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A CRITICAL JUNCTURE

*The 2004 U.S. Presidential Election and
the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*

Jinwook Choi

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About the author

Jinwook Choi is a senior research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU) in Seoul. His research field is North Korean politics and administration, and his recent research interest focuses on the U.S.–North Korean relations. He received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Choi's recent publications include "Uncertain Prospects for the Six–Party Talks: North Korea's Nuclear Crisis and U.S. Policy," *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Winter 2003); "The Impact of U.S.–North Korean Relations on Inter–Korean Relations," *Korea and World Affairs*, vol. 26, no. 2 (Summer 2002); *Contemporary North Korean Public Administration* (Seoul: Inkansarang, 2002) (in Korean).

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The analyses, comments and other opinions contained in this monograph are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of Korea Institute for National Unification.

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The United States has traditionally enjoyed a bipartisan foreign policy. The policy direction, however, which the Bush Administration took in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, triggered a controversy both domestically and overseas. It is generally believed that if Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kerry wins the election in November, American foreign policy will change. It is not clear, however, what will change and how much. Even if President George W. Bush is reelected, his policy, particularly unilateralism, is unlikely to remain the same as during his first term.

The U.S. presidential election is also likely to have a great impact on the North Korean nuclear crisis. Kerry faults President Bush for failing to stop North Korea's nuclear program and announced bilateral talks with Pyongyang, as opposed to the multilateral approach of the Bush Administration.

The U.S. presidential election affects the pre-election situation as well as the post-election U.S. policy towards North Korea. The Bush Administration's more specific proposal to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis in the third round of 6-Party Talks, held

in June 2004, was partially attributed to the concern about a possible negative impact of the nuclear crisis on the campaign. In fact, the Kerry campaign has criticized the Bush Administration for ignoring the threat of the North's nuclear program. Pyongyang also carefully watches the U.S. presidential election, and seems to be flexible in its negotiation strategies with Washington, depending on changing election prospects.

This study analyzes the impact of the U.S. presidential election on the North Korean nuclear crisis with a special focus on the difference between President George W. Bush and Democratic candidate John F. Kerry in overall foreign policy as well as in specific policy towards North Korea. It will analyze such factors as North Korean intentions and policy directions, relations between the United States and South Korea, and inter-Korean relations. Policies of China, Japan, and Russia towards the North Korean nuclear crisis will be considered in the analysis. This study will also analyze the prospects for the North Korean nuclear crisis. Three scenarios are proposed, with estimates of likelihood. Finally, this study offers some policy suggestions.

This study is composed of six chapters. The first chapter is an overview of the 2004 U.S. presidential election. This chapter is to review election issues and to analyze the prospects for the election. It also analyzes the significance of foreign policy issues in the election.

Chapter II compares the position of George W. Bush and John F. Kerry on such major foreign policy issues as the War on Terror, WMD, unilateralism, preemption, military transformation, and promotion of democracy.

Chapter III analyzes similarities and differences of Bush and Kerry on North Korea policy. Specifically, it compares the two candidates on perceptions towards Kim Jong-il's North Korea, policy

goal, and policy means.

Chapter IV is to analyze North Korean intentions and surrounding environments. Specifically, it analyzes North Korea's concerns, strategies, and policy making process. It also analyzes other determining factors of ROK-U.S. relations, inter-Korean relations, and policy directions of Japan, Russia, and China.

Chapter V analyzes the prospects for the North Korean nuclear crisis. Three scenarios are proposed and evaluated.

Finally, Chapter VI briefly summarizes the research findings and provides some policy suggestions.

I. The 2004 U.S. Presidential Election

Overview of Election Issues and Prospects

George W. Bush and John F. Kerry sharply differ over many controversial political, social, and economic issues, although these issues do not attract the attention of voters as much as in previous elections. The table 1 shows the position of Bush and Kerry on such campaign issues as abortion, affirmative action, and so on.

President Bush came to office in 2001 with a relatively low approval rate of 53%. The approval rate jumped up to 89% after September 11, 2001 terrorist attack but it slowly went down back to 50's until the war against Iraq. when it jumped up to 70's. The approval rate dropped below 50 percent because of the post-war situation in Iraq, including the allegation of false information on WMD and increasing number of American casualties.

American voters believe that Kerry is more suitable than Bush in first two out of the three major agenda: stabilizing Iraq; the economy; and the War on Terror. Until August, after the Democratic National Convention, Kerry was leading Bush by a margin of several percent, but after the Republican National Convention

<Table 1> The Position of Bush and Kerry on Major Campaign Issues

Issues	George W. Bush	John F. Kerry
Abortion	Opposes abortion, but has said that neither the country nor Congress is ready for a ban on the procedure	Supports abortion
Affirmative Action	Opposes racial quotas and racial preferences	Supports affirmative action policies
Death Penalty	Supports the death penalty	Opposes the death penalty
Gay Rights	Opposes gay marriage; Supports a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union between a man and a woman	Would ban job discrimination against homosexuals and extend hate-crime protections to gays
Economy	President Bush has signed tax cuts each of the past three years, including a \$1.35 trillion cut over 10 years signed in 2001	Would repeal President Bush's tax cuts, primarily for families with incomes above \$200,000

Source: various data

in early September Bush reversed the trend and began to lead Kerry by several percent. President Bush's good record and hope for the reelection is attributed to the following several reasons, although the race is still close. First, the United States is still at war against terrorism and Bush is a war president. Traditionally American voters do not want to change their supreme commander in the middle of war. For example, in the 20th century, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman were both reelected during the war.

Secondly, the recession which began in March 2001 seems to be over and the economy is recovering according to some indicators, although it is controversial. For example, 1.4 million jobs were created from January to June this year, the jobless rate fell to 5.6 percent. The increase of employment rate means that

people go out and spend to keep the economy humming.¹

Thirdly, Kerry effectively captured the Democratic presidential nomination, but his campaign has not been so effective as in his primaries. Although George W. Bush has had three of the worst months of his presidency from February to April, Kerry was stuck. As Kerry struggles to find a theme and focus, it is often said that American voters do not know Kerry's message and agenda.² Many American voters want to vote for Kerry because they do not like Bush rather than they really like Kerry.

Fourth, the support for Bush is more intensive than the support for Kerry. A national survey, conducted in April 2004, demonstrates that Bush supporters favor Bush more strongly than Kerry supporters favor Kerry, as shown in the following questions and answers. This means that those who indicated an intention to vote for Kerry in November are more likely to change than those who intended to vote for Bush. Swing voters are also more likely to vote for Bush.

Q1 Would you describe your support for George W. Bush as strongly favoring him, or do you like him but with reservations, or do you support him because you dislike the other candidates?

This question was asked only for those who answered GEORGE W. BUSH when they were asked "If the 2004 Presidential elections were being held today, and the candidate were John Kerry, the Democrat, and George W. Bush, the Republican, would you vote for John Kerry or George W. Bush?" (Candidate Names Rotated)

¹ <http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000103&sid=aVcpUOS30LbI&refer=us> (June 30, 2004).

² Adam Nagourney, Kerry Struggling to Find a Theme, Democrats Fear,"*New York Times*, May 2, 2004.

Strongly favor	Like with reservations	Dislike others	DK/NA
55	35	8	2

Q2 Would you describe your support for George W. Bush as strongly favoring him, or do you like him but with reservations, or do you support him because you dislike the other candidates?

This question was asked only for those who answered John Kerry when they were asked "If the 2004 Presidential elections were being held today, and the candidate were John Kerry, the Democrat, and George W. Bush, the Republican, would you vote for John Kerry or George W. Bush?" (Candidate Names Rotated)

Strongly favor	Like with reservations	Dislike others	DK/NA
32	28	38	2

Finally, Ralph Nader has had a negative impact on Kerry. Brushing aside urgent appeals from his own friends and Democratic leaders, Nader announced on Feb 22, 2004 that he would run again for president this year, sending shudders through the camps of Democratic presidential candidates. Among Nader voters in the 2000 presidential election, 45 percent said they would have voted for Mr. Gore, 27 percent said they would have voted for Bush, and the rest said they would not have voted.

The Increasing Importance of Foreign Affairs and Security Issues

In democracies, foreign policy issues do not have a great impact on presidential elections. The U.S. presidential elections have never been about foreign policy, with the exception of 1972, since 1952.³ They have rather tended to focus on education, health care, social security, and the economy above all. This year, however, national security issues top the agenda because of the September 11 terrorist attack, the subsequent War on Terrorism, and the occupation of Iraq.

A survey conducted by the New York Times and CBS from April 23 through 27, 2004 supports this point. When people were asked “Which one issue would you most like to hear the candidates for president discuss during the 2004 presidential campaign?” more people responded that they wanted to hear issues related to foreign policy and security rather than issues related to economy.

As shown in Table 2, 28 percent of people responded that they wanted to hear about foreign affairs and security issues, such as war, information on a specific country/person, defense/military, terrorism, security/safety, and foreign policy, while 21 percent of people responded that they wanted to hear about economic affairs, such as taxes, budget deficit, and the economy. 20 percent of people responded that they wanted to hear about social affairs, such as medicare/medicaid, social security, jobs/unemployment, elderly, and health care.

³ Maxine Isaacs, “In Their Own Words: the 2004 U.S. Presidential Candidates on Foreign Policy,” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* vol. 28 no. 1 (Winter 2004), p. 5.

<Table 2> The Significance of Each Campaign Issue in the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election

Categories	Specific Issues	Significance of Each Item(%)	Subtotal (%)
Economic Affairs	Economy	16	21
	Taxes	3	
	Budget Deficit	2	
Foreign Affairs/ Security Affairs	Foreign Policy	1	28
	War	11	
	Specific country/person	10	
	Defence/Military	3	
	Terrorism	2	
	Security/Safety	1	
Social Affairs	Medicare/Medicaid	1	20
	Social Security	2	
	Jobs and Unemployment	9	
	Elderly	1	
	Health Care	7	
Education	Education	5	5
Other	Other	17	17
DK/NA	DK/NA	9	9

Source: NYT/CBS News Poll, April 23-27, 2004.

The tendency to consider foreign affairs and national security as the top campaign issue continued through the summer. A poll conducted by the Pew Research Center during July 8-18, 2004 says that four in ten Americans cite international and defense issues as the most important problems confronting the country, while only one in four mentions economic concerns.⁴

The concept of “safety and security” seems to be far more important than before, particularly to women voters. Thus, it is widely believed that voters demand foreign policy experience and ex-

⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, August 20, 2004.

pertise as major requirements for the presidency.⁵ This situation is well reflected in the campaign strategy for both Bush and Kerry. While President Bush wants to maintain that he is a “war president,” Senator Kerry confronts this image. Kerry does not avoid the War on Terrorism as a major campaign issue, but rather actively tackles it criticizing Bush’s mishandling of the issue. Kerry’s major asset is that he is a mature political figure with experience in foreign policy. He is a Vietnam veteran and has been a member of the Foreign Relations Committee through his Senate career. One of the reasons for the failure of Howard Dean and John Edwards in Democratic presidential nomination is that they are untested new figures.⁶

Foreign policy is not only a major campaign issue but also a highly controversial issue. Not only American voters but foreign countries are divided over the way President Bush conducts foreign policy, which is characterized by unilateralism and preemption. Kerry said that “all across the world Americans and America are meeting with a new level of hostility.” John Kerry, however, is very careful of any such endorsement from foreign leaders, since he was criticized for his comment that a foreign leader wanted him elected. For example, Kerry’s foreign policy advisor Rand Beers said that it is not appropriate for foreign leader to endorse a candidate in America’s presidential election, when former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad endorsed Kerry.

It is believed, however, that any increase in global anti-American sentiment would be due to U.S. foreign policy and President Bush, not due to America and the American people. A survey of five Western European countries showed that few dislike Americans

⁵ Maxine Isaacs, “In Their Own Words,” p. 6.

⁶ William Pfaff, “How Kerry’s Foreign Policy Might Look,” <http://www.iht.com/articles/508938.html> (2004. 3. 25).

or the United States but most dislike President Bush and his foreign policy.⁷ Only 13% of these Europeans had negative opinions of the American people, and only 33% had negative opinions of the United States. However, 70% had negative opinions of President Bush, 69% had negative opinions of U.S. policies in Iraq, and 62% had negative opinions of American foreign policy since 2000. More specifically, pluralities hold positive views of American films and television (48% to 22%), the quality of life in America (45% to 21%), and “how Americans do business” (37% to 24%). On the other hand, only a quarter of these Europeans hold favorable views of American justice and governmental systems. Pluralities hold negative views of American courts and systems of justice (41% to 26%), American systems of government (40% to 26%), and American values (34% to 30%).

⁷ The survey was conducted online by HI Europe between February and March 4, 2004 among the following nationwide cross sections of adults: 2,637 Great Britain, 2,574 in France, 1,273 in Germany, 2,407 in Spain, and 1,301 in Italy.

II. Similarities and Differences between Bush and Kerry on Foreign Affairs and Security Issues

The War on Terror and WMD

Bush and Kerry share the view that the fight against terrorism and the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) must be top global priorities.⁸ Few people deny that WMD poses the biggest threat to American security and the rationale for the War on Terrorism and intervention is to make America safer and more secure.

Bush. Immediately after September 11, 2001, President Bush defined the terrorist attack as a war rather than simple terrorism, and did not hesitate to wage a War on Terror. Even after the swift and decisive victory in Afghanistan, he said that he did not know when the War on Terror would be finished. He went to war against Iraq in the name of 'War on Terror,' and the United States is still at war.

⁸ Samuel Berger, "Foreign Policy for a Democratic President," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 3 (May/June 2004), p. 49.

Kerry. Kerry supported the war against Iraq because he believed it could get rid of Iraqi WMD programs. From an American perspective the war was justified on the basis of Saddam's decade-long refusal to comply with UN Security Council Resolutions on WMD, although people did not agree on how imminent was the threat.⁹ One of the major reasons for the fall of Howard Dean, one time front runner in the Democratic presidential nomination, was his opposition to the war against Iraq.

In his book *Our Plan for America: Stronger at Home, Respected in the World*, co-authored with John Edwards, Kerry says "we face three great challenges above all - first, to win the global war against terror; second, to stop the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; third, to promote democracy, development, and freedom around the world, starting by winning the peace in Iraq."¹⁰

Although Kerry considered the War on Terror and stemming the spread of WMD as major foreign policy goals, he disagrees with Bush in some aspects. With respect to WMD, Kerry faults Bush for standing by as North Korea and Iran further developed nuclear programs. Kerry argues that the Bush Administration will take up to 13 years to finish the job of securing former Soviet weapons and materials at the current pace. Kerry says he has a comprehensive plan to secure nuclear weapons and nuclear materials worldwide and complete the Global Cleanout of bomb materials within four years.

As for the War on Terrorism, Kerry faults Bush for failing to go after Bin Laden at Tora Bora and pursuing an ad hoc strategy.

⁹ Madeline K. Albright, "Bridges, Bombs, or Bluster?," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 5 (September/October 2003), p. 7.

¹⁰ John Kerry and John Edwards, *Our Plan for America: Stronger at Home, Respected in the World*, <http://www.johnkerry.com/plan> (July 20, 2004), p. 10.

Kerry also criticizes Bush for focusing on Iraq only, without proper attention to Afghanistan. Kerry says that he will launch a bold, comprehensive strategy to disrupt and destroy terrorist networks, double Special Forces capability to fight the War on Terror, reform U.S. intelligence, crack down on terrorist financing, secure the homeland, and prevent the emergence of new terrorists.

Unilateralism and Preemption

Bush. President Bush's foreign policy means is well reflected in the National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS), which accepts the concept of unilateralism and preemption as the U.S. strategy. President Bush announced the necessity to act preemptively to prevent rogue states from attaining Weapons of Mass Destruction, and using them as tools of intimidation and military aggression against the United States and its allies.¹¹ His justification of the preemption was based on the changing security environment: in the Cold War, deterrence was an effective defense, but deterrence based upon the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states more willing to take risks, gambling with lives of their people, and the wealth of their nations.¹²

Soon after September 11, 2001 President Bush said, "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." The Bush Administration justifies unilateralism on the basis of real politics.

We will be prepared to act apart when our interests and unique

¹¹ The preemption was first announced in his speech at the West Point on June 1, 2002. "Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction."

¹² George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (September 2002), p. 15.

responsibilities require. When we disagree on particulars, we will explain forthrightly the grounds for our concerns and strive to forge viable alternatives. We will not allow such disagreements to obscure our determination to secure together, with our allies and our friends, our shared fundamental interests and values.¹³

Republicans, particularly neo-conservatives, deeply distrust the United Nations. They insist that American security cannot be made hostage to the interests of others who have the power to block decisions at the UN. Neo-cons believe that in the real world, no nation really has shown a willingness to take on equal responsibilities for managing global crises. The most effective multi-lateral response comes when the strongest power decides to act, with or without the others, and then asks its partners whether they will join.¹⁴

They consider it inevitable to cause frictions with Europe, because of significant gap in power between Europe and America: Americans are likely to be the first to become involved in international crisis, while Europeans have neither such intentions nor capacity. Europeans fear American unilateralism and seek to constrain it through such institutions as the United Nations.¹⁵

Bush campaign has identified Kerry's willingness to work with other nations as a delay in defending America until the UN approves. The Bush Administration believes that the threats and enemies the United States must confront have changed, and so must its forces. The Bush Administration argues that the United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions.

¹³ Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, p. 31.

¹⁴ Robert Kagan, "The Benevolent Empire," *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1998), p. 33.

¹⁵ Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), p. 40.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said that the Panama invasion in 1989 is an example of preemption.¹⁶

In the Cold War, Weapons of Mass Destruction were considered weapons of last resort whose use risked the destruction of those who used them. Today, terrorists and rogue states see Weapons of Mass Destruction as weapons of choice. Thus the United States should, if necessary, act preemptively, to prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries. The United State will not use force in all cases to preempt emerging threats, nor should nations use pre-emption as a pretext for aggression. Yet in an age where the enemies of civilization openly and actively seek the world's most destructive technologies, the United States cannot remain idle while dangers gather.¹⁷

Kerry. In *Our Plan for America*, Kerry suggests four foreign policy means. Kerry's foremost foreign policy means is to "launch and lead a new era of alliances." The starting point of Kerry's new foreign policy is his claim that by neglecting the rest of the world, the Bush Administration has undermined America's security. He says that "the threat of terrorism demands alliances on a global scale - to utilize every available resource to get the terrorists." Kerry suggests a concept of "progressive internationalism," which means American security is best served when a military second to none is backed by an all-out effort to make the world a better place by promoting democracy, spreading the rule of law, and advancing human rights abroad.¹⁸

He said, "I pledge to you that within weeks of being elected

¹⁶ Testimony in the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, September 26, 2002.

¹⁷ Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Isaacs, "In Their Own Words," p. 19.

I will return to the United Nations.” Senator Kerry has insisted that he will pursue “collective” and “internationalized” policies instead of the “imperial” approach of the Bush Administration. One of major differences between Bush and Kerry over the war on Iraq from Kerry’s perspective was that President Bush failed to enlist the UN and key allies in the enterprise.

With respect to his decision to support the war against Iraq, Kerry claims that he was fooled by exaggerated reports about Iraq’s military threat, although there were other senators who had access to the same information as Kerry that voted against going to war.¹⁹ Kerry also stated that he expected President Bush to work with the UN and allies and promised that if Bush failed to do so, he would be the first to speak out.

Samuel Berger, Kerry’s former top foreign policy advisor, criticizes that Bush’s unilateralist approach has given the U.S. allies an excuse to avoid their global responsibilities.²⁰ Multilateralists believe that working within the UN gives the United States effectiveness and legitimacy in responding to the global challenges: it maximizes the ability to attract and persuade others to adopt the American agenda rather than relying purely on the dissuasive or coercive “hard power.”²¹

Kerry also points out that the U.S. unilateralism in Iraq became the burden of the American military and taxpayer. He said that go-it-alone strategy means the United States has contributed 90%

¹⁹ Former chief UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter personally briefed Senator Kerry prior to his decision on how Iraq did not have any dangerous WMD capability. Jeremy Rifkin, “Perfect Storm That’s about to Hit,” *Common Dreams News Center*, <http://www.commondreams.org.view04/0301-01.htm> (2004. 04. 01).

²⁰ Berger, “Foreign Policy for a Democratic President,” p. 54.

²¹ Shashi Tharoor, “Why America Still Needs the United Nations,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 5 (September/October 2003), p. 68.

of forces on the ground and paid the vast majority of the cost. Kerry plans to internationalize the security and reconstruction effort by making Iraq part of NATO's global mission and by involving allies in rebuilding the country, providing troops, and financial commitments.

Senator Kerry, however, does not rule out the validity of unilateral military intervention to deal with the threat of proliferation. Despite a lack of credible evidence, Kerry categorically declared that "Iraq has chemical and biological weapons," and asserted that Iraq was "attempting to develop nuclear weapons."

Kerry said he would have sent troops to Haiti even without international support to quell the revolt against President Jean-Bretrand Aristide. He said, "I will not hesitate to order direct military action when needed to capture and destroy terrorist groups and their leaders." The Washington Post observed it as Kerry's own pre-emptive doctrine.²² Kerry declared, "every nation has the right to act preemptively if it faces an imminent and grave threat."

Kerry says he supported the war on Iraq based on the false information about WMD. But some people suspect that his decision to support the war against Iraq is based on his consistent positions of pro-Israel and anti-Palestine. Senator Kerry is criticized by his opponents for joining in late 1998 Republican senators in calling on the Clinton Administration to consider launching air and missile strikes against Iraq in order to "respond effectively to the threat posed by Iraq's refusal to end its Weapons of Mass Destruction programs."²³ A number of U.S. allies in the region--Israel and Egypt--actually have WMD, although Iraq had already

²² *Washington Post*, February 28, 2004.

²³ Stephen Zunes, "Kerry's Foreign Policy Record Suggests Few Differences with Bush," <http://www.dissidentvoice.org/Mar04/Zunes0306.htm> (2004. 04. 01).

ended such programs years earlier.²⁴ Kerry also rejected calls by Jordan, Syria, and other Middle Eastern governments for a WMD-free zone for the entire region, and demanded that Syria unilaterally eliminate its chemical weapons and missiles.

Kerry has been in opposition to the Palestinian statehood. Kerry urged the Bush Administration to strongly endorse Israeli Prime Minister Yizhak Shamir in 1989, when he proposed Israeli-managed elections in certain Palestinian areas under Israeli military occupation and restated that Israel would never give up the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Military Transformation

Bush. In 2001 the Bush Administration decided to move away from the Two Major-Theater War Doctrine, an approach that called for maintaining two massive occupation forces, capable of marching on and occupying the capitals of two aggressors at the same time and changing their regime.²⁵ The Bush Administration believed that this approach left the United States overprepared for two specific conflicts and underprepared for unexpected contingencies and Twenty-First-Century challenges. This evaluation was made before September 11, 2001, but the September 11 terrorist attack supported the necessity of a new approach.

In the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Bush Administration took an “1-4-2-1” military strategy.²⁶ The first 1 means defending the United States. The highest priority of the U.S. military is

²⁴ Egypt has chemical weapons and Israel has nuclear weapons.

²⁵ Donald H. Rumsfeld, “Transforming the Military,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 3 (May/June 2002), p. 24.

²⁶ Donald Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, September 30, 2001. pp. 17-21.

to defend its homeland. Four (“4”) means deterring forward in four regions: Europe, Northeast Asia, East Asian littoral, and the Middle East/Southwest Asia. Two (“2”) means swiftly defeating attacks against U.S. allies in any two major combat operations in the above four regions in overlapping time frame. The last 1 means decisively defeating an adversary in one of the two theaters in which U.S. forces are conducting major combat operations by imposing America’s will and removing any future threat it could pose. The Bush Administration’s military strategy requires the United States to maintain and prepare its forces for smaller-scale contingency operations in peacetime.

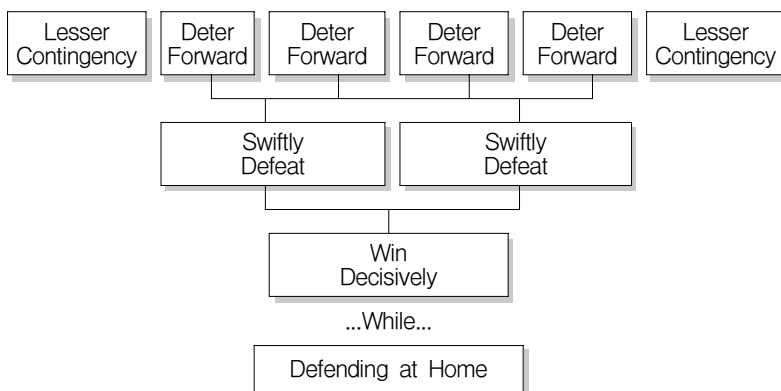
The overseas military posture, concentrated in Western Europe and Northeast Asia, turned out to be inadequate for the Bush Administration’s new military approach. U.S. forces deployed forward were defensive, tripwire units that were expected to fight near where they were based. The 21st century security environment, however, requires the United States to project power into theaters that may be distant from where they are based, and to transform the U.S. military capabilities. Transformation is not only a matter of using new technologies to produce better weapons, but about realigning the global defense posture: updating the types, locations, numbers, and capabilities of military forces, and the nature of the U.S. alliances.²⁷ The new military strategy can be conceptualized as shown in Figure 1.

Key requirements for reorienting the global military posture include new combination of immediately employable forward stationed and deployed forces; expeditionary and forcible entry capabilities; globally available reconnaissance, strike, and command and control assets; information operations; special operations forces; and rapidly deployable, highly lethal and sustainable

²⁷ Douglas J. Feith, “Transforming the U.S. Global Defense Posture,” [http://www.dod.gov/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.dod.gov/speeches/..\(2003.12.31\)](http://www.dod.gov/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.dod.gov/speeches/..(2003.12.31)).

forces.²⁸ The U.S. military forces are expected to be more mobile, more flexible, lighter, and more lethal.

<Figure 1> A New Concept of an “1-4-2-1” Strategy



Kerry. Senator Kerry’s other foreign policy means regarding military readiness, in addition to “A New Era of Alliances,” is well reflected in his book, “Our plan for America.” First, he says that he will modernize and strengthen the U.S. military to meet new threats. Senator Kerry faults President Bush for failing to adequately plan for wars of the 21st Century and sending troops into Iraq without proper equipment and supplies. Kerry commits himself to strengthening the U.S. military, including doubling Special Forces capability to fight the War on Terror; improving technology; adding 40,000 new soldiers to the active-duty Army.

Secondly, Kerry’s foreign policy means is to “deploy all that is in America’s arsenal.” Kerry argues that the War on Terrorism cannot be won by military might alone, but that all forces in America’s arsenal - diplomacy, intelligence system, economic

²⁸ Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, p. 26.

power, and the appeal of American values and ideas - should be deployed to make America more secure and prevent a new generation of terrorists from emerging.

Finally, Kerry's foreign policy means is to "free America from its dangerous dependence on Mideast oil." To achieve the goal of growing the U.S. economy and protecting the U.S. environment, Kerry wants to create a new energy and conservation trust fund to accelerate the development of innovative technologies, such as more efficient cars and trucks, the development of biofuels, and creating clean, secure, hydrogen-based energy. Kerry faults Bush for refusing to get serious with Saudi Arabia about its role in funding terrorism, and says that he will get tough with countries that launder money for terrorism. Kerry also faults Bush for alienating large portions of the Arab and Muslim world against America.

Promotion of Democracy

Bush. One of Bush Administration's foreign policy goals is to promote democracy in Mideast. President Bush says that Islam is consistent with democracy and that modernization is not the same as Westernization.²⁹ Democracy is succeeding in numerous predominantly Muslim countries. The war in Iraq was the first step towards the transformation of the entire Middle East. Bush said that the establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be watershed event in the global democratic revolution.

Kerry. Kerry considers the promotion of democracy, development, and freedom around the world one of three great challenges that the United States faces. This would start by winning the peace

²⁹ The U.S. Department of State, *Washington File*, November 6, 2003, <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/ircseoul/www5260.html> (March 12, 2004).

in Iraq. However, Democrats consider it condescending to claim America has the right to impose democracy on other nations and cultures, regardless of their circumstances and preferences. They also do not believe that democracies do not fight and guarantee American leadership, when they look at the history. The War of 1812 against the United Kingdom and the Civil War were battles between democracies by the standards of their time. In the war against Iraq, democracy was an obstacle to Turkey's support and reinforced anti-American policies in France and Germany.³⁰

Evaluations

Many people, particularly those people who oppose the Bush foreign policy, hope that a Kerry presidency would be quite the radical break. However, the policies of Bush and Kerry are the same in the War on Terror and WMD, and very similar in military transformation and the promotion of democracy. Even in pre-emption and unilateralism, differences between Bush and Kerry are not quite clear.

The "War on Terror" is a central campaign topic, and political realities will limit the victor's policy options in the U.S. battle against terrorism. Both Bush and Kerry agree on most of the core issues and see stabilizing Iraq, hunting down militants abroad, tightening security at home, and reviewing domestic intelligence as central pillars of the fight.

As the Bush campaign criticizes, Kerry seems to be inconsistent in foreign policy. Even Democrats fear that Kerry is struggling to find a theme.³¹ Throughout his career, Kerry has been rated

³⁰ Dimitri K. Simes, "America's Imperial Dilemma," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 6 (November/December 2003), pp. 98-99.

³¹ Nagourney, "Kerry Struggling to Find a Theme, Democrats Fear."

among the left-of-center members of the Democratic caucus on foreign policy issues. Kerry displayed skepticisms about the costly weapons systems, such as B-2 Bombers and Strategic Defense Initiative.

If September 11 terrorist attack had not happened, globalization could have been the major foreign policy issue of the 2004 presidential campaign and Senator Kerry would have been identified on the right wing of the Democratic contenders.³² Senator Kerry is a supporter of the neo-liberal model of globalization. He supported NAFTA, WTO, and MFN status for China. He supported measures promoting human rights in China.

But Kerry refashioned his foreign policy in recent years probably in order to make it appear tougher in preparation for presidency.³³ Kerry faulted George H. W. Bush for assembling a Persian Gulf War coalition that amounted to a “pax Americana,” and has criticized the George W. Bush for going-it-alone to the war on Iraq.

It is likely that Kerry will be more diplomatic and try to enhance U.S. relations with other countries. Kerry, however, did not challenge the Bush Doctrine of unilateral preemptive invasion of foreign countries. Senator Kerry has continued to vote in favor of record military budgets. Kerry wants to increase the size of the army by 40,000 men, half for peacekeeping and civil-affairs work but half for real combat.

Kerry’s inconsistency is reflected in his decision as for the war against Iraq. He followed the Bush’s decision to start the war, but he did not support the \$870 million for reconstruction and

³² Zunes, “Kerry’s Foreign Policy Record Suggests Few Differences with Bush.”

³³ Glenn Kessler, “Engagement is a Constant Kerry’s Foreign Policy,” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A11541-2004Mar20?language=printer> (2004. 4. 1).

occupation. Kerry accuses Bush of taking a “cut and run” strategy in Iraq.³⁴

Bush and Kerry sharply differ over the means of foreign policy in spite of their general agreement on its ends. The Republicans emphasize Missile Defense, preemption, and regime change, while the Democrats want to strengthen international law, universalize the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and focus on multilateralism and diplomacy.

³⁴ Among democratic candidates, Howard Dean was more clearly opposed to President Bush. Dean called on the United States to play a more even-handed role in Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and challenged the Bush Doctrine of unilateral preemptive invasions of foreign countries. Dean’s failure was attributed to his low chance of electibility.

III. Similarities and Differences between Bush and Kerry over the North Korean Nuclear Crisis

Perceptions

Bush. President Bush made it clear that he would not succeed Clinton's North Korea policy, when he took office in 2001. The Bush Administration believes that Clinton's policy failed to induce North Korea to open up to the outside world and to real reform. It also thinks that the Agreed Framework failed in ending the North Korean nuclear program and made it clear that it does not have to comply with the Agreed Framework unless North Korea also complies.

President Bush expresses his "skepticism" about Kim Jong-il and the North Korean regime. In his State of Union address on January 29, 2002 Bush included North Korea in an "axis of evil" along with Iran and Iraq and said it was ruled by a "regime armed with missiles and Weapons of Mass Destruction while starving its citizens." He made his position clear once again in the summit talks with South Korean President Kim on February 20, 2002, saying, "I will not change my opinion on the man, on Kim Jong-il, until he frees his people and accepts genuine proposals from

countries such as South Korea or the United States to dialogue; until he proves to the world that he's got a good heart, that he cares about the people that live in his country." Bush was also reported to have called Kim Jong-il a "pygmy" and compared him to a "spoiled child at a dinner table."³⁵

The terrorist attacks of September 11 made the United States even tougher on North Korea as concerns about the development and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and missiles rose high in the context of the War on Terrorism. The export of missiles was the primary reason why Bush called North Korea a member of the "axis of evil." As Condoleezza Rice, National Security Adviser, put it, "North Korea is the world's number one merchant for ballistic missiles, open for business with anyone, no matter how malign the buyer's intentions."³⁶ After September 11, 2001 the United States began to consider North Korean missiles a direct threat to its own domestic security beyond the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

Kerry. Senator Kerry declared that North Korea "took some remarkable steps, heretofore unimaginable steps" under a 1994 agreement with Clinton, and that the United States should not be "sending them a message that may, in fact, make it months later and far more difficult before we can do so."

Nevertheless, Kerry believes that the North Korean nuclear program is a very dangerous and urgent issue. He believes that it is well ahead of Saddam Hussein's previously suspected program, and criticizes President Bush for ignoring the growing danger. Kerry said that North Korea had reportedly made enough new material to make six to nine nuclear bombs.³⁷

³⁵ *Newsweek*, May 27, 2002.

³⁶ The U.S. Department of State, *Washington File*, January 31, 2002.

³⁷ John Kerry and John Edwards, *Our Plan for America*, p. 27.

Policy Goal

Bush. The Bush Administration is pursuing such a short-term policy goal as WMD, missiles, conventional military posture, human rights, and humanitarian aid rather than a long-term goal like engagement of North Korea in the international community. Particularly after 9/11, the United States perceives the North Korean WMD and missiles as a direct threat to itself as well as a regional issue. As for the North Korean nuclear program, the United States is aiming a complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID).

Unlike the previous Clinton Administration which had pursued an eventual normalization of relations with North Korea, the change of Kim Jong-il regime has always been in the key policy makers' mind of the Bush Administration, particularly if such policy goal as dismantling the nuclear program cannot be achieved by diplomatic means.

Kerry. Senator Kerry's goal in his North Korea policy is the same as that of President Bush. Senator Kerry said that he will work toward negotiating a comprehensive agreement with North Korea that will completely, irreversibly, and verifiably end (CIVE) North Korea's nuclear weapon program.³⁸ Kerry perceives that the North Korean nuclear program is a far more imminent threat to U.S. security than the previous Iraqi program.

While it is not clear if the United States-North Korean relations can be normalized under the Bush Administration even after a peaceful resolution of the nuclear crisis, the Kerry presidency is expected to pursue the engagement of North Korea into the international community.

³⁸ John Kerry and John Edwards, *Our Plan for America*, p. 27.

Policy Means

Bush. The Bush Administration's approach is dual: diplomacy and pressure. The diplomatic approach is demonstrated by the 6-Party talks in which the two Koreas, the United States, China, Russia, and Japan participate. The biggest goal of the United States through the 6-Party talks is to make it known to the world that the United States is not the sole concerned party, but one among other countries concerned with this issue. The reason that the United States pursued the 6-Party talks despite strong resistance from the North is that it wanted to prevent the issue from being aggravated due to North Korean claim that the nuclear crisis was sparked by hostile U.S. policy, as well as possible future arguments involving the security guarantee and the scrapping of the nuclear program. In other words, it aimed to prevent the focus of the discussion from moving into a "security guarantee in return for the scrapping of the nuclear program" and to eliminate the arguments that the United States is responsible for the nuclear crisis.

In the 6-Party talks, the United States proposed a three-stage road map. In the first stage, the United States expands the humanitarian food aid in return for the North's announcement of the willingness to abandon its nuclear program and to return to the NPT. In the second stage, the United States analyzes North Korean energy demands and is prepared to talk with North Korea on the conditions for removing the North from the list of terrorist sponsoring countries, while the North begins to dismantle its nuclear program. In the third stage, the United States actively handles the North Korean energy problem, when the North's nuclear program is completely dismantled. The United States is willing to discuss the North's security concern in order to normalize the relationship with North Korea in addition to other issues such as WMD, missiles, human rights, and abduction issues, when it is verified that North Korea does not have nuclear weapons.

The U.S. effort to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis diplomatically is attributed to limitations that it faces with military options. First, the United States, which already waged two major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, needs some time to build up its military and diplomatic strength. Particularly, the United States is preoccupied with the Iraq issue due to the increasing number of casualties and the cost for reconstructing Iraq. President Bush has taken the policy of “Adjust and Adapt” towards Iraq since September 2003. The United States sought international cooperation for an international force and a financial contribution by the international community. Moreover, the Bush Administration wants to postpone the North Korea’s nuclear issue until the end of the election as long as it is not further aggravated, and focus on the domestic economy.

Secondly, it is all but impossible to take a military option against North Korea without the full cooperation of South Korea. The South Korean government, which believes that the North Korean nuclear program is nothing more than a bargaining chip to gain a security guarantee from the United States, however, has been determined to oppose the military option. According to a national survey conducted by KINU in May 2003,³⁹ only 11.6 percent of South Korean people responded that the purpose of the North Korean nuclear program is to possess nuclear weapons, while those who responded ‘bargaining chip’ and ‘North Korea’s domestic purpose’ accounted for 41.6 percent and 46.8 percent respectively.

Thirdly, the possibility of a North Korean counterattack is another concern for the United States. Sixty percent of the North’s 1.2 million-soldier military force is forward deployed south of the Pyonyang-Wonsan line, and 11,000 artillery pieces are aimed at the Seoul metropolitan area. Thus, a huge number of casualties and destruction are expected at the early stage of war on the Korean Peninsula.

³⁹ The face-to-face interview was done with the sample size of 1,000.

Although the above factors limit the U.S. military options, the hawkish group in Washington had not changed its negative perception towards North Korea and never considers concessions to the North. On the contrary, they believe that the rationale for the war on Iraq--WMD and liberation of the oppressed--could be applied to North Korea. The Bush Administration believes that it should demonstrate unambiguously that the United States is prepared to bolster its deterrent military posture if diplomacy proves inadequate. The United States has hinted that if the 6-Party talks fail, it has a stronger option.

The peaceful resolution to the North Korean nuclear crisis, the United States believes, would be to induce the North to abandon the nuclear program by juggling negotiations with and putting pressure on the North. The United States has put pressure on the North with the PSI (Proliferation Security Initiative), military buildup on the Korea Peninsula, and such issues as North Korean defectors and human rights. In short, the United States has been making diplomatic efforts while continuing its pressure on the North with little consideration of military strikes on North Korean territory.⁴⁰

First, the United States has tried to squeeze the source of cash input through PSI which is being implemented to interdict the shipping of drugs, missiles, counterfeit notes, and weapons in the name of law enforcement. PSI was proposed by President Bush on May 31, 2003 and 11 countries joined it. In April 2003 North Korean ship carrying heroin was interdicted near Australia, and 29 crew members were indicted and remain in an Australian jail.

Panama and Liberia, which together with Honduras constitute 85%

⁴⁰ President Bush has repeatedly said the United States would not invade North Korean territory, but military pressure on the shipping of missiles has not been ruled out.

of all commercial shipping flags, supported the PSI by allowing the United States to inspect their flag ships in high seas. The United States inspected a German ship heading to Libya in October 2003, and found nuclear-related parts. The United States believes that this may have a significant impact on Ghaddafi in giving up nuclear program.

Secondly, the United States is also trying to strengthen its military power on the Korean Peninsula. The United States plans an 11 billion dollar military buildup. The military buildup includes 24 AH-64 D Longbow Apache helicopters, 300 Patriot Missiles (PAC-3), MSRS, HARPY, AN/TPQ-36,³⁷. The United States is also working on troop relocation in South Korea. The troop relocation effort is being pursued in the context of a global military transformation, which aims at creating a more flexible, more lethal, and lighter military. However, the troop relocation to the south of Han River would increase the counterattack capacity of U.S. forces against the North's invasion, and must be taken as a serious warning signal to the North.

Finally, the United States is paying more attention to North Korean human rights and defectors. The U.S. House of Representatives passed North Korean *Human Rights Act of 2004*, which is aimed at promoting the human rights of North Koreans, assisting North Koreans in need, and protecting North Korean refugees. The U.S. bill authorizes the U.S. president to use \$24 million for each of the fiscal years from 2005 through 2008: \$2 million for programs aimed at promoting human rights, democracy, rule of law, and the development of a market economy in North Korea; \$2 million for 12-hour-per-day broadcasting to North Korea, including broadcasts by Radio Free Asia and Voice of America; \$20 million to support organizations or persons that provide humanitarian assistance to North Koreans who are outside of North Korea without the permission of the Government of North Korea.

Kerry. As the Bush Administration’s approach to the North Korean nuclear crisis started with the criticism of his predecessor Clinton’s approach, Kerry’s approach is likely to start with criticism of Bush’s approach. Kerry seems to believe that the Bush Administration’s failure to implement the Perry Process is a mistake, because the standoff of the relations between the United States and North Korea continued during the Bush Administration. Thus, the Perry Process will give some policy implications to the Kerry Administration, although its assumptions on which the Perry Process is based were already broken: North Korea’s secret nuclear activities were revealed and the Agreed framework was seriously damaged. In fact, the September 11 terrorist attack fundamentally changed the U.S. security environment.

<Table 3> Summary of the Perry Process

Subjects	Contents
U.S.-ROK Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No U.S. policy can succeed unless it is coordinated with the ROK’s policy. - The United States must not withdraw any of its forces from Korea.
Possibility of War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The war on the Korean Peninsula will cause death of hundreds of thousands of people, and millions of refugees.
Agreed Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreed Framework has verifiably frozen plutonium production at Yongbon. - Unfreezing Yongbon remains the North’s quickest surest path to nuclear weapons. - U.S. security objectives may therefore require the United States to supplement the Agreed Framework, but we must not undermine or supplant.
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If stability can be preserved through the cooperative ending of DPRK nuclear weapons and long-range missile-related activities, the United States should be prepared to establish more normal diplomatic relations with the DPRK and join in the ROK’s policy of engagement and peaceful coexistence.

Source: William Perry, “Review of United States Policy Toward North Korea,” October 12, 1999.

Kerry claims the prolonged absence of the Bush Administration's attention on North Korea destroyed possible opportunities to make important progress in the face of testing and terror.⁴¹ Kerry believes that the North Korean nuclear crisis is the imminent issue, and faults Bush for not handling it promptly and actively. Kerry's key advisors are concerned that North Korea crossed line after line on its way to becoming the world's first nuclear Wal-Mart.⁴² Because of Bush's failure to stop North Korea's nuclear program, Pyongyang is capable of producing up to six nuclear weapons at any time, possibly 20 a year by the end of this decade.

The worst scenario is that cash-starved North Korea sells nuclear weapons to al Qaeda or Hamas or the radical Chechens, who then deliver them to Washington, London, or Moscow.⁴³

Kerry faults Bush for failing to continue direct talks on a range of issues with North Korea. He said that he will continue the current six-nation negotiations with North Korea, but be prepared to engage in direct U.S. bilateral negotiations with Pyongyang as part of those talks.⁴⁴ Kerry has pushed for a diplomatic opening to Iran, as he did with Vietnam.

Samuel Berger suggests three steps of the U.S. approach towards North Korea. First, the United States must clearly and promptly test whether Pyongyang intends to retain nuclear weapons or is willing to negotiate with the United States. Secondly, the United States proposes a "nationwide, verifiable dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear programs in exchange for economic integration." Thirdly, the United States will take coercive actions joined by South Korea, Japan, and China only if they are convinced that

⁴¹ Isaacs, "In Their Own Words," p. 19.

⁴² Berger, "Foreign Policy for a Democratic President." p. 55.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 56.

⁴⁴ John Kerry and John Edwards, *Our Plan for America*, p. 27.

the United States made a serious, good-faith effort to avoid confrontation but Pyongyang did not accept it.

IV. North Korean Intentions and Surrounding Environments

North Korean Intentions and Strategies

North Korea's Concerns

Pyongyang suspects that the Bush Administration's ultimate policy goal towards North Korea is the change of the Kim Jong-il regime. Pyongyang's suspicion is due to the Bush Administration's negative perceptions towards the Kim Jong-il regime and its evaluations that North Korea has economically collapsed and that CVID is the final solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis. North Korea argues that the resolution of the nuclear crisis is not the end of problems and does not necessarily guarantee the improvement of relations between Pyongyang and Washington. In spite of the Bush Administration's goal to change the Kim Jong-il regime, North Korea thinks that Washington has certain limitations to implementing its policy, and is carefully watching its policy directions towards North Korea. Pyongyang's major concerns include U.S. policies on human rights, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), and the military buildup on the Korean Peninsula.

Pyongyang said that the PSI was clearly a military provocation against North Korea immediately after it started, and blamed the United States for trying to illegally isolate North Korea. Pyongyang warned that the United States may face with strong North Korean opposition, and emphasized the necessity of the development of missiles and nuclear deterrence.

North Korea says that the issues of human rights and drug trafficking, raised by the United States, do not even exist, and suspects that the United States seeks to tarnish the international image of North Korea in a bid to topple its political system.⁴⁵ North Korea says that the type of political system North Korea has and what sort of lifestyle its people follow are its internal issue and the United States is, therefore, not entitled to say anything about them.

North Korea's response to the *North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004* and North Korean defectors reflects how seriously North Korea is concerned about these issues. Immediately after 468 North Korean defectors arrived in Seoul from Vietnam on July 27 and 28, 2004, North Korea claimed the mass defection was a product of the United States' hostile policy towards it, whose ultimate aim is regime change in the North.

What North Korea is really concerned about is that the international image of North Korea is tarnished and it justifies the U.S. hardline policy towards North Korea. For this reason North Korea began to argue that the North Koreans were kidnapped. As a gesture to demonstrate its innocence, North Korea filed a suit on August 28, calling on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to take action to keep South Korea and the United States from further taking North Koreans. North Korea sent a similar letter to the International Committee of the Red Cross on August 27,

⁴⁵ *Korean Central News Agency*, August 20, 2004.

saying that it was the allurements and abduction of North Koreans. North Korea also summoned its ambassador to Hanoi, blaming Vietnam for cooperating with the United States and South Korea, which is the highest level of expression of displeasure.

North Korea noted that the mass defection happened less than a week after the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed the *North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004* on July 21, 2004. North Korea said the United States is using a lot of money and materials in a bid to destroy North Korean socialist system.

North Korea said, “the United States regards the nuclear issue and the ‘human rights issue’ as two levers in executing its policy to isolate and stifle the DPRK.”⁴⁶ It even threatened to boycott the 6-Party talks.

History of North Korean Deliberate Calculations and Watch on the U.S. Presidential Election

It is generally believed that North Korea is closely watching the external environment, particularly U.S. politics and foreign policy. The reason North Korea displays ambiguous messages of developing nuclear weapons and continuing negotiations at the same time is based upon its constant follow-up of the changing U.S. position. North Korea’s flip-flop attitude in its nuclear policy since its admission of a highly enriched uranium nuclear program in October 2002 seems to be based upon its analysis of the U.S. political, military, and diplomatic situation. North Korean rhetoric and actions depend on what the United States has done or what the United States is expected to do. From late 2002 to early 2003 North Korea did not hesitate to escalate nuclear tensions by rejecting IAEA inspections, announcing the unfreezing of nuclear

⁴⁶ *Korean Central News Agency*, August 27, 2004

activities, and withdrawing from the NPT. During this time, North Korea seemed to believe the United States was so preoccupied with Iraq issue that it could not take a tough policy line towards North Korea. North Korea also announced reactivating the nuclear reactor, North Korean fighters crossed NLL, and it fired a cruise missile in February 2003. By putting pressure on the United States, North Korea may have wanted to achieve concessions from the United States.

As the war against Iraq came to an end, however, North Korea's attitude began to change dramatically. The United States proposed a multilateral talks of 5P+5 in which five UN Security Council members (the United States, Russia, China, Great Britain, France), the two Koreas, Japan, Australia, and the EU were to participate. Although the 5P+5 appeared humiliating to Pyongyang, which has demanded a bilateral talks with the United States, it reluctantly decided to participate in preliminary 3-way talks with the United States and China.

The North, however, said that the war on Iraq demonstrated the importance of a strong military deterrence to protect the national safety and sovereignty. In this context, North Korea, which seemed to be scared by the U.S. attack on Iraq, said before the 3-way talks started, "we are successfully reprocessing more than 8,000 spent fuel rods at the final phase." The chief North Korean delegate, Lee Geun, said to his American counterpart, James Kelly, in the 3-way talks that the North possessed nuclear weapons.

As "the major combat was completed" on May 1, 2003, Pyongyang was reluctantly forced to accept the 6-Party talks. It appears that North Korea agreed to the proposed 6-Party talks, not the bilateral talks that it had asked for, because it needed to escape from the international isolation due to the aggravated situation, like the increased U.S. pressure and its own economic distress. North Korea may have wanted to find out the true intention of the United

States while maintaining dialogue rather than aggravating its isolation by heightened tensions. Pyongyang also wanted to show the outside world that it has a flexible and active attitude towards dialogue with other countries.

Also, against the backdrop of the intensifying nuclear crisis, the conflict between the United States and South Korea as well as the internal conflict within South Korea were beneficial factors for North Korea. However, it was against the expectations of the North that the United States-South Korean conflicts were resolved with the summit meeting between the two countries, and that the conservative groups came to have greater say in South Korea. As the international opinions about the North's nuclear development are worsening, strong pressure on North Korea from China appears to have made it difficult for North Korea to resist any longer.

In the first round of 6-Party talks, held in August 2003, the North suggested a principle of "package deal, simultaneous action." In the first stage, North Korea expresses its willingness to give up its nuclear program, while the United States resumes the supply of crude oil and expands food aid to a large extent. In the second stage, North Korea freezes its nuclear facilities and accepts inspection, while the United States signs the non-aggression pact and makes up for the loss of electricity. In the third stage, North Korea resolves the missile issue in return for the normalization of diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan. In the fourth stage, North Korea completely dismantles its nuclear program, when the construction of two light water reactors is completed.

After the first round of 6-Party talks in Beijing, the North did not hide its frustration, saying that the United States request that the North give up its nuclear program first is a foolish game that even a 5-year-old child would not like to play.

Around this time, North Korea wanted to escalate tensions once again, taking advantage of the U.S. weakness caused by instability in Iraq. North Korea informed the United States on July 8, 2003 that it had completed reprocessing the spent fuel rods by June 30 and that it could be used as nuclear deterrence. It also displayed its plutonium to American visitors in early 2004.

Although North Korea tried to put pressure on the United States by showing a strong bargaining chip, the second and third round of 6-Party talks, held in February and June 2004 respectively, failed to narrow the gaps between the United States and North Korea. As the U.S. election draws near, North Korea is less interested in the talks with the United States, hoping to see Bush fail to be reelected. In sum, North Korea's policy response is based on deliberate calculation of internal and external affairs,⁴⁷ rather than being the result of reckless behavior.

Above all, North Korea must be very attentive to the process as well as the result of the U.S. presidential election. It is said that North Korea may want to postpone the nuclear issue until after the U.S. presidential election in the hope that if Bush is voted out, it would be possible to settle the nuclear issue more favorably. However, North Korea argues that this is an expression of utter ignorance of the independent nature of the DPRK's diplomacy, and this is aimed to serve the purpose of speaking for the Bush Administration which takes a hostile policy towards North Korea and is not interested in talks with North Korea. It also says, "the DPRK does not care at all whether a candidate from the Democratic Party is elected or a candidate from the Republican Party is elected in the United States because it is a matter to be decided by the U.S. voters."⁴⁸ North Korea,

⁴⁷ North Korea announced anti-terrorism and joined the UN anti-terrorism pacts in November 2002, soon after 9/11.

⁴⁸ *Korean Central News Agency*, March 11, 2004.

however, said that whoever is elected U.S. president should be willing to make a switchover in its policy toward the DPRK, drop the hostile policy toward it, and express readiness to coexist with it.

Unpredictability of Decision-Making⁴⁹

Although North Korea is deliberately calculating its response based on a careful watch on the U.S. policy, it sometimes seems to be irrational and unpredictable. North Korea's flip-flop attitude is also attributed to its decision-making process. One of major characteristics in Kim Jong-il's leadership style is that he does not convene significant meetings of the Party. In North Korea, as in other socialist countries, the Party is the source and center of political power. The Party guides all the state and social organs.

Despite the almighty status and power of KWP, it has not functioned normally since Kim Il Sung's death. A Party Congress has not been held since the Sixth Party Congress in 1980.⁵⁰ The plenum of the Central Committee has not been held since the 21th plenum in December 1993.⁵¹ Secretariat and Politburo meetings have not been held since Kim Il Sung's death.

There are a number of vacant positions in the party, including

⁴⁹ Jinwook Choi, "Changing Relations between Party, Military, and Government in North Korea and Their Impact on Policy Directions," Discussion Paper, Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University (July 1999), pp. 9-10.

⁵⁰ According to the Party Act, the Party Congress is supposed to be held every 5 years.

⁵¹ The plenum, which has the right to elect the Secretary-General, was not held, even when Kim Jong-il became the Party's Secretary-General in October 1997. Instead Kim Jong-il was endorsed by both the Central Committee and the Central Military Committee.

Agriculture Secretary, International Secretary, Education Secretary, Chairman of the Central Military Committee, and Chairman of the Central Inspection Committee.⁵² Several Politburo Member positions also need to be filled. All the Politburo Standing Committee members except Kim Jong-il have died.

It means that the Party does not function as a major discussion forum or a decision-making body as in the Kim Il Sung era. Instead, Kim Jong-il's personal leadership would overwhelm any other institutional leadership. For example, individual Party Secretaries take orders from Kim Jong-il, and Departments in charge of Organization and Propaganda/Agitation carry out the orders. Kim Jong-il said that his Army-First Policy is characterized by a business style without meetings.⁵³

Kim Jong-il, like many other world leaders, is assisted by his personal secretary office (Suhkishil). However, the role of this office differs greatly from that of Chinese *mishus* (secretaries)⁵⁴ or White House staffs. *Mishus* play a "ubiquitous role" in politics as major advisor, writer, personal representative, coordinator, office administrator, personal manager, servant, and chief body-guard to Chinese leaders;⁵⁵ White House staffs significantly influence the president's decision-making. On the other hand, Kim Jong-il's personal secretaries (not Party Secretaries) do not actively participate in decision-making, but handle only administrative matters.

⁵² Agriculture Secretary Shu Kwan Hee was executed on spying charges, International Secretary Hwang Jang Yop defected to South Korea, and Education Secretary Choi Tae Bok was elected as SPA speaker.

⁵³ *Rodong Shinmun*, February 3, 2001.

⁵⁴ *Mishu* must be distinguished from *shuji*, which are both translated as "secretary." *Mishu* is a personal secretary, while *shuji* refers to a party secretary. Thus a *mishu* often works for a *shuji*.

⁵⁵ Wei Li and Lucian W. Pye, "The Ubiquitous Role of the *Mishu* in Chinese Politics," *The China Quarterly* 132 (December 1992).

In North Korea, where the principle of rule by man overwhelms the principle of rule by law, however, the personal relationship is still very significant. In fact, a number of high-ranking officials are related to Kim Jong-il or have worked with him in the same Department in the 60's and 70's and contributed to his succession to power.

North Korea, like China, has a dual communication network of the open mass media and the closed system contained within the bureaucracy. There are various modes of communication channels within the bureaucracy: the formal documentary system within the bureaucracy; telecommunications; oral briefings; personal letters; and commentaries.⁵⁶ North Korean cadres, however, do not have private communication among themselves as freely as Chinese cadres do, which often serves as an important way of collecting information, understanding current issues, adjusting their opinions, and so on. North Korean cadres are often subject to close watch when they meet privately. The higher the cadre's rank, the closer the watch. Thus, high-ranking officials have few friends. North Korea has been very strict against factionalism since the process of consolidating Kim Il Sung's one-man dictatorship. North Koreans are not allowed to organize any kind of private meeting such as alumni associations and meetings of people from the same hometown, which have been traditionally very popular in Korea. Needless to say, this is a preemptive measure to prevent potential opposition to the regime from growing and being organized. This was inevitably led to rigidity of North Korean decision-making.

In sum, decision-making is highly centralized on Kim Jong-il, particularly in the areas of military affairs, foreign policy, and high level appointments, and he does not depend on an insti-

⁵⁶ Michel Oksenberg, "Methods of Communication Within the Chinese Bureaucracy," *The China Quarterly* (Jan-March 1974).

tutionalized body in the decision-making process. When a single paramount leader dominates the decision-making process, decision-making bodies do not operate properly, even though they are convened. When Mao ruled China, for example, he limited the degree of top leadership participation in key policy debates and decision-making bodies were relegated to rubber stamps.⁵⁷ In North Korea, where the input of formal and informal institutions in the decision-making process is extremely limited, the result could be unpredictable, irrational, and sometimes even dangerous.

North Korea's nuclear confession in October 2002 could be a good example of unpredictability of decision-making process. North Korea's unexpected admission to its HEU program seems to be an abrupt response to the U.S. delegate James Kelley's 'high-handed and arrogant' manner. North Korea changed its positions several times since then. On October 25, 2002, North Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman denied North Korea's nuclear program and said that it is nothing but the U.S.'s unilateral argument without any evidence. On November 4, 2002, North Korea's ambassador to Germany said that the U.S. argument of Pyongyang's nuclear program is groundless. On November 17, 2002, however, North Korea once again admitted that it *came to* possess nuclear weapons to protect its sovereignty, although it denied next day by saying that it is *entitled to* possess nuclear weapons.

Evaluations

The single most important question with regard to the North

⁵⁷ After Mao's death, China's foreign policy decision-making process has been transformed from a "strong-man model" to one more characterized by bureaucratic, sectorial, and regional competition. Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign Policy Decision-making in China* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 1-17.

Korean nuclear crisis is whether Pyongyang will pursue nuclear weapons or seek a diplomatic solution by using its nuclear program as a bargaining chip. The best scenario for North Korea seems to be both possessing nuclear weapons and normalizing relations with the United States. However, North Korea's strategy varies deliberately based on surrounding environments. North Korea has tried to avoid the tough U.S. policy towards it through 'national collaboration,' cooperation with China and Russia, negotiation for normalization of its relations with Japan, and conciliatory gesture to the United States.

Particularly when the U.S. position is strong and about to take a tough policy towards North Korea, it tries to be conciliatory. However, North Korea does not want to look weak and defensive, and rhetoric is always strong and provocative, while the action is very tough by escalating tensions.

The relations between Washington and Pyongyang has been in stalemate since President George W. Bush came to office in 2001, in spite of 6-Party talks and less significant meetings between the two from time to time. Recently, the U.S. presidential election seems to delay any meaningful breakthrough for the resolution of the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Prior to the U.S. presidential election, North Korea may want to strengthen its bargaining chip and prepare for the talks with the United States, whoever wins the election. Internally, it may want to extract more plutonium and complete more nuclear weapons. A test explosion of a nuclear weapon cannot be ruled out to demonstrate its nuclear deterrence. It will also try to develop inter-Korean relations in the name of 'national collaboration.' Such inter-Korean cooperation as development of Kaesung Industrial Park and Kumkang Mountain tourism can be considered a good sign of reconciliation between the two Koreas, and can dissuade the U.S. hardline policy towards the North. The inter-Korean

summit talks can serve as a big leverage in its negotiations with the United States. It will also strengthen its ties with Russia and China. Finally, North Korea will try to improve its relations with Japan in an effort to normalize the diplomatic relations. If Japan supports the U.S. position, however, North Korea will try to weaken Japan's voice. North Korea criticized Japan by saying on October 7, 2003 "Japan lost its position as a reliable member of the 6-Party talks and is nothing but an obstacle to the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue between the United States and North Korea." North Korea also said that it would not tolerate the participation of Japan in any type of talks to resolve the nuclear issue. North Korea wants to keep Japan from raising the abduction issue and supporting the United States, although it is not possible to exclude Japan from the talks.

ROK-U.S Relations

The United States and South Korea share the common goal of not tolerating a North Korean nuclear program. However, the two countries differ in perceptions of the Kim Jong-il regime and the intensity of the threat from the North. According to a national survey conducted by KINU in May 2003,⁵⁸ 41.6 percent of South Korean people responded that the purpose of the North Korean nuclear program is to use it as a 'bargaining chip,' while only 11.6 percent responded possession of nuclear weapons. 'North Korea's domestic purpose' accounted for 46.8 percent. On the other hand, the United States considers North Korea's nuclear program as a serious challenge to its nuclear nonproliferation policy, and it is not only a regional issue but also a direct threat to the United States after 9/11. The Bush Administration also has a very negative perception towards Kim Jong-il himself.

⁵⁸ Refer to the footnote 39.

South Korea believes that Kim Jong-il may lead North Korea to reform and opening, and a lot of changes have already happened in North Korea. On the other hand, the United States believes North Korea's economy already collapsed and North Korean reform is unlikely. The Bush Administration does not trust North Korea, saying that it violated Agreed Framework, North-South Denuclearization Pact, IAEA Safeguard Agreement, and the NPT.

As for North Korea's human rights, South Korea and the United States takes a different approach. South Korea abstained from voting for the resolution on North Korea's Human Rights in the 60th UN Commission on Human Rights in April 2004.⁵⁹ After the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed *North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004* on July 21, 2004, 27 National Assemblyman of South Korea's ruling Uri Party presented a letter to the U.S. Embassy in Seoul to be delivered to the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in which they said that the Bill might have a negative impact on the peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Recently anti-American sentiment has a negative impact on the United States-ROK alliance. Although the relocation of U.S. forces in South Korea is under way in the context of military transformation and global military posture, the effect of anti-America sentiment may have made it happen earlier.⁶⁰ The U.S. and South

⁵⁹ The resolution 2004/13 was adopted by a recorded vote of 29 votes to 8, with 16 abstentions. It expressed its deep concern about continuing reports of systemic, widespread and grave, violations of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It notes with regrets that the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have not created the necessary conditions to permit the international community including the United Nations system, to examine these reports in an independent manner and calls upon the Government to address these reports and concerns in an open and constructive manner.

⁶⁰ According to a professor in Seoul, the U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld said "God damn it, get them out," when he watched NBC News broadcasting

Korea agreed on the relocation of U.S. forces south of Han River and reduction of one third of forces, 12,500 out of 37,000. The United States wants to finish the troop reduction by the end of 2005, but South Korea wants to delay it until the end of 2006. The two countries will refer the issue to Defense-Ministerial talks set for October 22 in Washington. The troop cut is implemented in the context of the reduction of 60,000 to 70,000 troops globally.

The deteriorating relationship between the United States and South Korea was illustrated when President Bush omitted South Korea from a list of key allies in the U.S.-led war in Iraq during his Republican Convention speech.⁶¹ South Korea has committed the third-largest troop contingent in Iraq after the United States and Britain.

Inter-Korean Relations

Inter-Korean relations has been in a good shape despite the North Korean nuclear crisis. Inter-Korean trade recorded \$724 million in 2003 ever higher. Kumkang Mt. tourism is revitalized by the opening of land transportation this year, and Kaesung Industrial Park is well under way. South Korea provides 400,000 tons of rice and 300,000 tons of fertilizers every year.⁶² North Korea defined the nuclear crisis as the conflict between the United States and all Koreans both in the South and the North, rather than the conflict between the United States and North Korea, and emphasized the ‘national collaboration’ to fight against the United

on December 30, 2003, of a U.S. soldier bleeding hit by a stone thrown by a Korean student, *Yonhap News*, August 27, 2004.

⁶¹ Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. National Security Adviser, said the omission was not intentional and the United States is grateful for South Korea’s contribution to the U.S.-led War on Terror.

⁶² South Korea also contributes 100,000 tons of rice to the World Food Program, which is supposed to go to North Korea.

States.⁶³ In the 13th round of ministerial talks between North and South Korea, held in February 2004, the North Korean chief delegate said that the most fundamental ‘national collaboration’ is that of South and North Korean governments, and tasks of national collaboration are the support for North Korea’s position in the nuclear issue and inter-Korean economic cooperation.

South Korean President and the ruling Uri Party also seek to abolish the National Security Law, which North Korea has demanded for a long time. North Korea said that it will link the abolition of South Korea’s National Security Law to the resumption of ministerial-level talks.

The smooth development of inter-Korean relations, however, was set back by the mass defection of North Koreans in August 2004. North Korea accused South Korea of committing an “organized and premeditated allurement, abduction and terrorism” against the people of the North. North Korea said that the South is pursuing the U.S. campaign and throwing insurmountable obstacles in the way of improving inter-Korean relations. North Korea suspended the 15th round of inter-Korean ministerial-level talks scheduled for August 3-6 in Seoul. North Korea’s real complaint is that the mass defection may be used by the United States as pretext to take a tough policy towards North Korea.

The recent revelation of past South Korean nuclear experiment is another obstacle to inter-Korean relations. It was revealed that in September 2004 that South Korea extracted a minimal amount of plutonium during a research experiment in 1982 and produced a small amount of enriched uranium in 2000.⁶⁴ “We view South

⁶³ North Korea began to redefine the concept of ‘nation’ in the early 1990s. Until the 1980s, Kim Jong-il said that communists cannot become nationalists, but revolution and construction must be accomplished by the unit of state and nation. Kim Jong-il, *Selected Works of Kim Jong-il* (Pyongyang: KWP Press, 1997), p 47.

Korea's uranium enrichment program as part of armament race in the Northeast Asian region," Han Song-ryol, Deputy Chief of North Korea's mission to the United Nations, said on September 8, 2004.⁶⁵ North Korea drew attention to what it called "double standards" by the United States, accusing Washington of overlooking Seoul's uranium enrichment experiment while trying to pressure Pyongyang over its "non-existent" nuclear arms program.

International Factors

One of the differences between North Korea's current nuclear crisis and the North Korean nuclear crisis from 1993 through 1994 is the role of China. The first nuclear crisis was handled only through direct negotiation between Pyongyang and Washington, because of North Korea's strong demand. Thus, both China and South Korea played little role. For the current nuclear crisis, however, China plays a very important role: it strongly urged North Korea to accept the multilateral talks in spite of Pyongyang's reluctance; and hosts 6-Party talks. China's active role was partially attributed to its belief that the United States might move towards a military option after "the major combat was completed" in Iraq on May 1.

China's influence as a broker between the United States and North Korea was further increased by South Korea's reliance on China in resolving the North Korean crisis. As anti-America sentiment increases among Koreans, many South Koreans tended to consider China as a substitute for the United States. Various surveys,

⁶⁴ "Several milligrams" of the fissile material were extracted from about 2.5 kilograms of spent nuclear fuel rods at a 5-megawatt research reactor in a state-run nuclear research center, officials at the Foreign Ministry and the Science and Technology Ministry said on September 9, 2004.

⁶⁵ *Yonhap News*, September 8, 2004.

conducted from 2003 through mid 2004, show that people tend to regard China as more important country economically and politically than the United States.

Chinese claims to an ancient Korean kingdom, however, anger the Korean people, and make them realize the reality of international politics.⁶⁶ China's attempt to distort history seems to be attributed to the ethnic instability that may be caused by rapprochement between the two Koreas. More than two million ethnic Koreans live in China's Northeast region, which was a historically Korean territory. Many Koreans now understand that China is concerned about Korean unification, which may cause serious ethnic and territorial dispute. China is concerned about the U.S. containment against itself and strong military alliance with Japan, and does not want to lose North Korea as a buffer state.

Japan had the second summit talks with North Korea in an effort to normalize relations between the two countries in May 2004, where the abduction issue was the main topic. But Japan strongly supports the U.S. position on North Korea's nuclear program, and takes a very tough position on South Korea's unreported nuclear activities, although it is believed to be nothing but a laboratory experiment.

Japan intends to become a political and military power based on its economic strength. Japan's new National Defense Program Outline, which is expected to be finalized by the end of 2004, aims at a flexible future strategy, to respond to new threats and play a more active role in the world.⁶⁷ The Outline is expected

⁶⁶ Koguryo Kingdom, which had existed from 37 B.C. to A.D. 668, ruled Northern part of the Korean peninsula and Northeast region of the present China's territory.

⁶⁷ The National Defense Program Outline, dating back to 1976, lays out the mission and scale of the Self Defense Force. It was revised in 1995 following the end of the Cold War.

to strengthen the United States-Japan alliance, taking China as a potential enemy. Japan already sent 1,000 combat troops to Iraq in late 2003, and Japan's peacekeeping operations are expected to be expanded. Japan will strongly support the United States in the North Korean nuclear crisis, the War on Terror, and missile defense. Japan, encouraged by strong support from the United States, strives to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Russia seeks to expand its role on the Korean Peninsula. President Putin is interested in the development of Russian Far East, which would be supported by the connection of the Trans-Siberian Railway to the Trans-Korean Railway and the economic cooperation with South Korea. A Russian ambassador to Seoul said on September 14, 2004 that Moscow would host a three-way summit meeting involving leaders of the two Koreas and Russia to help resolve the standoff over the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Russia is sympathetic with North Korean security concerns and energy problem, although it has opposed its nuclear program. The official Russian position is that at present North Korea does not possess nuclear weapons and it is not an urgent issue. Russia believes that the current crisis is attributed to the actions taken by the Bush Administration, and opposes to any type of pressure on North Korea. Russia tries to broker a solution to the crisis.

V. Prospects for the North Korean Nuclear Crisis after the U.S. Presidential Election

The future prospects for the North Korean nuclear crisis will be affected by the U.S. election results and North Korean strategies. Although Bush and Kerry have much in common on the North Korean nuclear crisis, their approaches will be different. President Bush, who has a very negative perception towards Kim Jong-il regime, does not trust North Korea and will try to resolve the nuclear issue through multilateral talks. As for other issues like missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights, President Bush will take a comprehensive approach, in which all the concerning issues are dealt with simultaneously. On the other hand, Senator Kerry will accept bilateral talks with North Korea, although he does not deny the validity of a multilateral approach and does not seem to abandon the 6-Party talks. Senator Kerry also tends to see North Korea as it is, and will not necessarily pursue regime change.

Future prospects for the nuclear crisis will also be affected by what kind of strategies North Korea takes, either appeasement or threat, although it often uses a dual approach of using the both.

Three Scenarios

<Table 4> Three Scenarios for the North Korean Nuclear Crisis

		Election Result	
		Bush Wins	Kerry Wins
NK's Options	Appeasement	A	B
	Threat	C	

Scenario A: From Tension to a Breakthrough?

The Bush victory in the presidential election means American voters' support for his strong commitment to the War on Terror including his unilateralism and preemption strategy. Given Bush Administration's negative perceptions towards North Korean regime and determination to completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle North Korea's nuclear program, it is expected to take an uncompromisingly hardline policy.

If North Korea, fearful of the U.S. hardline policy, looks for a breakthrough by completely abandoning its nuclear program, the relations between the United States and North Korea may find a breakthrough dramatically. This means that North Korea surrenders to the United States in return for the security guarantee of Kim Jong-il regime and economic assistance. North Korea will have to resolve such pending issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights in a comprehensive way. North Korea will try to pursue direct talks with the United States and may want to reduce the influence of South Korea. Although the United States does want to keep the 6-Party talks, it may want to maximize its influence in North Korea through a bilateral dialogue. Neighboring countries may also hesitate to allow South Korea deep involvement in North Korean affairs, and the two Koreas may enter into a new type of competition.

The likelihood of this scenario depends on how successfully the United States can let North Korea save face and assure North Korea that regime change will not be pursued in return for the abandonment of its nuclear program. In fact, it is not certain that the resolution of the nuclear crisis can lead the two countries to the normalization of relations.

Scenario B: Compromise

If Kerry wins the election, it is likely that he will start direct talks with North Korea to understand North Korea's true intentions. If North Korea is willing to dismantle its nuclear program, the two countries will enter into a long process of compromise. It is likely that the United States provides economic assistance and crude oil in return for North Korea's freezing the nuclear activities. However, it will take a long time that they reach a final agreement on how to resolve the nuclear crisis. It was three years after the nuclear crisis occurred in 1991 that the United States and North Korea signed the Agreed Framework.

Such issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights will be addressed one at a time, as the relations between the United States and North Korea improve. The Kerry Administration may deal with North Korean regime as it is, not as the United States might wish it to be, as Dr. William Perry suggested four years ago. The United States may not insist on the regime change. The United States will lift economic sanctions and provide economic assistance to North Korea. The two countries will move to the normalization of relations.

The likelihood of this scenario will depend upon whether North Korea can convince the United States that it will freeze the nuclear activities and nuclear proliferation during the negotiation. It will also be important that North Korea abides by agreements made

with South Korea and the international community. North Korean reform will be another condition for the improvement of relations with the United States.

Scenario C: Catastrophe

If North Korea resists the U.S. hardline policy instead of abandoning its nuclear program, the relations between the United States and North Korea will soon enter into a state of confrontation. Both the Bush Administration and the Kerry Administration will take a very tough policy towards North Korea: from selective interdiction to expansion of economic sanctions, diplomatic and military pressure, and even the military option. North Korean regime change may be the ultimate policy goal. North Korea will employ a brinkmanship policy including missile and nuclear tests. North Korea will also take advantage of all the existing leverages and develop additional leverages. It may pursue summit talks with the South, strengthen its ties with China and Russia, and resume diplomatic efforts to normalize relations with Japan. Whatever North Korea uses, however, the United States will swiftly move to a very tough policy. Both Administrations will include military options, although the Kerry Administration is likely to be more careful in using them than the Bush Administration.

Cooperation with South Korea and China will be very important for the success of the U.S. policy. China provides a significant amount of gas and food to North Korea. It is not certain that China will recognize the advent of the United States as a dominant power on the whole Korean peninsula in the event of the collapse of the Kim Jong-il regime. South Korea provides fertilizer, food, and some hard currency through Kumkang Mountain and other visitors. Particularly, a military option without the cooperation of South Korea and China will be unlikely.

Evaluations

Considering the conflicting interests between the United States and North Korea, it will be difficult to anticipate how the North Korean nuclear crisis is resolved. North Korea has expressed a strong intention to maintain its nuclear programs until it secures the U.S. security guarantee for its regime. Even if North Korea gains a security guarantee, it is not certain that it will give up nuclear program. North Korea's nuclear program is the most important leverage to attract attention, food, and assistance from the outside world. North Korea without a nuclear program will become an international orphan. North Korea has also been developing nuclear arms as a prerequisite for its security, and it has recently been focusing on its nuclear development in order to cut its military spending. On the other hand, the United States aims to dismantle North Korea's programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The United States has had certain limitations to resolve the issue more aggressively: Iraq, concern about a North Korean counterattack, policy coordination with Japan and South Korea, and the presidential election.

The United States and North Korea have employed both threat and appeasement towards each other, and the relationship between the two countries has remained in a state of tension and stagnation rather than falling into a catastrophic phase. In fact, North Korea participated in the 6-Party talks, although it was not fully satisfied with it.⁶⁸

However, the post-election situation will be different from the

⁶⁸ But North Korea wants to make the 6-Party talks bilateral talks in a real sense. For that purpose, North Korea tries to minimize the roles of South Korea and Japan. North Korea refused to talk about the nuclear issue with South Korean delegates who participated in the 12th round of ministerial talks that was held in Pyongyang on October 14, 2003 right after the first round of the 6-Party talks.

pre-election standoff. Regardless of who wins the presidential election, if North Korea does not want to give up its nuclear program, the unclear dual strategy of appeasement and pressure is unlikely to continue any further. North Korea's appeasement and threat will not work any more. North Korea's crossing the red line, such as conducting a test explosion of nuclear weapon or further fuel reprocessing, would not necessarily be negative to the United States. If the North does so, it will make the U.S. policy options more flexible because it can justify whatever it does. South Korea's position has been weakened by its own nuclear experiments conducted in 2000 to enrich a small amount of uranium. Director General Mohamad Elbaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expressed a "deep concern" over the atomic experiments, although South Korea argued that it was a scientific research and the government did not know.

It is not certain that the United States is willing to use a military option, although it is more likely in case of the Bush presidency. President Bush repeatedly said that the United States would not invade North Korean territory, but a surgical strike may be on the table, and the military pressure on the shipping of missiles through the PSI is much more likely.

China's positions will be one of the major factors determining the success of the U.S. hardline policy towards North Korea. China does not tolerate the North Korean nuclear weapons, but it does not want to see the collapse of North Korean regime in fear of appearance of a strong unified Korea which may cause ethnic and territorial dispute with China. If the two Koreas are unified, China is also concerned about the extension of the U.S. influence over the northern part of the Korean peninsula.

If North Korea is willing to give up its nuclear program, the future prospects will be different in case of a Bush presidency and in case of a Kerry presidency. From President Bush's per-

spective, North Korea constitutes one element of the “Axis of Evil.” If Bush is reelected, he will urge North Korea to resolve such pending issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights in a comprehensive way. His final goal might be the regime change and the promotion of democracy in North Korea.

If Senator Kerry wins the election and North Korea is willing to dismantle its nuclear program, the United States will provide economic assistance and crude oil in return for North Korea’s freezing the nuclear activities. The United States will deal with such issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights step by step, as the relations between the United States and North Korea improve. The Kerry Administration will be much more patient with the transformation of North Korean system than the Bush Administration.

VI. Summary and Suggestions

Summary

The 2004 U.S. presidential election seems to be a turning point in the North Korean nuclear crisis. The U.S. presidential election is one of the factors that has delayed the resolution of the nuclear crisis and the post-election situation is expected to be completely different from the previous situation.

Bush and Kerry share the view that the fight against terrorism and the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) must be top global priorities. Few people deny that WMD poses the biggest threat to American security and that the rationale for the War on Terrorism and intervention is to make America safer and more secure.

Many people, particularly those who oppose the Bush foreign policy, hope that a Kerry presidency would be quite the radical break. But it is not clear yet. The “War on Terror” is a central campaign topic, and political realities will limit the victor’s policy options in the U.S. battle against terrorism. Both Bush and Kerry agree on most of the core issues and see stabilizing Iraq, hunting

down militants abroad, tightening security at home, and reviewing domestic intelligence as central pillars of the fight.

Bush and Kerry sharply differ over the means of foreign policy in spite of their general agreement on its ends. The Republicans emphasize Missile Defense, preemption, and regime change, while the Democrats want to strengthen international law, universalize the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, focus on multilateralism and diplomacy.

Both Bush and Kerry consider the North Korean nuclear program a serious threat to the U.S. security, although Kerry seems to take it more seriously than Bush. Kerry believes that the North Korean nuclear program is well ahead of Saddam Hussein's previously suspected program, and criticizes President Bush for ignoring the growing danger.

Both Bush and Kerry are aiming a complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID)⁶⁹. The change of Kim Jong-il regime has always been in the key policy makers' mind of the Bush Administration, particularly if such policy goal as dismantling the nuclear program cannot be achieved by diplomatic means. While it is not clear if the U.S.-North Korean relationship can be normalized under the Bush Administration even after a peaceful resolution of the nuclear crisis, the Kerry campaign is pursuing the engagement of North Korea into the international community.

By early 2001, the United States was questioning whether the Agreed Framework was the best way to dismantle North Korea's nuclear capacity. The Bush Administration has succeeded in internationalizing the response to it by engaging China, Japan,

⁶⁹ Kerry said that he will completely, irreversibly, and verifiably end (CIVE) North Korea's nuclear weapon program.

Russia and South Korea in the 6-Party talks.⁷⁰ The U.S. effort to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis diplomatically is attributed to limitations that it faces with regard to a military option: Iraq, the economy, the presidential election, concern about North Korea's counterattack, and so on.

Along with the 6-Party talks, the United States has put pressure on the North with the PSI, military buildup on the Korea Peninsula, and such issues as North Korean defectors and human rights. In short, the United States has been making diplomatic efforts while continuing its pressure on the North with little consideration of military strikes on North Korean territory.

The United States and South Korea share the common goal of not tolerating North Korea's nuclear program. However, the two countries are different in perceptions towards Kim Jong-il regime and the intensity of the threat from the North.

As the Bush Administration's approach started with the criticism of his predecessor Clinton's approach, Kerry's approach to the North Korean nuclear crisis is likely to start with criticism of Bush's approach. On North Korea, Kerry demands, the prolonged absence of the Bush Administration's attentions destroyed possible opportunities to make important progress in the face of testing and terror. Kerry believes that the North Korean nuclear crisis is the imminent issue, and faults Bush for not handling it promptly and actively.

Kerry's key advisors are concerned that North Korea crossed line after line on its way to becoming the world's first nuclear Wal-Mart. The worst scenario is that cash-starved North Korea sells nuclear weapons to al Qaeda or Hamas or the radical Chechens,

⁷⁰ Richard V. Allen, "What Bush did right on North Korea," *New York Times*, September 15, 2004.

who then deliver them to Washington, London, or Moscow.

Sandy Berger, Kerry's former top foreign policy advisor, suggests three steps of the U.S. approach towards North Korea. First, the United States must clearly and promptly test whether Pyongyang intends to develop nuclear weapons or is willing to negotiate with the United States. Secondly, the United States proposes a "nation-wide, verifiable dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear programs in exchange for economic integration." Thirdly, the United States will take coercive actions joined by South Korea, Japan, and China only if they are convinced that the United States made a serious, good-faith effort to avoid confrontation but Pyongyang did not accept it.

The single most important question with regard to the North Korean nuclear crisis is whether Pyongyang will pursue nuclear weapons or seek a diplomatic solution by using its nuclear program as a bargaining chip. The best scenario for North Korea seems to be both possessing nuclear weapons and normalizing relations with the United States. However, North Korea's strategy varies deliberately based on surrounding environments. North Korea has tried to avoid the tough U.S. policy towards it through 'national collaboration,' cooperation with China and Russia, negotiation for normalization of its relations with Japan, and conciliatory gesture to the United States.

Prior to the U.S. presidential election, North Korea may want to strengthen its bargaining chip and prepare for the talks with the United States, whoever wins the election. Internally, it may want to extract more plutonium and complete more nuclear weapons. A test explosion of a nuclear weapon cannot be ruled out to demonstrate its nuclear deterrence.

The United States and South Korea share the common goal of not tolerating North Korea's nuclear program. However, the two

countries differ in perceptions of Kim Jong-il regime and the intensity of the threat from the North. Inter-Korean relations were in a good shape, despite the North Korean nuclear crisis, until the mass defection and revelation of South Korea's nuclear experiments in August and September 2004 respectively.

The future prospects for the North Korean nuclear crisis will be affected by the U.S. election results and subsequent North Korean strategies. Although Bush and Kerry have much in common on the North Korean nuclear crisis, their approaches will be different. President Bush, who has a very negative perception of the Kim Jong-il regime, does not trust North Korea, and will try to resolve the nuclear issue through multilateral talks. As for other issues like missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights, President Bush will take a comprehensive approach, in which all the concerning issues are dealt with simultaneously. On the other hand, Senator Kerry will accept bilateral talks with North Korea, although he does not deny the validity of a multilateral approach and does not seem to intend to abandon the 6-Party talks. Senator Kerry also tends to see North Korea as it is, and will not necessarily pursue regime change.

Future prospects for the nuclear crisis will also be affected by what kind of strategies North Korea takes, either appeasement or threat, although it often uses a dual approach of using the both. Regardless of who wins the presidential election, if North Korea does not want to give up its nuclear program, the dual strategy of appeasement and pressure by the United States is unlikely to continue. Crossing of "red lines," such as conducting a test explosion of a nuclear weapon or further fuel reprocessing would make the U.S. policy options more flexible because it can justify almost any reaction. South Korea's position has been weakened by its own nuclear experiments conducted in 2000 to enrich a small amount of uranium.

It is not certain that the United States is willing to use a military option, although it is more likely in case of the Bush presidency. President Bush repeatedly said that the United States would not invade North Korean territory, but a surgical strike may be on the table, and the military pressure on the shipping of missiles through the PSI is much more likely.

China's positions will be one of the major factors determining the success of the U.S. hardline policy towards North Korea. China does not tolerate North Korean nuclear weapons, but it does not want to see the collapse of North Korean regime in fear of appearance of a strong unified Korea which may cause ethnic and territorial dispute with China. If the two Koreas are unified, China is also concerned about the extension of the U.S. influence over the northern part of the Korean peninsula.

If North Korea is willing to give up its nuclear program, the future prospects will be different in case of a Bush presidency and in case of a Kerry presidency. From President Bush's perspective, North Korea constitutes one element of the "Axis of Evil." If Bush is reelected, he will urge North Korea to resolve such pending issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights in a comprehensive way. His final goal might be the regime change and the promotion of democracy in North Korea.

If Senator Kerry wins the election and North Korea is willing to dismantle its nuclear program, the United States will provide economic assistance and crude oil in return for North Korea's freezing the nuclear activities. The United States will deal with such issues as missiles, conventional military posture, and human rights step by step, as the relations between the United States and North Korea improve. The Kerry Administration will be much more patient with the transformation of North Korean system than the Bush Administration.

Suggestions

The U.S.-North Korean relationship has broken down due to the conflicting arguments of the two and the mutual mistrust. The U.S.-North Korean relations could easily be aggravated at any time due to mistrust alone, if North Korea accelerated its nuclear development or the United States pursued military strikes against North Korea.

It is important for both countries to build confidence in each other. The United States needs to set North Korea at ease and allow the country to save face, if North Korea is ready to dismantle its nuclear program and the United States wants to make a compromise with North Korea. North Korea seems to be concerned about its security and is particularly sensitive to the security of Kim Jong-il. North Korea's primary response to the Bush Administration's hardline policy has been very provocative and hostile. Displeased with Bush's decision to re-examine Clinton's North Korea policy from the outset, North Korea said after the Washington-Seoul summit in March 2001 that if the United States engaged in a policy of confrontation with the North, its army and people would "retaliate a hundred and a thousand times." In response to Bush's negative remarks about Kim Jong-il, in which he said the North was under the rule of a despotic regime starving its people in his summit talks with South Korean president Kim in February 2002, a spokesman for North Korea's Foreign Affairs Ministry said, "We are not willing to have contacts with Bush's clan which is trying to change by force of arms a system chosen by the Korean people." If North Korea recognizes the U.S. pressure as a movement to topple its regime, the U.S.-North Korean relationship may enter into an unnecessary crisis situation.

North Korea needs to abide by agreements made with the international society and show its true intention to reform. It is still unclear whether the resolution of the nuclear crisis without

any fundamental changes in the North Korean regime would lead to the normalization of the U.S.-North Korean relationship.

If the nuclear crisis gets worse, North Korea will try to approach the South more actively in an attempt to show its sincerity to the international community for reform and opening as well as reconciliation with the South. It may also seek to make mischief between the United States and South Korea. The conflict in the relations between the United States and North Korea will inevitably have a negative impact on inter-Korean relations in the long run. South Korea should, therefore, prepare for this situation in case a peaceful resolution fails. It is not desirable to not prepare a contingency plan, as such preparations may themselves increase tension. More specifically, South Korea should prepare for all possible scenarios: selective interdiction, diplomatic and military pressure, and even surgical strikes.

As for the security guarantee, North Korea demands a security guarantee for the regime as well as for the country. It is, however, impossible to give a security guarantee for the regime. A Non-aggression pact will affect the U.S.-ROK alliance, which assumes North Korea as a potential enemy. It is desirable that all the countries sign a document in which no country should threaten or attack any other country. North Korea triggered the two naval clashes despite South Korea's sunshine policy and is escalating tension in the region by developing a nuclear program. South Korea is also under the threat of North Korean chemical and biological weapons. Therefore, not only North Korea but also South Korea and Japan need security guarantees.

Finally, the North Korean nuclear crisis, whose resolution is already overdue, is approaching its final destination. It will be resolved, whatever the form, under the next U.S. administration. The policy coordination between South Korea, the United States, and Japan is essential to the successful resolution of the nuclear

crisis, and the policy coordination should be based on common perceptions towards Kim Jong-il regime, its policy intentions, and intensity of threat from North Korea. Nobody should feel left behind, although improving relations with the United States is the most immediate agenda for North Korea. It is time to bring peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula by ending the North Korean nuclear program.

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