely. We can not easily conclude about the position of a South leading unified Korea among the powers and should not do so.

North Korea

According to the Constitution of North Korea adopted by the first session of the 10th Supreme People's Assembly on September 5, 1998, North Korea and its people "shall uphold Great Leader Comrade Kim Il-sung as the eternal President of the Republic, defend and carry forward his ideas and exploits, and complete the "Juche" revolution under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea."⁶² The Charter of Workers' Party supercedes the Constitution.⁶³ The preamble to the charter of the Korean Workers' Party declares as follows.

The present task of the Korean Workers' Party is to ensure the complete victory of socialism in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the accomplishment of the revolutionary goals of national liberation and the people's democracy in the entire area of the country.⁶⁴

The policy of North Korea for unification is just unification under communism. Meanwhile, North Korea has been trying to arouse in South Korea a sense that they are one and the same people with their counterparts in the North since the historical summit meeting between the North and South in June 2000. It has promoted anti-Americanism in an effort to create an atmosphere favorable to gaining greater economic cooperation from South Korea, using slogans such as "national cooperation," and "by our nation itself," while it is developing a nuclear program.⁶⁵

Character of a Unified Korea

The character of a unified Korea relies on factors such as domestic environment, international relations, ways toward unification, and interrelations between them. There are numerous possible processes for unification on which complex mechanism works. But considering the possible great powers' attitudes and the situation of both Koreas, we can

organize the character of a unified Korea into three categories, which maintains democracy and a market economy. There is a U.S.-leaning Korea, a neutral Korea, and a China-leaning Korea.

The U.S.-leaning Korea is an extension of the present U.S.-South Korea relation, but the Mutual Defense Treaty will basically be revised, because its articles include expressions based on a divided Korea.⁶⁶ In this case, relations between the U.S. and Korea have some variations. Korea can grant the right to station U.S. forces (a U.S.-leaning Korea with U.S. bases). Korea can also refuse to grant the right (a U.S.-leaning Korea without U.S. bases).

A Neutral Korea means the unification situation terminates the Mutual Defense Treaty and the unified Korea does not conclude any conventions of security with other countries. In this case, Korea also has alternatives. It can keep neutral mainly depending on diplomacy (a moderate neutral Korea). It can also strengthen its self-reliant defense to prevent invasion (a strong neutral Korea).

The China-leaning Korea does not necessarily mean alliance with China. Terminating the Mutual Defense Treaty with the U.S., Korea can lead to a policy favorable to China against the U.S. clearly and constantly. Theoretically, this case should be called a neutral Korea, but practically, it is adequate to regard Korea as China-leaning. A Korea-China ally is an extension of this.

Which character will a unified Korea have? Each course may have certain probabilities, but it is more important to evaluate its implementation for Japan than to analyze its probability. This point will be discussed in next section.

Security of Japan and Korea Unification

A U.S.-leaning Korea means the continuation of relations among three countries; the U.S., (South) Korea, and Japan. Japan and South Korea have been connected by the U.S. through bilateral agreements or treaties. This triangle will remain basically stay on course.

A "U.S.-leaning Korea with U.S. bases" will improve the environment of Japan's security. The borderline between China and the free world will move from thirty-eighth parallel to the Yalu River. The free world could get the buffer zone even though deployment of U.S. forces does not exist practically, because U.S. deployments beyond the thirty-eighth parallel might be a critical issue for China. A "U.S.-leaning Korea without U.S. bases" will still be favorable to Japan. U.S. bases in Japan will change status from a rear to front area for so-called forward deployment of U.S. forces and Japan will be more important for the U.S.

Two kinds of neutral Korea have different implications for Japan. A "moderate neutral Korea" and Japan may make a good relationship and pursue prosperity at the beginning. But

from an historical perspective, “moderate neutral Korea” will be domestically unstable and will be subjected to struggles for power including external powers like the second half of the nineteenth century. The U.S. and China may have a tug of war and Russia may enjoy such a power game regarding Korea as a balancer. At the end, a “moderate neutral Korea” will lean to the winner of the power game. On the contrary, “a strong neutral Korea” may be able to keep its position. In this case, Japan may be faced with some challenges from Korea such as an arms race and international place-name controversy. Bilateral relations may get worse. Conflict between Japanese and Koreans living in Japan may disturb public security. As far as the security framework between Japan and the U.S., it works well. Japan can maintain its security with the U.S., even though this case is not favorable for Japan.

A China-leaning Korea is the worst course for Japan, because “China has a major impact on regional security.”⁶⁷ Due to the Yasukuni Shrine visit of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, his mutual visits with the leaders of South Korea as well as China have been at a standstill since the middle of 2005. If a unified Korea leans to China in this situation, they will cooperate and make a “united front” against Japan based on historical issues, while anti-China and Korea feelings will spread in Japan.⁶⁸ Adversity against Japan may propagate itself by interaction between China and Korea, and mutual hostility between the mainland and archipelago may “boil over” by action and reaction. Potential threats might grow to actual threats. If China becomes aggressive and Korea subordinates it, the situation in the region will be similar to the Mongol invasions. In the case of an invasion of the Senkaku Islands, the U.S. may not intervene.

Implications of Korean unification for Japan's security are as follows.

- A U.S.-leaning Korea is favorable for Japan.
- A “strong neutral Korea” is unfavorable for Japan, but not critical to Japan as long as ties between Japan and the U.S. are firm.
- A China-leaning Korea is unfavorable. If China becomes aggressive with Korea, it may be critical to Japan's security.

Therefore, Japan should prepare three points for maintaining its security. First, Japan should make ties with the U.S. much firmer. Second, Japan should make stronger efforts to reconcile with and establish good relationship with Korea. Third, Japan should promote friendship with China as well as promote China's transparency.

To make ties with the U.S. much firmer, Japan should expand its mission and revise domestic restraints such as the Constitution or restrictive laws. This may also expand the chance to improve the relationship with Korea through coalitional operations. To improve relations with Korea, Japan should make the biggest effort in supporting unification including

settlement of issues stemming from the period of Japanese annexation, while talking about historical problems as well as territorial issues. To promote China's transparency, Japan should promote security dialogue and defense exchanges as well as continue to require disclosure of defense expenditures. Cooperation between two countries through the process of Korean unification may develop relations and generate momentum for establishing new security frameworks in East Asia.

Conclusion

Prime Minister Koizumi stressed the importance of relations with Korea and China in his General Policy Speech to Diet in January 20, 2006 as follows.

At the time that Japan and the ROK normalized their relations 40 years ago, the number of visits between the two countries was about 10,000 a year. Today, more than 10,000 people a day travel between the two countries. Even if there are differences or oppositions of opinions on certain issues, China and the ROK are our vital neighbors, and Japan will work to strengthen our cooperation from a broad perspective and develop our future-oriented relations built on mutual understanding and trust.⁶⁹

Actually, Japan is in fourth place in exports and in first place in imports with South Korea. South Korea is in fourth place in both exports and imports with Japan.⁷⁰ Historical ties between both countries are deep. The character of a unified Korea will be a complex functional equation. Japan hopes a new Korea is friendly if making efforts to support the project to unify the two Koreas is successful. Japan should also strengthen ties with the U.S. and build mutual understanding and trust with China.

Endnotes

¹ Communist dictatorships still remain in China, North Korea, and Vietnam. The political situation did not change so dramatically as in Europe where new counties were unified or divided, and new political or economical frameworks were established or reformed. From the Japanese viewpoint, Russia still occupies Japan's "Northern Territories" and a peace treaty between the two nations has yet to be concluded; territorial issues continue to exist between Japan and China/Korea. The community in East Asia has not matured enough in comparison with Europe.

² Barbara Demick, "Talk Swirling of North Korean Regime Collapse," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 December 2004 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.fairuse.1accesshost.com/news3/latimes4.htm>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2005.

³ "Most S. Koreans Prefer Phased Unification" *The Korea Times*, 20 December 2005 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/nation/200512/kt2005122020433411990.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 2006.

⁴ Shin Chang-woon, Chun Young-gi, and Ser Myo-ja, "Koreans Sober about Unification," *JoongAng Daily*, 13 October 2005 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200510/12/200510122257253279900090409041.html>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2006.

⁵ Shin Chung-un and Brian Lee, "More Desire to See Unification," *JoongAng Daily*, 22 September 2004, [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200409/22/20049222157392239900090409041.html>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2006.

⁶ Kyung-Won Kim, "Downfall Delayed: Endgames for the North Korean Regime," *Harvard International Review* 27 (Fall 2005), 56.

⁷ Jonathan D. Pollack and Chung Min Lee, *Preparing for Korean Unification: Scenarios and Implications* (Washington D.C.: RAND, 1999). Actually, this study shows fourth scenario (Disequilibrium and potential external intervention) that is drawn in order to prevent from surprise. This scenario can be regarded as interim situation for unification.

⁸ Derek J. Mitchell, "A Blueprint for U.S. Policy toward a Unified Korea," *The Washington Quarterly* 26 (Winter 2002-03), 127.

⁹ Alan Campbell and David S Noble, eds., *Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 827.

¹⁰ *Yearbook of Religions 2003*, Agency for cultural affairs, (Tokyo: Government Printing Office, 2003), 93. Available from http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/pdf/04_11-93-94p.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 February 2006.

¹¹ Richard Bowring and Peter Kornicki, eds., *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Japan*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 45.

¹² Louis Frederic, *Japan Encyclopedia*, (Cambridge: The Belknap of Harvard University Press, 2002), 280-281.

¹³ Frederic, 150. After Hakesukinoe no Tatakai, Silla allied with the Tang Dynasty, defeated the northern kingdom of Koguryo and unified the Korean peninsula in 668. In Japan, a new capital was built in 710 at the Nara basin, and in 794 it was removed to Heian-kyo (Capital of peace and tranquility), known later as Kyoto. The latter part of the Kofun period, Nara period (710-794), and Heian period (794-1192) were ruled by emperors or court nobles. A formal relation between Japan and Silla ceased in the latter part of the eighth century because rebellions in Silla began to shake its foundations, but trade between them thrived. This tendency continued after the establishment of Koryo in 918. (Andrea M. Savada and William Shaw, eds., *South Korea: a Country Study*, (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 1992), 7. Campbell and Noble, 827)

¹⁴ Savada and Shaw, 8. Campbell and Noble, 1000.

¹⁵ Campbell and Noble, 827.

¹⁶ Wolf Mendel, "Japan's Asia Policy: Regional Security and Global Interests," (London: Routledge, 1995), 62.

¹⁷ Bowring and Kornicki, 84.

¹⁸ Azusa Oyama, *Yamaga Aritomo Ikenn-sho* (Remark of Yamagata Aritomo), (Tokyo: Hara Sho-bo, 1966), 196. Yamagata's speech was as follows. "There are two ways for nation to keep independent and maintain security. First, protect sovereignty line and prevent other countries from invasion it. Second, protect interest line and keep the posture to protect it. What is the sovereignty line? That is the territory. What is the interest line? That is the neighboring country which is critical to Japan's sovereignty... Actually Japan focuses on Korea as the interest line... We should not forget that instability in Korea may disorganize the order in Eastern World."

¹⁹ Bowring and Kornicki, 84-87.

²⁰ "Joint statement of Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and U.S. President Richard Nixon," 21 November 1969, available from http://www.ioc.u.ac.jp/_worldjpn/documents/texts/docs/19691121.D1E.html; Internet; accessed 20 January 2006.

²¹ Edward A. Olsen, "Transforming U.S. Policy toward Korean Unification: Creating a New U.S. – 'U.K.': Special Relationship," *Korea and World Affairs* (Summer 2005), 217.

²² Michael McDevitt, "Engagement with North Korea: Implications for the United States, in Conference Report," 23 February 2001, available from http://www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_northkorea.html; Internet; accessed 26 January 2006.

²³ Edward A. Olsen, *Toward Normalization U.S. – Korea Relations: In Due Course?* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 114-115.

²⁴ George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, September 2002), 26.

²⁵ Nicholas Eberstadt and Richard J. Ellings, "Assessing Interests and Objectives of Major Actors in the Korean Drama," *Korea's Future and the Great Powers*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 322.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Bush, 1.

²⁸ The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2004*, (Seoul: 2004), 107-113.

²⁹ Victor D. Cha, "Shaping Change in the Alliance," *East Asia* (Summer 2004), 43-44.

³⁰ Sean McCormack, "United States and the Republic of Korea Launch Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership," (U.S. Department of State press release on 19 January 2006); available from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/59447.htm>; Internet; accessed 26 January 2006. The joint statement said as follows. "The ROK, as an ally, fully understands the rationale for the transformation of the U.S. global military strategy, and respects the necessity for strategic flexibility of the U.S. forces in the ROK. In the implementation of strategic flexibility,

the U.S. respects the ROK position that it shall not be involved in a regional conflict in Northeast Asia against the will of the Korean people.”

³¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2005*, 2.

³² The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, *East Asian Strategic Review 2005*, (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 2005), 102-103.

³³ World Trade Organization, *International Trade Statistics 2005*, available from http://stat.wto.org/CountryProfiles/CN_e.htm; Internet; accessed 25 January 2006.

³⁴ Bong Hyon park, “When to Withdraw U.S. Forces from Korea,” *Korea and World Affairs* (Spring 2004), 63-65.

³⁵ Eberstadt and Ellings, 332.

³⁶ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense 1998*, available from <http://english.pladaily.com.cn/special/book/C1998/02.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2006.

³⁷ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense 2004*, available from [http://english.people.com.cn/whitepaper/defense2004/defense2004\(1\).htm](http://english.people.com.cn/whitepaper/defense2004/defense2004(1).htm); Internet; accessed 25 January 2006.

³⁸ Eberstadt and Ellings, 335-337.

³⁹ Seung-Hawn Kim, “Anti-Americanism in Korea,” *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 2002-03), 112.

⁴⁰ Shin Chang-woon, “Majority Opposes U.S. Troop Presence”, *JoongAng Daily*, September 22, 2005 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200509/21/200509212243265579900090309031.html>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2006.

⁴¹ Kim In-gu “Korean Students Believe U.S. Most Opposed to Reunification,” *The Chosun Ilbo* [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://english.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200406/200406020037.html>; Internet; accessed 30 January 2006.

⁴² Chan Yul Yoo, “Anti-American, Pro-Chinese Sentiment in South Korea,” *East Asia* (spring 2005), 21-22.

⁴³ Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu: *The Art of War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77.

⁴⁴ The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, 177.

⁴⁵ Alexandre Y. Mansourov, “Mercantilism and Neo-Imperialism in Russian Foreign Policy during President Putin's 2nd Term, *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* (Spring 2005), 179.

⁴⁶ The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, 177. President of Russia Home Page, *Press Statements and Response to Journalists' Question Following Russian-Korean Talks, 2005*, available from http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/11/19/0940_type82914_type82915_97634.shtml Internet; accessed 29 January 2006.

⁴⁷ Mansourov, 178-179.

⁴⁸ Eberstadt Ellings, 329-330.

⁴⁹ Mansourov, 182.

⁵⁰ The Ministry of Unification, *The Policy for Peace and Prosperity*, available from <http://www.unikorea.go.kr/index.jsp> Internet; accessed 29 January 2006.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, 74.

⁵³ Poll Finds Pragmatic Patriotism among the Young, *ChosunIlbo*, August 14 2005, [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://English.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200508/200508140019.html>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2006.

⁵⁴ "Most S. Koreans Prefer Phased Unification" *The Korea Times*, 20 December 2005 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/nation/200512/kt2005122020433411990.htm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 2006.

⁵⁵ The phrase explains "national defense objectives" and shows the difference between 2000 edition and 2004 one as follows. (National defense objective; to defend the nation from external military threats and invasion, uphold peaceful unification and contribute to regional stability and world peace.)

"defending the nation from the external military threats and invasion" means protecting the country from direct military threats from North Korea including its conventional military capabilities, weapons of mass destruction and forward military deployment as well as other external military threats that threaten the nation's right to survival. (*Defense White Paper 2004*, 53)

"defending the nation from the external military threats and invasion" means protecting it from any possible external military threat as well as those immediate threats from North Korea, which, as the nation's main enemy, could endanger our survival. (*Defense White Paper 2000*, 68)

⁵⁶ Scott Snyder, "South Korea's Squeeze Play," *The Washington Quarterly* (Autumn 2005), 98-99. According to Snyder, South Korea took a hard-line against North Korea while the U.S. took a soft-line in 1994. The roles have reversed during the second North Korea crisis. The U.S. takes a hard-line under the "CVID (Complete, Verifiable, and Irreversible Dismantlement) policy" while South Korea continues to pursue a policy of economic engagement toward North Korea despite mounting tensions.

⁵⁷ *Survey Report of Relation between Japan and Korea*, Japan Research Center, available from <http://www.nrc.co.jp/rep/rep20050815.html>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2006.

⁵⁸ Ahn Sung-kyoo, "Survey shows Japan is seen as leading threat," *JoongAng Daily*, 18 April 2005, [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200504/17/200504172206552209900090309031.html>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2006

⁵⁹ Hahn Chaibong, "The Two South Koreas: A House Divided," *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2005), 62.

⁶⁰ Presidential Committee on Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative Office of the President Republic of Korea, *Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative*, available from <http://72.14.203.104/search?q=cache:xzYNIHIDrMJ:www.nabh.go.kr/board/data/policy/313/303.pdf+%22northeast+asian+cooperation+initiative+for+peace+and+prosperity%22&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2006. This report said as follows. "The ROK can play a role as a 'Bridge Building' state. The ROK intends to link continental and maritime powers to create a new order of cooperation and integration. By taking advantage of its geographic position as a peninsular country, the ROK can play a role of bridging the two through the initiation of cooperative initiatives in security, economic, and social and cultural domains." [Text to endnote]

⁶¹ The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, 83.

⁶² Yonhap News Agency, *North Korea Handbook*, trans., Monterey Interpretation and Translations Services, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 1011-1012.

⁶³ Article 11 of the North Korean Constitution states that "The DPRK shall conduct all its activities under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea." (*North Korea Handbook*, 1013.) This means that the Workers' Party leads the DPRK state. Since the Charter is the foundation of the Workers' Party, it supercedes the Constitution.

⁶⁴ Tai Sung An, *North Korea: A Political Handbook*, (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1983), 246.

⁶⁵ The National Institute for Defense Studies Japan, 74.

⁶⁶ Article 3 provides as follows. "Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties in territories now under their respective administrative control, or hereafter recognized by one of the Parties as lawfully brought under the 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."

⁶⁷ According to *National Defense Program Guidelines FY2005-* (Japanese government approved by the Cabinet on 10 December 2004), regarded China as follows.

China, which has a major impact on regional security, continues to modernize its nuclear forces and missile capabilities as well as its naval and air forces. China is also expanding its area of operation at sea. We will have to remain attentive to its future action.

According to *The Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2005*, which is annual report to congress from Department of Defense, conveyed cautious view while it said "China does not now face a direct threat from another nation."

[I]t continues to invest heavily in its military, particularly in programs designed to improve power projection. The pace and scope of China's military build-up are, already, such as to put regional military balances at risk. Current trends in China's military modernization could provide China with a force capable of prosecuting a range of military operations in Asia – well beyond Taiwan – potentially posing a credible threat to modern militaries operating in the region.(p.13)

China has expanded defense expenditure for many years. There is also problem of its transparency (China has not disclosed its defense budget in detail and announced amount is considered to be only a part of its actual expenditure). China has showed adversarial activity around Japan (a submerged Chinese nuclear-powered submarine intruded into Japanese territorial waters in November 2004). (*Defense of Japan 2005*, 59-63.)

⁶⁸ We can find hostility heating up by action and reaction in poll. The survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office of Japan on October 2005 showed deterioration of Japanese affinity for China and South Korea. According to this poll, 63.4 percent of respondents said they do not have affinity for China, while 32.4 percent have. Regarding South Korea, affinity decreased by 5.6 percent from former year though it had increased for several years and marked best at 56.7 percent last year. (Survey about Diplomacy 2005, Cabinet Office of Japan, available from <http://www.8.cao.go.jp/survey/h17/h17-gaikou/2-1.html>; Internet; accessed 14 January 2006.) In addition to Yasukuni visit, anti-Japan demonstration in China broke up and spread in April 2004.

⁶⁹ *General Policy Speech by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the 164th Session of the Diet*, January 20, 2006, available from http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/koizumispeech/2006/01/20speech_e.html; Internet; accessed 31 January 2006.

⁷⁰ World Trade Organization, *International Trade Statistics 2005*, available from http://stat.wto.org/CountryProfiles/CN_e.htm; Internet; accessed 25 January 2006