A Grand Strategy for Korea’s Defense

Chae-Ha Pak

This paper first tries to outline Korea’s national security interests and set objectives stemming from them, then consider Korea’s military environment. The interests of four major powers (China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States) intersect on the Korean peninsula, as do major differences in ideology. As a result, confrontation continues between the two Koreas.

Accordingly, there is always a high possibility of military conflict. The paper analyzes the respective power relationships between these four, as well as Korea’s primary threat North Korea.

A discussion has also been made of secondary threats that could materialize in the near future. In order to respond to these threats, there must be a true balance of military power. Based upon the balance of power deterrent strategy, alternatives for Korean defense have been recommended.

First, the Republic of Korea should adopt what might be called a “porcupine strategy” in order to protect its national security interests, which are: to ensure the survival of the Republic of Korea and its people, to preserve territorial integrity, to achieve economic well-being, and to promote Korean culture for a contribution to the peace of mankind.

Second, on the basis of this porcupine strategy, from this time forward the ROK should focus more on the improvement of sea and air power than on ground power.

Third, in order ultimately to achieve this porcupine strategy the ROK needs to continue to spend 5.5 to six percent of its gross national product for defense, and to develop more appropriate weapon systems.

Fourth, more attention should be given to internal factors influencing the national security environment, which can be best effected only when there is a solid national consensus.

Finally, the civil-military relationship should be improved. As the proportion of post-war generation population increases, existing national security policies including the anti-communist law have become less and less convincing to the younger generations.
A Grand Strategy for Korea's Defense

Chae-Ha Pak

Introduction

This paper analyzes the current environment in Korea and attempts to present recommendable alternatives for the defense of the ROK. Military strategy and policy can be clearly established only after national interests and objectives are clearly defined. The national interests of the present day Republic are different from those of our ancestors, because they now reflect the much broader popular interests. With industrialization in particular, not only has the nation's economic prosperity taken on as much importance as political and military interests of previous times, but with the arrival of the modern welfare state we now have the introduction of cultural interests as well.

Military power supports the pursuit of these national interests, and is not solely for the purpose to ensure a country's existence. It must also support the country's ability to assert itself and protect its interests in the midst of the problems and discord that occur as nations conflict with each other in pursuit of their own respective national interests. As Clausewitz indicated, military power is the final means of national policy.¹ Korea, too, must establish a strategy which uses military power to establish a foundation for the nation's objectives. We must then maintain that strategy, and in case of emergency we must have established plans on how to use that power.

Korea's own national power deteriorated, and we have had to rely on the United States to help provide an allied strategy for national defense. Accordingly, we were unable to develop and establish independent, national military strategies and policy. However, Korea's relative economic weight has increased, and with it Korea's political and diplomatic power has increased so that now we must establish an independent military strategy suitable to our new situation. Moreover, to best suit our own situation, even though we cannot avoid a certain degree of reliance upon the US, it will be also be desirable to establish a self-reliant independent military strategy.

This paper therefore will try to outline Korea's national security interests, set the objectives which logically stem from them, and look at the military environment in Korea. The interests of the four major powers (China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States), as well as major ideological differences, clearly intersect on the Korean peninsula; the result is continuing confrontation between the two Koreas. There is always high possibility of a military conflict. Accordingly, I have analyzed the respective power relationships between these four powers, made analysis of Korea's primary threat North Korea, and discussed secondary threats that could materialize in the future.

In order to respond to these threats, there must be a true balance of military power. I have proposed here a basic military strategy for Korea for the near future, based upon the deterrent strategy of a balance of power.

The ROK's National Security Interests and Objectives

A. History of the Korean people and the Republic of Korea

The unique geographic position of the Korean peninsula has played an important role in the peninsula's history. Until the nineteenth century entry of maritime powers such as Japan and the US, Korea's border with China was the most important geopolitical factor; the major influences on the peninsula were from China and Manchuria. Accordingly, before the opening of Korea's ports to foreign nations in the mid-1860s, Korean history was dotted with resistance to invasions from the north. There are over 970 cases of fighting against invaders throughout Korea's history, as summarized in Table 1.
Table 1

Foreign Invaders in Korean History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign invader</th>
<th>With whom they fought</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Han Empire</td>
<td>Kojoson, Koguryo</td>
<td>late 2C BC–early 4C AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui, Tang</td>
<td>Koguryo, Shilla</td>
<td>late 6C–mid-7C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan Empire</td>
<td>Koryo</td>
<td>13C–14C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Japan</td>
<td>Choson (Yi)</td>
<td>late 10C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ching</td>
<td>Choson (Yi)</td>
<td>early 17C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Choson (Yi)</td>
<td>late 19C–early 20C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The industrial revolution first began in England in the 1870s and the English held the leading position in world capitalism during the colonial period; other challengers were the US, France and Germany. A newcomer from the east, Japan, after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, began giving impetus to its “rich country, strong military” policy; meanwhile Russia had been pushing eastward since the seventeenth century and by 1870 had also entered the peninsula. The great continental powers were spreading their power to the sea, and the great maritime powers started to spread their might into the Asian continent by way of the Korean peninsula. Thus at the end of the nineteenth century there was a huge struggle between land and maritime powers, resulting in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1902–1904). Although newly emerging as a regional power, having won these two major wars Japan made Korea into a colony (1910–1945) with British and American approval.

After Japan colonized the peninsula it further extended its influence to both sea and land, but it met with fierce resistance in Manchuria, where the Chinese Communist Party ruled. Japanese expansion on the seas, meanwhile, competed sharply with that of the US, resulting in Japan’s ultimate defeat in the Pacific War by the US. The Korean peninsula was liberated by the Americans, basically an other-directed liberation by a foreign power. As a result, the US and the USSR, although allies during the war, conducted a divided occupation of the peninsula. It established two separate countries, one that followed the ideology of one superpower and the other following the other—conflicting with each other. Under such tragic circumstances, the Republic of Korea was born in the southern half of the Korean peninsula in 1948.
After World War II ended, the two ideologically opposed superpowers, the US and the USSR, began to compete with each other worldwide, the effect of which was reflected in microcosm in Korea. From the international cold war a diametric opposition developed between what had actually become two independent nations, and a distinct confrontation developed between fellow Koreans. This led to the Korean War. However, the cold war which remained in Korea after the Korean War remains undiminished to this day. In fact, the sharp differences between North and South Korea have widened, resulting in a truly tragically divided nation. Moreover, the Korean peninsula has become the “front line” of US-USSR confrontation, with over 1,300,000 regular troops and eight million reserves opposing each other. In addition to hosting this superpower confrontation, Korea also stands at the intersection of Japanese and Chinese (PRC) diplomatic interests. As a result of all this, the Korean peninsula is the world’s most unstable hotspot, likely to break out in armed conflict at any moment.

Reflecting upon Korean history, we should first realize a significant mistake made by Korean leadership—they could not comprehend the world around them and therefore did not understand how to respond. A people can never prosper depending merely upon a strong will to survive: in order to substantiate its will to exist, a nation must organize its power in an effective way. This requires the leadership to grasp the surrounding reality and respond accordingly, which the leaders of the Koryo and Chosen periods failed to do.

Second, the ruling class relied too much on foreign powers. In order for a weaker smaller nation to maintain its independence and autonomy in the midst of larger stronger neighbors, it is often necessary as a diplomatic tool to adopt dependent policies. The Korean leaders, however, cooperated excessively with foreign powers. The pro-Yuan sect at the end of the Koryo era and those friendly to Japan, China and Russia at the end of the Choson era finally had to rely on foreign power even to support their own authority within Korea.

Third, Koreans were originally an aggressive, active, horse-riding people. As agrarian culture took root, however, the rulers gradually gave unbalanced regard to literature and paid not enough attention to defense matters; naturally, the nation weakened.

Fourth, the frequent popular uprisings and revolts of the late Choson era show how much the decadence of the ruling class had weakened
the nation. A country's foundation is in its people; discipline and command authority weaken when the people separate from the ruling echelon.

Fifth, each time a strong challenger entered the peninsula, the leaders allowed petty domestic differences prevent their mounting an organized defense. Disunity and turmoil weakened the national vitality. Korea lost its ability to defend itself or retaliate, and was thus invaded over 970 times over its 5,000 year-year history.

Nevertheless, despite these frequent attacks the Korean people have maintained a strong desire to survive and maintain their identity as a nation. They have endured, outgrown the undeveloped nation status, and are well on their way towards an advanced polity and entry into the company of the strong advanced countries.

B. National Security Interests

The national security interests of the ROK are survival, territorial integrity, economic well being, and the promotion of culture and world peace.

Of primary importance is survival of the Korean people. The threats against our survival are North Korea's provocations and other potential threats posed by the major powers around the Korean peninsula. The Soviet Union in particular has unceasingly fortified its military position in Northeast Asia, where the four major powers' interests intersect. Ever since 1980 when the trans-Pacific trade volume surpassed that of the trans-Atlantic, established maritime powers such as the United States, Japan and some of the European countries have implemented protectionist measures under the pretext of their own trade deficits to curtail the trade expansion of the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs). We must recognize that these protectionist measures also pose a definite threat to the Korean national interest.

Second, territorial invasion by the real or by potential enemies should be deterred by any means. However, territorial integrity should also

---

2. Since 1980, US trans-Pacific trade volume ($90 billion) has surpassed its trans-Atlantic trade volume ($8.8 billion). The average annual economic growth rate of the Republic of Korea was 8.8 percent during 1962-1971 and 8.4 percent during 1972-1981. In 1988, its GNP and trade volumes were $118.6 billion (Number. 16 in the world) and $88.3 billion (Number. nine in the world), respectively. (Korea Development Institute Report, 1988).
include the continental shelf, which has recently become a hot issue in international law. Territorial waters should be extended to twelve miles and an Exclusive Economic Zone should be declared.

Third is the economy. A welfare state under a free democratic system would be the ideal goal for the Korean people. Such a free democratic welfare state could guarantee Korea’s freedom, peace and happiness, but economic growth is a prerequisite for a welfare state, and economic power is unique in its ability to strengthen national security and diplomacy.

Fourth, Korea should promote culture and world peace. The Korean people are proud of their civilized culture over a 5,000 year history. Korean culture has contributed to the peace and civilization of mankind as a branch of oriental civilization. In consideration of national security interests, this theme might be suggested: by deterring war Korea will maintain peace and stability, and this will allow the ROK smoothly to pursue its economic wealth as an advanced country. The subsequent growth of national power will provide the Korean people more opportunities to advance into the outer world, and to contribute to the peaceful unification of North and South.

C. National Security Objectives

In formulating grand strategic concepts, after recognizing and defining security interests, we consider security objectives. The primary national goal of the Republic of Korea, as its constitution dictates, is to establish a welfare state under a free democratic system and to achieve peaceful reunification.

The first objective is to deter renewal of war and to ease tensions between North and South Korea, ultimately to achieve the peaceful unification of the peninsula. Second is to prevent any regional war in Northeast Asia by deterring provocations from the North, as well as to contain the expansion and confrontation of the four major powers. Accordingly, Korea’s survival and territorial integrity will be secured. Third is to guarantee the safety of the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs), upon which the ROK relies for international trade. International trade is vitally essential for the ROK’s economic progress.  

The fourth objective would be to enhance the national consensus for security under a free democratic system. This will provide an intangible deterrent against war, but can be obtained only through the establishment of a free democratic society and the advancement in ethics and spirit of the Korean people. National security objectives in the broadest sense can be analyzed in many aspects—political, diplomatic, military, economic or social. This paper, however, deals only with military security in order to propose a grand military strategy.

The ROK Military Environment

A. Strategic value of the Korean peninsula

As mentioned, during the late nineteenth century Korea became a great bone of contention among major foreign powers, largely due to the peninsula's geopolitical characteristics. When the continental powers sought expansion into the sea, it formed a good strategic foothold; when maritime powers sought projection of power into the continent, it served as a useful bridge. Russia and Japan made great efforts to build naval bases on the Korean peninsula, and history shows that the countries dominating Korea were originally regional powers that later graduated into the global scale.

As the national interests of the US, USSR, China and Japan intersect today on the peninsula, Korea grows in its strategic importance. From a US perspective, the peninsula plays an important role as the most advanced post against Soviet expansion, and along with China and Japan it constitutes a vital link in the chain against Soviet expansion. The strategic value of the Korean peninsula cannot be underestimated: if it were to be communized and fall into the Soviet sphere, the defense of Japan would be seriously threatened. From a Soviet perspective, on the other hand, the peninsula is located at a cutting point of the US "maritime alliance" connecting China and Japan, and would greatly facilitate a Soviet advance into the Western Pacific.\(^4\)

Its strategic value stands out even more vividly when one considers that within a 1,000-mile radius of Seoul are concentrated (1) one billion people, (2) some eighty percent of East Asian industries, (3) approx-

---

imately seventy-five percent of the world's armed forces, and (4) major high-seas SLOCs.

B. The Korean peninsula and the four major powers

The power relationships of the four major nations whose interests intersect on the Korean peninsula are rooted in world events following World War II. The US-Soviet relationship between then and now can be divided into three periods: the cold war from the end of the war until 1969, detente from the early 1970s until 1979 when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and the final phase including a "new cold war" until the signing of the INF treaty in December 1987. That event began a new phase of detente. During the first period, characterized by US nuclear supremacy, the Soviet Union challenged the hegemony of the overwhelmingly powerful United States, accelerating the development of its nuclear forces until it reached a rough parity with the US. This point ushered in the second period, of detente.

Once its nuclear supremacy came to a close, the United States strove for the normalization of relationships with the Soviets to reduce the danger of nuclear war. After a long arms control process, the two countries concluded the SALT I and SALT II treaties. Meanwhile, however, the Soviet Union was gradually building its conventional weaponry until it surpassed the US in overall military power.

During this period of detente the Soviets came to possess nuclear war capability equal to that of the United States. Employing an indirect, detoured revolutionary strategy, they assisted revolutionary warfare in various areas of the Third World. The prime example of this strategy was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, after which the United States began to change its strategy towards the Soviet Union. Under the Reagan administration the US responded strongly against Soviet military expansion.

The US responded to Soviet military expansion in East Asia with a "tripartite" alliance system linking Japan and China. After the Sino-Soviet border dispute, the United States took the bold initiative of normalizing relationships with China and at the same time inviting Japan to build up its armed forces for the purpose of taking over a considerable part of what had been the US defense role in the region. Thus, against

5. Rhee Sang Woo, pp. 94–99.
Changes in World Security Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
<th>1980s</th>
<th>1990s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Conflict</td>
<td>East-West</td>
<td>East-West</td>
<td>East-West</td>
<td>East-West</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(political)</td>
<td>(political)</td>
<td>(political)</td>
<td>(political)</td>
<td>(political)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North-South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(economic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US-USSR Relations</td>
<td>Cold War</td>
<td>Cold War</td>
<td>Detente</td>
<td>New Cold War</td>
<td>New Detente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Economic Power</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Share in Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Product)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Value</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Vital</td>
<td>Absolutely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Korea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This (mostly naval) Soviet expansion, the US formed a line of containment. The ROK could be seen as being located on this containment line between China and Japan. In contrast to the cold war bipolarity between the US and the Soviet Union, the power relationships of the four major powers in Northeast Asia during this detente period can be characterized basically by the confrontation between the Soviets' attempted reach into the Pacific on one hand and the United States, China and Japan on the other.

The change in world security environment from the 1950s to the 1980s and the prospects for the 1990s can be summarized in Table 2. In the 1990s the US-Soviet relationship will be highly likely to continue in a detente mood, but it would be a big mistake to think that the US should withdraw its forces from the region in the near future. In the mid-1980s while Japan, Western Europe and Asian NICs have continued to make rapid economic growth, the shares of the US and the USSR combined in total world product has been reduced almost by half compared to the 1950s. With the average economic growth rate of two percent since 1980, increases in defense expenditures were made at the sacrifice of other sectors. The two superpowers could no longer afford the fierce arms competition they had undergone during the cold war period. They have
begun to perceive other powers more threatening than their own arms competition. They have had to allocate more resources to their economic growth while maintaining a minimum deterrent against each other, one of the main reasons behind the signing of the INF treaty in December 1987.

Moreover, the two superpowers are likely to reach an agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons sometime no later than 1990. From a Soviet standpoint, even after the two superpowers abolish the INFs and reduce strategic arms by half, Soviet military power would not be significantly altered, still beffitting superpower status. In particular, Soviet nuclear force would not be inferior to that of the US. After all, the INF was deployed primarily to pose threats against each other’s allies but hardly against the two superpowers themselves. The American SDI program, if developed and implemented, will pose grave threats to the Soviets. But it is well worth remembering the fact that in signing the INF treaty the Soviets successfully delayed the development of the SDI program until after 1995. It appears that with the signing of the INF treaty the Soviets wanted to give the impression they no longer pose a threat to US allies, especially the the Federal German Republic and the ROK, and intended to achieve their national goal by weakening US influence in the region.

Prior to President Nixon’s visit to Beijing in 1972, Chinese policy had been to fully support North Korea’s reunification policy; but subsequently, with the normalization of relationships between Beijing and Washington, China changed its perspective towards the Korean peninsula. They have appeared to continue to support North Korea’s policy towards the ROK (a prime example is its demand for US troop withdrawal) but on the other hand have been pursuing a policy of pragmatism, in contrast to their previous ideology-centered orientation. Deng Xiaoping’s pragmatic efforts to reconstruct the Chinese economy after the death of Mao have been conducive to this policy change. The Chinese have come to conclude that stability in Korea and economic cooperation with the ROK are definitely necessary for a successful implementation of their Four Modernizations program. In reality, therefore, China has come to recognize the existence of two states on the Korean peninsula, pursuing economic ties with the ROK on one hand and security ties with North Korea on the other. For Chinese economy and security, Korea has grown in strategic value. North Korea, mindful of the grow-
ing difficulty in military cooperation with China, has strengthened its
security ties with the Soviet Union as manifested by the introduction
of 46 MiG-23/29s as well as SA-5 and SCUD-B missiles, and Soviet-
North Korean joint naval exercises.
Maintaining economic ties with both Koreas, Japan apparently has
adopted policies favoring the status quo on the peninsula, no doubt pur-
suing more favorable ties with the ROK than with North Korea because
of the ROK’s importance to Japan’s national interests. From the point
of view of the economy, the annual trade volume between the ROK and
Japan has far exceeded $15 billion and Japan has been running trade
surpluses of over $5 billion with the ROK annually. From the point of
view of security, the Korean peninsula serves Japan as a forward defense
post. For it to be communized by either North Korea or the Soviet Union
would cost Japan a rapid military buildup at two percent of the GNP,
because they would need to deploy additional forces in the Korea Straight
and the Sea of Japan to augment their present heavy deployment in
Hokkaido. Japan’s two-Korea policy therefore, obviously has been
serving its national interests well.

C. Primary threat
The ROK plays an important part of the U.S. containment of the
USSR, but our real primary or direct threat is not the Soviets but North
Korea. North Korea’s basic political objective is the unification of the
Korean Peninsula under communism. No matter what (superficial)
changes the North Koreans make to their strategy or how they diver-
sify it, the bottom line (their basic political objective) remains the same.

This communization of the Korean Peninsula is to be encompassed
in North Korea’s “Three Revolutionary Strategies’’:
   a) To solidify North Korea into a base for socialist revolution;
   b) To build a people’s revolutionary base in South Korea based on
      its autogenous revolutionary power; and
   c) To strengthen world revolutionary power by cooperating with other
      socialist nations.
This is based on the so-called “four military lines’’:
   a) the modernization of North Korea’s armed forces;
   b) the arming of all people;
   c) making officers of all regular military; and
   d) the fortification of the entire North Korea.
Table 3

Comparison of N/S Korea’s Cumulative Military Expenditures (1950–85)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N. Korea</th>
<th>S. Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>$4 million</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>$42 million</td>
<td>$31 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>$143 million</td>
<td>$67 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>$807 million</td>
<td>$93 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>$2,557 million</td>
<td>$186 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>$5,966 million</td>
<td>$810 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$12,538 million</td>
<td>$5,941 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>$15,895 million</td>
<td>$12,580 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this military policy, North Korea has significantly strengthened its armed forces, and has pursued a policy of promoting the development of heavy industries starting with the "7-Year Economic Plan" in 1961, spending a huge amount of their GNP on military expenditures. While their military budget was less than 10 percent of total annual expenditures during 1954–66, it was over 30 percent during 1967–71, and from 1972 has averaged about 15 percent.6

Accordingly, North Korea’s military capability has increased correspondingly to their large military budget. Table 3 shows a comparison of North/South Korea’s accumulative military expenditures since 1950.

As shown in Table 3, the ROK’s military power has long been inferior to that of North Korea and despite the ROK’s continued force improvement since the 1970s North Korea is still superior to the ROK in military power.7 However, with an overwhelmingly bigger GNP and higher economic growth rate, the ROK is likely to reach a military parity with North Korea by the late 1990s.8 Table 4 shows a comparison of

6. The actual North Korean defense expenditure is higher than this. For instance, in most communist countries the maintenance cost items for military manpower come under the people’s economic budget. See General Report on North Korea published by the North Korea Research Center in 1983, pp. 634–637.

7. The main reason North Korea has armed forces superior to the ROK’s is that North Korea started its force improvement plan or the "Four Military Lines," 15 years earlier than the ROK.

8. For a comparison of GNPs of the North and South, in 1980 the ROK’s GNP was $61.2 billion, North Korea’s $13.5 billion, and in 1986, $95.1 billion and $17.4 billion, respectively. See the National Unification Board, The North-South Korea Comparison Diagram, 1986.
Table 4

Projected Comparison of North and South Korea’s Military Expenditures, Military Investments and Accumulatives*  
(unit: billion dollars, current account)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>NK</td>
<td>SK/NK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Expenditures</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulative</td>
<td>675.8</td>
<td>545.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Accumulatives: Estimated from 1974 up to the corresponding year.

Table 5

Comparison of North and South Korean Military Powers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Power</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Troops</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td>870,000</td>
<td>1:1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>1:2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field artillery</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>1:2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval combatants</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1:2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 destroyers</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 submarines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 missile boats</td>
<td></td>
<td>34 missile boats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical aircraft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-4/5/16, A-37</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MiG-15/17/19/21/23/29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU-7/25, IL-28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


the two Koreas’ estimated military expenditures and military investments, and each of their cumulatives, between now and the year 2000.

Military power of North and South Korea as of 1988 is compared in Table 5.
It can be seen from these tables that the North Koreans have the superior military forces. North Korea has almost one million regular troops, over three times more tanks, about 50 percent more field artillery pieces, twice as many trench mortars, over 10 times more anti-aircraft guns, and four times more surface-to-air missiles (SAM). In terms of sea power, they outnumber us by 77:20 in large surface ships, and are far superior in amphibians and submarines. In terms of all air power except helicopters, the North is superior. With this vast superiority, we can probably go as far as to say that at the root of North Korea's military policy is the principle of an intensive, all-out surprise attack.

North Korea's recent military activities

First, since mid-1985 North Korea has been strengthening its attack arsenal with the latest equipment. MiG-23/29 advanced fighters now stationed at Pukchang Air Base can reach Seoul in as quickly as 17 minutes. Moreover, SCUD-D long-range (270 km) surface-to-surface missiles now based in Pyongyang are within striking distance of Seoul. For the purpose of a speedy war, North Korea has established armored units and has built a large number of small submarines to infiltrate special forces.

Secondly, since late 1985 the North Koreans have put a large percentage of their forces at or near the front lines in preparation for blitzkrieg. In addition to the 30 air bases located south of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, they have built two more airstrips just a bit north of the DMZ, which will shorten the flight time to Seoul to a mere 8 minutes.

Thirdly, they have some 100,000 special forces actually deployed, the largest such force in the world. They can be deployed quickly and deeply into South Korea in their hard-to-detect-by-radar AN-2 aircraft and Hughes 500 helicopters, which total 280.

Fourth is their chemical warfare capability. North Korea has an estimated 180-250 tons of chemical warheads, which can be fired by trench mortars, field artillery, MLRS's, or by SCUD-B missiles with their range of 270 Km.

In view of this aggressive military buildup, we can describe North Korea’s military plan as follows:

1. They would try to use the chemical weapons, so as to redeploy the fewest troops possible and to seize superiority early.

2. They would launch mixed operations of regular warfare on the front lines combined with guerrilla warfare deep beyond the front lines. In other words, the battle zone forces would contain army corps, light infantry brigades, ambush brigades and other large and small units with a purpose to neutralize the main forces of our field armies. In the rear areas, air-to-ground attack and special force operations with extensive use of air power would nullify the ROK’s command channels and logistic support.

3. They plan to win a war in five to seven days, before ROK forces could redeploy troops from other areas and before reserves and allied support could be in place. This strategic concept gives the North Koreans a significant advantage. The degree to which the North Koreans have increased their military forces in numbers and in weapon systems can be seen in Table 6.

One other aspect of the North Korean threat is the so-called “allied strategy.” North Korea’s military-diplomatic strategy can be divided into three major parts: (1) as a foundation, their military ties to China and the USSR; (2) their military strategy towards nonaligned countries; and (3) their negotiation policy with the US. The problems are with

Table 6

North Korea’s Growing Military Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1980s</th>
<th>% of increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular troops</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>830,000</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major weapon systems</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detection probability</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit probability</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>+900%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aircraft</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maneuverability</td>
<td>350 kts</td>
<td>1,300 kts</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destruction</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>+3000%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chae Ha Park, Weapons and War, Pyonghaksa, 1987, p. 517

China and the USSR, which border North Korea and which have the capability, and the well, to provide military assistance to North Korea.

Since liberation from Japanese reign after World War II, in all aspects such as military strategy and policy, military organization, weapon systems, etc., North Korea has been a satellite of the USSR. Since China entered the Korean War and since North Korea’s ideological rift with the USSR, however, the North has also been influenced by the Chinese. To receive the promise of military support in case of war, North Korea signed individual friendship and mutual support treaties with both the USSR and China in 1961. By thus playing the two communist superpowers against each other, North Korea managed to receive from both countries a total of $2.1 billion in military aid during 1954–1980 alone. This is broken down in table 7.

The Soviets have supplied North Korea with major equipment such as T-54/55/62 tanks, K-61 river-crossing vehicles, high-speed missile boats, Whiskey-class submarines, MiG-21 fighters, AN-2 transport aircraft, and Mi-4/8 helicopters. The Chinese have supplied T-59 tanks, Romeo-class submarines, MiG-19 fighters, Il-28 bombers, and Yak-18 training aircraft. All of these weapon systems are offensive weapon systems.

### Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USSR</th>
<th>PRC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954–71</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total  1,633  548


and in the event of war they would enable North Korea to completely paralyze the SLOCs around the ROK.

Most recently, while maintaining the existing equidistance policy between both communist superpowers, North Korea has been somewhat closer to the USSR. As the Soviets have been steadily increasing their military power in the Far East, North Korea has been providing access to its major east coast ports as bases for the Soviets. In return, the Soviets have provided some of their latest offensive weapons such as the MiG-29 fighters and SA-5s. Such weapons-for-bases diplomacy calls for close attention to the North Korea-USSR relationship.

The final item we should note well is the North Korean terrorist threat. The ROK has been making steady economic progress, and our relative economic strength vis-a-vis North Korea has increased rapidly in recent years. The more that time passes, the more the North Korean dream of communist reunification of the Korean Peninsula seems less and less likely. The only alternative, then, has been for them to wage an undeclared, large-scale war of terrorism against the ROK. With incidents such as the 1983 Rangoon incident and the 1987 KAL Flight 858 bombing, it is evident that North Korea is trying to provoke the ROK into a war. Whether the ROK will be able to continue to avoid falling into such a trap will depend on our level of crisis management capability.

D. Secondary threats

Secondary, or latent, threats against the ROK center around the military powers of the USSR, China and Japan, as described in Table 8. There are three important recent transitions which require close attention:

1. the Soviet military expansion in the Far East, particularly in naval power;
2. the rearming of Japan; and
3. China’s growing military power, particularly in nuclear submarines.

All these are variables with a major impact on ROK security, and all three are interrelated. The huge military buildup in the Soviet Far East has triggered Japan to rearm itself.

China, meanwhile, is striving to become a major economic power by the year 2000 and therefore has been steadily modernizing its naval
forces to protect its maritime resources. China now has twice the number of submarines as the Soviet Far East fleet. Of these, China has six nuclear-powered submarines, of which two are already equipped with SLBMs. Some of China's modern military technology was given by the US in part as a way to further contain the Soviets. Korea's continental shelf is in direct contact with China's and if both countries declare their respective Exclusive Economic Zones it could result in friction. Accordingly, China's increasing naval and air power is a threat to Korea.

The Soviets' most conspicuous military expansion has been in the Far East. As shown in Table 9 the Soviets have deployed a total of 57 army divisions in this region (a full one-fourth of their total), aircraft (one-fourth of total), and 25 percent of their nuclear weapons. In comparison with the 1960s' level, this vast Soviet military power in the region represents an overall average increase of over 300 percent. From the viewpoint of Soviet worldwide strategy, the region has significantly grown in importance as one major element of the Soviets' total strategy, and as a way to beat the US at the zero-sum game in Northeast Asia.

The Soviets' sharp increase in naval power in the region deserves the most attention. Although not very strong at the end of the 1960s, the USSR began to expand its naval power in the 1970s, graduating from a coastal to a blue-water navy. The Soviet Pacific Fleet Head-
Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soviet Military Power</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1986</th>
<th>comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>army divisions</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>200 (57)</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tanks</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>53,000 (14,900)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tactical aircraft</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>5,150 (2,430)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBMs</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>983 (385)</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuclear BMs</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>10,716 (736)</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>submarines</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>360 (76)</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cruisers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36 (15)</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destroyers</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>61 (14)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers in the parenthesis are for the Soviet Far East forces.


quarters in Vladivostok is now responsible for the greater region all the way to the Indian Ocean. This greater region is divided into individual strategic areas covering the North Pacific, the Sea of Japan, East China Sea, South Japan Sea, and South China Sea. The current status of this expanded Pacific Fleet is shown in Table 10.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soviet Pacific Fleet</th>
<th>no. of units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>submarines</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aircraft carriers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cruisers</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destroyers</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frigates</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corvettes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small fighting ships</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


12. Rhee Sang Woo, p. 221. Soviet naval buildup is based on Admiral S. Gorshikov’s plan. He suggests the missions of the Soviet Navy as follows:
   a. Strategic attack
   b. Territorial defense
   c. Support for ground forces operations, and
   d. Sea power projection.
Attached to the Soviet Pacific Fleet are 160 bombers, of which there are one squadron of Tu-22M Backfires with an operational radius of 2,500 miles and four squadrons of Tu-16B Badgers. There are also 34 nuclear-powered submarines with SLBM capability.\(^\text{13}\) Soviet submarines pass through the Korea Strait over 250 times a year. With this much sea power, they could probably intercept the SLOCs all the way from the North Pacific to the South China Sea.

Further Soviet threats to Korea include the SS-20 IRBMs in Siberia. With a range of 5,000 kilometers, these missiles can reach not only the Korean Peninsula and Japan but can go as far as Guam. These IRBMs were included in the US-USSR INF treaty to all be scrapped within a few years.

Therefore, while the USSR military might in the Far East has been rapidly accelerating the US’s relative economic power has weakened, and the result has been a demand for Japan to share more of the burden by strengthening its military. Because of its so-called “Peace Constitution,” however, Japan had for some time kept its military expenditures at the very low level of less than 1 percent of GNP, compared to the US at 5 percent of GNP and the other NATO countries with an average of 3 percent.\(^\text{14}\) This, of course, changed when Japan’s economy became second only to the US in the 1980s, and the US has continued to demand that Japan share more of the defense burden.

In response to such urging, Japan has recently increased its military budget to over 1 percent of GNP ($27.8 billion in FY ’87), and has begun to make significant investments in defense. Based on current trends and the size of the Japanese economy, within five years Japan’s military budget should roughly equal those of all Asian countries combined, except China, making Japan a significant military power in the region.\(^\text{15}\) With the sharp appreciation of the Japanese currency during 1986–87 and a significant jump in their GNP during the same period, Japan’s


\(^{15}\) The GNP of Japan reached $1257 billion in 1984 and its FY 1987 defense expenditure surpassed 1 percent of GNP (1.004%). Japan’s defense expenditure for FY1988 is almost $35 billion or approximately four times that of the ROK.
military expenditures almost tripled (+2.7 times) between 1985 ($10.8 billion) and 1987 ($28 billion). Japan's military budget is now six times larger than Korea's.

Japan is today an economic superpower; on top of this it is rapidly becoming a regional military power. While the Japanese say this military buildup is strictly for self-defense, they have some of the world's leading conventional military systems (including F-15 fighters, and submarines), and they are seriously considering the introduction of a medium-size aircraft carrier for VSTOL operations and surface-to-surface missiles.

The problem with the re-arming of Japan, however, is that the Korean Peninsula is at the crux of their military planning; the peninsula is of utmost importance to the defense of Japan. Should the US reduce its military presence in the region, Japan would pick up much of that burden. In such a case, should Japanese extreme rightists take power, Japan would present a significant threat to Korea.

**ROK's Military Strategy**

**A. Basic Strategic Concept**

Korea's basic strategic objective is to deter war on the Korean peninsula. The concept of deterrence is to prevent the other side from having the perception that anything could be gained from starting a war. Accordingly, for this purpose, a prerequisite exists for a stable balance of power between the two countries.

As Dr. Kissinger said, there are three requirements for an effective deterrent: (1) retaliative force, (2) the will (in the form of existing government policy) to use such retaliative force, and (3) channels of communication to make sure that the other country is fully aware of (1) and (2).

However, it is a bit unrealistic for Korea to be able to present such a deterrent against potential threats from far greater powers such as the USSR, China and Japan; even if we emerge as an economic power in the 21st century we will still be unable to maintain a balance of power with these three superpowers. Korea, then, must seek a military deterrent policy which best fits our unique circumstances.

The threat posed by our first threat North Korea is different from the potential threat posed by the secondary threats, for several reasons. First, we have to think of our number-one threat in terms of a possible future war on the Korean Peninsula. Our objectives therefore would
be to reduce conflicts of interests between our two countries; at the same
time try to weaken the enemy. If we do not limit out objectives to these
two areas, it could possibly lead to a worldwide nuclear war.

Second, should such a war occur, in the early stages the hostility crisis,
the brinkmanship crisis and the spinoff crisis would all proceed in the
same manner. The objective of war is to win, and the aggressor tries
to overwhelm the defender with a swift surprise attack before the
latter is aware of the danger.

Third, in any future war the battlefield is likely to enlarge. Accordingly,
along with such an enlarged battlefield would be an en-
larged amount of information, presenting the characteristics of a speedy
war with linkage between troop movement and fire power, and a paralyz-
ing war.

Fourth, the characteristics of the war would include a nonlinear use
of smaller units conducting independent operations, in order to win a
speedy, paralyzing victory.

The basic military strategy, therefore, should be against our number-
one threat, North Korea. We must establish an offensive defensive
strategy based on conventional weapon systems, and if that fails then
we would rely on the strategic weapon systems of the ROK-US com-
bined forces. This is because combat depth is relatively short at the
Korean front line, and when a first attack is received we absolutely must
reduce early warning time in order to respond as quickly as possible.
For the defense forces to be able to respond immediately and actively
to such a warning, offensive tactics in theory are much more effective
than defensive tactics because the former are, by their nature, more
responsive in a deployment sense. Should such an offensive deterrent
strategy fail, it would theoretically be necessary to use strategic weapons.
If strategic weapons are used, however, the aggressor’s existence would
be endangered. In this light, is war really possible? Such a possibility
is actually one of the major reasons why for the past forty years there
has not been an outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula.

With regards to the secondary threats, then, what might be labeled
a “porcupine strategy” should be our basic goal, whereby we can main-
tain the absolute minimum of restraining power and deterrent regard-
ing the protection of our national interests.
B. Strategy Towards North Korea

North Korea’s objective regarding the ROK continues to be the reunification of the peninsula under communism. The required strategy and military power to achieve this objective, however, has changed with the passing of time and circumstances. North Korea’s strategy at the time of the Korean War was a breakthrough centered around armored divisions, a blitzkrieg attack centered on Soviet-supplied tanks. The ROK was greatly inferior to North Korea in armored forces, and we were without resources against the force of such a tank-led attack. Seoul fell within three days, and they continued their march south. As can be seen in the comparison of North and South Korean forces in Table 11, North Korea overpowered South Korea in every category (including troops, weapon systems, etc.) from two to ten times: under such circumstance it was virtually impossible to deter war on the peninsula.

During the Korean War, our forces managed to last for less than seven days, until the UN forces came in to save us. Today’s defense strategy

Table 11

Comparison of North and South Korean Forces at the Outbreak of the Korean War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N. Korea</th>
<th>S. Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Army:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manpower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 divisions</td>
<td>182,000</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trench mortars</td>
<td>1,727</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>howitzers</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-aircraft guns</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-tank guns</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tanks</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>armored vehicles</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field guns</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navy:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manpower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>7,715</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patrol ships</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Force:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manpower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total aircraft</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *The Chosun Ilbo*, June 24, 1984
is based on a concept far more intricate than before. We have strengthened our defense, particularly regarding the mistakes made during the Korean War. Based on the American strategy of emphasizing linear position defense and fire-power attrition, we have gradually implemented a defensive defense strategy that for over 30 years has contributed to the determent of war. Today we have strengthened the mobility of our forces and switched to a concept based on offensive deterrence. Therefore, North Korea is well aware that it would be very difficult for them to break through the front lines in five to seven days as they did in the Korean War. They also know the longer a battle is prolonged the slimmer their chances for success. The lesson we learned from the Korean War is that in order for the North to win war within seven days, first they must paralyze our front lines and make heavy use of modern weapon systems to inflict a high casualties in a very short period.

The only such weapons that will do this job are nuclear weapons or chemical weapons. North Korea has no nuclear weapons, but they do have large amounts of Soviet-supplied chemical weapons. Furthermore, in order to overcome the geographical characteristics of the Korean peninsula, they have also reorganized their forces into a highly mobile fighting force well prepared for hit-and-run guerrilla fighting. North Korea has significantly modified its military targets and tactics, and molded a new strategy based on a combination of conventional and guerrilla warfare.

In response to North Korea’s new military thinking, the ROK needs an offensive deterrent strategy. The fact that such an offensive deterrent strategy is the best deterrent strategy to war can be proven, in theory, by the non-zero-sum-game approach. Under the non-zero-sum-game theory, if both sides take an offensive defense strategy then there is no equilibrium point and, likewise, no winner and no loser. Accordingly, in theory when both sides still hold their respective ground against each other in a standoff, tactical deterrence increases.

Here are some concrete examples of the offensive deterrent strategy. First, in terms of force operation various fighting elements are integrated three dimensionally. Each side tries to take the initiative away from the other, that is, on the foremost front lines, they try to divide and destroy the enemy’s main forces while behind the lines they use sea and air power to destroy the enemy’s C^3I capabilities and thus paralyze its mobility. Defenders behind the lines try to maximize the integrated deployment
of their resources and repel enemy intrusions as soon as possible, destroying the intruders with swift mobile actions. Air space defense and air operation include the use of anti-air firepower against localized attacks and low-altitude intrusions. Regional air defense and active air defense are the job of the air force. At the front lines and within enemy territory, then, we would have to destroy the enemy's air power, damage their will to fight, and crush the source of their military power. Naval forces, meanwhile, will have to keep our sea-lanes of communication open and safe from submarine attack to ensure transport by sea, actively integrate all its fighting power to support the land combat and protect the rear support units, and attack the enemy's naval forces in tactically important areas to neutralize their sources of fighting power.

Along with this strategic operation concept, another important deterrent strategy is the combined US-Korean deterrent strategy. However, the Combined Forces setup that was created based on the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953 has a basic weak point. First, 6,000 miles separate Korea and the nearest US land, which means that considerable time would be required to get support by sea or air. Therefore there is not only a time handicap on the deployment of military goods, it is also likely that any decision to send reinforcement troops would be delayed. In particular, the nature of the American political setup and the constraints now placed upon the president make it difficult for him to make such a speedy decision alone. Under the War Powers Act, Congress must approve any US military intervention that will last over 60 days.

The US Army's 2nd Division is located in Korea with its 165 tanks, 75 field guns, 225 helicopters, and 108 aircraft. It is believed that the US could send the equivalent of two divisions to support this one. The US also has, we estimate, 470 aircraft, six aircraft carriers, 89 other combat vessels, and about 40 submarines that could come to our support.

In addition to these conventional forces, another major contributor to the war deterrent are the US tactical nuclear weapons that allegedly have been deployed in the ROK since the mid-1970s. These tactical nuclear weapons are the basic deterrent to North Korea's starting a war, but their use on the Korean peninsula would threaten the existence of both aggressor and defender. North Korea and the USSR have been trying in recent years to have the peninsula made into a nuclear-free zone. This is because the presence of nuclear arms in the ROK make
the North Koreans’ dream of communizing the entire Peninsula eternally difficult to materialize. It seems almost impossible for the North Koreans to attack the ROK as long as the US forces in Korea have nuclear weapons. It is due to this major deterrent that the North Koreans have focused on a terrorist strategy.

In the 35-plus years since the armistice was signed in 1953, North Korea has committed many kinds of terrorist acts against the ROK. However, if North Korea should obtain nuclear weapons in the future, their military strategy towards the ROK would probably move in two major directions. First, they would probably continue terrorist activities in order to “blackmail” the ROK from military action against them and force us to adopt a sort of appeasement policy towards them for our own protection. Second, knowing that an all-out war is impossible, they would try to force the ROK into a so-called peaceful co-existence with them somewhat like the situation between East and West Germany.

However, the ROK has set a target to become an economic power before that kind of “peaceful unification” takes place. For this purpose it is imperative that we maintain a strong in-place deterrent. Therefore, the combined ROK-US deterrent is more important today than ever before, both against outright war and against terrorist activities. For the latter, we establish a setup and a crisis management system so the damage can be kept to a minimum. In other words, we need to find a new dimension for the ROK-US combined deterrent setup. By the mid-1990s, it is expected that the ROK will close gap on North Korean military superiority. In response, North Korea will then be very likely to acquire nuclear weapons and speed up their terrorist activity, trying to force the ROK into a peaceful co-existence arrangement under their terms—for example, their being in a position to dictate the ROK’s deployment of weapons.

C. Strategy Towards Secondary Threats

Korea’s relatively small size in comparison to the major powers surrounding us naturally forces us to have a considerably different strategy toward these secondary threats than we have towards our primary threat. Towards these major powers, we must adopt what might be called a “porcupine strategy.” In other words, the basic concept must be that since we would obviously be the loser should they invade us (because of their enormous size and military might), we have to do everything
within our power to deter such an invasion. While we could not overcome an invasion by the superpowers, we have to sharpen our military expertise and systems mainly in terms of accuracy, so that they are as effective as the poisonous quills of a porcupine. If we are perceived not to be such an easy pushover, they will be less likely to attack us, just like the little porcupine which most larger and better-equipped hunters usually avoid.

Most important is to deter any invasion by the surrounding superpowers, by taking advantage of the fact that the superpower’s respective interests intersect to varying degrees, and by trying to maintain a balance among them. Should the USSR pursue a policy of increasing military power to gain influence in the region, we should take advantage of the military cooperation between Japan, China and the US. It would be ideal to have a collective security system such as NATO in our region; however, due to other circumstances that is probably impossible. Accordingly, it is more realistic to pursue a deterrent policy utilizing balance of power and diplomacy. To date, however, Korea has been behind the US shadow and has not been able to conduct its own, independent diplomacy. For Korea, it is extremely important that China and the USSR, both of which are latent threats to us, improve their relations with each other because we are very limited in our radius of independent diplomatic action, particularly towards the two communist superpowers. In order to deal with these two giants, we must rely on economic and cultural (such sports) exchanges to get some leverage. One of the major objectives and accomplishments of the 1988 Olympic Games was to take active steps to improve our relations with China and the USSR.

China, meanwhile, as a major pillar of its diplomatic strategy is pursuing the so-called "Five Peace Principles" policy towards non-communist nations. Korea, too, should be included under this policy of non-aggression and peaceful co-existence. While we pursue our cultural-sports diplomacy toward the communist superpowers, we should

---

16. The PRC’s Five Peace Principles are:
   a. Mutual respect of territory and sovereignty
   b. Mutual non-aggression
   c. Mutual non-intervention
   d. Equality, and
   e. Mutual interest and peaceful co-existence.
also conduct a full-scale economic campaign, and at the same time should begin political contact as well. Such political contacts might include our approaches to North Korea once we can reach a non-aggression pact with them. For us to achieve a reduction of tensions between ourselves and North Korea, we will have to be somewhat more positive in our policy towards them. To get North Korea to the negotiating table, it will be necessary to use multiple channels, that is, other countries in addition to those we are using now. Also, we will have to be a bit more flexible in the new concepts we discuss with them. For that purpose, we will probably have to reduce our heavy political and military reliance on the US.

Another strategically important problem should war break out on the Korean peninsula is the life-and-death question of how to keep open the SLOCs around us. Not only is the Korean economy heavily dependent on these SLOCs to transport our all-important exports, but they are our vital lines for needed energy, natural resources and other necessary supplies and raw materials. Tables 12 and 13 show how much Korea’s annual reliance on these channels has increased from 1977 to 1986.

Table 12

*Trends of Korean Imports*  
(unit: 1,000 tons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Average vs. 1979</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>51,498</td>
<td>16,814</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>61,843</td>
<td>16,038</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>72,991</td>
<td>17,827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>71,352</td>
<td>22,682</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>79,023</td>
<td>26,296</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>80,937</td>
<td>27,568</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>88,905</td>
<td>29,279</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>95,118</td>
<td>30,617</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>101,111</td>
<td>31,898</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>112,057</td>
<td>41,765</td>
<td>125%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ROK Ports Authority, *1986 Annual Report*
Table 13

*Korean Imports & Exports by Ship, 1986*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no. of ships</td>
<td>20,028</td>
<td>20,391</td>
<td>40,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no. of tons (x1000)</td>
<td>179,760</td>
<td>179,286</td>
<td>359,046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ROK Ports Authority, *1986 Annual Report*

In 1986 alone Korea’s inbound and outbound combined surface shipments reached 153,920,000 tons, for the equivalent of some 40,000 ships, and this huge volume of traffic is expected to increase further as the Korean economy continues to grow. Accordingly, as time passes, the security of the sea lanes will become more a central factor in the security of the Korean economy. Such protection is especially important because modern warfare is by nature a war of attrition, with the ultimate winner and loser decided by who can continue to fight the longest.

However, the big question is, if the US Navy is gradually withdrawing from the region for their economic reasons while the Soviets are increasing their naval forces here, what will happen to the stability of the region’s sea lanes? The ROK Navy, meanwhile, has been preoccupied with the higher priority of strengthening our deterrent force against North Korea’s navy, and we have not been able to address the sea lane problem. Instead, we have relied entirely on the US for this support. Even though it is impossible for us to ensure the security of all of the sea lanes in our area, however, we still must do as much as possible by ourselves.

A realistic target in this respect would be to try to ensure the security of the so-called local sea lanes centering around Cheju Island in the south. This area includes almost all the sea lanes to Korea except the Pusan-Shimonoseki corridor from southwestern Japan. Being so strategically important by its high traffic level, it is highly likely that this area could become a center of submarine operations for which Korea should develop its own capability to defend. The defense of the other sea lane areas we should leave to Japan and the US. Such a tri-nation regional cooperative effort to protect the sea lanes of Northeast Asia will be an absolute necessity in the not-too-distant future.
Conclusions and Recommendations

In this paper the author has tried to delineate some grand strategic thoughts that lead us to the following conclusions and recommendations.

First, the Republic of Korea should adopt what might be called "porcupine strategy" in order to protect its national security interests, which are: to keep the survival of the Republic of Korea and its people, to preserve territorial integrity, to achieve economic well-being, and to promote Korean culture for contribution towards the peace of mankind. On the basis on this porcupine strategy, the ROK-US combined deterrent defense strategy must be more consolidated against the primary threat, North Korea, and we should consider an offensive diplomatic security policy towards the secondary threats that could materialize in the future.

Second, from now on, on the basis of this porcupine strategy the ROK should focus more on the improvement of the sea and air power than on ground power. In order to catch up with North Korea's military power in the shortest possible period of time, until now the ROK's military force improvement policy has focused mainly on the traditional continental strategic concept: first is the ground, then comes the air and the sea.

Third, in order ultimately to achieve the porcupine strategy the ROK needs to continue to spend 5.5-6 percent of its GNP for defense and needs to develop more appropriate weapon systems. Specifically, the ROK should develop the PGMs (Precision-Guided Munitions) which play a vital role in modern warfare. For this, efforts should be made to foster the ROK defense industry. The doors to the defense industry should be opened wider, and technology exchange between the civilian and defense sectors should further proceed to cover more research and development investments.

Fourth, internal factors influencing the national security environment should be given more attention. National security can be maximized in efficiency only when there is a solid national consensus. As industrialization proceeds, social conflict tends to be aggravated by the complaints and grievances of the people who are relatively more deprived. If this alienated class becomes skewed toward the radical ideology of the so-called "mass democracy," national security will be quite vulnerable to external threats. This is exactly what North Korea wants to have happen in the ROK.
Finally, our civil-military relationship should be improved. As the proportion of the post-war generation population increases, the existing national security policies including the anti-communist policy have become less and less convincing to these generations. In addition, for various political reasons it cannot be denied that popular perceptions on the military have hardly been favorable. Enhancing civilian trust in the military, therefore, is one of the most urgent and important tasks facing the ROK today.

As has been examined in the preceding chapters, North Korea has a numerical superiority over the ROK in almost every military field. It appears that the ROK can achieve a rough military parity with North Korea by in mid-1990s or possibly somewhat after. For the time being, therefore, the US military presence in the ROK will continue to be a necessity for maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. Related to this, the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) system needs to be modified into a more equal and cooperative system worthy of its name. This kind of change in the command system can be achieved when the ROK obtains a rough military parity with North Korea and when operational control is transferred from the US to the ROK side. It is only after such changes that the ROK will be able effectively to execute the grand strategy proposed in this paper.