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FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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I: INTRODUCTION

1. THE AGENCIES OF FOREIGN POLICY FORMULATION

There are a number of governmental agencies which concern themselves, directly or indirectly, with the foreign policy of South Korea.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the most responsible agency in making foreign policy for the Republic of Korea. Having commenced its operations without inheriting any holdovers from the Japanese colonial government, the Ministry is staffed by the relatively young officers, who are, in many cases, inexperienced. But the corps of the Foreign Service is regarded as an elite group in the Korean society and so commands a certain deference and recognition because it is almost free from the traditionally scandalous image of Korean bureaucrats.

However, the Ministry has not quite established itself as a powerful, self-promoting government agency, largely because the first twelve years of the Republic under the Syngman Rhee Presidency did not allow the Foreign Ministry to grow to be an influential policy-making body in the government. During the Rhee government, the Ministry was little more than a consular office. Most of the foreign policy was made by the President himself. The Ministry was often ignored in the direct communication between the President and the envoys abroad who were non-career political appointees. It was only after the May (1961) Revolution that the large promotions of the career diplomats to the higher ranking posts in the Ministry and the embassies abroad began.

However, the main handicap to effective development of foreign policy by the Korean Foreign Service is the fact that foreign policy-making is not sufficiently supported by specialized area research and long-range planning. Research and long-range planning are still unfamiliar to governmental bodies in South Korea. To the Koreans, government usually means a regulation and control, not research or planning.

It is largely for this reason that the Foreign Ministry has not been able to establish itself as the most influential agency in the process of the foreign

policy formulation. However, it must be noted that the Foreign Ministry is now regarded as one of the best in terms of research and long-range planning among the other government agencies in South Korea.

The second important organization in the process of the foreign policy-making is South Korea's Central Intelligence Agency. Since the 1961 Military Revolution, the South Korean CIA has become a rather powerful political institution. The scope of CIA activities is so wide that it is almost all inclusive of the affairs of the State. Thus, its influence over the matters of foreign relations has been recognized as a formidable one for some time.

Backed with almost unlimited resources and authority, the CIA can be very influential in the area of the foreign relations. Supposedly, it is an information gathering agency, and its research department is reputed as the largest and one best in the country. It maintains a network on a world-wide scale, and its agents attend most of the international meetings in which South Korea participates. In spite of this, CIA of South Korea is still an agency of operations, not of policy-making.

Thirdly, there is the Ministry of National Defense. The Defense Ministry, however, is not likely to make any substantial contribution to the South Korean foreign policy, largely because the Ministry, preoccupied with the problems of its own management, is not equipped with either manpower or training to compete with other agencies in the process of foreign policy-making. The only organization in the Defense Ministry that deals with the problem of the foreign policy is the National Defense College, which is too small to be an influential source in policy formulation.

Fourthly, the National Security Council and its small secretariat can be considered a participant in the foreign policy-making process. But its staffs function as more or less a record-keeping or housekeeping organization rather than a policy coordinating body. Peculiar as it may seem, the tradition in South Korea is that an agency such as the National Security Council and its secretariat is generally regarded as a colorless and powerless agency in the

government. Thus, it simply cannot recruit men of high caliber and often is outmaneuvered by other prestigious agencies like the Foreign Ministry or CIA.

Fifthly, there is the Foreign Affairs Committee of South Korea's National Assembly, which takes a part in the process of foreign policy-making. Understandably, the Committee itself has no experience or resources to make any positive, independent policy proposal to the Administration. Its chief function seems to be to sanctify the policies of the Administration under the name of peoples' representatives. Thus, it is often used as a rallying point to support the Executive Branch's foreign policies instead of advising or counselling it.

Lastly, there is an organ which plays a very important role in the foreign policy-making process in South Korea that of the Secretariat of the President. Recently upgraded, the Secretariat is today known as the superagency of all the Ministries. It is very true that as far as the economic policies are concerned, the major decisions are made in the Presidential Secretariat. The President retains a number of ex-Ministers in the Secretariat just to supervise the ever-increasing burdens of the office.

It is thus generally believed that the foreign policies are dictated by the Secretariat. However, this research has found no convincing evidence that the Secretariat is the most powerful agency in the foreign policy-making process in the South Korean government. The Presidential Staffs used as the foreign affairs specialists are seemingly unrecognized as the lesser ranking members of the Foreign Service. Their credentials are far less impressive than those of the economic advisors in the office. It is unlikely that they have the same high level of responsibility as the economic advisors.

Another persistent belief in South Korea's foreign policy-making process is that the President himself keeps unpublicized advisors on foreign affairs. It is said that the President conceives the general direction of policy from these unknown figures, possibly including a foreign emissary.

The practice is not unusual in Korean history for a foreign envoy from a dominant power to advise the head of state on foreign affairs. He was often a

protector and benefactor to the incumbent regime, while relied upon him for a continuing support and recognition.

Although the present regime is, at this writing, rather far from being dependent on a foreign power for its own political survival, it is, however, undeniable that the regime simply cannot ignore the obvious presence of the United States and its effect on Korean foreign policy.

2. THE OTHER INFLUENTIAL GROUPS

There are also other groups influential in the process of the foreign policy-making in South Korea. These extra-governmental groups consist of political parties, newspapers, labor and business organizations, academicians, and student organizations.

While they are often vocal in foreign policy discussions, their roles and actual influence over the government's decision in foreign relations are highly doubtful, if not negligible. Their limited function in this area could be a result of the political systems of South Korea - a highly centralized, ideologically inflexible, and anti-communistic outlook of government.

First of all, the political parties in South Korea are understandably much less interested in the foreign policies than in the domestic issues. Thus, their influence is very limited. The major parties have, of course, foreign policy platforms, which are characteristically very general and vague statements rather than specific policy proposals. Even the party in power has a very little "say" in the process of the foreign policy makeup. Naturally, the opposition party exercises almost no influence over it.

Secondly, the newspapers in South Korea have traditionally been very influential in the limited sphere of public opinion formation. The Korean newspapers are known to be muckrakers rather than informers. Naturally, their prestige and strength are based on their role of appealing to morality, patriotism, and so forth. They are, therefore, frequently reprimanding the government for a "low posture" in its foreign relations and advocating a strong security system. But

they are simply outmaneuvered by the government expertise in specific policy questions.

Thirdly, business and labor organizations are growing slowly as the economy of South Korea is developing. But their influence over the process of foreign policy formation is extremely limited. These groups are preoccupied with their own welfare and interest in the domestic issues, and are not equipped for a role in the foreign policy area.

Finally, it seems that academicians and students in South Korea do have a formidable influence on the questions of foreign policy. These groups have enough time and relatively perceptive understanding of the foreign policy issues involved. Furthermore, the academic world in South Korea has traditionally held a cherished status in society.

However, there is again a limitation in the role of the academician in South Korea today. The limitation on academic freedom is so great that, for example, even the teaching of Marxism in the university is illegal. Therefore, this limited scope of research and expression does not allow to significantly affect foreign policy formulation.

However, there is an exception to the general limitation of these students and professors in the area of South Korea's relations with Japan. That Korea has greater degree of interest and understanding with Japan can be attributed unquestionably to the fact that the leaders of these groups were raised and educated under the Japanese colonial rule. Thus, they have not only a deep emotional identity with the Japanese but also comprehension of the problems which these groups do not usually display on other issues of foreign relations. The noisy demonstrations and heated debates on the ROK-Japan Treaty reflected their special relationship with Japan.

With this exception then, foreign policy in South Korea is generally regarded as the prerogative of the government agencies concerned named above and public opinion is not taken into account.¹ The intellectuals have not been able to challenge the proposals of the government, neither have South Korea's

so-called interest groups contributed to foreign policy decisions for the past two decades.

II. UNIFICATION AND NORTH KOREA

1. SOUTH KOREA'S PROPOSALS FOR THE UNIFICATION

Ever since the United Nations resolution of 1947 calling for a free election with U. N. supervision, which North Korea refused, the South Korean government has taken a somewhat fatalistic attitude toward the issue of the territorial unification. It is fatalistic because she is inclined to believe that this solution rests beyond her control.

The Korean War, in spite of its catastrophic effect, was considered a last chance for South Koreans to unify their divided country. Thus, the "March North" was not only a political gesture of the government but also an earnest aspiration for many South Koreans, because a military victory seemed an only alternative. However, the Korean War had brought a fortified division, not a unification.

Thus, the discussion of the unification during the long tenure of the late President Syngman Rhee had become nothing but a rhetoric. It was mainly aimed at keeping the issue alive as a reminder to the divided country. Neither the government nor the people had much hope for the unification, except the hope that an easing of East-West relations would somehow help create a better atmosphere for a solution toward the unification of the two Koreas.

It was not until the opposition Minjudang (Democratic Party) came into power in the Second Republic following the general election of June 29, 1960, that a serious discussion, possibly a movement, started in South Korea.

However, out of the fear that a candid discussion among the intellectuals who were previously not permitted such a freedom might get out of hand, the Democratic government presented a rather unimaginative scheme for a unification, which, in effect, hardened the conditions submitted at the Geneva Conference by the Rhee regime in 1954. The essence of the proposal follows:

1. Peaceful unification through a free election under the supervision of the United Nations.
2. The member of such supervisory commission should be chosen in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the U. N.
3. The proposed establishment of South-North Joint Committee is incongruent with the U. N. resolution that the Republic of Korea is only legal government for the whole Korea, and therefore, it is rejected.
4. Any form of exchanges between North and South should be rejected because there is no guarantee to prevent activities of the Communist subversion.
5. A unified Korea should be a state which guarantees democracy and civil liberties and rejects any form of dictatorship.¹

This formula by the supposedly liberal Democratic government was regarded as a setback to any hope for a step toward a unification. The Geneva formula was believed to be less inflexible than the proposal of the Second Republic in 1960.

While the government took a hardened position, the yearning for a unification by the citizenry, notably students and intellectuals, reached its peak when a group of students marched toward the Demilitarized Zone for a meeting with the other side. Thus, the issue of unification enjoyed a feverish vitality throughout this ill-fated Republic.

The military junta which overthrew the Democratic government in 1961 did not present a positive policy on methods of national unification. It seemed the issue dropped out of the political discussion for some time.

Only upon the birth of the Third Republic in 1964, however, did the problem of unification raise its head again. The unification question, however, was treated differently this time. The Park government wanted to discuss the unification in 1970's, not 1960's. It was not difficult to find out what the present regime had in mind when they wanted unification discussed in the 1970's. What they needed was more time. More time was needed to upgrade the economic level of the predominantly agricultural South to be equally viable with the industrial North before any serious talk for unification began.

The plan reflects Gen. Park's conviction that an economic self-sufficiency is a prerequisite to any meaningful discussion of territorial unification.

Characteristically, the ruling Democratic-Republican Party took a somewhat philosophical position in regarding the issue of unification. It stated:

1. Posture to win over Communism should be established in every aspect of life, such as politics, economy, social and cultural spheres.
2. A special research organization should be set up to study the problems and issues of national unification.
3. National spiritual armament to achieve unification by victory over Communism should be strengthened.
4. Unification policy should be bi-partisan endeavor and active diplomatic activities must follow.²

As a typical gesture, South Korea's Foreign Minister wrote:

"As for our national reunification question, there is no change in our stand that while we endeavor to strengthen our own national strength, we will abide by the principle of holding North-South general elections under the U. N. supervision—a formula supported by the majority of the U. N. member countries."³

Thus, except for the U. N. lobby, most South Korean leaders, particularly under the leadership of Gen. Park, have come to believe that the reunification has no immediate prospect and, therefore, the discussion of the unification does not serve any constructive purpose. They prefer the United Nations to any direct contact between North and South.

2. THE U. N. RESOLUTIONS

As far as the method of the unification is concerned, the annual adoption of the United Nation resolution calling for free election in North-South Korea with U. N. supervision has been the extent to which the Seoul government has actively sought unification. There is no evidence that the South Korean government has sought any other means of a solution for the unification questions.

Thus, all the resources of South Korean diplomacy once a year are exerted into the so-called U. N. lobbying for a favorable resolution to the Korean question at the General Assembly. South Korea's somewhat expansive diplomatic net-

work in Africa which sprang up in the past few years has a single purpose: "yes" votes from those newly emerging nations at the U. N.

However, the South Korean people and government alike are not totally satisfied with their performance at the U. N. in recent years. Consequently, overall prospects of the Korean resolution in the U. N. would not permit optimism. The following table shows the problem South Korea faces at the U. N.

VOTES ON THE U. N. RESOLUTION FOR KOREAN UNIFICATION⁴

	"Yes"	"No"	"Abstain"	"Absent"	No. of Memberships
1947	43	0	6	8	57
1957	57	8	9	6	80
1961	60	11	27	6	104
1965	61	13	34	9	117
1967	68	23	26	5	122
1968	67	28	28	3	126
1969	65	31	26	4	126

As a result, for the first time since 1947, the South Korean government came to take a critical look at her policy toward the U. N. Its aim was a self-interrogation: to elicit a fresh assessment of the situation. The Seoul regime decided not to push the ritualized adoption of the U. N. resolution whose content is almost identical year after year, favoring a more flexible policy which puts the resolution at the discretion of the U. N. Secretary-General.⁵

Such a decision by the Park government was motivated by at least two factors with regard to the U. N.

First of all, in the recent years the South Korean government has encountered a growing unpopularity of the traditional approach at the U. N. As indicated above, more and more countries have become unsympathetic toward the South Korean government, despite the extensive diplomacy. It seemed a wiser policy not to prolong an approach which drew more hostile members than the friendly ones in the U. N.

Secondly, the past adoption of the U. N. resolution has, after all, failed to bring the reunification of two Koreas. Furthermore, the recent history of

the U. N. failure in similar issues in Vietnam, Mid-East, and Czechoslovakia must have reinforced the doubt about the wisdom that the adoption of the U. N. resolution was a practical step toward national reunification as long as North Korea rejects the U. N. resolution calling for a North-South free election under the U. N. supervision, the U. N. adoption of such resolution seems a futile effort to reunify Korea.

Because of political differences, it is most unlikely that either North or South Korea would compromise to bring about a peaceful unification, as suggested in some quarters. Therefore, the most celebrated suggestion of "a neutralized Korea" is undoubtedly unacceptable to either side, because the present leadership of both sides realizes that a neutralization can be achieved only at the expense of their hard-earned political capital. Thus, the only other method seemingly left for the North is a military solution.

While South Korea is evidently anxious to push through the economic development plan, there is growing evidence that North Korea is contemplating, if not beginning, a new assault on the South.

3. VIEWS ON THE NORTH KOREAN STRATEGY

Seoul's North Korea watchers generally agree that there are three main possibilities for North Korea in launching a new war. They are:

1. An all out attack of the front line;
2. Selective bombing on the cities and plants; and,
3. Guerrilla warfare.

While they would not rule out the first two possibilities, most observers deem the third method most likely.⁶

First of all, the South Korean military authority reported that the frequency of the Armistice violation along the DMZ significantly increased in the past two years. The following figures show the trends for the past four years.

Nos. of Violations in the Armistice by North Korea and of Fighting in the DMZ⁷

1965	42	23
1966	37	29
1967	423	117
1968 (as of May 17)	259	Not Available

The intensified infiltration of North Korean espionage agents into the South is now generally interpreted as positive evidence that the North Korean regime is preparing a new military venture into the South.

In the wake of the latest flare-up of the North Korean infiltration, occasioned by the presence of the so-called "suicide squadron" which aimed to attack the Presidential Palace in Seoul on January 5, 1968, the Pueblo seizure by North Korea was an even more traumatic event for many South Koreans who suspect a greater belligerency from North Korea.

Collaborating this suspicion approximately sixty North Korean regulars, the largest number so far, landed on the eastern coast of South Korea's Kangwondo (Province) in November 1968. The South Korean government claimed that the most of the infiltrates had been either killed or captured. This rather swift success over what might have been the first guerrilla operation is largely attributed to the local cooperation the government received.⁸ Such cooperation by the local peasantry is not a new experience to the government authorities. The peasants have traditionally been cooperative toward any central authority, including the Japanese colonialists. Therefore, it was probably the result of the political discipline rather than any positive loyalty or affinity toward the Seoul regime. The traditionally strong, centralized police system which supervises almost every activity of the local citizens, together with the political regimentation such as the Home Guard, must have made the local people cooperative with the authorities.

So far the infiltrators from North Korea have proved incapable of generating local support and spreading disorder in the countryside. But when things cooled off a bit in the countryside where the search for operations of the North

Korea agents was centered, it seems that the Seoul government recovered a confidence in her capability to defend herself and tried to search for a new role in the years ahead.⁹

One may wonder if the outcome would have been different if North Korean agents had succeeded in infiltrating into the large cities such as Seoul and Pusan, where tens of thousands of unhappy, underemployed or unemployed lived in ghettos. The widely heralded economic progress in South Korea has only resulted in widening the gap between the rich and the poor.

The near bankruptcy of the small merchants and medium-size firms due to the monopoly and trust as a result of the growing accumulation and concentration of large capital under the Park regime has prevented the gradual development of the middle class and, therefore, accentuated the social unrest.¹⁰

However, the Park government, realizing the urgent need for controlling the urban unrest, has already resorted to the old technique of "creating a fear" by suppressing the press, probably one of only a few viable institutions in Korea, and other civil liberties by applying the Anti-Communist Act which allows the government to exercise an extraordinary power over the suspect. Furthermore, the Home Guard will take care of the potentially dangerous elements with organization and discipline.¹¹

Therefore, it is very doubtful that any type of counter insurgency has a chance of success in South Korea, regardless of either urban or rural locales. Thus, even if the disgruntled element, such as the urban dweller, underpaid, underemployed, unemployed or long suppressed peasants, were not unsympathetic to the cause of the North Korean agents, they probably would not constitute a danger serious enough to warrant another Vietnam in South Korea, because the present regime undoubtedly has an almost complete control of these groups of the population.

Historically, political socialization of the above group has been negligible. The trade unions, farmers organizations, and other socio-economic groups are traditionally subordinated to the political authorities. Besides, there is no strong religious affiliation among them. Thus, these groups of the population are too

extremely disorganized or disintegrated to contribute to the political process, legal or extra-legal, as a political force.

One has to reckon with another factor-timing of such an attack. Thus, one can suspect that the intensified violation of the Armistice could have been designed to tempt and perhaps confuse the United States policy on South Korea, as it undergoes a trying period of self-search at home. However, compared to ones that had occurred in the past, these incidences were not of a casual or easily controllable nature of infiltration, but something of different implication, according to the South Korean sources.

Meantime, the two most publicized events (North Korea's attack on the Presidential Palace and the seizure of the USS Pueblo) led the South Korean government to a series of moves to face this new crisis. The South Korean government leaders are determined to enlist every citizen, willing or not, in their cause for preventing South Korea from becoming another Vietnam. Rightly or wrongly among the newly created schemes to combat the crisis, there was a formation of National Guard-type militia called the Home Guard, an intensified censorship of press and other political activities, and a stepped-up supply of new equipment to ROK armed forces.

Supposedly, mobilization of the Home Guard works in two ways. It provides the government with the needed manpower to counter North Korean infiltrators, and by the same token, it serves to reduce the availability of villagers who might become recruits of North Korean agents. However, the creation of two million member Home Guard in such a short period raises a number of questions as to the effectiveness, logistics, discipline and morale, and most of all, the very need for a vast militia besides the 600,000 men in the regular army, since the resources (such as budget, weapons and ammunition) are rather limited and dependent on U.S. assistance. Would it not be wise to use those resources for the ROK regular forces to upgrade their combat readiness instead of dividing them into two forces without having either of them satisfactorily prepared?

Closely connected with this inadequacy of the so-called Home Guard is the exemption of the well-connected, well-to-do from the units in their home town by the

means of setting up numerous special units in government offices, big firms, and public corporations while most of the socio-economically less well off are forced to serve in the Home Guard. Seemingly, the hurried formation of the Home Guard was, not only as the regime insists, directly to curb the North Korean infiltration, but also to satisfy the long-felt need for a political regimentation of the disgruntled, restless masses of the unemployed and the underemployed.

Therefore, unless South Korea is on the verge of a major political eruption in the coming years, there is very little likelihood that a North Korea-agitated subversion will succeed, mainly because most South Koreans have no affinity or trust in the North Korean government, due to their vivid memory of suffering during the Korean War under the bloody Communist rule, as well as because of the effective control of South Korean government.

Thus, as long as the guerrilla warfare is waged by North Korea, it is safe to assume the present regime is capable of overcoming it.

However, the question remains as to the stability of the present political order. During the last nine years of rather critical times for South Korea, Gen. Park has developed a finely tuned instinct for political survival. As things stand now, the problem is Pres. Park's 1975 step-down from his present office. The current Constitution prohibits another term to President Park.

The Park government knows that another constitutional amendment dealing with the Presidential term is traditionally a sensitive matter in this faction-ridden political land where no President has ever been succeeded by opposition leader constitutionally. He also is fully aware of the fact that his regime enjoys no great popular support outside its own ranks.

However the Constitutional amendment is not necessarily the final solution to the question of presidential succession. There is always a possibility of staging a pro-government *coup d'etat* as a short cut to Park's prolonged rule.

An educated guess is that the military establishment, having the role it has, will not sit back and wait until the quarrelling professional politicians, of whom the military has a very low opinion, take over. For instance, even though few be-

lieve that the multiplied incidents by the North Korea agents are no more than an effort to rile the Seoul regime, there are many who suspect that the impact of the incidents is often exaggerated, and, for that matter, that the government is guilty of over-reaction.

Some military officers go as far as to hypothesize that the government tends to exaggerate the significance of the recent more frequent North Korean incursions into South Korea, in order to create tensions among the populace, justify the increased restrictions on civil rights, and pave the way to ensuring President Park's continued reign through the constitutional amendment and subsequent re-election.

III. THE UNITED STATES AND MUTUAL SECURITY

1. THE PUEBLO INCIDENT

South Korea's relations with the United States went down to the lowest point in recent years after North Korea's capture of the USS Pueblo. What seemed to so upset the Seoul regime was the fact that North Korea could hijack the U.S. intelligence ship on the high seas and, furthermore, that the U.S. government took no retaliation against the North Korean action. This, to the South Korean government, is a sign of weakness or defeatism. It, therefore, believes that the showing of such a permissive attitude would only encourage, if not invite, North Korea's beligerency.

To make things especially worse, the Pueblo incident occurred only a few weeks after the North Korean agents marched into the Capital to attack the Presidential Palace. In the wake of the so-called "suicide squadron" incident, the anger of the South Korean government against the North Korean government had already reached its peak even before the Pueblo. Thus, when the Pueblo was captured, the Seoul officials were secretly hoping that the United States government would demonstrate a "toughness" toward the aggressive act of North Korea with military pressure, in order to ensure that any future assault by North Korea would not be tolerated.¹

However, the disappointment of the South Korean government was rooted deeper than the Pueblo incident. Among the most significant indication of the Soeul go-

verment's grievances about its relations with the United States government was South Korea's discomfort in the growing rapprochement between the United States and the Soviet Union, one product of which was believed to be the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.²

2. SIGNING OF THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

The Seoul regime's cool (or lukewarm) reaction to the invitation to sign the Treaty May 1968 manifested its doubt in the wisdom of making a treaty with Communist countries. It still believes that the Soviet Union is taking advantage of the Treaty by denying the free nations an access to nuclear weapons, while she is not adhering to the same restraints shown by the West in the nuclear proliferation.³ Particularly the South Korean government's uneasiness is based on the further fact that neither North Korea nor Communist China signed the Treaty, thus allowing them unlimited nuclear production.⁴

On the eve of South Korea's signing the Treaty, the single most contentious issue was whether or not the United States would live up to its promise of help to South Korea, even if North Korea dared to use the nuclear weapons in a new assault.⁵ From the standpoint of the prospects for South Korea's survival, the need for the United States' unmitigated support could scarcely be exaggerated, simply because there is no other protection available once North Korea starts another invasion.

Once again the South Korean defense posture moved back into the limelight. The question of security was particularly significant since South Korea, which had moved to the verge of an economic "take-off", needed all the guarantees to her security she could possibly get to persuade reluctant foreign firms to continue their investment in the country.

3. THE ROK-US MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY

While the South Korean government is not totally happy about some of the United States policies such as on the Pueblo incident and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, no less disturbing were what it called the deficiencies of the Mutual Security Treaty between the two countries.⁶

First of all, the South Korean government seemed bothered by the fact that the

treaty has no fixed duration of validity. While a treaty without the validity of duration may be put to effect indefinitely, it also, can be repealed at anytime. The Seoul government's worry is based on the prospects that the United States is moving toward a neo-isolation as expressed in the recent opinion polls. Therefore, it wants to fix a certain duration validity into the treaty so that no change of the internal politics could withdraw the United States armed forces from South Korea.⁷

Secondly, the South Korean government wants a more specific definition of "armed attacks", which obligates each party to support the attacked party. It wants to include into the categories of "armed attacks", not only direct aggression, but also "indirect aggression". What is meant by "indirect aggression" is not clear, but it seems that the main concern of the Seoul government is to eliminate any confusion as to the nature of the armed attacks by the external forces, in order to meet the invasion.⁸

Thirdly, the South Korean government is not satisfied with the lack of a provision for immediate action against armed attacks. The present treaty stipulates that each party acts in accordance with its own constitutional procedures. It means an approval by the respective legislature bodies. Such a procedure, to the impatient Seoul officials, causes not only a delay, but also an uncertainty about the action against the attacks.⁹

Fourthly, the absence of a standing consultation body between the forces of the two nations is another defect the Seoul government wants to overcome. It feels a need for a permanent committee for consultation with regard to actual implementation of the treaty to minimize any danger of misunderstandings between the two countries.¹⁰

Finally, the South Korean government is not happy about the provisions of the United States - Japan Security Treaty which gives Japan a certain control over actions concerning the defense of the Republic of Korea as a result of so-called "prior-consultation".¹¹

Although South Korea normalized her relations with Japan in 1965, the relationship between the two countries has not always been in accord, but often on the verge

of open clash for one issue or another. Thus, Seoul feels uncomfortable as to the extent of Japanese influence over the United States policy over the Far East.

To all these problematic relations between the governments of the United States and South Korea, there must be added another, uneasiness which the Seoul officials began to sense with the start of the Nixon Administration.

South Korea's political leaders have curiously followed the developments of the political debates and their consequent impact upon the foreign policy of the United States --- particularly President Johnson's retirement and the bombing pause in North Vietnam.

Correctly or not, the South Korean government has thus come to believe that the foreign policy under the new Nixon Administration would be different from its predecessors. One of the possible changes in its policy would be a deAmericanization of the East Asian security arrangement -- a policy which Seoul suspects with great anxiety as a step toward the elevation of Japan's position in the region and the ultimate replacement by them of the role played by the United States since the end of World War II.

Generally, the South Korean leaders find it extremely difficult to accept Japan as a replacement for the United States as a leader in the international security system in East Asia.

IV: RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

1. INTRODUCTION

After twelve years of the monolithic diplomacy of Syngman Rhee who taught the South Koreans to hate the Communists and Japanese alike, the young militarists of the so-called May Revolution (1961) discovered their country unrealistically and dangerously isolated. Two early decisions in the foreign relations reached by the Junta were normalizing the diplomatic relations with Japan and opening up a communication with the non-aligned, newly-emerging, nations of the world.

As expected, the settling of diplomatic normalization with Japan was not without obstacles. While the Japanese government met some internal opposition, Korean

resistance against the proposed Korea-Japan Treaty was so great that it almost toppled the Park regime. A nearly year-long, nation-wide campaign to defeat the Treaty, led by academicians, journalists, religious leaders, and students, caused an extreme unrest and left a deep mark upon the direction of her relations with Japan. For instance, the opposition to the government's proposed Treaty to be ratified by the National Assembly was so great that the disgruntled members of the splintered opposition parties had actually linked to form a united opposition party, called Minjung-dang (Popular Party) in 1965, although all they had in common was that they were out of power.

Meanwhile, the Seoul government was determined to defeat opposition and at any cost. For the first time in Korean history, major universities were closed down and several leading professors responsible for the resistance were removed from their schools. On the other hand, an extensive campaign through the vast government propaganda machinery to persuade the skeptical public to accept the Treaty was mobilized for the interest of the people as well as the state. President Park himself pleaded repeatedly with the public not to underestimate the economic and international contribution to be made by normalizing relations with Japan. While most of the opposition (Minjung) party members resigned from the National Assembly in a final protest against the ratification of the treaty, it passed the chamber on August 14, 1965, only fifty-four days after signing the treaty in Tokyo.¹ Such was the beginning of the South Korea's diplomatic normalization with Japan.

Unlike relations with other countries South Korea's policy toward Japan has had special constituency. Not only are the constituents numerous and representative of the major components of Korean society, but also their importance understandably exceeds that of other foreign relations. Proximity, past history, cultural and linguistic familiarity, and most of all, economics are factors which contribute to and arouse special interest and concern. The presence of these obvious entanglements make the conduct of South Korea's diplomacy toward Japan difficult.

2. THE TRADE IMBALANCE

Among the most serious problems the Seoul regime faced in her relations with

Japan in late 1960's was the endeavor to improve the ever-widening trade imbalance. No sooner had the treaty been signed in mid 1965, than Japanese merchants landed in South Korea with such impressive credentials as a long experience, technical know-how, polished salesmanship, and reasonably good products.

As expected, it did not take very long before the Japanese goods dominated the Korean import market. In a little over three years of a normalized trade, South Korea has become the Japan's second largest importer, trailing only the U.S. in this respect.²

SOUTH KOREA'S TRADE WITH JAPAN³

Year	Export	Import	<u>Import</u> <u>Export</u>
1965	43,000,000	166,000,000	3.8
1966	66,000,000	293,000,000	4.4
1967	84,000,000	443,000,000	5.2
1968	102,000,000	603,000,000	5.9
1969 (Jan.-Nov.)	120,000,000	703,000,000	5.9

The above table indicates how serious the problem of trade imbalance has become for the past years. In 1965, South Korea imported from Japan 3.7 times as much as she exported to Japan. But the export-import ratio has since seen accelerated to 4.4 in 1966, 5.2 in 1967, 5.9 in 1968, and 5.9 in the first eleven months of 1969.

Unless something is done about the ever-widening gap it will not be long before the ratio may go as high as one to ten in favor of Japanese products. South Korea is convinced that such a wide gulf must be bridged, because the thriving South Korean economy simply cannot afford to let the current trends continue forever.⁴

In Fiscal Year 1969 the South Korean government set a goal of \$180 million export to Japan against the previous year's actual export of less than \$100 million, which was only 66 per cent of \$150 million goal. This is a high target, but she also expects usually large amount of import from Japan. Thus, she does not attempt to balance the trade, which is unrealistic in the foreseeable future, but

only wants to narrow the gap so that she can be assured of the badly needed foreign currency for a continuing support of the economic development projects.⁵

The Korean government blames the discriminative policy of the Japanese government for the trade imbalance. It deplores the fact that the Tokyo does not do as much as Seoul does for better relations between the two countries. That Japanese government could help narrow the gap without damaging Japan's economy, is the view of the Korean government. By relaxing some of their overly protective policy on fishing and agricultural products, the Seoul regime believes that the Japanese government could help reduce the wide imbalance of trade and reciprocate the good will of the Korean people who have become their second largest customer, despite the unhappy colonial experience.⁶

So far the Japanese government has not taken any major steps to remedy the situation. The Korean government hoped to elicit some promises from the Japanese Cabinet members who visited Seoul for an annual meeting of Korea-Japan Joint Cabinet Conference held August 27-29, 1968. The representatives of both governments agreed on a further consultation at the forthcoming meeting of lesser officials.⁷ But by the very vagueness of the joint communique issued at the end of the cabinet conference left loopholes for a further negotiation. The Park government holds out for further consultations to gain something concrete in this im passe.

3. JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA

Besides the trade imbalance, which causes the government of South Korea to be so unhappy in her relations with Japan, is Japan's relations with North Korea. Although Japan does not recognize the government of North Korea, the two countries have had a continued history of trade, travel, and communication since 1948.

Among the most outstanding past between the governments of Japan and North Korea, is the Kalcutta Treaty. This is a treaty which enabled Japan to repatriate Korean residents in Japan who wished to return to North Korea. Between 1959 and 1967 North Korea received 87,621 Korean residents from Japan, most of whom were believed to be brought to Japan for a wartime labor during the Second World War. The

North Korean government had long sought this repatriation to make up the Korean War loss of labor force, while Japan was anxious to get rid of as many Koreans as possible for one reason or another.⁸

The entire episode of the repatriation was an unpleasant reminder to the Seoul government that Koreans in Japan had preferred the North to the South. This was something South Korea found very painful to admit in light of the competitiveness between the two Koreas. Such was the case when the then President, Syngman Rhee, even threatened to go to war with Japan if the repatriation ship departed for North Korea in 1959. As time went by, the South Korean government came to an understanding that there was nothing she could do except to wait till the treaty expired in 1967.

However, the problem of repatriation once again attracted the attention of the South Korean government in 1968. It noticed that negotiations had been underway for quite some time between the representatives of the two countries' Red Cross to re-open the repatriation. The Japanese government admitted that she wanted to repatriate approximately 15,000 Korean residents who had applied before the treaty expired in 1967.⁹

Another issue in Japan's relations with North Korea which the Seoul government finds most irritating has been that Japan continues to trade with North Korea, even after the ROK-Japan Treaty was signed in 1965.

Ironically, while South Korea is troubled by Japan's unwillingness to buy more of her products, Japan imports more than she exports in trade with North Korea.

JAPAN'S TRADE WITH NORTH KOREA¹⁰

Year	Export	Import	<u>Import</u> <u>Export</u>
1965	16,000,000	14,000,000	0.87
1966	5,000,000	22,000,000	4.40
1967	6,000,000	29,000,000	4.83
1968 (Jan.-Nov.)	18,000,000	31,000,000	1.72

Although the export to North Korea in 1968 is slightly over the level of the pre-treaty, South Korean's concern is the fact that the trade level after the treaty

has been increased in spite of the persistent protest from Seoul. Last year Japan was planning a Fair of Industry and Technology in Pyongyang in October.¹¹

When the normalization was put into effect in 1965, the South Korean government boasted that she is the sole government recognized by Japan on the Korean Peninsula. She further assumed that there would be no direct deal between the Japanese and North Korea. However, it turned out that Japan did not intend to cut off all the relations with North Korea as South Korea wanted. Rather, Japan wants to keep her door open to North Korea by any means.

Upon hearing that Japan is contemplating to export several machine tool plants to North Korea, every major newspaper in Seoul denounced Japan's plan. It was also blasted as "short-sighted and a betrayal" by leading politicians in South Korea.

Even the man who is more responsible than anyone for the Korea-Japan Treaty of 1965, South Korea's Foreign Minister, National Assemblyman Tong Won Lee, criticized Japan's continued relations with North Korea. Using rather harsh words, he states that Japan's supply of machine tool plants might constitute an indirect aggression on South Korea, because North Korea will ultimately use the plants to produce arms and ammunition to endanger the security of South Korea.¹² By and large, former Foreign Minister Lee's accusation represents the sensitivity and grievances of South Korean leaders about Japan's relations with North Korea.

In 1968 the Japanese government issued the re-entry visa to Korean residents in Japan who want to visit North Korea. This naturally aroused a great clamor in Seoul. As usual, newspapers and political parties denounced the action of the Japanese government, demanding a stern measure to be taken by Seoul's government against Japan. However, there has been no strong action initiated by the South Korean government to prevent Japanese government from making any further contact with North Korea, except a series of verbal warnings against the Japanese government.

A typical reaction by the Seoul government upon any news that Japan and North Korea are doing something unacceptable to South Korea's taste has been that the Foreign Ministry invited Japan's Ambassador in Seoul to exclaim to him that "the

government of Korea cannot tolerate any contact between Japan and the North Korea."¹³

Verbal warning is the extent to which Seoul's government can go in her efforts against Japan's contacts with North Korea. Thus far, such a warning has proved to bring no change on Japan's policy. Perhaps anything short of a diplomatic break-up with Japan may not be effective. Unfortunately, however desirable it may sound, the Seoul government simply can't afford, at this stage, a diplomatic cut-off from Japan, because, in fact, Korean economic development needs Japan's investment and technology more than Japan needs the Korean market.

The South Korean government's anguish is greater, because it believes that South Korea, as a Far Eastern bastion in the Free World against the threat of the Communism has in fact defended the security of Japan. In other words, the fall of South Korea into the hands of Communism would certainly endanger the security and prosperity of Japan sooner or later. South Korea contends that Japan must realize, if not appreciate, the burdens and difficulties of South Korea in this agonizing period of defense and growth.

V: SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. VIETNAM WAR

It was during the Vietnam War that South Korea really launched an active diplomacy with the nations in Southeast Asia even though she had maintained nominal relations with most of them.

South Korea's entry into the Vietnam War which began with a dispatch of mobile surgical hospitals and karate instructors in September 1964 was gradual, and thus strikingly similar to the pattern of the United States troop commitments.¹ The first dispatch of South Koreans was almost unnoticed and, therefore, no opposition against the action arose. However, the opposition against the government's decision to send about 1,500 army engineers and transportation teams in January 1965 was quite formidable.²

Major newspapers and the opposition parties raised doubts as to the wisdom of sending the troops to Vietnam, primarily because of the uncertainties about the war itself. They questioned whether the United States had a concrete objective to win

the War and, furthermore, whether the South Vietnamese desired to fight the War or whether they desired foreign troops to fight it for them.³

However, interestingly enough, the opposition began to disappear soon after the United States Ambassador in Seoul made a round of visits with the prominent opposition leaders including former President Posun Yun.⁴

Meanwhile, eight opposition members walked out of the chamber in protest against the Administration's request to allow the troop dispatch to South Vietnam, when the Administration-controlled National Assembly passed the measure by 106 to 11 votes.⁵ However, the major commitment of the South Korean military forces to South Vietnam came only after President Park of South Korea made a State visit to the United States in the Spring of 1965.⁶

After receiving a formal request from the government of South Vietnam, South Korea sent a 15,000 member army combat division.⁷ Ironically, there was virtually no opposition to the later dispatch of the army fighting divisions.⁸ Thus started South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War. South Korea now has close to 50,000 soldiers and approximately 15,000 civilian workers in South Vietnam.

The opposition's sudden acquiescence to the government's decision on the Vietnam War participation needs an explanation. The best reason has been that it was at the earnest request of the United States government which the South Korean government could not refuse, and also because South Korea could then share a slice of the Vietnam War boom.⁹ What made the Seoul government particularly interested was the United States' suggestion that South Vietnam could be a good place for South Korea to earn much needed foreign exchange dollar.¹⁰ Soon the Park regime got on with the job of expanding her exports of manpower as well as goods.

South Korea has recorded Vietnam-originated foreign exchange receipts of \$302.2 million from January 1966 to August 31, 1968. A typical component of Seoul's Vietnam earnings follows:

SOUTH KOREAN EARNINGS FROM VIETNAM: AUG. 1968 ¹¹	
Service and Labor	\$ 29,381,000
Export	3,477,000

Supply to military	15,862,000
Construction	8,051,000
Wages for technicians	23,756,000
Combat allowances for soldiers	23,042,000
Insurance premium and others	3,435,000
TOTAL	\$107,013,000

Surely, the economic gain not to mention the added morale among the Koreans who take any part in the Vietnam campaign, to South Korea from the Vietnam War is more than the statistics and figures above shown. The series of economic activities, spurred by a newly created source of exports, wages, services and supplies to the South Vietnam campaign, helped sustain the economic growth rate of more than 10 per cent during the past three years.¹²

Never in their history has Korea sent her troops to foreign countries to fight. This creates tremendous national pride and facilitates morale building among the general public. This certainly helped unite the Korean people, in contrast to the United States, whose people are divided by the Vietnam War.

An economic interest, rather than military or political reasons, accounts for a greater proportion of Korea's hard line policy in Vietnam. As far as the future course of the Vietnam War is concerned; the Seoul regime took rather simplistic view of the nature of the Vietnam War, drawing a parallel between it and the Korean War.

Thus, South Korean government and people in general would not like to see Vietnam War end in the same manner as the Korean War ended in 1953, because they believe the United States policy, failing to unify the Korean people was a mistake. The United States bombing pause of November 1968 in North Vietnam was generally interpreted as an appeasement of communist strategy.¹³

However, realizing that South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War is largely a means of fortifying South Korea's relationship with the United States rather than any independent assistance to the South Vietnamese people, South Korea will not jeopardize the United States policy, because what South Korea is

interested in is the United States but not Vietnam. Still to many South Koreans, the decision that the Vietnam War could be ended in the Paris talks is almost tantamount to according to the communist (North Vietnamese) strategy of political settlement in Vietnam.

2. ASPAC

It will be useful to glance at some of the background circumstances of the ASPAC (Asia and Pacific Council). As early as 1949, President Sympman Rhee of South Korea voiced a need for regional cooperation in fighting against the communist menace in Asia.

Asian People's Anti-Communist League (APACL) was formed in Seoul June 1954, after a series of strenuous diplomatic efforts by the South Korean government. The League was non-governmental organization, but it was no secret that the organization was the brain child of former President Rhee's brand of regional anti-Communist activity.

Gen. Park, in his first presidential campaign in 1963, proposed a summit conference for the Asian leaders as a step toward a better cooperation and solidarity. Since September 1964, South Korea's Foreign Minister Tong Won Lee had repeatedly advocated a need for the Asian countries to organize a system of cooperation to strengthen solidarity and promote common interest. Among the countries which are historically and geographically destined to share common interest, Mr. Lee contended, "solidarity and cooperation is a necessity rather than a desideratum". He further asserted that "moreover, in the councils of World, where big powers speak loud, the only effective way for small and weak countries to be heard is to join their voices in unison."¹⁴

At first most of the Southeast Asians greeted the South Korean's suggestions coolly. Then followed the good will visit of President Park to Malaysia, Thailand, and the Republic of China in early 1966. The trip was generally regarded as a success for South Korea, largely because Park was believed to be able to convince the leaders of these countries of the significance of regional cooperation and solidarity.¹⁵

As a result of two years of diplomatic endeavors by the South Korean government, the First Ministerial Meeting for Asia and Pacific Cooperation was convened in Seoul on June 14-16, 1966. The conference, attended by ministers from Australia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of China, Korea, Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand, and an observer from the Kingdom of Laos was hailed as the first and largest diplomatic event in Korean history.

Although there was a strong speculation that what the South Korean government had in mind ultimately was the formation of a collective security system, the Conference mainly dealt with regional cooperation in economic, social, and cultural fields. It was later, however, revealed that there was a certain degree of difference in the attitude of participating nations. The majority of the members supported Seoul's plan to include the discussion of regional collective security and the minority opposed any mentioning of a military alliance at the ASPAC. The majority nations including the Republics of China, Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand had apparently yielded to the minority which included Australia, Japan, Malaysia, and New Zealand, in order to save the organization from collapsing.¹⁶

However, the Joint Communique reflected the limited accomplishment of the first Asian and Pacific Nations Conference. Some of the highlights are as follows:¹⁷

1. It reaffirmed the dedication of the people of the Asia and Pacific regions to the common cause of peace, freedom and prosperity, and their determination to preserve their integrity and sovereignty in the face of external threats;
2. It expressed sympathy for the Vietnam people in their courageous efforts to protect their independence and sovereignty;
3. It supported the Korea's stand on unification and reaffirmed its support of the U.N. resolution on Korea;
4. It emphasized the continuity of the meeting in order to forge better international understanding and to promote closer and more fruitful regional cooperation, and to further strengthen Asian-Pacific solidarity; and,
5. It considered it desirable to set up the following:

- A. Economic Coordination Center
- B. Technical Coordination Center
- C. Social and Cultural Center
- D. Mutual Information Service
- E. Commodities and Fertilizer Bank
- F. Technicians Pool
- G. Center for Asian and Pacific Studies

Thus, although it could have been no more than the first phase of numerous diplomatic efforts required before reaching any substantive results of the nature of "forming a system of cooperation", the mere fact that most of the Asia and Pacific countries participated in the Seoul-sponsored conference must have generated a new confidence in her traditionally timid diplomacy.¹⁸ The South Korean government believes also that the conference aided the South Korea's position on unification by endorsing the U.N. resolution.

Secondly, the conference implied, although not overtly, the anti-communistic attitudes which South Korea sought to manifest, primarily in supporting the plight of the South Vietnamese people.

Thirdly, the conference took a step toward the permanent organization of the conference by having the ambassadors of the ASPAC nations in Bangkok act as members of standing committees until the next meeting in Bangkok in 1967.

3. REGIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM

At various points, South Korea attempted to turn the ASPAC meeting into a more serious discussion for a political and military alliance. The second (Bangkok) and third (Canberra) meetings of ASPAC produced no new commitment but merely reaffirmed the policy adopted at the first (Seoul) meeting, that is to maintain a non-military alliance interested only in economic and cultural cooperation in the region.¹⁹

Anticipating that the Vietnam War would end and that Great Britain would withdraw her troops from the east of Suez in the 1970's, the South Korean government saw a very strong need for a regional security system in Southeast Asia, something similar to NATO. Reportedly the Seoul government has taken under consideration se-

veral approaches to form a regional cooperation in defense of the Asian-Pacific nations against external threat-notably that of communist China.

Among the proposals under consideration by the South Korean government, are the following:²⁰

1. Formation of APATO (Asia and Pacific Treaty Organization)
2. Transformation of ASPAC into a military alliance
3. South Korea's admission to SEATO
4. Merger of ASPAC and SEATO
5. Formation of NEATO (Northeast Asia Treaty Organization)

The transformation of ASPAC into a military alliance is viewed as an extremely remote possibility, chiefly because some of the ASPAC members, led by Japan, perceive an ominous threat in the very idea of a possible military alliance in the region.²¹ It is now generally accepted that if South Korea had pushed a little harder in exploring the possibility of military alliances among the ASPAC members during the past three annual meetings, it might have set the stage for a new round of diplomatic warfare that, in turn, would lead to a confrontation between those who favored the idea and those who opposed it. Thus, South Korea has wisely been very cautious about approaching the matter of military alliance among the ASPAC members since it was established in 1966.

As a result, ASPAC initiated by South Korea ostensibly to test the idea of a collective security system in Southeast Asia has not been able to accomplish a military alliance as South Korea had originally hoped.²²

Only summer 1968, the South Korean envoys in the region were instructed to sound out a possibility of discussing the matter at the annual meeting of ASPAC at Canberra. As usual Japan led the opposition to even the inclusion of the security matter on the agenda, stating that she opposed, unequivocally, any discussion of a military alliance at the meetings of ASPAC because the original objective of ASPAC was to provide a forum for better understanding, not a security alliance.²³

The idea that South Korea join SEATO as a means of strengthening regional security in Southeast Asia bore on the question of the very survival of SEATO, which

because of France's disinterest and Britain's scheduled troop withdrawal forces its extinction. The idea of merging ASPAC and SEATO is equally impractical, and the formation of NEATO also has extreme difficulty, because Japan is unwilling to rearm herself and join the regional security system.²⁴

Thus, the South Korean government concludes that a formation of APATO is only a possibility under the present conditions.²⁵ In the basic member nations of APATO, the Seoul sources include those countries which have now their troops in Vietnam; namely, the United States, Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, New Zealand, and Korea. Seoul is exploring a possibility of adding Nationalist China and Japan. While Japan has not shown any interest in a military alliance, Nationalist China is reported to be interested in the idea.²⁶ Once again, the South Korean government proposed to form APATO at the Foreign Minister's Conference held in Bangkok in May 1969, only to find a lukewarm reception.

This strenuous drive for a regional security system stems largely from South Korea's insecurity because she is facing the threat of Communist aggression along the DMZ line and also because the ROK-United States mutual defense pact contains in it various legal shortcomings. There is a feeling that the United States will never dare to stake its fate in a nuclear war for the ROK.²⁷

Therefore, it can be summarized that South Korea's major interest in South-east Asia is, first of all, to bring about a viable regional system of security, as another guarantee for her national security. Such a system could ward off the Communist China's menace in the region. Also, South Korea is not uninterested in the economic potential of the region--both as an exporter and an investor. Finally, South Korea is slowly becoming aware of her growing prestige and reputation in the region since the Vietnam involvement and the sponsorship of ASPAC, taking this momentum to enhance her position in the community of the nations.

VI: A PERSPECTIVE

In an effort to have a proper perspective of South Korea's foreign policy, one ought to recognize some of the most pertinent characteristics of the process of foreign policy-making in the Republic of Korea.

In spite of her long history as an independent nation, the making of foreign policy is such a new task for the Korean government and its people that there has not yet been established a pattern that enables investigators to predict a probable course of direction. One can only resort to an educated guess based on impressionistic evidence.

Korea's earlier contact with the foreign powers before she was annexed to Japan in 1910 was more or less "court diplomacy", which was often characterized as full of secrecy, intrigue, and conspiracy.

It was thus only after the 1948 Independence that the South Korean government began to learn how to conduct foreign relations. The beginning was justifiably modest with half a dozen legations abroad.

During and after the Korean War (1950-1963), the foreign policy of South Korea soon found itself involved with United States' policy in the Far East. Understandably, the United States, as a guardian, at first, and a protector and rebuildler, later, overshadowed the South Korean government and, particularly, its mentality. In almost every sphere of governmental functions, the American assistance and advice was obvious. Foreign policy was no exception.

While the United States did not dictate the Seoul policy, the government of South Korea was zealously solicitous of the United States reaction (or approval) of her conduct of foreign relations. Thus, the diplomacy of the South Korean government was orbiting around the United States' foreign policy in general and its Far Eastern policy in particular.

Even though she has been trying to redefine her new role after the Military Revolution of 1961, the South Korean tendency to see her role through what Professor Reischauer called "American Fixation"¹ is still strongly evident in her diplomacy- in fact, much stronger in South Korea than in Japan.

Former Foreign Minister Tong Won Lee prophetically asked himself a question: "What would be the best possible course and posture of our diplomacy in this changing world situation," and answered, "In view of the world tendency toward multi-polarizations, we should step up the process of our switch from the old practice of person-

al and secret diplomacy to modern, democratic, and independent diplomacy."

As to "what is democratic, modern and independent diplomacy," Mr. Lee did not elaborate, but he has repeatedly advocated active, positive diplomacy during and after his rather flamboyant days as Foreign Minister.

In effect, "Independence" in foreign policy was one of early goals of the Military Junta in 1961. Several attempts were made to experiment on "independent" foreign policy, including Jong Pil Kim's short courtship with France and Canada. Mr. Kim's rather sudden downfall of political fortune may not have necessarily been related to his predisposition toward the "independent" road in Korea's foreign policy, but Mr. Kim soon learned to change his predisposition.

This legacy of the United States influence in South Korea is closely related to the preoccupation of the South Korean government with what might be called a "security complex". Ever since the Korean War, the policy which deals with the national security has superceded all other phases of foreign policy.

South Korea's repeated, but unsuccessful, attempts to convert ASPAC into a military alliance even at the risk of losing economic, cultural cooperation in the region manifested themselves unequivocally in this preoccupation with security problems. The Vietnam War participation is another example of this characteristic of South Korea's foreign policy.

The second characteristic of the South Korean foreign policy formulation is the absence of divergent political forces at work. Under the present rule, only strongly anti-communistic political groups are allowed to exist, and everything else is either eliminated or under tight control.

Therefore, there is a remarkable degree of "consensus" among the political groups on the foreign policy of South Korea, with a possible exception of her relations with Japan. Their disagreement on Japan having much conservative motive, the government feels no threat at all.

The consensus is on such policies as:

- (1) a strong tie with the United States;
- (2) a need for regional security system to ward off Communist China's threat; and

(3) the reunification by the U.N. supervised free election in the North and South.

As a matter of fact, these policies have persisted throughout several political changes. Thus, it is very unlikely that any of them will be changed in the near future, because a political force which might change such a policy simply cannot be cultivated in the present political soil.

Thirdly, one must notice an amateurism in the foreign policy-making. As indicated in the Introduction, any one of the agencies concerned with foreign policy has not proved itself a strong policy-oriented force. The lack of well-researched and planned policy substance in the conduct of South Korea's foreign relations can be attributed to the infancy of the South Korean foreign relations as well as to unperceptive political leadership.

There is simply no group of individuals or organizations available that might provide the government of South Korea with available alternatives in default of skillful conduct in delicate diplomacy. South Korean diplomacy has been amateurish in its policy substance as well as its performance.

Therefore, out of this group of amateur foreign policy formulation, one naturally does not anticipate any change of great significance in the near future.

Fourthly, South Korea's foreign policies are still formulated largely through a moralistic fixation. "Moral obligation" or "comradely sacrifice" often found in the utterances of the Korean leaders are not just rhetoric but a reflection of the state of their mind in weighing the foreign policy alternatives.

This rather emotional or philosophical (depending upon point of view) predisposition in the process of the foreign policy making in South Korea is believed to be largely due to the legacy of the Confucianism which remains a strong undercurrent in the Korean society in spite of a formidable Western influence.

Therefore, it is not at all surprising to find concepts of morality, ethics, values, and righteousness play such a vital role in the foreign relations of South Korea. The foreign relations of South Korea are thus frequently described with such words as "friendship", "betrayal", "appreciation", and "enmity" (even not at

war).

Interestingly, Koreans have developed rather peculiar double standards of life: One for the domestic relations and the other for the outside contact. This double standard of morality applies not only to the life of an individual but also to the affairs of state.

While domestic politics in the Republic of Korea has been filled with immoral (or amoral) practices, the South Korean government nevertheless seems quite "incapable of being morally wrong" in its foreign relations. For instance, "she shouldn't bargain for more than she deserves"; "she can't refuse (or reject) a bit of sacrifice for the benefit of a comrade"; "she can't betray a dear friend", and so forth.

This propensity of over simplification and an extremely abstract, value judgment in the Korean mentality has been reinforced by the deduction-oriented schooling. An empirical, inductive discipline has no place in their training along with an habitual disregard of or impatience for detail and facts.

Because of this over-simplification, the South Korean government is so easily upset and feels so soon betrayed by a yesterday's ally. It undoubtedly burdens the policy makers in foreign relations, mainly because the issues involved are complicated and the circumstances in a foreign relations are hard to understand, particularly so to the inexperienced diplomats and politicians.

Thus, their agony and frustrations increase not decrease, as they deal with the bigger, much more sophisticated countries. This is one reason why the South Korean government wants APATO, where she feels much more at home than at a bilateral bargaining table.

Since the process of foreign policy making in South Korea is what it is, one can only guess what is the hierarchy of priorities in the foreign policies of the Republic of Korea.

The South Korean government will give first priority to an assurance that the South Korean government shall be protected from the future aggression by North Korea.

The outcry for a remedy of so-called deficiencies of the R.O.K.-U.S. Security Treaty is nothing but a diplomatic hysteria for a reassurance from the United States

government to honor her commitment.

The Pueblo over-reaction by the Korean government was another maneuver to remind the U.S. government, which was undergoing a painful soul-searching, of the belligerency of North Korea.

It is also obvious that a series of diplomatic endeavors to create a regional security system by the South Korean government aims mostly at keeping the United States as the dominant power in the Eastern Asia against both the menace of the Communist China on the one hand and the reincarnation of Japanese militarism on the other.

Only after the that South Korea will not be alone if the North attacks once again, can foreign policy be made on other interests that come into the picture-trade, cultural exchange, and even the territorial reunification.

These are only secondary to the national security issue. While these foreign policies of secondary importance do not satisfy everybody, their conditions, nevertheless have never been better. It seems that the South Korean government would like to keep up the present pace of the foreign policy developments in non-security areas for the time being.

In conclusion, South Korea, with a remarkably improved economy and much expanded diplomacy, can be expected to become less subservient and more independent than in any period of her short history of diplomacy after the Second World War.

However, the preoccupation with the national security freezes South Korea's attempts at drastic changes in other phases of her foreign policy. Rather, in an honest effort to cement relations with the United States, South Korea would not spare any cooperation, but would actively demonstrate her amicability.

FOOTNOTES

I

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II

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2. Tong'a Ilbo, June 17, 1965, p. 3.

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4. Tong'a Ilbo, December 10, 1968, p. 3., November 28, 1968, p. 1., & October 31, 1969, p. 1.

5. Tong'a Ilbo, November 30, December 7, December 10, 1968.

6. Tong'a Ilbo, June 25, 1968, pp. 1, p. 3.

7. Tong'a Ilbo, June 25, 1968, p. 2.

8. Tong'a Ilbo, November 6, 13, 16, 1968.

9. Tong'a Ilbo, November 13, 1968.

10. Tong'a Ilbo, July 17, November 12, 1968.

11. Tong'a Ilbo, August 13, 20, 22, November 29, 1968.

III

1. Chong-dog Kim, "Limitation of the ROK-U.S. Relations", Policies Quarterly, August 1968, pp. 47-52.

2. Tong'a Ilbo, July 4, 1968, p. 2.

3. Ibid.

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