

Anti-American, Pro-Chinese Sentiment in South Korea

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Anti-American, pro-Chinese sentiment is spreading widely in South Korea. This phenomenon is caused by extreme US-ROK policy dissension over matters related to North Korea, especially the nuclear questions, and South Korea's emotional attachment for China based on historical and geopolitical factors. In order to prevent this irrational situation from damaging the mutual interests of both Washington and Seoul, the two capitals should come up with mutually acceptable options for nuclear issues—placing more gravity and priority on dialogue over sanctions as a matter of strategy. Coercive measures can be employed only as a last resort. In order to maintain peace, to fulfill the political responsibility as a great power in East Asia, and to reciprocate to South Korea's positive expectation, Beijing should play a more constructive role in resolving the North Korean nuclear issues and in inducing Pyongyang to open up and reform more aggressively.

Key words: anti-American, pro-Chinese sentiment, North Korea's nuclear weapons, US-ROK policy dissension, US international primacy

South Korea has long been one of the closest allies of the United States. Just as crucial as the role of NATO in Europe, as important as the US-Singapore, US-Philippine, and US-Thai security relationships in Southeast Asia, the US-ROK security cooperation along with US-Japanese alliance has clearly been the most invaluable and indispensable element for the stability and peace in East Asia.¹ However, for the last several years, the US-ROK alliance has suffered drastic and undesirable changes. Voices in Korea denouncing America have grown at an unprecedented rate, and demands have risen for US military bases in Yongsan, Seoul, to move out of the city and for the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) to be amended. In reaction, anti-Korean sentiment has spread within the United States: Unable to understand why a country that should be appreciative instead criticizes, some American mass media and security specialists have strongly retorted that US troops should not stay where they are not welcome. Said to be coincidentally—but Koreans find it hard to believe—a third (12,000) of the US Forces in Korea (USFK) were announced to be leaving Korea.

What is even more worrying is the pro-Chinese sentiment growing openly and radically in Korea. As China looms as Korea's biggest trade partner, a

majority of congressmen in the incumbent party and some in the opposition parties are counting China as the country Korea should most value in the future, whether for diplomatic or economic purposes. Polls also show more and more people feeling emotionally closer to China than to the United States. As an expression of worry over this new syndrome, one influential daily published a column titled "Is It All Right to Worship China?"² Aided by a steadfast increase of the progressive, or left-leaning, ideology and inclination, this trend may be linked to the serious disruption of US-ROK relations, and in the longer term do irrevocable damage to the alliance. This article discusses why such phenomena emerged, what a great mistake it is for South Korea to associate more with China at the expense of the US-ROK alliance, and what the related powers should do.

I. The Cause

South Korea long bestowed the highest priority on US-ROK alliance because the role of the United States has been incomparably crucial in containing the threat emanating from the North and the dangers inherent in the spread of communist influence. These days, the reason bilateral security cooperation is downplayed so, at least in psychological terms, is that the political and military vulnerabilities that Seoul perceives from outside have decreased remarkably, obviously due to the structural collateral of the Soviet collapse. Analyzing from a micro level, however, the conspicuous advance of anti-American sentiment is caused by mutually reinforcing factors: Washington-Seoul controversies over the Sunshine Policy and North Korea's nuclear problem, some traditional and conventional questions related to the USFK, and the hurt pride of many Koreans in the course.

The Washington-Seoul dissension has emerged most conspicuously and on broad scale during the administrations of George W. Bush and Kim Dae-jung. Though there had previously been bickering, nothing had been as organized, systematic, and deep-seated as is the case today. Seoul believed the Sunshine Policy would provide the most persuasive road to induce the North to reform and open, promote reconciliation and cooperation, and lead to peaceful unification without war. Formation of a stable security environment through diplomatic rapprochement and normalization with Western democracies would remove the incentive for Pyongyang to develop weapons of mass destruction. The nuclear freeze following the Agreed Framework of 1994, the summit meeting of June 2001, and economic exchanges that were barely beginning to institutionalize, all seemed to prove that the Sunshine Policy was on the right track.

However, Washington had a somewhat different understanding over the role and legitimacy of the Sunshine Policy. True, the policy did induce some opening on the part of the North, but they were not really significant; that Pyongyang allowed the Geumgansan Diamond Mountains to the South Korean tourists could not be regarded as a sufficient evidence for North's opening, because tourists stay at a remote isolated area just for a couple of days in exchange for very high fees. Nor were there any visible reforms; though some

analysts argued that Pyongyang's introduction of certain economic measures—change in foreign exchange rates and raising of the merchandise prices—was a signal that Pyongyang had begun to embrace the merits of the market economy, it was obviously an exaggeration. What was most agonizing to Washington was that the Sunshine Policy was instrumental in delivering a billion dollars to Pyongyang through Geumgangsán Diamond Mountains sightseeing and half a billion as price for the summit meeting—which money the regime used to purchase more weapons from China and Russia and attempt another round of nuclear development via uranium enrichment.³ To Washington, the Sunshine Policy was from the outset the wrong prescription, which adversely helped the “axis of evil” nation develop WMD, support international terrorism, sell narcotics, print and circulate counterfeit money, and prolong the life of a moribund state.

Washington and Seoul also disagreed about diagnosing the cause of and creating solutions for the nuclear crisis. Seoul believed that Pyongyang had not yet developed nuclear weapons, but was only using the possibility as a bargaining chip to induce political rapprochement and economic subsidies. The nuclear problem was caused, then, by Pyongyang's diplomatic skill in taking advantage of the concern of the US and international community worrying about WMD proliferation. Such trust was quite contrary what Washington thought: Not only had Pyongyang developed several nuclear weapons, but it would be able to mass produce more if it so desired. These might find their way into the hands of irresponsible states and terrorist groups. The chances for Pyongyang to use them for military purposes seemed reasonably high; if they were not used actually, obviously they would at least be used for military blackmail.

In order to resolve the nuclear question, Seoul argued for a return to the 1994 Agreed Framework, maintaining that the 1994 package deal was most rational: Washington and Seoul provide political rapprochement and economic benefits in exchange for Pyongyang's freeze of nuclear activities. It would restore the previous status quo in which Pyongyang would not develop any more nuclear weapons, and most of all would let all the immediate actors involved avoid chances of military collision. At a minimum, there would be no war on the Korean peninsula.

Washington's idea was different: North Korea was not to be trusted again. For the last several years Pyongyang had been cheating the world by secretly attempting to manufacture nuclear weapons again through uranium enrichment while receiving enormous amounts of economic subsidies as designated by the Agreed Framework. If another agreement were concluded, how could anyone be sure that Pyongyang would abide by? Now is high time to correct the misbehavior of a rogue “axis of evil” country, and force Pyongyang to accept comprehensive, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all its nuclear facilities. Only when Pyongyang fulfills that responsibility, would Washington consider the possibility of economic subsidy as material compensation. If Pyongyang continues to stick to its hard-line policy, sanctions, economic and military, would not be excluded as an option.

This perception gap has not narrowed, and it has had its own impact on Korean domestic politics. When North Korean naval vessels killed several

South Korean sailors in the Yellow Sea, progressive sectors in Korea—participatory government, left-leaning civic organizations, and progressive mass media—blamed all this anomaly and malaise on the hawkish, conservative Bush policy. This negative understanding provoked leftist political activists to quarrel about the issues related to the USFK. They insisted that Status of Forces Agreement clause dealing with criminal jurisdiction be amended. They demanded that US Yongsan military base be outside of Seoul and, in line with Pyongyang's constant refrain, that the USFK withdraw from Korea.

When an American military vehicle ran over and killed two schoolgirls, they organized enormous mass candlelight demonstrations all over the country, in which several tens of thousands participated. This situation was very similar to what has happened to Okinawa, Japan, in that enormous numbers of people held demonstrations and uprisings over the issues that typically occur while the US soldiers stay in a foreign country, including sexual assaults, killings, traffic accidents, and environmental pollution.⁴ But the Okinawa case was motivated mostly by a sense of legal justice among general populace to correct the wrongs; the Koreans, relatively, were more influenced by leftist nationalistic emotions over US stance towards the Sunshine Policy and nuclear issues. In fact, questions concerned with USFK have not been much of an issue between the US and Korea because most of the controversial matters have already been institutionally corrected. The Korean SOFA was upgraded to the level of those for NATO and US Forces in Japan (USFJ), eliciting overall satisfaction from the mass media and civic organizations. It had been previously revised in 2000 following the Japanese example so that American soldiers who commit serious crimes would be delivered to the Korean judicial authorities, not after conviction by a US military court, but to stand trial under Korean prosecution. Furthermore, it was agreed many years ago that the Yongsan military base was to be relocated to the periphery of Seoul.

The unfortunate incident—an American military vehicle running over the two schoolgirls—simply catalyzed a dispersion and escalation of the antagonistic fervor when many, especially progressives, were extremely angered by the American stance over the Sunshine Policy and nuclear issues. If the US had not objected to the legitimacy of the Sunshine Policy, and if the US did not declare the possibility of coercive measures—sanctions or even military—as an option for the resolution of North Korea's nuclear issues, there would not have been such intense and widespread anti-USFK agitation.

Is Korea's pro-China proclivity all a result of anti-American sentiment? It might be partially so, but a more fundamental cause seems to reside in the anticipatory psychology of the Korean people towards the ascendancy of China as a new center of power. Since opening up, the Chinese economy has been growing so remarkably as to record 9–10% of annual growth for several decades. Its official GNP of \$1.5 trillion is approaching that of advanced industrial countries in Western Europe. China is advantaged with high quality cheap labor and a huge market of 1.3 billion people with a potential of further growth. Since its entry into the World Trade Organization, China has tried to observe international commercial regulations more regarding fair trade and invest-

ment. While growing economically, Chinese political influence has also increased. During the Cold War, its political role was constrained between the two superpowers, but without the Soviet Union its voice has grown far bigger. China is now much more active in world affairs. Beijing's engagement in the affairs of Korea seems unavoidable, apparent in the current six-party talks process to resolve Pyongyang's nuclear problem. Koreans seem to believe more and more that they cannot escape from the influence or intervention of a rising China.

South Koreans feel the pressure of China's geographical proximity, and for the last two thousand years the peninsula has been under the influence of China. The historical bilateral nexus was a tributary relationship, encompassing political, military, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. Chinese dynasties had the official right to intervene in the domestic politics of its smaller neighbor, from the selection of the name of the Korean dynasties to the individual rulers. Militarily, the two countries were allies to engage in a common defense against threats from abroad. When Japan, ruled by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, invaded Chosun in 1592, the Ming Empire sent its armies to save its Korean ally. Socio-culturally, too, the two were very intimate, organically almost one as is observed in the degree of Confucian influence and the originality of Chinese characters used and oriental medicine practiced in Korea. During the Chosun era, Korea used to be called "small China," and many experts argued that "Korea was more sinified than China."

II. Objective Assessment

China plays an important role in today's international community. In order to accomplish the grand goal of democratic peace, President Clinton actively sought Chinese cooperation, his attitude well manifested in repeated speeches. The essence was that cooperation from Beijing was indispensable in light of China's enormous population, geopolitical bearing, future economic and military potential, and splendid cultural heritage.

Today's China exercises noticeable diplomatic influence. In the first Gulf War, Beijing, along with Moscow, agreed in the UN Security Council to the resolution that Iraq must withdraw from Kuwaiti territory, but opposed any dispatch of UN forces. That pushed Washington to build a multinational force composed of countries supporting the ideologies and values of the free world to roll back Saddam's invading army. During the first North Korean nuclear crisis of 1994, Beijing played a critical role behind the scenes in Pyongyang accepting the US proposal. Ever since the September 11th incident, there has been cooperative Sino-Russian effort to subdue Islamist terrorism, augmenting the strength and vigor of the endeavors of the liberal world.

China has many responsibilities to fulfill in the future for the world and Asia. One of the most important and widely recognized now is to prevent weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear and missile technologies, from flowing out of China. This is all too obvious when imagining the cataclysm that could be caused by such horrifying weapons in the hands of rogue states or irresponsible terrorist groups in Southeast and Central Asia

and the Middle East.⁵ Al-Qaeda is rooted in some 80 to 90 countries and ruthlessly attacks civilians and liberal governments.⁶

China has been reasonably cooperative with the US and international community to battle international terrorism. Following the September 11th attacks, Beijing clearly stated that it was strongly against terrorist activities killing numerous innocent civilians, and has repeatedly said that it would clearly uphold the principle of fighting international injustice. Beijing's policy is reflected in its efforts to subdue the separatist movement of the 7 million Islamic inhabitants in Xinjiang in the northwest, which possesses significant oil resources and serves as a strategic buffer with the Central Asian states. Beijing managed to suppress the uprisings in Xinjiang unilaterally, regarding them as domestic matters, and its endeavors to share information or to provide funds for international efforts have been extremely limited. But Beijing's policy has been instrumental in severing the worldwide connections among Islamic terrorists. This was similar to what Russia did in Chechnya. Moscow was so opposed to the 20 million separatist Chechens that it did not mind incurring enormous casualties. Its actions did, however, help curb the spread of international terrorism despite the resulting controversy over human rights.⁷

Beijing's role in East Asia is equally critical. It has to peacefully resolve the China-Taiwan unification problem, along with Washington (which has long opposed Taipei's unilateral declaration of independence but which also stands firm against any cross-strait military moves).⁸ China can also exercise extensive influence over the India-Pakistan conflict. Its role is decisively important in resolving the second Korean peninsula nuclear crisis, because only Beijing can apply direct pressure upon Pyongyang with multiple aspects of leverage.⁹ If the Chinese leadership rationally abstains from its territorial conflicts with diverse small states such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam in the vicinity of the South China Sea, and with Japan over Senkaku Island, it will receive international respect.¹⁰

When working for international peace, China will have no problem whatsoever lying ahead. On the contrary, if China attempts to exercise excessive political power or pursue international hegemony for self-centered purposes, it will entail numerous troubles.¹¹ The United States, the other advanced industrial democracies, and even contiguous Russia would not be hampered by an ambiguous Chinese foreign policy, dotted with uncertainty. The experts expect this to precipitate limitation in Sino-Russian cooperation, even though the two have been cooperating well since the mid-1990s.¹² China continues to be categorized as an Asian country rather than a world-class country on the level of the United States. Chinese military capacity is particularly vulnerable in its air force and navy.¹³ The quantum jump to the status of blue water navy and the control of sea lanes would require at least two or three aircraft carriers, and the old Soviet-model Sukhoi fighter planes would have to be replaced with modern aircraft. Such military restructuring is impossible with China's current \$50 billion defense budget.¹⁴

China has been systematically and extensively building its military capabilities since the first Gulf War.¹⁵ This was in reaction to the shock China felt at the outcome of the war, which exhibited the up-to-date technologies of the US

and the multinational forces, such as stealth bombers and the computer-guided precision missiles. Beijing has tried to modernize its military as much as possible, from strategic to the conventional forces. Since China has only 20 or so long-range missiles, easily exposed to attack, mobile missiles were built and deployed. Old Soviet model fighter planes of the 1960s were replaced with more sophisticated ones and in-flight refueling systems were newly imported from Israel. But the People's Liberation Army is far from the equal of the West, even in the field of conventional weapons, let alone the most essential and valued elements in any future battle, including the C⁴I.¹⁶

Is there any chance for China to become militarily much stronger in the future, with its growing economy as a background? Several Western economic institutes estimated that the Chinese economy could surpass that of America within 20 to 30 years in terms of simple GDP. In light of the assessment of the World Bank and IMF that the current Chinese unofficial GNP could be much bigger when the purchasing power is taken into account, that kind of prediction might someday be realized. But, such estimation is based only on the expectation that China's current growth rate would continue for several more decades, and that the US or the advanced European countries would stop their economic growth; neither assumption is warranted. When considering that the locomotives of economic growth originate from the knowledge-based industries these days such as the Internet, computers, or biotechnology, the legitimacy of such forecasting needs more careful examination. More significantly, even if the Chinese economy does grow as fast as some imagine, it does not mean that China can acquire the most advanced technologies needed to become a militarily influential state of world class. Economic capacity is important for a strong military, but wealth does not always translate into commensurate military strength.

Military capabilities do not grow in a day. Technologies cannot be imported or transferred as any country desires; it is possible usually within an alliance system or at least when there is little doubt about the future behavior of the purchasing country. As long as China does not provide enough evidence to the international community that it is a safe country, the most important elements of military technologies will not be transferred to it, even at a high price—as was the case among Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control (COCOM) nations during the Cold War. Chinese efforts to buy technology and weapons system from Russia would also face enormous barriers once the US and the West are determined to counter them. Global positioning systems (GPS) and all kinds of advanced weapons systems that appeared ten years later in the second Gulf War cannot be imported from abroad unless China sufficiently proves that it is a responsible partner of the international community.

Since escaping its socialist economic shackles, the Chinese economy has developed splendidly. Labor has become more independent from state control; company managers have appeared as a new social class. Agricultural and industrial productivity have grown. As commercial motives and bourgeois impulse buying expand, the volume of trade and international transactions have grown explosively. More and more foreign companies invest in China, especially after its entry into the WTO; and its reserves of hard currencies

amount to more than \$300 billion. But the Chinese economy has as many problems to solve. For China to grow faster, the major industries currently under the control of the central government need to be privatized.¹⁷ When more than 50% of China's total industrial products are produced by state-owned enterprises, history has proved that there must be room to increase efficiency. Per-capita income, currently under \$2,000 per year, should go up. If the masses do not become wealthier, citizens will not enjoy the fruit of economic development, and China will not be regarded as an affluent country by international standards.

As Chinese society pluralizes, Beijing will encounter greater and greater domestic challenges. Issues are growing that China must face in the process of modernization. It is not yet quite clear how the huge country will deal with diverse questions posed by widely differing social sectors and classes, but at least for the moment, the record is disappointing and more progress is needed. Christians enjoy a certain level of freedom, in appearance, so long as they accept government policy without complaint. If they behave independently they face severe state control and intervention in various forms, including physical arrest on the charge of treason. Falun Gong members, who once numbered 200 million, were continuously oppressed and decimated, because they were deemed to have the capability to organize someday and challenge government authority. Mass media are officially allowed to broadcast independently, but in reality, no one is allowed to challenge or contradict government policy. The attempt of some liberals to establish a separate party in 1997 was blocked by the Communist Party, which has no intention to permit pluralist democracy. The general populace also thinks that the economy should grow first before human rights and democracy are allowed.¹⁸ Chances are good that China will eventually evolve into a liberal democracy, but its transformation into a country that the outside world feels is safe will need time.

III. Why Wrong?

Is it right for Koreans to worship China unconditionally? Absolutely not. China must not be treated as a power that can replace America on the basis of superficial promised capabilities and an unverified guess about future growth. By no means should Korea exclude China as a future partner, but Seoul can cooperate with Beijing on a selective basis while keeping the US-ROK alliance strong. No one in the world can out-compete the United States as a strategic partner for Korea because no one can provide such comprehensive and multi-dimensional benefits for the present or in the foreseeable future. Russo-Korean relations have not been particularly attractive since the 19th century. Though there exist opportunities for bilateral cooperation, note that when Moscow tried to sell Korea its jet fighters, transfer of military technologies was not to be included. Japan does not express any particularly pleasant emotion toward Korea. China continues to think of Korea as a kind of vassal state, as it did for thousands of years.

The United States currently enjoys unchallenged primacy. Such political status might not last forever, but it can be expected to continue for quite a

while. Nowhere in the world is beyond the reach of decisions made in Washington. The US played a critically important role in preventing the incidents in Bosnia and Kosovo from creeping into Western Europe. Eastern European countries' eagerness to enter NATO for security guarantee, and their fervor to be admitted to the European Union (EU) for economic prosperity, testify to the superiority of liberal democracy and market economy that America has advocated for so long, and fought to establish. Russia complies with the leadership of its former American adversary by sending peacekeeping forces to Bosnia and Kosovo. Even though sporadically and selectively vocal to US positions, China is well aware that not only the resolution of Taiwan issue, but also its very economic development cannot be achieved without US cooperation. Since the end of World War II, Japan has been loyal to the principle of Washington-Tokyo security consultation and this is clear in the US-Japanese Security Guideline declared in 1997. Prime Minister Koizumi can lean toward neo-conservatism more freely because it does not contradict the principium of the Bush administration.

There is no change in the standing of American preponderance even after the September 11th incident.¹⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein argued at the time of Vietnam War that American power was declining, and Paul Kennedy too analyzed that US might was waning due to weakening industrial capabilities. But is it true? Post-Cold War America achieved phenomenal economic development with its GDP exceeding 10 trillion dollars. That is bigger than all EU countries' GDPs aggregated, more than twice that of second economic power in the world, Japan, and five times that of China. In military capacities, the most immediate element as a great power, America is unmatched and unrivalled. Russia has no mental leeway to heed on strengthening the military due to accumulated domestic problems, and Chinese military lags 30 years behind that of United States.²⁰ Japan would be able, if it so craved, to construct a first-class military mobilizing high-tech technologies, but Tokyo simply does not opt for political or military autonomy at least for the time being.²¹

In today's world, America exercises an indispensable leadership in finding solutions for worldwide problems. International Islamist terrorism is impossible to untangle without US initiative.²² Russian and Chinese collaboration is comparatively parochial.²³ To which country is Islamist terrorism helpful? Except a very few hawks, the Islamic countries clearly oppose the atrocities of international terrorism.²⁴

Even though more time is needed to safely control the post-Gulf War II state of affairs, the Bush administration's endeavor to build democratic Iraq is proceeding speedily. It already handed over political power to the sovereign Iraqi government, and political and military situations there are being stabilized conspicuously. Even though the Bush team, for a while, has been widely criticized for unilateralism, these policies have contributed significantly to the spread of liberty and liberal democracy in the Middle East and Central Asia. Despite the complex travails of various tribes and diverse political factions, Afghanistan is moving forward to the ideals of liberal democracy, slow though it is. The Pakistani government has joined the array, aspiring to realize noble morals, following American enthusiasm despite severe domestic opposition from not-inconsiderable Islamist elements in Pakistani society.

Obviously, the US cannot exercise its leadership alone, however splendid and efficient it may be; for the US to try to solve international matters unilaterally would multiply the problems. Preventing the proliferation of WMD needs close international cooperation from all partners available, and so does the struggle against Islamist terrorism. The United States would have experienced considerable difficulty politically, psychologically, and militarily in fighting the second Gulf War if not for the active participation and support from the United Kingdom and Australia from its outset—especially in light of astonishing opposition among many European nations.

Also, the US leadership does not always respond to world affairs as timely and effectively as it should. The al-Qaeda networks and activities had expanded very quickly in the 1990s as many incidents—the bombing of the World Trade Center, the massacre of US diplomats in Kenya and Tanzania, and the suicide boat attack on the USS Cole—prove, but Clinton administration was rather careless. It was only in the year 2000 that international terrorism took the highest priority in US security circles as the most immediate national threat. During the George W. Bush era, Washington decided to withdraw from the ABM Treaty and to retreat from the Kyoto Treaty despite considerable international and domestic opposition. Washington did not mind much that Paris, Bonn, many other capitals, and interestingly enough, even many Americans, opposed the military campaign in Iraq, eventually making them label the US leadership unilateral. When the second Gulf War was over and the inspection teams were dispatched to search for proof of development of WMD—the official reason of military intervention—there was no sufficient evidence to morally legitimize the venture. Nevertheless, many experts concur that there exists considerable moral justice in what the US has done, and that the US is unusually qualified as the sole balancer to bring peace in this turbulent and hard-to-predict world with numerous outstanding advantages.

The US is equipped with so-called soft power as well. Pluralist political institutions, judicial checks and balances against the executive branch, the power of public opinion, individual freedom, rule of law, and human rights are models for others to emulate.²⁵ Superb-quality American merchandise is also exemplary, and the open US market has served as an important engine for global economic growth. Possessing both hard and soft powers, the United States has ample responsibility. Other than the US, to whom can South American governments turn to help stop the illegal circulation of narcotics by anti-government crime cartels? Without US help, the Colombian government would not be able to root out the cocaine dealers who are protected by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a leftist anti-government organization. So far, the biggest hope comes from the US' military and economic support envisaged through the Colombia Plan. The situations are similar in Bolivia and Peru: Due to US efforts, the size of cultivating land for, and correspondingly the trade volume in, cocaine has been reduced more than 60%—despite resistance from those who profit from the industry.

Who can arrange economic and medical support for African countries suffering from hunger and disease? Who can send troops for the resolution of conflicts across the continent? Africa shows signs of a “Hobbesian state of

nature,” and there seems no hope for the inhabitants to manage their own destiny at this time. The problems of sheer starvation of more than 30 million people, malnutrition of more than 200 million, atrocious massacres among warring ethnic groups and nationalities, and refugees amounting to several million will not disappear by themselves. Most countries are not eager to be involved in this endless turmoil, and even the UN is poorly prepared to act in Africa—as the cases of Somalia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda testify. UN PKO and US forces who intervened in the Somali civil war for humanitarian purposes withdrew declaring that their missions failed. UN PKO activities in Sierra Leone could not achieve their goal of establishing peace when the anti-government forces did not agree to the legitimacy of a truce with the government. UN PKO could do nothing to prevent the genocide in Rwanda without real political and military backup from the US or other powerful countries. If there are any powers that can push the UN and related international organizations to take action, they would be the US and some advanced Western European countries.

Who would prevent Iranian development of WMD?²⁶ Iran has nuclear programs aimed at developing nuclear weapons, and is expected to succeed in enriching uranium by the end of 2005 and possess nukes by 2007. Seeking a peaceful resolution, delegations from the United Kingdom, France, and Germany—as representatives of EU countries—have tried to persuade Tehran to stop the programs in exchange for financial and technical assistance, but Tehran is unwilling to give up the ambition for more power and influence in the Islamic world. Doubting that the EU’s soft approach based on negotiations will work—arguing rather that Iran would just take unfair advantage—the US warns that the issue can be transferred to the UN Security Council and make Tehran a target of international sanctions, unless it complies with international demands.

What would happen to international regimes such as NPT, CWC, BWC, or MTCR if not for the combined efforts of the US and the advanced liberal democracies? The NPT is already challenged by the irresponsible attempts of North Korea and Iran, and will further lose efficacy unless it introduces a turning point by enlarging the numbers of participating countries or by strengthening punitive measures towards violators. The CWC, BWC or MTCR will also function much better when the leading Western democracies push to increase the numbers of the participating countries and to induce them accept more thorough inspections.

Would Khadaffi of Libya have given up WMD if not for strong, yet controversial US leadership? Probably not. He had been stubborn enough to survive the sanctions in effect since the Reagan administration. Only after the rise of the Bush administration did he conclude that further resistance against global norms would bring no good to him and his country. Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, progress seems doubtful. Even though the US initiative has, for complex reasons, been more constrained there than it could have been, still it was the indispensable force of US pressure that convinced Israel of need to establish an independent Palestinian state in order to make peace.

How will all the Asian problems mentioned so far develop—the disputes in the South China Sea, North Korean nuclear development, Taiwanese inde-

pendence, and India-Pakistan rivalry? One day, the ASEAN countries could need US intervention if Chinese aggression were to go beyond a certain limit; The North Korean nuclear question will obviously not be resolved without US intervention, and the same is true of China-Taiwan and India-Pakistan relations. As such, virtually every major case of international friction would be hard to settle without US mediation, even interference, as an international balancer.

IV. What to Do?

It is difficult to predict how long Korea's anti-American, pro-Chinese sentiment will last, but it can be said certainly that the phenomenon should be corrected because it infringes on the important common interests of both the US and the ROK. From the vantage points of international preponderance, the US might think that the significance of small allies including South Korea has decreased. When challenges from "axis of evil" states or international terrorism loom as the dominant threat and pertinent ad hoc coalitions come to be most required, the value of traditional allies might seem to have diminished. But South Korea has again proved itself a diplomatically and militarily valuable US ally through sending 3,000 soldiers to Arvil, Iraq. In the future, too, once the current security quagmire is over, there could arrive a new strategic era when traditional security cooperation with South Korea and forward presence there are required once again.

In order to cure the emotional wounds of the past several years and to revitalize the strained US-ROK alliance, Washington should try to lessen Seoul's biggest anxiety: that the possibility of war increases with the rise of economic and military sanctions as indispensable options for the nuclear mess. Washington's current approach, to levy more gravity on dialogue via six-party talks over sanctions as a matter of strategy seems conducive to normalizing the disturbed alliance. Of course, Washington would not wait forever. When it becomes clear again that Pyongyang is clearly determined to possess, develop, or even proliferate nuclear weapons, then Washington could move on to the next step of relying on more coercive measures. Until then, the US should be more patient and show signs of utmost sincerity regarding peace on the Korean peninsula. For its part, South Korea should reciprocate by recognizing once more why Washington worries so much about proliferation of WMD and mobilizes all means for their resolution. It is because Pyongyang's development of nuclear weapons can be linked to the nuclear armament of Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, and potentially throw the world into nuclear conflict through the inflow of these weapons into the hands of irresponsible terrorist groups.²⁷ North Korea's development of nuclear weapons is not just a problem for the Korean peninsula, but the world.²⁸ When inevitable, Seoul should be ready to join the American effort to foil Pyongyang's gamble by all means available. Seoul will find it easier to resolve North Korea's weapons of mass destruction when Washington and international community move quickly and in harmony, than vying for the impossible mission alone, later. Seoul should awake from the illusions of romantic ethnic nationalism that blood is thicker than ideology.²⁹

Seoul seems to have been psychologically hurt by the unilateral attitude and behavior of the Bush administration in managing bilateral relations.³⁰ It may be understandable since Korea has achieved OECD membership and national pride has grown much in the process. Washington, however, may have been finding it difficult to maintain a friendly stance when Seoul stubbornly insists upon its own position. Seoul should remember how beneficial the US-ROK alliance has been in the past, and should think how beneficial it would be in the future. For the last 50 years, the United States has supplied a security umbrella vital to systemic protection from communist subversion, and offered capital, technology, and markets absolutely vital for Korea to have risen as the 11th largest trading country.³¹ Seoul can be fully immersed in resolving the nuclear issues with Pyongyang because Washington blocks the harsh wind from outside. The US is the only country that can protect South Korea's interests in the complex and hard-to-predict future international environment. The international primacy of the US is absolutely advantageous to South Korea because the domestic structures of the two countries were built on the same foundation of liberal democracy and a market economy. For Seoul to turn its back on Washington—while Russia and China provide cooperation to the United States to subdue international terrorism, Eastern Europe aspires to liberal democracy and NATO security protection, and Japan strengthens the security nexus—would be a retrogression from the currents of the era and historical trend. South Korea's obsession with autonomy, extreme self-reliance, or unbalanced preference for China is not advisable.

In light of enormous expectations from the US and the international community for international peace, China should perform a role commensurate to its political status as a great power in East Asia. It can begin with a larger and clearer contribution to the resolution of the North Korea's nuclear problem. So far, Beijing has been helpful in resolving the nuclear questions through many routes including six-party talks, but has been hesitant in applying definite pressure on Pyongyang. As part of its historical and traditional format of diplomacy, and for reasons of foreign relations and domestic politics, Beijing is reluctant to be transparent in its intentions vis-à-vis Pyongyang. Beijing opposes Pyongyang's nuclear development verbally, but is lukewarm in action. Beijing needs to understand that nukes in North Korean hands would be against its strategic interests in every sense. If Beijing fulfills its responsibility in this regard and serves as tugboat for Pyongyang's incipient opening and reform, it will be remembered as an unforgettable watershed for its contribution for world peace. It will also become a critical juncture for China to secure the indispensable support from the international community needed to regain proper political status, to safely resolve its own security problems, and to accelerate economic development.

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Notes

1. Since WWII, the United States has maintained more than one hundred formal treaties and arrangements and security commitments for the sake of diplomacy and security strategies. Kurt M. Campbell, "The End of Alliances? Not So Fast," *The Washington Quarterly* 27:2 (Spring 2004), 150.
2. *Dong-A Ilbo*, 24 April 2004.
3. Larry A. Niksch, "Korea: U.S.-Korean Relations—Issues for Congress," *CRS Issue Brief for Congress* (Updated 18 July 2003), CRS-12.
4. Chalmers A. Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2000).
5. In order to understand American approaches to nonproliferation, see the speech delivered at the Sandia National Laboratories 12th Annual International Arms Control Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico by John S. Wolf (Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation) [<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/arms/02041902.htm>] (assessed on 19 April 2002).
6. Regarding the merciless features of international terrorism, see "The Network of Terrorism." [<http://usembassy.state.gov/seoul/>]; "Day of Blood and Fire," [<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/terrornet/03.htm>]; Murderous Declarations, [<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/ubs/terrornet/04.htm>]; Hijacking the World, [<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/terrornet/05.htm>] (assessed on 11 October 2001).
7. Regarding Sino-Russian cooperation to reduce Islamic agitation, see Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia?" *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder* 1459 (July 2001), 5-6.
8. President Bush always emphasizes that Washington would uphold the one-China policy, even though it can help Taipei so that it can stand on its own feet for national defense. "Bush, China's Hu Jintao Discuss North Korea, SARS, Taiwan" (White House Background briefing in Evian-les-bains), [<http://usinfostate.gov/reginal/ea/easec/bushhg8.htm>] (assessed on 1 June 2003).
9. David Michael Lampton, "China and the Crisis in Korea," *In The National Interest* 2:3 (July 2003), 1-3; Robert Manning and James J. Przystup, "The Great Powers and the Future of Korea," Council on Foreign Relations, [<http://www.foreignrelations.org/studies/transcripts/manning.html>] (assessed on 24 June 1998).
10. For the general debate for Sino-Japanese security relationship, Wu Xinbo, "The Security Dimension of Sino-Japanese Relations," *Asian Survey* XL:2 (March/April 2002), 296-310; Regarding the territorial competition and mutual perception between China and ASEAN countries, David B. H. Denoon and Wendy Frieman, "China's Security Strategy," *Asian Survey* 36:4 (April 1996), 425-434.
11. President George W. Bush promoted sincere cooperation with China since the September 11 incident, but initially he was somewhat worried about China's aggressive security policy and human rights situations. This position was well expressed in the speech he delivered at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California on 19 November 1999, "China and Russia—Powers in Transition." Meanwhile, Senator Jesse Helms emphasizes that Chinese obstructive behavior would find no way out, "Setting the U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda," [<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/pj61helm.htm>] (assessed on 29 March 2001).
12. Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship," 8.
13. Richard Ross, "Beijing as a Conservative Power," *Foreign Affairs* 76:2 (March/April 1997), 35-38.
14. Chinese defense budget is hard to calculate because it is dispersed in many different budget categories in another bureaucracies. Thus it ranges from 10 billion to 100 billion dollars, but a current reasonable guess including that of IISS is the neighborhood of 50 billion dollars.
15. For a detailed discussion of military modernization of China, David Shambaugh, "China's Military: Real or Paper Tiger," *Washington Quarterly* 19:2 (Spring 1996), 19-28.
16. Joseph S. Nye, "China's Re-emergence and the Future of the Asia-Pacific," *Survival* 39:4 (Winter 1997/98), 68-70.
17. The Chinese economy is waiting for new reform and industrial restructuring for transition to an efficient system for participation in international cooperation and corresponding competition. Barry Naughton, "The Dangers of Economic Complacency," *Current History* 95:602 (September 1996), 263-265.

18. Ming Wan "Chinese Opinion on Human Rights," *Orbis*, 42:3(Summer 1998), 361-369.
19. Stephen M. Walt, "Beyond bin laden (Reshaping U.S. Foreign Policy)," *International Security* 26:3 (Winter 2001/02), 64.
20. Regarding Russia's socio-political confusion and economic decline, see David Remnick, "Can Russia Change," *Foreign Affairs* 76:1 (June 1994), 35-48; Grigory Yavlinsky, "Russia's Phony Capitalism," *Foreign Affairs* 77:3(May/June 1998), 67-79; Clifford G. Gaddy and Barry W. Ickes, "Russia's Virtual Economy," *Foreign Affairs* 77:5(Sep/Oct 1998), 53-67.
21. Refer to Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," *International Security* 22:4 (Spring 1998), 171-198.
22. At the IISS conference held at Geneva the day after the September 11th incident, all the participants concurred that, if the United States does not save the world from the horror of international terrorism, the idea of world order would become an imaginary concept existing only in ideals. Paul Dibb, "The Future of International Coalition, How Useful? How Manageable?" *Washington Quarterly* 25:2 (Spring 2002), 133. To understand US effort to subdue international terrorism, see Raphael F. Perl, "Terrorism, the Future, and U.S. Foreign Policy," *CRS Issue Brief for Congress*, Order Code IB95112 (Updated 19 September 2001), CRS1- CRS 17; Paul R. Pillar, "The Instruments of Counterterrorism," National Intelligence Council, Central Intelligence Agency, [<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/101/ijpe/pj63pillar.htm>] (assessed on 20 November 2001); Dana R. Dillon and Paolo Pasicolan, "Southeast Asia and the War against Terrorism." *Heritage Foundation Backgrounder* 1496 (October 2001), 1-5.
23. Regarding that China's cooperative action is rather limited, see Bates Gill, "September 11 and Northeast Asia: Change and Uncertainty in Regional Security," *Brookings Review* 20:3 (Summer 2002), 2.
24. Fifty-six Islamic states condemned the barbaric actions of the terrorism, and declared that such behaviors contradict the peaceful teachings of the Islam religion. "Bush, in Press Conference, Decries Terrorist Evildoers," *Washington File*, [<http://usembassy.state.gov/ircseoul/www5052.html>] (assessed on 11 October 2001).
25. Joseph S. Nye, "U.S. Security Policy: Challenges for the 21st Century," U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda, *USIA Electronic Journals* 3:3 (July 1998), 20.
26. For the American leadership to prevent nuclear proliferation including that by Iraq, Iran, Russia, China, and North Korea, see Carl E. Behrens, "Nuclear Nonproliferation Issues," *CRS Issue Brief for Congress* (Updated 2 January 2002), CRS1- CRS 15.
27. Stephen J. Morris, "Averting the Unthinkable," *The National Interest* 74 (Winter 2003/04), 100-106.
28. Sang-Hyun Lee, "Terrorism and Asymmetric War: Is North Korea a Threat?" *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 20:2(Summer 2003), 32-37.
29. Sung-Yoon Lee, "Nuclear Diplomacy vis-à-vis the DPRK: A Dead-End Street," *Fletcher Forum* 27:2 (Summer/Fall 2003), 159.
30. Balbina Y. Hwang, "Anti-Americanism in Korea: Implications for the Future of the U.S.-ROK Alliance," *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 20:2 (Summer 2003), 65.
31. The role model for modernization along with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, as a country which achieved the miracle of Han River, would not have been possible either, if not for US support.