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# *Korean Détente*

## *A Threat to Washington's Anachronistic Military Presence?*

**by Doug Bandow**

## Executive Summary

The recent summit meeting between South Korean president Kim Dae Jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il raises the prospect that the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula may at last be coming to an end. Although the latest effort at détente could ultimately abort as did similar initiatives in the 1970s and early 1990s, North Korea's dire economic straits probably leave the Stalinist state little choice this time but to open itself to the outside world and seek trade and investment from its prosperous, democratic South Korean rival.

At the very least, the United States should do nothing that might disrupt the improvement in inter-Korean relations. But Washington's objective appears to be to preserve the U.S. military presence in Korea at all costs. Although the Clinton administration did lift some economic sanctions against North Korea after the summit, U.S. policymakers have also seized every opportunity to argue that the summit did nothing to change the threat environment and that U.S. troops will remain in South Korea indefinitely. Washington shows no willingness to withdraw those forces even if the current détente leads to a significant and permanent reduction in tensions. Indeed, U.S. officials suggest that the troops should remain even if reunification of the two Koreas takes place, arguing that a U.S. military presence is needed to preserve "stability" in Northeast Asia.

The U.S. troop deployment has been unnecessary for years. South Korea has twice the population of North Korea and an economy at least 30 times as large. South Korea is fully capable of building whatever military force is needed to defend itself against the North if détente should fail. The broader "stability" rationale is little more than a code word for keeping a military presence to contain China and restrain Japan. A continued U.S. troop deployment in Korea after reunification, however, would merely antagonize China without being large enough to be militarily useful in a showdown. The whisper rationale of needing the troops to deter democratic Japan is a measure of just how desperate the proponents of retaining the military presence have become.

*Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and the author of* Tripwire: Korea and U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changed World. *He was a special assistant to President Reagan.*

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## Introduction

Nothing is certain in international relations. Communism collapsed. The Warsaw Pact disintegrated. The Soviet Union dissolved. Now the leaders of the two Koreas have met.

Euphoria has been the response of many South Koreans. Polls found that 90 percent of respondents had a positive view of the North and a majority believed the possibility of war to be remote.[1] Nine of ten respondents also believed that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) would change, improve its relations with the West, and continue to expand its ties to the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The vast majority consider the North to be a partner and would welcome a visit by North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.[2]

The magazine *Korea Now* emblazoned its June 27 cover with a photo of South Korean president Kim Dae Jung and Kim Jong Il shaking hands, with the caption "Gateway to Peace and Unity."[3] Article titles included "Hope Floats in the Air," "Embracing the Future," "Dawn of a New Era," "With Wide Open Arms," "Epoch History in the Making," "A Monumental Step Forward," and "Meeting of Unified Minds."[4] One could be forgiven for believing that the magazine was published in Pyongyang.

The summit was more successful than most observers imagined possible. Kim Jong Il treated Kim Dae Jung with surprising respect. The former also confounded his image, appearing to be more intelligent, well informed, and charming than anyone had believed.[5] (Kim Jong Il, a reputed fan of Western movies, may have carefully choreographed his role, but that doesn't diminish the success of his performance.)

## Positive Signs

The two Koreas have already ended hostile propaganda broadcasts across the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and muted their respective commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War. Despite initial disputes over the release of North Korean spies, the two countries came to speedy agreement on an initial experiment in family reunification.[6] In late July negotiators met in Seoul to discuss taking further steps, such as reopening rail links between the two Koreas, to implement the summit agreements.

Another positive sign is Kim Jong Il's cautious endorsement of Chinese economic reforms during his recent visit to Beijing.[7] Pyongyang also has been shedding its isolationist past and increasing diplomatic contacts with numerous countries, including Australia, Britain, Brunei, Canada, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, the Philippines, and several Latin American states. Observes Yang Hyun-soo, a research fellow at the Institute for National Unification Policy in Seoul, "During the first few months of this year the North Korean government has been making various diplomatic breakthroughs in many directions."[8]

Optimists are looking toward expanded inter-Korean trade (about $340 million last year), additional aid for the North (the delivery of 200,000 tons of fertilizer is already under way, for instance, and President Kim has promised $450 million in assistance), regular opportunities for family reunification, installation of a hot line between the two countries' capitals, and conclusion of a formal peace treaty. There is even talk of Pyongyang's membership in such international organizations as the Asian Development Bank (North Korea applied to join in 1997 but was blackballed by Japan and the United States) and the International Monetary Fund (which sent an informational mission to the North in 1997) and participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum (Pyongyang attended its first meeting in July).[9] Talks have begun on cooperation for the 2000 Summer Olympics in September and the 2001 world table tennis championships. Kim Jong Il even seemed to welcome a visit by the Pope.

America's ambassador to Seoul, Stephen

Bosworth, concedes that rapprochement "could take less time than many of us wise pundits on the outside now believe. North Korea does not have a vested interest in delay and will be interested in moving this process forward."[10] Exulted Kim Dae Jung, "The danger of war on the Korean peninsula has disappeared."[11] In short, the Korean cold war may finally be ending.

## Grounds for Caution

Given the history of dashed hopes, the South Korean government and people should perhaps be a little less euphoric. In 1972 the two Koreas signed a reconciliation agreement and halted hostile propaganda. That accord, which endorsed unification, promised inter-Korean exchanges, and provided for a bilateral telephone hot line, soon collapsed. A decade later the North Koreans attempted to assassinate South Korean president Chun Doo Hwan during a state visit to Rangoon, Burma.

In 1990 the two nations' prime ministers met and soon thereafter inked arms reduction and economic cooperation agreements. (The latter was even more detailed than the pledges made by the two Kims in June 2000.)[12] The nuclear crisis soon followed the 1990 thaw, however, with the United States threatening (and, by some accounts, coming close to) war to halt North Korea's apparent nuclear weapons development program.

In 1994 the two leaders' predecessors, North Korea's Kim Il Sung and South Korea's Kim Young Sam, planned a summit, only to have the former die of a heart attack 17 days before the meeting. Relations rapidly soured, with the North returning to threats and aggressive action.

Will this time be different? So far, the DPRK has made few practical concessions. Although the North dropped its usual preconditions to inter-Korean negotiations (end of joint U.S.-ROK military exercises, repeal of Seoul's National Security Law, and so forth) before the summit, it presented the meeting as a triumph for the North and seemed to choreograph the festivities for international rather than domestic consumption.

Moreover, the obstacles to increased trade and investment remain immense. The North has attempted to create a more inviting investment climate, and some North Korean officials evidence surprising knowledge of the outside world.[13] But the DPRK remains an isolated totalitarian country: It lacks a rule of law, a convertible currency, productive industry, and a transportation network; business customs differ from those of capitalist countries; and even many companies that once intended to invest in the North have abandoned their plans.[14]

Most important, the DPRK remains capable of threatening, if perhaps less willing to threaten, South Korea. Although Pyongyang has pulled some FROG-7 rocket emplacements to the rear and reduced some naval activities, the bulk of its military remains poised near the DMZ. Argues Karl Swanson, chief historian of U.S. Forces Korea, "Don't think of it as a heavily armed border—think of it as a fighting zone waiting for the attack to be launched."[15] Although the South's qualitatively superior force would likely triumph, Seoul, barely 25 miles south of the DMZ, would almost certainly be heavily damaged or destroyed in any conflict.

## Unresolved Problems

Issues such as the North's missile program and U.S. troop deployments in South Korea remain unresolved. The past will not soon lift its heavy hand. Observes Robert Gallucci, dean of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, "There is a lot of history here—war, terrorism, nuclear ambitions, incidents at sea—that suggests the need for a lot of caution."[16]

Furthermore, the new agreement is not easy to fulfill. The platitudinous commitment to reunification has little practical meaning. The problem is not so much the different formal details of the two sides' unifica-

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tion proposals.[17] More problematic is the vast cultural, economic, and political gulf between the nations. Indeed, Goldman Sachs Group Inc. estimates that the cost of "fixing" the DPRK would run up to $1 trillion, more than wealthier West Germany spent on reunification with a wealthier East Germany.[18]

Moreover, in the joint declaration Seoul promised to release "unswerving Communists serving prison sentences in the South," something opposed by the opposition Grand National Party, which dominates parliament.[19] The good-will generated by the summit and the planned August reunion of families separated by the war may go only so far even in the South.[20]

What the summit has yielded, then, is the first step in a long process of rapprochement. A huge, indeed vital, first step, but just a first step nonetheless.

## Washington's Response

The Clinton administration responded with what Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon called "controlled exuberance," lifting economic sanctions against the DPRK.[21] U.S. companies now can trade and invest in non-strategic areas without a license and open direct communication and transportation links. One official told the *Los Angeles Times:* "It's not a reward, because we don't know if there's anything to reward yet. It's the U.S. trying to do what it can to support this positive movement by North and South Korea."[22]

That step is long overdue. The administration actually promised last September to act. And the 1994 Framework Agreement, which halted the North's nuclear program, also committed Washington to improve bilateral ties. Although misbehavior by the DPRK gave the Clinton administration a convenient excuse to do nothing, Washington had as much as or more than the North to gain from improving relations with Pyongyang.[23] The only downside would be if such a step aided the North Korean military, but despite charges of food aid diversions, it appears that most international humanitarian assistance has gone to starving civilians.[24]

Of course, the DPRK is hoping to benefit from economic investment without having to bear the cost of the pressures for political reform that often follow economic growth. Explains Kim Chung Kyun of the Hyundai Research Institute in Seoul: "North Korea has followed a mosquito-net liberalization policy. They're trying to open the window to catch a cool summer breeze without letting in the insects."[25] Yet the danger created by economic change will be enormous. Increasing contact with the West will almost inevitably have some corrosive political impact on the totalitarian state.

## Washington's Principal Objective: Keep the Troop Presence Forever

Typically, Washington denies that the summit should have any impact on American troop deployments or the U.S. alliance with South Korea. P. J. Crowley, spokesman for the National Security Council, stated that "we don't envision any change in the U.S. troops status."[26] The Pentagon's Bacon asserted that the ROK expects the troops to remain "for a long time to come."[27] Secretary of State Madeleine Albright contended that "our forces, when they are stationed somewhere, provide evidence of America's interest." In Korea, she claims, they promote "stability."[28] Robert Manning of the Council on Foreign Relations epitomized the view of the American foreign policy establishment when he worried not only about South Korean "giddiness" after the summit but also about the "loose talk about the future of the U.S.-Korean alliance and the U.S. military presence in Korea."[29]

The South Koreans have taken much the same position. South Korean ambassador Lee Hong-koo said that any withdrawal was

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"a long way off."[30] President Kim Dae Jung has called U.S. forces a stabilizing force.

In a sense, the reluctance in both Seoul and Washington to consider any change is understandable. The summit has not dramatically changed the threat environment or force balance on the peninsula. However, Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) admits that a permanent drop in tensions should allow a troop withdrawal.[31] Even Gen. Robert Riscassi, the now-retired commander of U.S. forces in Korea from 1990 to 1993, acknowledges that a formal peace treaty would create pressure for change "almost overnight." He adds: "Clearly there will be a debate. It's inevitable."[32]

But that debate shouldn't wait. In the aftermath of the summit, Bacon insisted, "We intend to remain a force for stability in that area as long as we are needed."[33] But U.S. forces weren't needed on the Korean peninsula even before the summit.

The South has upwards of 30 times the gross domestic product and twice the population of the North.[34] Although the North Korean regime survives, to the surprise of many observers, the North's economy is thought to have shrunk every year from 1990 to 1998, contracting almost by half.[35] Last winter even Pyongyang was reportedly subject to power outages. As many as 2 million people are thought to have died of starvation over the last five years, with another 100,000 to 200,000 illegally crossing into China.[36]

Seoul has also won the international contest, accumulating the most diplomatic recognitions and effectively breaking the alliance between the North and its onetime communist allies, Beijing and Moscow. In a reversal of policy, China and Russia have recently begun competing for influence in Pyongyang—Chinese president Jiang Zemin hosted Kim Jong Il in Beijing shortly before the inter-Korean summit, while Russian president Vladimir Putin visited shortly afterwards. Neither nation is interested in war on the peninsula.[37] Indeed, both maintain more significant economic ties with the ROK. Moscow's offer of economic aid is tied to Japanese participation, and Russia has begun shipping arms to the South to pay off its debts.

In short, the South leads the DPRK in every measure of national power other than military force levels, and the latter is a matter of choice, not an inevitable consequence of geography. South Korea's military is qualitatively better and backed by a larger reserve, a much stronger economic base, and a network of friendly states. The ROK could match its northern neighbor tank for tank if it wished. As South Korea acknowledges in its own defense reports, it chose to focus on economic development at the expense of military strength, which it could do secure in the protection by the United States.[38]

Indeed, Seoul has demonstrated its willingness to respond to North Korean efforts to build uniquely threatening weapons. More than two decades ago only intense pressure from Washington killed the Park Chung Hee government's incipient nuclear weapons program. And while the North's missile development efforts have created a furor, Seoul has responded with its own missile program. In fact, South Korea has been working to extend the range of its surface-to-surface missiles, which raised American complaints that it was violating the two nations' missile development agreement.[39]

## Increasingly Strained Justifications for the U.S. Troop Presence

In today's world, there's no need for America to defend South Korea. Rather, the U.S. presence is an anachronism, a Cold War leftover with no present justification.

Of course, some people back the U.S. presence in Korea for what Avery Goldstein, director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute's Asia Program, calls "dual-use" purposes.[40] That is, the North Korean threat provides a convenient pretext for maintain-

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ing a troop presence actually intended for other purposes—containing China, restraining Japan, and maintaining regional stability. Unfortunately for supporters of American involvement, Goldstein observes that "rapprochement on the Korean peninsula will eliminate this line of argument and require the U.S. and its allies, including Japan, to offer new justifications for their post–Cold War military postures."[41] Doug Paal, president of the Asia Pacific Policy Center, also worries about the disappearance of the North Korean threat. He says simply, "The public needs to be educated" about other reasons to keep U.S. forces in South Korea.[42]

The "dual-use" arguments are not only outmoded but illogical. Whatever the future course of Chinese-U.S. relations, the U.S. forces in Korea (especially the lone Army division) would be of little use since America would hardly be so foolish as to fight a ground war against China. A mission to restrain Japan makes even less sense. Tokyo needs to be pushed to do more militarily, not less. Despite disquieting memories among its neighbors, Japan is not about to embark on another imperialist rampage. Indeed, the greatest threats to regional stability are internal—a Muslim insurgency and political corruption in the Philippines, democratic protests and ethnic conflict in Burma, and economic, ethnic, nationalistic, and religious discord in Indonesia. There is little that U.S. forces stationed in Korea could do to counter any of those threats.[43]

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If general détente flourishes on the peninsula, there will be no credible argument for keeping American troops there. That realization seems to worry the administration. Secretary of State Albright's hurried trip to Seoul was allegedly intended to assess the summit's results, but it almost certainly also reflected U.S. concern that the ROK might take the prospects of inter-Korean détente a little too seriously. That the United States was an outsider did not go unnoticed in the region. Opines Kim Hyung Kook, an American University scholar currently living in Seoul, "There's [*sic*] a lot of people who are enjoying the sight of Washington being left behind."[44]

## Initiative Grabbing

There are subtle indications that Seoul intends to snatch the policy initiative away from Washington. For example, President Kim has sent former foreign minister Hong Soon Young as ambassador to Beijing and Yang Sung Chul, an obscure former lawmaker and professor, to Washington. Observers disagree about whether those choices reflect an increased emphasis on relations with China (Hong is the more serious diplomat), a determination to change policy toward the North (Yang is an expert on North Korea), or the operation of the political spoils system (Yang hails from Cholla province, President Kim's power base).[45]

Indeed, if the peninsula shifts away from a military struggle, in which Washington has an advantage, to a political and economic one, in which Washington's edge is less, Washington may lose its leadership position. Analysts debate whether China has been promoting Korean détente primarily to reduce regional tensions or to reduce U..S. influence, but the two goals are in fact compatible.

Beijing is not the only player desiring to expand its role. Shortly after the summit, Japanese foreign minister Yohei Kono indicated his desire to restart talks with Pyongyang, which had been suspended in April because of Japan's allegations of North Korean kidnapping of Japanese citizens during the 1970s and 1980s and the DPRK's claims for reparations for Japan's colonial rule earlier this century. "The government will not simply stay idle. We are closely watching North Korea's moves," he explained.[46] Apparently Japan is urging Russia to join it in expanding four-way security talks among the two Koreas, America, and China to include Moscow and Tokyo as well. In this environment, Washington may have to relearn the game of diplomacy, instead of simply relying on the clout that

comes from being South Korea's military guarantor.

Unfortunately, many leading South Koreans advocate an American military presence even after reunification for parochial and often short-sighted reasons. They all reflexively cite the kitchen sink argument of "stability."[47] President Kim supports retention of the U.S. presence "in order to maintain the balance of power in northeast Asia."[48] Sometimes, though, they are blunter. Hong Choo-hyun, a former ROK ambassador to America, noted that during the summit, "The South Korean president added it would be better for the [U.S.] forces to be kept in South Korea to prevent Japan and China from engaging in efforts to gain hegemony in the region."[49] But that presumes quiescent populations on both sides of the Pacific. While U.S. citizens may be largely oblivious to the U.S. commitment, South Koreans are not. There is growing evidence that the South Korean government may be out of step with the country's population in advocating a permanent U.S. military presence.

## South Korean Protests

President Kim had barely set foot back in Seoul before thousands of students took to the streets demanding that the Americans go home. Protesters also used June 25, the 50th anniversary of the war's start, as an opportunity to demand Washington's withdrawal. The U.S. military has established a "civil disturbance hot line" and, in the aftermath of the murder of an Army officer at a shopping mall in late June, warned of anti-American "strike squads."[50] Although such hostile sentiments still seem to reflect only fringe opinions, that may change. Amidst the summit euphoria an American soldier was sentenced to eight years in prison for murdering a South Korean bar waitress who refused to have sex with him. The case rekindled public anger over a status of forces agreement that limits Seoul's jurisdiction over U.S. soldiers accused of a crime. South Korean farmers—a decidedly more moderate force than student activists—have begun demonstrating against the presence of U.S. bases.

Curiously, there is some indication that the North is warming to the idea of maintaining U.S. forces in a different role: as peacekeepers.[51] That is, the North is hoping the United States will defend Pyongyang from a potentially overpowering South Korea! Over the long term, Pyongyang also seeks protection from Japan. But while permanently subsidizing the ROK's defense makes no sense, protecting the totalitarian DPRK, with which the United States fought a war, would be truly bizarre.

The United States should not allow itself to be manipulated by the DPRK. That would undermine Seoul's position and be widely resented by the South Korean people.

But the North now appears to place greater hopes in the ROK. Observes Joel Wit of the Brookings Institution, "It's no secret that North Korea has been very disappointed with the stinginess of the United States and the Japanese when it comes to economic help."[52] Having long denounced Seoul as a puppet of the United States, Pyongyang now expects South Korea to act independently—which is all to the good. The summit and the DPRK's burst of international activism may simply be "sophisticated extortion," as some observers charge.[53] But it may also presage increased cooperation and more.

The two Koreas affirmed reunification as an ultimate goal. It will not be easy to achieve, however sincere the expressed commitment on both sides. As Park Jie Won, South Korea's minister of culture and tourism, observes, "North Korea would never agree to it, and South Korea's economy would not survive the high costs."[54] But if the North Korean regime disintegrates—and, given the severe economic strains, that scenario cannot be ruled out—such considerations will mean little.

## Korea for the Koreans

Their future course, whether together or sepa-

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rate, should be determined by the two Koreas. Washington should do nothing to interfere with that process—especially if obstructionism is motivated merely by a desire to maintain the U.S. military presence. At the same time, Washington should not be expected to finance or militarily guarantee a rapprochement.

Warmer relations between the two Koreas are likely to lead to less ROK reliance on Washington. That bothers not only U.S. hegemonists, who want this country to dominate the world, but also some Koreans. Complains Jeon Jaewook, an adviser to the Grand National Party, "This could open up a Pandora's box by triggering a surge of nationalism that could weaken our alliance with the U.S. and Japan."[55] Some conservative South Koreans fear a tilt toward China, which long dominated the peninsula.

But today's imperialist-client relationship between Washington and Seoul is not good for either America or the ROK. The Korean War in the midst of the Cold War, with the persistent threat of renewed North Korean aggression, probably made the unnatural tie between Washington and Seoul necessary through the 1970s. Since then, however, the South has moved steadily ahead of the DPRK by virtually every tangible measurement. The ROK has become a serious country. Serious countries normally control their own destinies, by, for example, defending themselves.

The recent lovefest in Pyongyang seems likely to transform the relationship between North and South Korea, however erratically. It should also transform the relationship between the ROK and the United States. After a half century of sometimes tempestuous patron-client relations, it is time the two countries forge a friendly relationship between equals.

## Notes

1. Robert Manning, "Toward What New Ends?" *Washington Times,* July 2, 2000, p. B3.

2. "An Opinion Poll on the Inter-Korean Summit," *Korea Update* 11, no. 4 (June 25, 2000): 4.

3. *Korea Now,* June 17, 2000, front cover.

4. Ibid., pp. 4–13.

5. For a description of the reaction of South Koreans, see Doug Struck, "S. Koreans See North in New Light," *Washington Post,* June 16, 2000, pp. A1, A25. Kim even claimed to have previously traveled to China and Indonesia, to the surprise of North Korea watchers. Less rapturous were some South Korean veterans, who criticized their government for downgrading the ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the Korean War.

6. South Korea made a major concession since the final agreement ignored its claim that the North continues to hold prisoners of war from the Korean War, which ended in 1953. See, for example, Calvin Sims, "2 Koreas Finish Deal to Reunite Families," *New York Times,* July 1, 2000, p. A5. Of course, it is hard to believe that Pyongyang will ever acknowledge doing so. Similar unresolvable claims involve American POWs in Vietnam and Greek Cypriots seized by Turkish troops during Ankara's invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

7. See, for example, Paul Eckert, "China 'Rejoices' in Korean Summit, Urges Them On," Reuters, June 15, 2000.

8. Yang Hyun-soo, "New Diplomatic Moves," *Vantage Point,* June 2000, p. 20. See also Joshua Kurlantzick, "N. Korea Suddenly an ASEAN 'Hot Date,' " *Washington Times,* July 28, 2000, p. A1.

9. In fact, North Korea's participation seemed to be the highlight of the proceedings. Ibid., pp. A1, A18.

10. Quoted in Christopher Torchia, "U.S. Envoy: New Unity May Be Swift," *Washington Times,* June 27, 2000, p. A14.

11. Quoted in Calvin Sims, "A Cease-Fire Takes Hold in Korean Propaganda War," *New York Times,* June 17, 2000, p. A3.

12. David Wall, "Euphoria Fading Fast in South Korea," *Japan Times,* July 7, 2000, p. 16.

13. See, for example, Frank Ching, "North Korea's Other Face," *Far Eastern Economic Review,* June 15, 2000, p. 36; Michael Schuman, Jane Lee, and Neil King, "Two Koreas Still Face a Tortuous Road," *Wall Street Journal,* June 16, 2000, pp. A10, A12; David Kang, "We Should Not Fear the North Koreans," *Los Angeles Times,* June 13, 2000, p. A17; and John Burton, "Historic Korean Summit May Thaw Last Frontier of the Cold War," *Financial Times,* June 13, 2000, p. 8.

14. See, for example, Samuel Len, "Despite Thaw, Western Businesses Wary of North Korea," *International Herald Tribune,* July 7, 2000, p. 16; Mark

Schuman and Jane Lee, "Pact May Open Business Channel, But Firms Face Obstacles," *Asian Wall Street Journal,* June 19–25, 2000, weekly edition, p. 11; and Mark Magnier, "Seoul Sees Long-Term Potential in N. Korea," *Los Angeles Times,* June 10, 2000, p. A1.

15. Quoted in Sonni Efron, "Cold War Still Hot in Korea's DMZ," *Los Angeles Times,* June 11, 2000, p. A4.

16. Quoted in David Sanger, "Divining the Big Event: A Ray of Hope, at Least," *New York Times,* June 16, 2000, p. A14.

17. See, for example, "A Monumental Step Forward," *Korea Now,* June 17, 2000, p. 12.

18. Doug Struck, "In the South, One Korea Is Distant Goal," *Washington Post,* June 17, 2000, p. A14. Marcus Noland of the Institute for International Economics figured that an investment of at least $700 billion would be necessary to prevent a mass migration south. Helle Bering, "The Twain Shall Meet," *Washington Times,* June 21, 2000, p. A21.

19. Quoted in "Redefining Korean Relations in the Wake of the Summit," Stratfor Global Intelligence Update, June 16, 2000, www.stratfor.com.

20. Lee Hoi Chang, head of the Grand National Party, explained that "the GNP has become concerned over signs of psychological slackening in South Korean society, due largely to excessive and premature expectations for national unification, and an as yet unrealized North-South business boom." Quoted in Sonni Efron, "Korean Summit Opens with Hope, Handshake," *Los Angeles Times,* June 11, 2000, p. A6.

21. Quoted in Schuman, Lee, and King, p. A10.

22. Quoted in Efron, "Korean Summit Opens with Hope, Handshake."

23. Critics of U.S. lethargy include Donald Gregg, president of the Korea Society and former U.S. ambassador to South Korea, who complains that "we have dragged our feet" on lifting sanctions. Quoted in Steven Mufson, "U.S. Lauds Korean Talks, Says More Work Ahead," *Washington Post,* June 16, 2000, p. A25.

24. David Morton, "No Food Gone Astray," Letter to the editor, *Far Eastern Economic Review,* June 29, 2000, p. 3; and John Owen-Davies, "Say It with Flowers," *Financial Times Weekend,* June 24–25, 2000, p. I.

25. Quoted in Magnier, p. A4.

26. Quoted in Robert Burns, "U.S. Intends to Remain in S. Korea," Associated Press, June 15, 2000.

27. Ibid.

28. Quoted in John Lancaster, "U.S. Presence Fixed on Korean Peninsula," *Washington Post,* June 24, 2000, p. A20.

29. Manning.

30. Quoted in George Gedda, "U.S. Troops to Remain in S. Korea," Associated Press, June 15, 2000.

31. Joyce Howard Price, "Helms Broaches the Return of Troops," *Washington Times,* June 18, 2000, p. C1. The Pentagon and its congressional allies moved quickly to discourage such talk. Rowan Scarborough, "Talk of S. Korea Pullout Discouraged," *Washington Times,* June 20, 2000, p. A12.

32. Quoted in Robert Burns, "Pentagon to Keep Troops in Korea," Associated Press, June 16, 2000.

33. Quoted in Ibid.

34. By one estimate, the respective per capita GDPs of the South and North are $13,366 and $741. "Just the Beginning for Korea?" *Washington Times,* June 16, 2000, p. A22.

35. See, for example, *The Unification Environment and Relations between South and North Korea: 1999–2000* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2000), p. 72; and Schuman and Lee. In 1998 the DPRK's GDP was estimated to have grown 6.2 percent. Ryusuke Hashimoto, "North Korea Sees GDP Climb 6.2%," *Nikkei Weekly,* June 26, 2000, p. 22.

36. The death rate has fallen, though observers disagree over whether food is more plentiful or the survivors tend to be hardier than the early victims. See, for example, Elisabeth Rosenthal, "Famine in North Korea Creates Steady Human Flow into China," *New York Times,* June 10, 2000, pp. A1, A6.

37. Both countries seem determined to reduce the instability long fomented by the North. During Russian president Putin's recent trip to Pyongyang, North Korea offered to abandon its missile program in return for aid in launching scientific research satellites. Doug Struck, "U.S. Hustling to a New Beat in Asia," *Washington Post,* July 28, 2000, p. A20. This offer has yet to be put to a serious test, of course.

38. Doug Bandow, *Tripwire: Korea and U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changed World* (Washington: Cato Institute, 1996), pp. 73–75.

39. "U.S. Concerned by South Korean Missile Test," Stratfor Asia Intelligence Update—Red Alert, April 20, 1999, www.stratfor.com. Seoul won U.S. approval for

improving the missile, only to suspend the program in the wake of the summit. Doug Struck, "As Relations Thaw, Seoul Suspends Arms Plan," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2000, pp. A20, A25.; and "South Korea Still Building Missiles," United Press International, June 27, 2000, www.newsmax.com.

40. Avery Goldstein, "Fallout from the Summit: The Challenging Consequences of Korean Detente," Foreign Policy Research Institute, July 1, 2000, E-Notes, www.FPRI.org.

41. Ibid. North Korea provides much the same cover for Japan in terms of China, in both its alliance with the United States and any independent military development. See, for example, Lorien Holland and Chester Dawson, "What If?" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 29, 2000, p. 18.

42. Quoted in Barry Wain, "U.S. Forces Still Have a Role in South Korea," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, July 21, 2000, electronic version.

43. In fact, some people look to the United States for answers to such problems. Many Christian leaders are calling for American or United Nations action to stop the slaughter of Christians, with the apparent acquiescence of factions of the local government and military, in the Molucca Islands, for instance. Conversations in Jakarta, Indonesia, July 8–11, 2000. But Washington is, rightly, not prepared to coerce the world's fourth most populous nation and could not solve the conflict even if it attempted to do so. Even if the United States was ready to intervene, forces located on the Korean peninsula are far from today's principal arenas of turmoil—such as Fiji, Indonesia, and the Solomon Islands. Units stationed in Guam, Wake Island, and even Hawaii would be closer or roughly as close.

44. Quoted in Struck, "U.S. Hustling to a New Beat in Asia," pp. A1, A20.

45. See, for example, Lorien Holland and Shim Jae Hoon, "China's Korea Game," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 15, 2000, pp. 17–18; and "Seoul's Unusual Choice," Stratfor Global Intelligence Update, May 26, 2000, www.stratfor.com.

46. Quoted in Yosuke Naito, "Kono Talks on North Korea, the G-8 Summit and Russia," *Japan Times*, July 7, 2000, p. 3.

47. See, for example, Lancaster, p. A20.

48. Quoted in Valerie Reitman, "The U.S.'s Ongoing Battle in South Korea," *Los Angeles Times*, June 29, 2000, p. A4.

49. "Defending the Troops," *Washington Times*, June 28, 2000, p. A13.

50. Rowan Scarborough, "American Citizens in S. Korea Warned," *Washington Times*, July 6, 2000, p. A1.

51. "ROK-DPRK Refocus on Regional Power Balance," Stratfor Asia Intelligence Update, April 7, 1999, www.stratfor.com. In fact, there have been indications of this interesting shift in Pyongyang for a number of years. See, for example. Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997), p. 402; and Bandow, pp. 98–99.

52. Quoted in Paul Flatin, "North and South, Face to Face," News & Events: Daily Briefing, June 10, 2000, www.policy.com.

53. "What Thaw in North Korea?" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 29, 2000, p. 6.

54. Quoted in Calvin Sims, "Despite Speedy Accord, Long Road Ahead to Korean Unification," *New York Times*, July 2, 2000, p. 3.

55. Quoted in John Burton, "Signs of Harmony Emerge on the Korean Peninsula," *Financial Times*, June 14, 2000, p. 6.

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