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*The South Korean Debate  
over Policies toward North  
Korea: Internal Dynamics*

*Norman D. Levin and Yong-Sup Han*

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1700 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

1200 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202-5050

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## PREFACE

This report is the second of three on the public South Korean debate over dealings with North Korea. The focus of all three reports is on the period since February 1998, when Kim Dae Jung became the first leader of South Korea's political opposition ever to be elected president of the country, and on the major actors, interests, and goals influencing South Korean policies. The reports seek to better understand the sources of controversy over these policies and assess their likely implications for the United States.

The first report, entitled *The South Korean Debate over Policies toward North Korea: Issues and Implications* (MR-1555.0, RAND, December 2001), focused on the *content* of the debate over South Korea's new engagement policy - the so-called "sunshine" policy - toward North Korea. This second report focuses on the debate's *internal dynamics* - the major actors involved in the debate and their roles in shaping its evolution. Initial fieldwork for this report was undertaken in July 2001 and a more focused field trip was conducted in December 2001. The final report will update and integrate the findings of these first two reports and assess their long-term implications.

As noted in the first report, none of these reports intend to either praise or criticize the new Administration's policies. A substantial literature already exists emphasizing the policies' important accomplishments, and alternatively itemizing their failures or shortcomings. Instead, the reports seek simply to better understand the sources of controversy over the government's policies and what their implications might be for the United States. They should be of interest to both government officials and specialists on Korea, as well as to general readers interested in Asia and contemporary foreign policy issues.

This research project was conducted under the auspices of the RAND Center for Asia-Pacific Policy (CAPP), which aims to improve public policy by providing decision makers and the public with rigorous, objective research on critical policy issues affecting Asia and U.S.-

Asia relations. CAPP is part of RAND's National Security Research Division (NSRD). NSRD conducts research and analysis for a broad range of clients including the U.S. Department of Defense, the intelligence community, allied foreign governments, and foundations.

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## **SUMMARY**

The situation on the Korean Peninsula, like that in many other parts of the world, constitutes something of a Rorschach test: People look at it and see different things. This is relevant to the main question posed in this report: How did the public consensus in South Korea behind the government's efforts to engage North Korea evaporate so quickly and the sunshine policy become the core issue in a much larger political and ideological struggle? The answer varies widely depending on the observer.

Consider two widely held views:

- One identifies the United States as the principal cause of the difficulties facing the sunshine policy. According to those who hold this view, the new "hard-line" policy of the Bush Administration and distrust expressed toward Kim Jong Il alarmed and offended North Korea, causing it to back off from dialogue and undermining support within South Korea for the government's policies.
- Another view stresses the role of North Korea. The North Koreans, according to this view, failed to honor most of their commitments. They continually toyed with the ROK government, canceling meetings at the last minute without any explanation or refusing to discuss previously agreed-upon matters. They also passed up countless opportunities to support those in the ROK government who argued that Kim Jong Il is a genuine peace partner worthy of assistance. Meanwhile, they stepped up efforts to exploit divisions in South Korean society and repeatedly acted in ways that undermined Kim Dae Jung's credibility and political standing with the South Korean public.

Each view has some merit. To be sure, emphasis on the importance of the Bush Administration's "hard line" overlooks the considerable continuity in U.S. policies. It also understates the lengths to which the Administration has gone to be supportive of what it considers a

valued ally. Still, the advent of the Bush Administration gave Pyongyang yet another pretext for breaking off dialogue with South Korea, and the more distrustful stance taken by Washington - as filtered through a South Korean media focused on furthering its own interests - bolstered those in the ROK who shared similar views. This undoubtedly reinforced divisions already existing in South Korea and contributed to the decline in public support for the sunshine policy.

In the case of North Korea, the contributions are even clearer. Put simply, Pyongyang was its own worst enemy. Whatever its goals or intentions, its conduct communicated a fundamental unwillingness to come to terms with South Korea. Together with its demonstrative efforts to inflame social tensions in the South, this undermined the willingness of most South Koreans to explain away North Korean behavior. It also undermined several key Administration arguments: that Kim Jong Il could be trusted; that the regime was no longer a threat; and that the sunshine policy was effective in producing broader change in North Korea.

Despite the importance of these two external actors, the fate of the sunshine policy has been heavily shaped by South Korea's own *internal* dynamics. The debate over the government's approach re-opened deep fissures within South Korean society and divided the public sharply along political, ideological, and regional lines. The list of contributing factors here is long:

- *The government's minority status:* President Kim was elected with a plurality of some 300,000 votes. Even then he won election only by forming a strange coalition - in political and policy terms - with Kim Jong-pil's very conservative United Liberal Democrats (ULD) party. His own party, moreover, was a distinct minority in the National Assembly. The logic of the situation suggested the need for the President to broaden his base of support in order to build greater consensus behind his policies. On the whole this was not his inclination. Instead, he used his sunshine policy overtly and intentionally to improve both his personal political position and his party's electoral prospects. This approach riled the political opposition, politicized what

had generally been considered a non-partisan issue, and increased the perceived stakes in domestic political terms. It also exacerbated the task of gaining legislative approval for government policies. One by-product was increased National Assembly influence over government policy.

- *The role of reciprocity:* Support for government policies in any democratic society hinges ultimately on a public view that such policies are effective in advancing important national interests. Absent clear manifestations of North Korean reciprocity, the "payback" for South Korea's largesse became increasingly hard to demonstrate. One effect was an Administration tendency to oversell its policy successes, which over time corroded its credibility. The failure to insist on reciprocity was important in another respect as well: It magnified the effect of the ruling party's minority status. By not educating Kim Jong Il about the importance of public opinion in a democracy and insisting on specific reciprocal gestures for specific South Korean acts, the Administration denied itself an important tool for shaping public opinion. Many South Koreans believe the President may also have oversold North Korean leaders on his ability to deliver on his promises, reinforcing Kim Jong Il's inherent emphasis on relations with the United States and reluctance to develop a serious relationship with South Korea.
- *The approach to domestic critics:* The President's confidence and conviction were valuable in at least two ways: They provided a compass that kept policy focused despite many challenges; and they succored the Administration in the face of severe domestic criticism. The downside was a certain governmental hard-headedness that closed the policymaking process to all but the closest of the President's aids and blinded the Administration to the dangers of mounting domestic opposition. Many South Koreans insist that the Administration exacerbated its difficulties by its harsh criticism of those who did express doubts or reservations, validating in the process longstanding

suspicious among South Korean conservatives about the President's ideological propensities and intentions. This had a predictable effect: While it heartened the radical left and secured its allegiance, it alienated many more in the middle of the political spectrum and narrowed the potential base for national consensus.

- *The war with the press:* The Administration's attack on the media under the rubric of "reforming" the press is widely seen as at least partly a manifestation of this intolerance for domestic criticism. The attack was even more consequential, however, in consolidating opposition to the sunshine policy: It severely alienated the mainstream press and stimulated a de facto alliance between them and the opposition parties to prevent the government from achieving its objectives. It also exacerbated the Administration's difficulty in mobilizing public support for steps it wanted to take with North Korea, since it could enlist only the leftist media in efforts to rally support for its policies.
- *The lack of trust and willingness to compromise:* These cultural characteristics have historically bedeviled Korean politics, contributing among other things to political rigidity and a "winner takes all" orientation. South Korea's short experience with democratization has provided little time for alternative approaches to develop. This affected the political dynamics at virtually all levels. Within the ruling coalition, President Kim's Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) and Kim Jong-pil's ULD each used the other to maximize its own political position without reaching a viable compromise on their very different views about policy toward North Korea. Similarly, the opposition parties - each containing both conservative and progressive National Assemblymen - had to deal with their own internal confrontations. This made it difficult to even reach intra-Party accord let alone adopt a more accommodating stance vis-à-vis the ruling coalition. Attempts by the government to exploit these internal confrontations intensified the distrust

between the ruling and opposition camps and further fueled the opposition's unwillingness to compromise.

Other internal factors contributing to the evolution of events could easily be identified. The extreme personalization of policy, for example, saddled the effort to engage North Korea with all of the President's personal baggage. The Administration's reluctance to acknowledge the underlying continuity in South Korean policies removed an important shield against both North Korean manipulation and domestic partisan attack. And the government's refusal to convey the actual state of the North-South relationship to the public generated disappointment and public cynicism. More broadly, the Administration's emphasis on "trusting" the North in the absence of a widely apparent basis for this trust, and its periodic efforts to palliate the North through policy and personnel changes, created an impression of governmental naivete and weakness. North Korea's behavior made it easy for critics to exploit this impression. These factors combined to dissipate support for the government's engagement efforts.

Ultimately, however, the story of how consensus evaporated so quickly is less about particular governmental "mistakes" than about the broader interactions among politicians, press, and public opinion, with civic groups on both sides of an increasingly polarized citizenry serving as flag bearers in a larger political and ideological struggle. This struggle reflects both the continued hold of old, unresolved issues, as described in our first report, and the impact of South Korea's new process of democratization. It also illustrates how, after decades of repressive, authoritarian rule, democracy has become a permanent feature of the South Korean landscape.

The bad news for government supporters is that engagement with North Korea has been dealt a significant blow. The sunshine policy is now wrapped up in ideological, regional, and partisan bickering. The obstacles to unwrapping the policy, moreover, are substantial. The government lacks a majority in the National Assembly. Its popularity is now limited mostly to its own home region. And public confidence is at an all-time low. Not surprisingly, few South Koreans see much potential

for forward movement in the absence of major North Korean concessions. Even fewer expect such concessions to be offered, given Pyongyang's track record and reactions thus far to the U.S. call for renewed dialogue. Were they offered, however, the effect would be explosive. Most South Koreans would see any such concessions as reflecting a blatant North Korean attempt to influence the outcome of South Korea's upcoming elections.

All this will make it difficult for the Administration to move far forward in inter-Korean relations for the remainder of its term. This is not necessarily a statement about either the intentions or abilities of the current Administration. The truth is that it would be hard for any government to pursue an effective engagement policy today. The bedrock requirement for any such policy is a strong national consensus. Achieving such a consensus, in turn, requires many things: a favorable international environment; a responsive North Korean partner; a perceived balance between South Korean initiatives and North Korean reciprocity; a supportive economy; and public trust. None of these appear to exist today. Instead, South Koreans are divided sharply not only over *how* to engage North Korea but over *whether* to even try. Many believe that efforts at engagement are futile, if not worse, in the absence of major change in North Korea.

The most likely short-term prospect, therefore, is for more of the same. The Administration is likely to focus on keeping the family reunions and Mt. Kungang project afloat and successfully implementing the railway, Kaesong Industrial Complex, and other already agreed-upon projects. Achieving even this modest agenda will be difficult. North Korea's interest in these projects remains uncertain, and both the opposition parties and large parts of the South Korean public are dubious about their wisdom and value. This will necessitate a rather narrow focus. The task of building a new domestic consensus that enables South Korea to proceed with a broader attempt at North-South reconciliation will likely fall to President Kim's successor.

There are, however, two wild cards. One is North Korea. If the regime sees a major opportunity to exploit divisions in South Korea, it could conceivably shift course and offer a new proposal for expanded

North-South cooperation that would be hard for the Administration to reject. The other is the upcoming presidential election in South Korea. If the prospects for the MDP candidate appear to be poor, the President could be tempted to seek a dramatic breakthrough in North-South relations as a means for improving his party's prospects in the elections. A combination of these two cards - an effort by the South Korean government to achieve a surprise breakthrough coupled with a North Korean perception of a chance to destabilize South Korean society - would be particularly incendiary. That awareness will likely decrease the prospects of major new departures. But it will not rule them out.

The internal dynamics of the debate over the sunshine policy are likely to have several short-term implications. Some of these were identified in our first report:

- South Korea will likely continue to be weighed down by the unresolved issues from its past.
- The domestic political situation will probably get worse before it gets better.
- And the tendency of some South Koreans to blame the U.S. for particular problems and conditions will likely persist, if not increase further.

At least two others emerge from developments over the last few months:

- Exploring ways to ease military tensions on the Korean Peninsula will likely become more important as North-South relations sputter and greater attention is paid to problems caused by North Korea's conventional forces.
- Dealing with potential crises, such as one caused by an unraveling of the Agreed Framework or a continuation of North Korea's missile and weapons of mass destruction activities, will likely rise on the policy agenda.

Strong emphasis on the importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance and the need to work together to address such issues will be a continual requirement for U.S. policy over the coming period. So, too, will be a

continued demonstration of U.S. sensitivity to South Korean concerns as Washington necessarily pursues its larger strategic interests.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We want to reiterate our gratitude to the many South Koreans in and out of government who have shared their views and understandings with us in extensive interviews. Their candor and insights immeasurably improved our understanding of both the key issues in the South Korean debate and the larger political context in which this debate is being conducted. Though necessarily nameless, they will recognize their contributions in the pages that follow. Needless to say, we alone are responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The first report in this series, entitled *The South Korean Debate over Policies toward North Korea: Issues and Implications* (MR-1555.0, RAND, December 2001), addressed the "what" of South Korea's ongoing debate over the government's attempts at engagement with North Korea. This included questions like: What is the "sunshine" policy? What are its goals, major components, and critical underlying assumptions? What are the main issues in the debate over this policy? What does the debate reveal about alternative schools of thought to the approach taken by the government? What fault lines has it uncovered in South Korean society more broadly? And what are the short-term implications of these divisions for the United States?

The report found that the debate in South Korea today is largely a product of sharp elite and public differences over the new departures in South Korean policies since Kim Dae Jung became President of South Korea in 1998, rather than over the issue of "engagement" per se. Controversy swirls in particular over four broad questions: what the effort to improve relations with North Korea should be all about; what role reciprocity should play in such an effort; what priority should be placed on helping North Korea; and how the effectiveness of the government's policies should be evaluated. The debate extends beyond these broad issues, however, to almost all of the basic assumptions underlying and motivating the government's policy, as well as to the manner in which policy has been formulated and implemented. What makes the debate so volatile and potentially consequential is the way it has opened deep fissures within the South Korean body politic. These divide South Koreans sharply along political, ideological, and regional lines and exacerbate the difficulty of achieving greater policy consensus. In the process, they have made policy toward the North the core issue in a larger political and ideological struggle.

This second report addresses the "how" of this process. How did it come about? How did the growing consensus behind the need for engagement with North Korea evaporate so quickly, particularly given the

clear successes - symbolized most dramatically by the June 2000 North-South summit - of the government's policy? How does South Korea's ongoing democratization and internal political dynamics affect government policy toward the North more broadly? This report addresses these questions. After briefly reviewing the evolution of public debate prior to the onset of the Kim Dae Jung government, the report identifies the major actors involved in the debate and describes their general positions on the government's sunshine policy. It then analyzes the process by which their views and actions affected the public debate over this policy. The report concludes by assessing how these internal dynamics contributed to the controversy over the sunshine policy existing today, how they are likely to effect South Korean policy for the remainder of President Kim's term, and what their short-term implications are likely to be for the United States.

As noted in the Preface, the report explicitly intends to neither praise nor criticize the policies and/or procedures of the Kim Dae Jung Administration. A substantial literature already exists emphasizing the Administration's many important accomplishments, which even governmental critics generally acknowledge. An at least equally substantial literature exists itemizing the Administration's failures or shortcomings. This report seeks to avoid entanglement in this particular aspect of the debate. Instead, its aim is simply to better understand the sources of controversy over the government's approach toward North Korea, how these led to the current situation, and what their short-term implications might be for the United States.

## 2. PUBLIC DEBATE IN SOUTH KOREA: HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

"The sunshine policy," one foreign observer of South Korean politics wrote somewhat plaintively, "is for statesmen, not politicians."<sup>1</sup> By this he meant that the government's effort to engage North Korea in pursuit of peaceful coexistence and ultimate unification requires greater patience and longer time horizons than are generally manifested in South Korean politics. A former high-level South Korean official once privately expressed a similar thought. Alluding not to the sunshine policy but to the general domestic turmoil then affecting South Korean policies, he sighed and said only half-facetiously: "I used to believe in democracy, but now I'm not so certain." Both of these comments reflect an important reality: Politics in South Korea are here to stay. Like government officials themselves, academics and outside observers can no longer address South Korean policy toward the North purely in its "foreign policy" dimensions.

This is a relatively new phenomenon. For much of its history South Korean politics were largely free of the kind of rancorous public debate characteristic of the country today. Although there have always been sharply divergent viewpoints, significant public discord was constrained by the Cold War structure of international politics and the objective threat from North Korea. Equally important was a host of purely internal factors, including South Korea's tradition of repressive rule, authoritarian practices, and ideological rigidity. With only a few exceptions, the external and internal environments combined to suppress public debate and dissension. Although detailing the historical record is beyond this report's purview, at least the main themes might be highlighted since they continue to influence the nature of public debate today.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David I. Steinberg, "The Republic of Korea's Sunshine Policy: Domestic Determinants of Policy and Performance," Chung-in Moon and David I. Steinberg, ed., *Kim Dae-jung Government and Sunshine Policy: Promises and Challenges* (Yonsei University Press, 1999), p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> A full accounting of the evolution in public debate over policies toward North Korea would show a more complex situation than that

The essential pattern dates to the period following Korea's "liberation" from Japanese colonial rule in 1945 and the establishment of the Republic of Korea (ROK) three years later. During this period, South Korea was sharply divided between rightists and leftists over how to respond to the division of the peninsula and the major powers' plan to impose a trusteeship on Korea.<sup>3</sup> Following the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, President Rhee enacted a National Security Law aimed at silencing his leftist opponents, whom he regarded as a threat not only to his rule but to the ROK's very existence. The law inhibited debate on unification issues by banning all "Communist" activities.

The Korean War (1950-1953) cemented the ideological confrontation between the North and South. In the period thereafter, neither side tolerated voices that diverged from the official government position. As protests mounted in the South against President Rhee's dictatorial regime, government leaders denounced the protestors for weakening South Korea's national security and forcibly put down the protests.<sup>4</sup> They further restricted freedom of speech in 1958 by amending the already stringent National Security Law to provide death sentences or long

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presented in the brief summary above. For more detailed accounts of the periods prior to Kim Dae Jung's election, see: Jinwook Choi and Sun-Song Park, *The Making of a Unified Korea - Policies, Positions, and Proposals* (Korea Institute for National Unification, 1997); Jong-Chun Baek, *Probe for Korean Unification* (Research Center for Peace and Unification of Korea, 1988); and Hakjoon Kim, "The Development of the Unification Debates in South and North Korea: From a South Korean Nationalism Perspective," Gun Ho Song and Man Kil Kang, *Korean Nationalism*, Vol. I (Seoul: Changjakgwa Bipyungsa, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> The "conservatives," led ultimately by Rhee Syngman, came to favor separate elections in the South and the establishment of an independent South Korean government backed by the United States, with unification being a goal to be pursued thereafter. The "progressives," behind leaders like Kim Ku and Kim Kyu Shik, opposed separate elections in the South on the grounds that they would perpetuate the division of the peninsula. Instead, they insisted on unification first followed by the establishment of a unified, neutral Korean government. See our first report for details.

<sup>4</sup> Yong Pyo Hong, "State Security and Regime Security (*Kukga Anbo wa Junggwon Anbo*): The Case of President Syngman Rhee's Security Policy 1953-1960," *Journal of Korean Association of International Studies*, 36:3, 1997, pp. 252-258.

prison terms for such ambiguous crimes as "disseminating Communist propaganda." This was part of a larger effort to muzzle government critics and uproot elements seen as sympathetic to North Korea.<sup>5</sup> The effort stifled public debate over unification issues until Rhee was overthrown in 1960 by massive student demonstrations.

Debate over the government's policies toward North Korea exploded following Rhee's downfall, fed by radical intellectuals and students bent on social revolution and facilitated by a new permissiveness toward civil freedom. In this brief but heady period, numerous leftist political parties were formed to contend for seats in the National Assembly. Together with other political and civic groups, they sought to bolster "progressive" elements throughout South Korean society. Not surprisingly given their political and ideological coloration, the positions they took on North-South issues were very close to North Korea's position. These included: "unification first, national construction later;" neutralization of the Korean Peninsula; "self-reliant unification" without external intervention (code words for the withdrawal of U.S. military forces); unconditional cooperation with North Korea and active promotion of North-South exchanges; acceptance of North Korean economic assistance; and institution of "democratic socialism" in the South. Motivating these positions were the paramount goals of "peace" and "grand national solidarity."

North Korea did all it could to rile things further, adroitly promoting anti-Rhee and anti-U.S. sentiment to exacerbate South Korea's growing domestic turmoil. Kim Il-sung proposed the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea, for example, and a free election by Koreans without any foreign intervention. He called for a joint meeting

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<sup>5</sup> One example: In 1958 President Rhee arrested Cho Bong Am, the leader of the opposition Progressive Party, because he was irate over the latter's call for "peaceful unification," which challenged the government's official policy of "unification by marching northward." Charging him with espionage and National Security Law violations, Rhee subsequently had him convicted and executed. In 1959, he banned publication of the major opposition newspaper, the *Kyonghyang Sinmun*, in a further attempt to prevent public discussion. See Richard C. Allen, *Korea's Syngman Rhee* (Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1960) for a fuller account.

attended by representatives of all political parties and social organizations to discuss a unified government. And he professed a willingness to allow free travel and exchange of materials between the two Koreas, while urging the formation of a joint inter-Korean economic committee to help South Korea overcome its economic difficulties. North Korea's emphasis on the strength of the North Korean economy and willingness to provide its "brothers and sisters" in the South economic assistance helped fuel a vehement student movement demanding acceptance of such assistance and the initiation of joint meetings with North Korean counterparts.

In response, the new Chang Myon government insisted on "first construction, then unification" - which, even packaged as a "new conservatism," did not diverge much from Rhee's approach. It also maintained Rhee's broader anti-Communist policy.<sup>6</sup> Seeing North Korea's proposals as attempts to subvert the South Korea government, the government rejected all of its overtures for exchange and cooperation. It did not halt, however, South Korea's growing turmoil and political disorganization.

The military coup in May 1961 did. Perceiving the domestic unrest as leading South Korea to the brink of collapse, Park Chung Hee, the leader of the coup and South Korea's next President, quickly moved to restore social order by suppressing the unification movement entirely. He also enacted a new, tougher "anti-Communism" law that designated anti-Communism as national policy and a top goal of the nation. Banning all talk about unification, President Park concentrated national efforts instead on rapid economic construction. The result: South Koreans' aspiration for unification and open debate on inter-Korean issues was iced for another decade.

In the 1970s, some cracks in the ice surfaced. President Park stimulated this process himself. Aware of the public's pent-up desire for unification and more confident about trends in the North-South economic competition, Park initiated an effort to open a dialogue with North Korea. This led to the historic July 4, 1972 North-South Joint

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<sup>6</sup> Hakjoon Kim, *Korean Matters and International Politics (Hankuk Munje wa Kukje Jungchi)*, (Seoul: Pak Young Sa, 1995), p.653.

Communiqué, which codified South Korea's de facto acceptance of North Korea's existence and its willingness to participate in direct interactions. The Communiqué and subsequent series of North-South negotiating sessions opened the door for South Korean officials, academics, institute analysts, and others to begin to explore a range of issues pertaining to inter-Korean cooperation. South Korean discussions and exploration of gradual, functionalist approaches to unification as a means for facilitating greater North-South integration also date to this period.

These cracks were carefully contained, however. At precisely the same time that Park was opening a dialogue with Pyongyang and moving toward official acceptance of peaceful coexistence, he reinforced his seemingly permanent dictatorship by amending the Constitution to perpetuate his personal rule. Under the guise of the new *Yushin* ("Revitalizing Reform") Constitution, Park banned all political activities and open opposition to his rule. He also promulgated a state of national emergency under which expressed criticism of his regime was equated with efforts to destabilize South Korean society - and hence with support for North Korea's attempt to bring the entire peninsula under its control. These acts, aided by the collapse of South Vietnam and South Korean fears of a U.S. withdrawal from Korea, stifled debate over policies to North Korea.

Throughout the *Yushin* regime (1972-1979), President Park equated national security with the militarization of South Korea's politics, economy, society, and culture and saw opposition to his North Korea policy as particularly damaging.<sup>7</sup> Opposition groups were accordingly infiltrated, co-opted, or forced underground, with many continuing their activities (despite dwindling numbers) as part of "people's" movements. In this hothouse environment, however, most of these activities centered on efforts to resist the military dictatorship. What passed for public

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<sup>7</sup> Youngnok Koo, "Foreign Policy Decision Making," Youngnok Koo and Sung-Joo Han, *The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 22-44. Also see Youngnok Koo, "South Korea's Security Strategy" (*Hankuk ui Anb o Junryak*), *National Strategy (Kukga Junryak)*, Spring 1995, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Seoul: Sejong Institute), p. 50.

debate tended to focus on issues pertaining to democratization rather than unification.

After a brief flare-up between the assassination of President Park in October 1979 and the formal assumption of power by General Chun Doo Hwan in August 1980, the situation resumed its previous pattern. Chun disbanded all four South Korean political parties (though he allowed new parties to be formed a year later under tight restrictions). He banned over eight hundred people from participating in politics (though roughly a third were later allowed to resume their political activities). And he forced the merger of all press, news agencies, and broadcasting companies throughout the country so as to control their reporting (though this was relaxed over time under close government supervision). As part of this extensive political repression, Chun indicted opposition leader Kim Dae Jung for participating in "anti-state" activities and fostering "rebellion," subsequently convicting him by military court-martial and sentencing him to death.<sup>8</sup> He also placed a political ban on the other two major opposition leaders, Kim Young Sam and Kim Jong Pil, which was not lifted until 1985. The effect was to muzzle debate over the regime's North Korea policies. In response, "progressive" groups stepped up their underground activities, focused on resisting the harsh repression and increasing public pressures for democratization.

The emphasis on democratization as the focus of opposition activity, however, should not obscure an important development: the gradual creation of a link between the struggle for democracy and the desire for unification. With material conditions improving and the middle class growing, the tradeoffs South Koreans had long made to ensure their economic security - prolongation of dictatorial rule and postponement of unification - became both more evident and less tolerable. In this environment, many came to see achieving democracy in South Korea not only as a critical need in its own right but as the essential first step toward promoting peace and unification on the

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<sup>8</sup> Kim's personal "three stage unification theory" was cited as one of the offenses for which he warranted the death penalty. U.S. pressure secured Kim's release in 1982, although it was three more years before he was allowed to resume his political activities.

peninsula more broadly. For "progressives" in particular, the struggle to achieve democracy in South Korean society became synonymous with the struggle to promote reconciliation between the two Koreas. After three decades of successive dictatorial regimes, they had come to believe that this latter struggle could never succeed so long as repressive governments ruled South Korea. "Democracy first" thus became the watchword for many opposition groups who saw democratization in South Korea as the "historically destined path" to ultimate unification.<sup>9</sup>

Constraints on public debate finally began to loosen after President Chun, bowing to strong public pressure, agreed in 1987 to new constitutional arrangements allowing direct presidential elections. This led the following year to South Korea's first peaceful transfer of power in its then 40-year history. Chun's successor, ruling party head and former General Roh Tae Woo, took significant steps to foster peaceful coexistence with North Korea, while gradually relaxing political controls in South Korea. The end of the Cold War abroad facilitated this process, as did North Korea's mounting economic desperation. For the first time, South Koreans were becoming confident about both short and long-term prospects. This gave greater leeway for the expression of diverse opinions.

President Roh himself encouraged this process, even tolerating the open efforts by a leading South Korean opposition leader to arrange a meeting for himself with North Korean leader Kim Il Sung. As described in our first report, Roh also made an effort to incorporate the views of all three major political opposition leaders in his government's three-stage, "Commonwealth" approach to unification - an approach that embodies South Korea's formal acceptance of peaceful coexistence and remains government policy today. Along with Roh's broader push to establish relations with the world's Communist powers, often labeled "*Nordpolitik*" in a nod to the model West Germany's "*Ostpolitik*" provided, these initiatives reinforced the sense of growing openness and change and elicited general support from the South Korean public.

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<sup>9</sup> Keun Il Ryu, "Democratization and Peace" and Hak Kyu Sohn, "Political Change and Peace," Ho Je Lee, ed., *Peace on the Korean Peninsula* (Seoul: Bobmunsa, 1989), pp. 271-287 and 288-330 respectively.

Despite this general support, many active duty and retired military officers opposed the government's directions. And conservatives still controlled the policy process. This placed significant constraints on both national policy and public discussions. While low-level debate emerged over such issues, it did not create sharp divisions in South Korean society. The dramatic success of the Administration's "Nordpolitik" policies and movement toward peaceful coexistence with North Korea - symbolized by the landmark 1991 North-South "Basic Agreement" in particular - also helped constrain debate. Together with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Communist states of Eastern Europe, they pulled the rug out from leftist groups that had begun to re-emerge in South Korea and undercut support for radical measures.

Public debate stepped up considerably during the presidency of Kim Young Sam (1993-1997), Roh's successor. Of all South Korea's presidents up to that point, President Kim was the most determined to establish a new era of reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea. Moreover, as a long-time leader of South Korean democratic forces and South Korea's first civilian President after three decades of military-dominated regimes, he could build on the successes of his predecessors without being handicapped by their military backgrounds and political orientations. Unfortunately for him, however, North Korea's decision to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty one month after President Kim's inauguration precipitated a major crisis on the peninsula. Kim's perceived inconsistency in dealing with North Korea as this crisis was managed over the next year and a half jeopardized his North Korea policy as a whole and stimulated widespread criticism of his management of foreign affairs.

Two additional factors fed public discord. One was U.S. dominance of the dialogue with North Korea to resolve the nuclear crisis. President Kim went along with this dominance partly because he had little choice but also because he considered it essential, given the high stakes, to engage North Korea in any way possible.<sup>10</sup> But this decision made the Administration vulnerable to charges from the left

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<sup>10</sup> Sung-Joo Han, "The Korea's New Century," *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 4, Winter 2000-01, p. 85.

that it had mortgaged South Korea's policy to the strategic interests of the United States. The other factor was Kim's decision to merge his party with the conservative ruling party of former President Roh in order to secure his election. While successful as an electoral strategy, this decision inherently limited Kim's freedom of action, since he was required to ensure that his government's policies reflected the preferences of his party's conservative mainstream. The collapse of the scheduled inter-Korean summit meeting following Kim Il Sung's sudden death opened the Administration to sharp criticism by Kim Dae Jung's opposition party, leftist labor unions, and progressive civic groups that it was responsible for the ensuing deadlock in North-South relations.

By the end of Kim Young Sam's term, public debate over policies toward North Korea had thus become a notable feature of South Korean politics. The debate's policy significance was limited, however, by continued conservative dominance, weak "progressive" leadership, and a growing public consensus on the need for some kind of engagement with North Korea despite its bellicose behavior. It took the election of Kim Dae Jung - the first time in South Korea's national history that power was transferred peacefully from the ruling to the opposition party - for the public debate to fully blossom.

### **3. INTERNAL DYNAMICS: THE ACTORS**

South Koreans often describe their country as a "shrimp among whales," employing an old Chinese saying to describe South Korea's geo-strategic position as a small country surrounded by large and powerful neighbors. And there's no question but that the major powers - particularly the United States - continue to exert enormous influence on the course of developments on the peninsula, as does North Korea in its own inimitable fashion. Insofar as the debate over policies toward the North is concerned, however, developments *inside* South Korea - the process of democratization and broader social and cultural transition under President Kim Dae Jung in particular - have also been critical. Democratization shattered the formerly monolithic South Korean policy line toward North Korea and opened up the policy process. President Kim's inauguration placed new leaders with very different philosophies and approaches in key positions throughout the South Korean establishment, while shifting the elite's social and ideological center of gravity. In the process, a broader range of political groups, perspectives, and interests came to contend over a more diverse - and in certain instances more fundamental - set of policy issues. This section introduces the major actors.

#### **THE GOVERNMENT**

The sunshine policy has been defined and directed by two main actors: President Kim and his chief aide, Lim Dong-Won. President Kim, of course, has played the leading role himself. This is a role for which he long prepared as the most "progressive" of the main opposition party leaders. As described in detail in our first report and noted in Section 2, Kim developed much earlier in his career his own "three-stage approach" to unification, an approach that helped solidify his reputation as a "Communist" among hard-line South Korean conservatives and contributed to his being jailed and sentenced to death in the early 1980s. He sustained his interest in unification throughout his prison years and thereafter, publishing a book on the subject when he was still

an opposition leader.<sup>11</sup> And several years before he became President, Kim publicly identified a "sunshine policy" as "the only effective way to deal with isolated countries such as North Korea," albeit in the context of urging the U.S. to be patient with Pyongyang in resolving the nuclear crisis.<sup>12</sup> In 1995, he described such a policy in detail in another book entitled *Kim Dae Jung's Three Stage Approach to Korean Reunification: Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage*, although he did not use the term "sunshine policy" to describe his own policy until after his inauguration as President.<sup>13</sup>

Lim Dong-Won is a retired two-star general with considerable experience on unification and foreign policy issues. After his retirement from the military, Lim served as Ambassador to Nigeria and Australia during the Chun Administration. Between 1988 and 1992, he participated directly in Roh Tae Woo's reconciliation and cooperation policy toward North Korea in a variety of positions.<sup>14</sup> Later he accepted Kim Dae Jung's invitation to join his personal foundation (the Kim Dae-jung Peace Foundation) as its Secretary-General and helped author Kim's 1995 book on Korean reunification. With Kim's election as President, Ambassador Lim was appointed Senior Secretary for National Security and Foreign Affairs at the Blue House, where he served as the principle architect of the sunshine policy and manager responsible for coordinating and managing its implementation. Thereafter he alternated between the Blue House and positions heading the National Intelligence Service (South Korea's CIA) and Ministry of Unification. In all

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<sup>11</sup> Kim Dae Jung, *The Korean Problem: Nuclear Crisis, Democracy, and Reunification* (Seoul: The Kim Dae Jung Peace Foundation, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> Kim Dae Jung, "Don't Take the Sunshine Away," *Korea and Asia: A Collection of Essays, Speeches, and Discussions* (Seoul: The Kim Dae Jung Peace Foundation, 1994), p. 33.

<sup>13</sup> Kim Dae Jung Peace Foundation, *Kim Dae Jung's Three Stage Approach to Korean Unification: Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage* (Seoul: Asia-Pacific Peace Foundation Press, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> Lim served successively during this period as Chancellor of the Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS), Chairman of the Presidential Commission on Arms Control and delegate to the South-North Talks, and Vice Minister for Unification.

positions, he exercised tight control over the planning, coordination, and implementation of policy toward North Korea.<sup>15</sup>

In assuming office, both men shared more than an aspiration for reconciliation with North Korea. They also shared remarkably similar worldviews. Both men agreed, for example, that the collapse of the Soviet Union, end of the Cold War, and widening gap in national power between Seoul and Pyongyang created an entirely new situation. They also agreed that North Korea would not collapse anytime soon, despite its severe economic conditions. On the contrary, they considered Pyongyang's economic straits as driving North Korea inexorably toward the "Chinese model" of reform and cooperation, while they saw in Kim Jong Il a reasonable leader willing to compromise - so long as his pride was maintained - and potential partner for peace. The task as they saw it was to show sincerity in seeking reconciliation, address North Korea's legitimate concerns, and provide Pyongyang a favorable environment in which it could opt for reform without feeling threatened.

Not surprisingly given these views, the two men were highly critical of the preceding Kim Young Sam Administration. They saw their predecessors as having effectively given up the fruitful attempts at engagement begun by Roh Tae Woo and were particularly critical of their alleged policy flip-flops during the nuclear crisis. Acknowledging that their own views of North Korea diverged sharply from their predecessors, they were determined to fashion a more patient, consistent, and focused policy.

Under these two dominant figures, a handful of senior staff at the Ministry of Unification and National Intelligence Service has been influential in implementing policy. Their primary emphasis has been on identifying ways to make progress in North-South relations - further steps that can be taken to implement and advance the President's agenda. As in any modern state, a larger governmental apparatus supports the work of these key individuals.

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<sup>15</sup> In September 2001, Ambassador Lim was forced to resign as Minister of Unification when the National Assembly passed a vote of no confidence over the government's handling of a controversial visit of South Koreans to North Korea. He is currently a "Policy Advisor" to the President in the Blue House.

The Administration, to be sure, is not monolithic. A second loose school of thought exists within the Administration that believes policy toward the North should be more "balanced" and place greater emphasis on North Korean reciprocity. This second school of thought, however, has no leader or organizational cohesion. It is simply a point of view held privately by a number of people within the Administration.<sup>16</sup> Even if this were not the case, few have sufficient stature, or standing, to advocate an approach that is significantly different from that defined by the President and Ambassador Lim. In this sense, when people talk about "the government" or "the Administration" in connection with the sunshine policy, they are talking overwhelmingly about the views or actions of these two individuals.

#### **THE PARTIES**

Political parties in Korea have traditionally been regarded as ciphers. They are organized around a single dominant personality. They lack political cohesion, institutionalized mechanisms, or even a core set of beliefs. And they are oriented almost exclusively to helping their leader get elected. Not surprisingly, they are often dismissed as insignificant policy actors. Korea's authoritarian tradition, coupled with the parties' own reliance on vague, equivocal policy statements, contributes to this general image. The political realities of the Kim Dae Jung Administration, however, have given the parties roles to play in the debate over policy toward North Korea. Particularly important among these realities has been the ruling party's status as a minority party in the National Assembly, although the sharp societal divisions described in our first report and larger process of democratization have also contributed.

The following are brief sketches of the three main parties and their general stances on the sunshine policy.

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<sup>16</sup> Dr. Ra Jong-il, a close advisor to President Kim in the first couple of years of the Administration, was widely seen as one representative of this general school of thought. He is now serving as South Korea's Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

### **The Millennium Democratic Party (MDP)**

The roots of President Kim's ruling party run back to the National Congress for New Politics (NCNP), which Kim formed in 1995 to run for President for the fourth time.<sup>17</sup> Kim transformed the NCNP into the MDP in January 2000 as part of a larger effort to refurbish the party's image, win the April 2000 legislative elections, and become the majority party in the National Assembly. Most MDP lawmakers are long-time followers of Kim Dae Jung.

As its origins and membership might suggest, the party has always been a major supporter of Kim's personal policy line.<sup>18</sup> The original Party platform: echoes Kim's call for dismantling the Cold War structure on the Korean Peninsula and establishing a foundation for unification; endorses the Three Basic Principles of the government's North Korea policy;<sup>19</sup> and urges expanded exchanges and cooperation with North Korea through a functionalist approach to North-South integration. The platform also emphasizes the "separation of economics and politics" principle as the means to foster economic cooperation and build a North-South economic community.<sup>20</sup>

Although the MDP muted its advocacy of the sunshine policy initially in an effort to avoid stirring up problems with its coalition partner and other South Korean conservatives, it stepped up its support after the June 2000 summit to reinforce the President's claim of major policy success. Arguing that the summit had put an end to the age of

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<sup>17</sup> Having resigned from his former party, the Peace and Democracy Party (PDP), following his loss to Kim Young Sam in the elections for President in December 1992, Kim formed the NCNP for his attempted comeback.

<sup>18</sup> Before the foundation of the MDP, the NCNP's policy was essentially a copy of that laid out in Kim Dae Jung's 1995 three-stage unification book. The platform renounced "unification by absorption" or "unification by force" and called for a gradual process of North-South reconciliation based on consensus, confidence building, and coexistence. National Congress for New Politics, *Party Platform* (Seoul: NCNP, 1997).

<sup>19</sup> These three principles, described in greater detail in our first report, are: no toleration of North Korean armed provocations; no South Korean efforts to undermine or absorb the North; and active ROK attempts to promote reconciliation and cooperation between the two Koreas.

<sup>20</sup> New Millennium Democratic Party, *Party Platform, Constitutions and Regulations* (Seoul: MDP, 2000).

rivalry and hostility between the two Koreas, the party amended its platform to present itself more aggressively as a political force able to initiate a new era of reconciliation, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence on the Korean Peninsula.<sup>21</sup>

**The Grand National Party (GNP)**

Like its MDP counterpart, the GNP is a product of substantial evolution. Unlike the MDP, it is a product of considerable cross-fertilization. In 1990, Roh Tae Woo's ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP) merged with Kim Young Sam's Reunification Democratic Party (RDP) and one other small opposition party to form the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). The DLP begot the New Korea Party (NKP) when Kim Young Sam ran for President in 1992. And the NKP merged with the splinter opposition Democratic Party (DP) to form the GNP when Lee Hoi Chang sought the presidency in 1997. Despite Lee's loss in that year's election, the GNP has remained South Korea's major opposition party, as well as the largest party in the National Assembly. The GNP also continues to be headed by Lee, who is planning on running for President again in the upcoming (December 2002) elections.

Representing mainstream conservative forces in South Korean politics, the party has retained the three-step unification policy of the Roh Tae Woo and Kim Young Sam administrations. While it has always supported dialogue with North Korea, it has opposed most aspects of the Kim Dae Jung government's approach. It has inveighed in particular against "one-sided" concessions and warned loudly against the "misuse" of the North-South summit for domestic political purposes. In general, the GNP has demanded a tougher stance toward North Korea, including greater emphasis on "reciprocity," "verification" of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction, and the end of "unidirectional" South Korean assistance to North Korea.

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<sup>21</sup> New Millennium Democratic Party, *Party Platform* (Seoul: MDP, August 2000).

### **The United Liberal Democrats (ULD)**

The ULD was formed in 1995 when Kim Jong-pil, the architect of Park Chung Hee's military coup in 1961 and long-time ruling party strongman, bolted the DLP and formed his own party. Outside of Kim's personal and regional constituencies, the party's key supporters come from veterans' groups, anti-Communist organizations, and business firms - all of which, like Kim himself, are extremely conservative. Although generally regarded as even farther to the right than the GNP, the ULD formed an unholy alliance with Kim Dae Jung's MDP in order to win the 1997 presidential election.<sup>22</sup> In return for their participation in the ruling coalition, the ULD was given the Prime Minister's position and other cabinet seats, along with a promise that the MDP would agree to institute a parliamentary system of government - Kim Jong-pil's long-held goal - during the second half of President Kim's Administration.

Kim Jong-pil is known to detest North Korea and strongly oppose the sunshine policy. While he supported the government up until the establishment of the MDP in January 2000, he sniped at and tried to slow down the sunshine policy incessantly from inside the government. The party's strong opposition to the sunshine policy emerged increasingly after the summit. President Kim's violation of his promise to move to a parliamentary system intensified the strife between the two coalition leaders. When a no confidence vote against sunshine policy architect Lim Dong-Won came up in the National Assembly in late 2001, Kim Jong-pil took his party out of the ruling coalition and voted with the opposition, forcing the resignation of Lim and the entire cabinet. Kim still hopes to play a major role in the 2002 presidential election.

### **THE MILITARY**

Democratization dealt a deathblow to the dominance of the military in South Korea. Aided by Roh Tae Woo's overt effort as President to distance himself from the military officers responsible for the December 1979 coup de'tat and May 1980 Kwangjoo massacre, the military began in

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<sup>22</sup> One vernacular captured the broad party orientations succinctly: "The ULD is conservative and GNP is moderately conservative, while the MDP is progressive in relative terms." *JoongAng Ilbo*, February 2, 2002.

the late 1980s to assume a low profile. Still, expressions of military opposition to Roh's "*Nordpolitik*" and dialogue with North Korea were occasionally expressed, as when the Commandant of the Korean Military Academy strongly criticized the government's policy for having caused confusion in the military over who is South Korea's enemy.

In its attempt to carry democratization further and establish a fully civilian, democratic government, the Kim Young Sam administration further weakened the military's voice by uprooting the *Hanahoe* faction in the Korean Army. This highly politicized group of senior Army officers had long dominated military leadership positions and still harbored hopes for a return by the military to its traditional position. By removing the generals in the *Hanahoe* from the military and abolishing the faction, Kim Young Sam also neutralized the group that had long oppressed Kim Dae Jung, inadvertently paving the way for him to subsequently become President.

Kim Jong-pil's decision to form a coalition with Kim Dae Jung helped mitigate traditional concerns within the military about the latter's ideological suitability for the presidency. One indication was the group of retired generals who publicly joined in supporting Kim's 1997 presidential campaign. This had the effect of dampening the impact of those active-duty and retired generals who opposed Kim's orientation on ideological grounds, while reinforcing the military's low profile. Lim Dong-Won's tight control over the participants and topics in National Security Council meetings further constrained the impact of military opposition to the government's policy, as did the government's screening process for the appointment of officers to senior command and leadership positions. There are reasons to believe that many in the military are very unhappy with the sunshine policy. They are particularly unhappy with what they see as the Administration's priority, in practice, on engagement over security and its effort to reduce the Ministry of National Defense (MND) budget to help fund its sunshine activities. But they feel "sandwiched" and unable to express their opposition publicly.

Unlike their active duty counterparts, many retired generals are more voluble in their opposition. The Korean Association of Retired

Generals and Admirals, for example, often expresses the concerns of its members over the nature and speed of the government's approach to North Korea. A particular Association criticism is that the government's policy has prematurely jettisoned North Korea as the ROK's enemy, weakening public support for national security in the process. This view appears to be widely shared among members of this group. One poll, for example, found that an absolute majority of retired generals and admirals still consider Pyongyang to be South Korea's enemy; in contrast, members of the government and government party were disinclined to identify North Korea in these terms.<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly, this group rejected the notion of approaching North Korea in "one people" terms and welcomed the depiction of North Korea in the Defense White Paper - a document put out annually by MND until the government quashed its publication in 2001 - as South Korea's continuing enemy. Other similar military organizations, such as the Korean Disabled Veterans Organization, are active in echoing these views. The high respect Koreans generally show for retired senior officers give such groups significant clout.

#### **THE MEDIA**

The major TV broadcasting companies, such as Korea Broadcasting System (KBS), Moonhwa Broadcasting Company (MBC), and Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS), have generally supported the sunshine policy, reflecting in part perhaps the high degree of government control over the broadcasting industry. The major newspapers, on the other hand, have been sharply divided. Mirroring the broader ideological division in South Korean society, progressive papers have been strongly supportive of the sunshine policy. The *Hankyoreh Sinmun*, a newspaper closely associated with South Korea's radical left, is particularly influential in progressive circles. The conservative papers take highly critical, although somewhat more nuanced, positions. Newspapers like the *JoongAng Ilbo* mix mild support for the principle of engagement with criticism of

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<sup>23</sup> Kyong-Mann Jeon, Ju-Suk Suh, Gosson Dok, and Bum-Chul Shin, *Survey on Security Environment after the South-North Summit Meeting* (Seoul: Korea Institute for Defense Analyses, December 2000).

the way the government has fashioned and implemented its policy. The *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and *Kookmin Ilbo* are strident critics. Coincidentally or otherwise, the unprecedented government attack on the media in the summer of 2001 under the rubric of "reforming the press" was focused on this latter group of newspapers.<sup>24</sup>

The Administration's attack indirectly highlights another feature of the press in South Korea: its highly influential position. While the press is important in all democratic societies, it is somewhat unique in Korea in two respects. First, it has existed longer than the country itself. Whereas the ROK was established only in 1948, the major newspapers have existed since the 1920s. Second, much of Korea's political elite rose through journalism. This was the only option open to politically attuned South Koreans during the Japanese colonial period, and it remained an esteemed career throughout the postwar decades of dictatorial rule. In the process, the press came to see itself not as observers, or even watchdogs, of the political process but rather as direct participants. Not surprisingly, many former newsmen, especially media figures, wind up being elected to the National Assembly. These unique features have reinforced, if not exacerbated, the sharp ideological and other divisions in South Korea, while posing obstacles not only to the Administration's North Korea policy but also to its larger domestic political objectives.

One other factor contributes to the particular importance of the press: the general weakness of political parties. As noted above, most political parties are aggregations of disparate groups held together by loyalty to a particular leader. For this reason, they are seen more as political lackeys than important articulators of public policy. Newspapers have stepped in to fill the vacuum, with the *Chosun Ilbo* on the right and *Hankyoreh Sinmun* on the left serving effectively as goal

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<sup>24</sup> The conservative press has never supported Kim Dae Jung throughout the last forty years, and the hostility is fully reciprocated. Participants on both sides of the relationship describe a situation today of growing warfare, with each side focused on strengthening its respective base of power in what is candidly described as attempts to undermine - if not destroy - the other as a political force.

posts around which the conservative and progressive camps gather. In a country as highly literate as South Korea, where virtually everyone reads one or another of the major national dailies, this gives them enormous influence.

The following are thumbnail sketches of the four major newspapers.

### ***Chosun Ilbo***

The *Chosun Ilbo*, established in 1920, is both the oldest and largest (in terms of circulation) newspaper in Korea today. The founder of the paper originally came from North Korea and both he and his successors (the current head is the founder's grandson) are stridently anti-Communist in their political orientations. As an open supporter of Kim Young Sam in the 1992 presidential election, the paper maintained a friendly relationship with the government throughout that administration.<sup>25</sup> Its deep, decades-long, ideology-based antagonism to Kim Dae Jung and strong support of GNP candidate Lee Hoi Chang in the 1997 election, on the other hand, ensured a tense relationship with the Kim Dae Jung administration from the outset.

The paper's drumbeat of harsh criticisms of President Kim's handling of relations with North Korea made relations worse. While the paper has taken the Administration to task for many things, it has particularly criticized its approach for having weakened South Korea's security, while predicating South Korean policy on the "naïve" assumption that North Korea can be enticed to change. It also has denounced government officials for having woefully misread North Korea's intentions, thereby allowing the government to be bullied by North Koreans without any recourse. Arguing that North Korea has abused South Korea's goodwill while continuing its provocations, the paper has called for a policy focused on strengthening South Korea's deterrent capabilities and rigorously applying the rule of reciprocity in all North-South interactions.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hong Won Park, *North Korea Policy and Relationship between the Press and the State: Comparative Analysis on the Contents of Chosun Ilbo and Hankyoreh Sinmun* (Seoul: The Korea Press Foundation, 2001), p.32.

<sup>26</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, June 24, 1998. North Korea has reciprocated in kind, banning *Chosun Ilbo* reporters from participating in trips to the

***Donga Ilbo***

The nearly equally venerable *Donga Ilbo* had a very large circulation until the 1980s. During that decade, Chun Doo Hwan cracked down hard on the paper for vigorously protesting (including through the use of blank advertisements) the regime's restrictions on freedom of the press. Readership fell thereafter. The *Donga Ilbo* from the beginning has questioned the efficacy of the sunshine policy, as well as many of its underlying assumptions. It has also criticized the Administration's alleged timidity in dealing with North Korea, citing its reluctance to raise human rights issues with the North or insist that humanitarian issues high on South Korea's agenda be linked to food assistance or other issues important to North Korea. The paper has expressed strong doubts about the sincerity of Kim Jong Il's reputed statement that he accepts the U.S. military presence in South Korea, while it has warned against revising South Korea's National Security Law until there is evidence of a corresponding change in Pyongyang's attitude.

***JoongAng Ilbo***

Despite its relatively recent establishment in 1965, the *JoongAng Ilbo* now has the second largest circulation of South Korean newspapers. Of the main conservative press, it has been the most moderate and balanced in its criticisms of the sunshine policy, striving strenuously to evaluate the policy on an issue-by-issue basis. The paper has supported the sunshine policy's broad goal of engaging North Korea, for example, predicated on the practical view that South Korea's best option given current conditions is to keep North Korea essentially as it is. The paper has criticized the Administration, however, for the speed with which it has moved to improve relations with North Korea, the personalization of the North-South relationship, and the lack of transparency in the policymaking process. It also has criticized the Administration for giving away too much to the North for too little in return and insisted that reciprocity should be applied to all interactions between the two Koreas.

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North and targeting severe propaganda attacks on, and threats against, the newspaper company.

Among other things, the *JoongAng Ilbo* was the first paper to publish a criticism of the absence of any reference in the summit's Joint Statement to reducing tensions and building a structure of peace on the Korean Peninsula. Since the summit, and with the growing warfare between the government and its critics in the press, the paper has stepped up its criticism of the sunshine policy, reflecting the difficulty of maintaining a relatively balanced viewpoint in an increasingly "black and white" atmosphere.

### ***Hankyoreh Sinmun***

The *Hankyoreh Sinmun* has no difficulty with the government's attack on the other major papers. Founded in 1987 as a product of the citizen's movements against South Korea's military dictatorship and partaking of their same "class-based" orientation, it does not regard these newspapers as "legitimate" representatives of the Korean people.<sup>27</sup> Not surprisingly, the *Hankyoreh* endorsed Kim Dae Jung in both the 1992 and 1997 presidential elections as the candidate closest to its own ideology.<sup>28</sup> Since Kim became President, the paper has supported his government across the board. It has been supportive of the sunshine policy in particular based on a relatively simple point of view: Koreans are "one people;" it is therefore incumbent on South Koreans to do everything they can to aid the North and promote unification. Seeing North Korea as a partner in cooperation, the *Hankyoreh* regards the sunshine policy as a means for reducing the possibility of war and fostering inter-Korean reconciliation. It also agrees with one of the critical assumptions underlying the policy: in order to open up and induce change in North Korea, there is no alternative to the approach followed by the government.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Progressive groups characterize the major newspaper companies as "slaves" of their owners. Lumping them together with doctors, private school owners, and several other professional groups they consider "thieves" ripping off the unsuspecting masses, these groups see the government's attack on the media not as a "freedom of the press" issue but as a "moral issue" of right and wrong.

<sup>28</sup> Hong Won Park, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>29</sup> *Hankyoreh Sinmun*, June 17, 1999.

### **THE CIVIC GROUPS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)**

Civil society groups in South Korea are not unique: Like their counterparts elsewhere, many share a different ideological vision from that held by the traditionally dominant power groups and seek to force a new set of issues onto a public agenda from which they have been excluded. These groups have been particularly significant in South Korea, however, for at least three reasons. First, they filled a gap left by decades of dictatorial rule and are heavily colored, in turn, by the nature of their experience during that period.<sup>30</sup> Second, they have grown astronomically, with literally thousands of South Korean civic groups and NGOs having emerged in the last few years alone.<sup>31</sup> And third, they cast a broad net in defining their interests, with many groups participating in nationwide coalitions and other cooperative activities that advance broadly shared goals but go well beyond their more focused organizational mission.<sup>32</sup>

Using highly motivated volunteers and a variety of innovative methods, these groups are now contending against other South Korean power groups in almost all sectors. Active government support undoubtedly contributed to this development. The "Law to Support Non-

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<sup>30</sup> Although a strong civil society goes back as far as the Japanese colonial period, the contemporary phenomenon is really a product of the democratization movement - most directly the massive demonstrations of June 1987 and then-ruling party Chairman Roh Tae Woo's subsequent agreement to allow the direct election of the President. This experience influences everything from the goals to the leadership of many of these organizations. For details on the historical development of civil society groups in different periods, see Sunhyuk Kim, *Politics of Democratization in Korea: The Role of Civil Society* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).

<sup>31</sup> Sungsoo Joo, "Understanding the NGO Revolution in Korea," an unpublished paper presented at the International Nonprofit Organization Conference "Northeast Asia Civil Society: Current Status and Challenging Roles of NGOs in Korea, Japan and China," November 11, 2000, Institute of East and West Studies, Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea.

<sup>32</sup> One example is the hundreds of diverse groups that joined forces in the Citizens' Alliance for the 2000 General Elections (CAGE) to defeat allegedly corrupt or incompetent politicians in the April 2000 National Assembly elections. For a useful account, see Andrew Eungi Kim, "Citizens' Coalition Movement and Consolidation of Democracy: 2000 General Elections in South Korea," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, August 2001, Vol. 1, No. 2.

profit Civic Organizations" adopted by the Kim Dae Jung Administration has been particularly important in this regard, funneling 15 billion won annually to national and local NGOs.<sup>33</sup>

Contemporary civic groups and NGOs may be categorized in different ways.<sup>34</sup> In terms of unification and North-South issues, however, they may be divided simply into "progressive" and "conservative" groupings. This reflects in part the ideological quotient of these issues in South Korea. It also reflects an artifact of history: Until the 1990s, a combination of government repression and social taboo made "reunification" issues almost exclusively the province of the radical student and people's movement - outside of the government and handful of conservative civic organizations it controlled. Even today, despite an effort to broaden participation, leadership of the major civic groups and NGOs active on unification issues remains largely in the hands of individuals who were deeply involved in the student and radical reunification movement. This contributed to the sharp polarization of positions and personalities on almost all of these issues.

The following are brief overviews of the major civic groups and NGOs active on policy toward North Korea on the "progressive" side of the spectrum.

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<sup>33</sup> Keunjoo Lee, *Support for NGOs and the Government (NGO Jiwon kwa Jungbu)* (Seoul: Korea Institute of Government, 2000), p. 20.

<sup>34</sup> Many Koreans, for example, talk of these groups in terms of the broad social movement from which they emerged. Examples are the radical student and people's democratization movement (which includes highly ideological, class-conscious groups such as the Korean Association of Students and Alliance for Democratic Unification and People's Movement); the more moderate but still reform-oriented citizens' movement (which includes groups like the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice); the occupation-based social movement emerging from the fierce labor struggles of the late 1980s (which includes groups like the Korea Trade Union Congress, Korea Teachers Union, and Korean Farmers' Movement Coalition); and the traditional conservative social movement (which includes groups long supported by South Korea's authoritarian governments like the New Village Movement and Korean Anti-Communism League). Other Koreans categorize the groups in terms of their principal goal or focus of interest (e.g., anti-U.S. military base groups, environmental groups, etc.).

### **Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KCRC)**

The KCRC, an umbrella organization open to all political parties and social groups interested in North-South reconciliation, was established in August 1998. Membership includes the MDP, ULD, thirty-two unification-related groups, forty-two civic groups, and a wide range of others. The Kim Dae Jung Administration had two goals in encouraging the KCRC's establishment: to actively promote inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation on the non-governmental level; and to co-opt, or at least restrain, conservative groups opposed to the government's policy.<sup>35</sup> The hope was to thereby build greater support in South Korea for expanded cooperation and exchanges with North Korea as a means to promote inter-Korean reconciliation. The KCRC has accordingly strongly supported the government's policy, giving heavy emphasis to implementing the North-South "Basic Agreement" of 1991 in particular.<sup>36</sup> It also has stressed the importance of "people exchange," sending numerous delegations to the North and encouraging support for the Mt. Kungang tourist project despite its financial non-viability.

Two problems have hindered the KCRC's efforts. First, despite its all-inclusive orientation, it has failed to involve the GNP, the Korea Veterans Association, and other major conservative civic groups in its membership and activities. Second, although the KCRC talks about the importance of facilitating dialogue and understanding among South Koreans as a means for building greater domestic consensus ("South-South dialogue"), in practice it has given far greater priority to promoting activities with, and inside, North Korea ("South-North dialogue"). Both problems may be related to an underlying organizational difficulty: Leadership at key levels is in the hands of people long involved in the

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<sup>35</sup> North Korea has long proposed meetings among all Korean political parties and social groups - under the guise of forging a "grand national integration" - as a means for circumventing direct government-to-government talks and undermining the South Korean government. Previous South Korean governments had equally long rejected these proposals. President Kim supported a different approach, however, seeing expanded non-governmental interactions as both a boost to his sunshine policy and means for neutralizing some of its opponents. The KCRC was one result.

<sup>36</sup> Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KCRC), *For Unification and the Future with KCRC* (Seoul: KCRC, 1998).

radical reunification movement. As a result, even activists in the NGO movement acknowledge that the KCRC is being used more to promote the strategic goals of the radical left than to co-opt or appeal to the conservative right. Still, it is a significant political force pushing for expanded interactions with North Korea.

**Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ)**

Outside of the KCRC, the CCEJ is the most important umbrella group dealing with policy toward North Korea. As its title implies, the CCEJ's primary focus since its establishment in 1989 is on promoting economic justice in South Korean society.<sup>37</sup> Its efforts in this area span a broad range of notable, non-political activities. The CCEJ also has a Reunification Committee, however, which is charged with mobilizing support for engagement with North Korea and promoting unification. This committee, founded in 1994, promotes expanded inter-Korean cooperation.

Although the CCEJ shares the "one Korea" orientation of most South Korean progressives, it split with the then head of the Reunification Committee over the question of whether to participate in North Korea's August 15, 2001 celebrations commemorating Korea's liberation from Japan. Seeing this trip (correctly as it turned out) as being too "political" and supportive of North Korea's agenda, the CCEJ opposed participation, which led to the resignation of the Reunification Committee's head. This tiff reflects broader, if incipient, tensions beginning to emerge between the most extreme and less radical of the left. The CCEJ is currently focused more on preserving the gains made by the sunshine policy against conservative attacks than on moving in any major new direction.

**People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)**

The PSPD was founded in 1994 with the aim of building a participatory, democratic society in which freedom, justice, human rights, and welfare are realized in South Korea. A non-partisan, "network" kind of organization combining various roles played in the

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<sup>37</sup> Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ), *Documents to Commemorate the First Anniversary of the Coalition* (Seoul: CCEJ, 1990), p. 9.

United States by the ACLU, American Bar Association, and Common Cause (among others), the PSPD monitors the government, National Assembly, and judiciary through an extensive array of voluntary citizens' committees. It not only proposes policy alternatives to different government bodies, it also drafts its own legislation (e.g., an anti-corruption law, social welfare law, tenant rights bill, etc), approximately half of which are adopted.

The PSPD does not have a dedicated staff for unification issues. However, it endorses the sunshine policy and actively helps mobilize support on the government's behalf. If anything, the PSPD feels the Administration has not moved far or fast enough to improve relations with North Korea. It is critical of what it considers a number of Administration "mistakes" that have bolstered conservatives and set back the reform agenda. The PSPD's growing success and reputation for integrity give it significant exposure in the mass media, through which it seeks to influence public opinion.<sup>38</sup> Only seven years since its establishment, the PSPD has become one of the largest NGOs in South Korea.

#### **Anti-U.S. and Anti-U.S. Military Base NGOs**

As a general statement, most of these groups can be considered part of the larger progressive (pro-peace/democracy/unification) movement. Although they don't focus primarily on North-South issues, they generally share the views (e.g., Koreans are all "one people," North Korea is not an enemy, etc.) of those who do. More importantly, they increasingly see a linkage between U.S. policies on security issues and the state of North-South relations. Many insist, for example, that North Korea has stalled the North-South dialogue only because of the "hard-line" U.S. stance toward North Korea. Some believe that the U.S. is at the heart of all Korea's problems. They thus conduct organized protests not only against the U.S. military presence in Korea but against the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), missile defense program, and U.S. security policies more broadly.

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<sup>38</sup> Kyungran Moon, *We Have a Dream (Uriegeneun Kkumi Issseumnida)* (Seoul: Nanam Publisher, 2000).

Many of these groups believe that the ultimate key to peace and unification - as well as to ending the U.S. military presence and "unequal" U.S.-ROK relationship - is fostering North-South reconciliation and ending the division of the peninsula. They actively participate in missions to North Korea, therefore, as well as in other civic group efforts to promote North-South relations. Representative groups include: Solidarity for Peace and Reunification of Korea; National Campaign for Eradication of Crime by US Troops in Korea; Solidarity for Revision of SOFA; Committee for Joint Measures to Stop US Missile Defense and to Realize Peace; and the National Alliance for Democracy and Unification of Korea.

#### **Labor Groups**

South Korea's two major labor groups, the Federation of Korean Trade Unions and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, share many of the characteristics described above (although the latter is closer to the other progressive NGOs because of its development as an independent organization). Both are advocates of the "one Korea" position. Both believe the key to peace and prosperity is promoting cooperation with North Korea. And both strongly support the Administration's sunshine policy as the only realistic policy. Although they do not focus on North-South issues, they actively participate in delegations to North Korea to emphasize "solidarity" with North Korean workers. They also participate in activities organized by other civic groups, including protests against U.S. policy toward North Korea. While not major actors themselves, they contribute to the nature and intensity of debate over policies toward North Korea.

On the conservative side of the spectrum, social groups did not really begin forming as genuine NGOs until the Kim Young Sam Administration. As the recipients of direct and exclusive government support, they saw little need before then. The general conservatism of Korean society may have further delayed adaptation to the new internal and external environments by creating something of a false sense of security. In contrast to the situation in the West, however, Korean

conservatism suffers from a key weakness. Largely lacking philosophical and religious foundations, it is heavily dependent for its public appeal on the perceived need to strengthen the ruling Establishment through "anti-Communism."<sup>39</sup> With the collapse of the Soviet Union and economic free-fall of North Korea, this appeal greatly diminished.

The advent of civilian democratic government in South Korea and demand for broad societal reforms, however, gradually made these groups aware that they needed to change if they were to survive on their own. The rise of the "pure" NGOs (i.e., "progressive" groups who had not been adjuncts of the military regimes) in the mid-1990s reinforced this message. In response, conservative groups began to emphasize liberal democracy and an open market economy as their organizational rationale and means for garnering public favor. The civic groups and NGOs on the conservative side most active on North Korean issues include the following.

**National Congress of Freedom and Democracy (NCFD)**

The NCFD was organized in 1994 as a coalition of thirty-three conservative civic groups, such as the Korean Freedom League, Daehan Anti-Communist Youths, and National Building Youth Council, to promote conservative views on security and unification issues. The head of the NCFD is Lee Chul Seung, a prominent opposition leader during the 1970s. In the face of charges that the NCFD is "ultra-conservative" and stuck with a "Cold War mentality," Lee has argued that the organization is the representative of South Korea's "true progressives," since it alone seeks to protect and preserve the country's liberal democracy. The NCFD opposes the sunshine policy for many reasons. It is particularly critical of the policy's emphasis on promoting Korea's "self-reliant" unification, which it feels is inappropriate and dangerous in the absence of prior efforts to build military confidence and reduce the

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<sup>39</sup> Yong Min Kim, "Origin and Evolution of Western Conservatism" (*Seoku Bosujuui ui Kiwon kwa Baljun*), Byung Kook Kim, et. al., *Korea's Conservatism (Hankuk ui BosuJuui)*, (Seoul: Ingansarang Publisher, 1999), p. 47.

danger of war on the Korean peninsula.<sup>40</sup> The NCFD also has been outspoken in opposing a visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul. It insists on a formal apology first for North Korea's past terrorist activities and a pledge to end its weapons of mass destruction program, missile activity, and other threatening behavior.

**Korean Freedom League (KFL)**

The KFL came into being in 1989 as the transformed version of the Korean Anti-Communism League, which was founded originally in 1964. Both organizations supported government actions to suppress pro-Communist actions. In an effort to broaden its appeal following the collapse of Communist regimes in the world and the end of the Cold War, however, the KFL created a new platform giving greater emphasis to protecting freedom and liberal democracy. Accordingly, it has stressed the inherent connection between peace and freedom and criticized the Administration harshly for ignoring the plight of the North Korean people. As a leading member of the NCFD, the KFL subscribes to most of its positions. It has also been active independently in supporting the U.S. military presence and the U.S.-ROK security alliance.

**Korean Veterans Association (KVA)**

As one of the oldest groups in Korea, the Korean Veterans Association played a major role supporting South Korean military governments until the 1980s. During this period, the Association and the former Anti-Communism League would mobilize their members for large demonstrations in support of the government whenever North Korea committed some provocation. Since the June 2000 Summit, however, the Association has had difficulty balancing between its historic support of the government and its traditional conservative position. The result has been a compromise: The Association supports the sunshine policy in principle while it distances itself from aspects of the policy it does not like.

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<sup>40</sup> Sung Won Park, "Conservatives Looking for Counterattack by the Progressives" (*Bosu neun Bangyok eul Norinda*), *Shindonga*, September 2000, pp. 76-109.

One example of the latter is the failure of the government to address the issue of South Korean prisoners of war held by the North since the Korean War, particularly given the Administration's decision to unilaterally return North Korean prisoners held in South Korean jails to the North. Another is the Administration's "unidirectional" assistance, which the KVA sees as producing little in return and symptomatic of a broader Administration weakness in dealing with North Korea.<sup>41</sup> The Association is highly critical of the government's decision to allow South Korean delegates to participate in North Korea's August 2001 "Liberation Day" celebrations, which it sees as weakening South Korea's will to defend itself.

#### **THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

As a general statement, the South Korean private sector is cautious and risk-averse when it comes to dealings with North Korea. They worry that economic interactions will require large initial investments and a long period of time before they become profitable, if ever. Many if not most of those in the private sector agree on the need to provide humanitarian assistance to the North. But they approach the North more in conservative, profit-oriented terms than in terms of nationalism or emotional, "one-people" images. Given this orientation, they tend to see China and even Vietnam as better business partners, although they are interested in low-level explorations of potential economic ventures in the North pending longer-term changes.

Two business organizations have been active in trying to foster North-South interactions: the Federation of Korean Industries (FKI), representing big business, and the Korea Federation of Small Business (KFSB), representing small business interests. Both have sent investment teams to the North to explore possibilities for promoting inter-Korean economic cooperation. Neither has been very optimistic. Although they have developed a range of potential investment plans, most South Korean businessmen see little of the kind of change in the North necessary to support large-scale investment assistance. The experiences of Hyundai in the Mt. Kumgang and other investment projects have

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p. 84.

reinforced this general orientation. Initial mixed feelings about the Hyundai initiatives - if they succeeded, after all, Hyundai would reap all the benefits - have largely been replaced by relief over their own caution.<sup>42</sup> Reluctant to get too involved in interactions with North Korea, most businesses focus their efforts on trying to resist government pressure.

There appear to be few major differences between large and small business in their attitudes toward the sunshine policy. In general, they support the principle of engagement with North Korea and, hence, the basic impulse of the sunshine policy. They are critical of the way this policy has been implemented however. They are particularly critical of the Administration's haste in trying to expedite expanded interactions, as well as the short shrift they believe the Administration has given to the importance of consensus building in South Korea. Both, in their view, exacerbated the divisions within South Korean society. They also hindered provision of government funds for inter-Korean cooperation, while inducing the National Assembly to reject a number of North-South agreements critical to expanded economic interactions.

South Korean businessmen generally agree that a return visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul is a prerequisite for any revitalization of North-South economic activity, because they believe that he alone will be able to induce the kinds of changes inside the North that will make this

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<sup>42</sup> The Mt. Kumgang project failed not only because Hyundai miscalculated the number of South Korean tourists who would participate but also because North Korea did not open up inland routes to the scenic tourist area, which would have facilitated travel and relieved Hyundai's operating expenses. As a result, the Hyundai Asan Group managing the project went bankrupt. In the middle of its own restructuring, the parent Hyundai conglomerate could not absorb Hyundai Asan's debt and the Mt. Kumgang project was cast adrift. As of June 2001, the Hyundai Asan Group owed the North \$24 million. On June 8, the two sides reached agreement to have Hyundai pay \$12 million plus \$100 per traveler. The Korea National Tourism Organization (KNTO), a South Korean government sponsored agency, then stepped in to take charge of the Mt. Kumgang project as a way to bail out the Hyundai Asan Group. With this support, the Hyundai Asan Group cleared its remaining debt to the North in March 2002.

possible. Few are making plans based on any of this happening any time soon.<sup>43</sup>

#### **PUBLIC OPINION**

Public opinion as a major factor influencing South Korean policies toward North Korea is a relatively new phenomenon, as described in Section 2 above. Not surprisingly, numerous polls are conducted to measure this new phenomenon. The Ministry of Unification conducts polls on issues dealing with policy toward North Korea at least two to three times a year. The major newspapers conduct their own polls regularly as well, sometimes independently and sometimes with Gallup Korea. Despite the number and frequency of these polls, acquiring a clear understanding of the nature of public opinion is difficult for a variety of reasons. These range from the incomparability of survey instruments and patently tendentious or simplistic questionnaires to the questionable competence, and accountability, of some of the firms doing the polling. The safest way to proceed is to assume that virtually all publicly released polls are distorted in one way or another.<sup>44</sup>

At a general level, however, the polls support at least three broad statements:

- First, the June 2000 summit was a breakpoint in public opinion. Before the summit the rate of public support for the sunshine

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<sup>43</sup> The Northeast Asia Economy Center of the Federation of Korean Industries, *Status and Implications of South-North Economic Cooperation of Major Enterprises* (Seoul: FKI CEM 2001-22, 2001). This report is based on surveys taken of 600 large firms in South Korea, asking their views on a range of issues affecting North-South economic cooperation. Among other interesting findings: Eighty-eight percent of the firms indicated they are not currently planning to pursue projects with North Korea in the future. Sixty-one percent said that social infrastructure in the North would have to be significantly improved before initiatives like the pending Kaesong Industrial Complex project could succeed. And seventy-seven percent said that a return visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul is essential to reactivate inter-Korean economic cooperation.

<sup>44</sup> This certainly is the way the main protagonists proceed in Korea itself. The government interprets the polls taken by the major media groups as reflecting their hostile views toward the government and negative attitudes toward its sunshine policy. Most everyone else discounts the government polls as designed to support the government's North Korea and domestic policy objectives.

policy was both relatively high (reaching 80-94 percent on the eve of the summit) and relatively consistent across the polls; thereafter, the support rate declined significantly as time passed in almost all polls other than those of the government.<sup>45</sup>

- Second, public opinion shows sharp divisions on many issues. Forty six percent of the public might say in one poll, for example, that they believe the government's policy has been well implemented while another 46 percent will say it has not been well implemented. Forty percent in another poll might say they believe liberal democracy is the best system for a unified Korea, while 37 percent will express a preference for a mixed system that includes aspects of the North's Communist system.
- Third, attitudes toward the government's policy are affected by South Korea's persistent problem of regionalism. The rates of support for the sunshine policy from those in President Kim's home Cholla provinces, for example, consistently are 20-30 percent higher than the comparable rates for those from the Kyongsang provinces, the home regions of most of South Korea's previous presidents.<sup>46</sup>

Whatever the precise nature of public opinion at any particular moment, it is clear that public opinion matters. Not only has President

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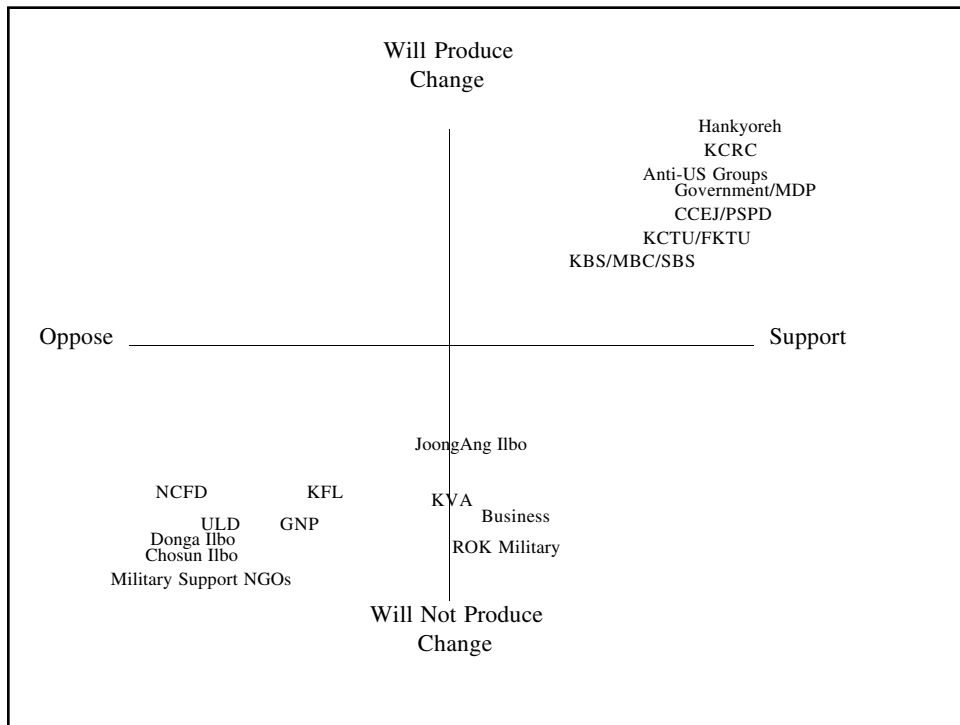
<sup>45</sup> The falloff in support was particularly acute in a survey conducted by Gallup Korea and the *Chosun Ilbo*: Whereas nearly 87 percent of the respondents supported the sunshine policy in August 2000, this number fell to 49 percent in February 2001 and then to only 34 percent in June 2001. *Chosun Ilbo*, August 24, 2000 and Gallup Korea web site, <http://egallup31.gallup.co.kr/News/>. The government's polls, in contrast, consistently register public support at more than 60 percent.

<sup>46</sup> The largest regional gaps tend to be when the rate of support declines sharply. Jun Han, "Change in the Public Perception of North Korea, Unification, and North-South Relations after the Inter-Korean Summit," *Social Criticism Quarterly (Kyegan Sahoe Bipyong)*, Summer 2001, pp. 247-261. On the "has policy been well implemented" question, for example, a December 2000 poll showed that nearly 80 percent of the people in the Cholla provinces answered affirmatively (vs. only 10 percent who said policy had not been well implemented). In contrast, only 34 percent and 40 percent of the people in the two Kyongsang provinces thought the policy had been well implemented (vs. 57 percent and 46 percent who thought the opposite). Gallup Korea web site, *ibid*.

Kim's Administration taken polls far more frequently than any previous South Korean government, it has actively used these government surveys to justify and accelerate its engagement efforts. The story of the sunshine policy is, to an important degree, the story of changes over time in public opinion.

**ENVIRONMENTAL MAPPING: A NOTIONAL MATRIX**

As the brief accounts above suggest, the major South Korean actors are sharply divided between supporters and opponents of the sunshine policy. They are equally divided on the effectiveness of the policy in producing changes in North Korea, as described in our first report. Figure 1 provides a notional depiction of where the major groups fall on these two issues.



**Figure 1: Notional Positions of Major Actors on Sunshine Policy**

This notional matrix shows a sharply bi-polar distribution, with a relatively small number of actors in the "middle." If anything, it understates the divide. As suggested above, for example, many in the ROK military do not personally support the sunshine policy, although the military as an institution has shown moderate support. Similarly, while most business groups support the government's basic effort to engage North Korea, many are critical of important aspects of the sunshine policy itself. And even among those who at least moderately support the government's policy, there is very little expectation that it will succeed in producing significant change inside North Korea. This divide was not nearly as pronounced at the beginning of the Kim Dae Jung Administration. As indicated in our first report, there was in fact a growing consensus in South Korea in favor of efforts to engage North Korea, a consensus that bolstered proponents of the sunshine policy and provided a basis on which to build. What happened to change this situation is the subject of the next section.

#### **4. INTERNAL DYNAMICS: THE PROCESS**

The process through which a major debate often moves is much like a calendar: Each has its seasons. The watershed event in the sunshine policy's cycle was clearly the June 2000 summit. This event transformed what had been a relatively low-level public discourse into a major public brouhaha. But two other events had significant impacts on the internal dynamics as well and contributed directly to the debate's nature and direction. One was President Kim's decision in January 2000 to form a new political party. This decision, understandable given the President's political position and policy aspirations, politicized what had been generally considered until then a largely non-partisan issue. In the process, it riled relations within the ruling coalition and exacerbated the task of generating broader public consensus behind the Administration's policies. The other was the inauguration of George W. Bush as President of the United States in January 2001. The advent of the Bush Administration gave North Korea an excuse to delay dialogue with South Korea (as well as with the United States), while the public articulation of the new Administration's approach - as filtered through the South Korean media - further fueled a domestic debate that was already raging.

These events serve as benchmarks for marking the debate's seasons. The period between President Kim's inauguration in February 1998 and his decision to form a new party in January 2000 might be thought of as the "spring" of the debate. During this period general support for the idea of trying to engage North Korea, along with continued North Korean rigidity and the exigencies of Korea's severe financial crisis, made public debate desultory, while seeds were quietly being planted for new growth later in the "year." The period between January 2000 when President Kim formed his new party and the June 2000 summit was a short but intense "summer." This period saw a series of sizzling developments, along with their concomitant dark clouds and sudden summer storms. Period 3 from the summit to the beginning of the Bush Administration was the "fall," with intense efforts by one side in the

debate to harvest the fruits of the summer's growth countered by equally intense efforts by the other side to frustrate and counter these efforts. "Winter" came in the fourth period, from January 2001 to today. Appropriately long for South Korea's harsh political climate, this period saw a freeze in North-South relations, solidification of the divides in South Korean politics, and a growing chill in U.S.-ROK relations. This section describes how this all happened.

**SPRING (FEBRUARY 1998 TO JANUARY 2000)**

As described in our first report, President Kim came into office fully determined to pursue his commitment to engagement. He made this clear in his inaugural address when he said that reconciliation and cooperation with the North would be a top priority of his Administration despite Pyongyang's continuing bellicosity and the severe financial crisis that had just hit South Korea. Kim was not only determined but also confident. His decades as a major national figure and years of thinking about unification issues convinced him that he understood North Korea better, and could accomplish more, than his predecessors, who he believed had exaggerated the North Korean threat and failed to approach North Korea with the proper sensitivity and understanding.

With this confidence and determination, the Administration described the goal of its policy as being to improve North-South relations as a means for inducing change inside North Korea and thereby hastening reconciliation. To President Kim and the key people in his government, this meant providing North Korea a favorable environment in which it could opt for openness and reform without feeling threatened. Providing such an environment, however, is difficult in the best of circumstances given the deep distrust of the North in South Korea - not to mention North Korea's own paranoia, erratic behavior, and inherent vulnerability. At a minimum, sustained domestic support is required to allow sufficient time to demonstrate the policy's success.

Beyond this requirement, President Kim faced several additional impediments to rapid forward movement when he first came to power:

- The "odd couple" coalition he formed with Kim Jong-pil to secure his election brought South Korea's ideological divide directly

into his Administration, creating significant constraints on how fast he could move in implementing his policy.

- The minority status of Kim's party in the National Assembly prevented it from unilaterally passing budgets and other legislation needed to help North Korea, increasing the President's reliance on the coalition and the time and energy required to achieve compromise.
- The economy, reeling from the financial crisis, was in no position to churn up large amounts of assistance for North Korea, simultaneously preoccupying the President and reinforcing the need for a "go-it-slow" approach.
- President Kim himself was deeply distrusted by large segments of the South Korean population because of his alleged "leftist" leanings, as described in our first report, which bolstered the need for moderation initially in pursuing his policy objectives.

Reflecting awareness of these constraints, Kim moved cautiously at first. He emphasized that deterrence and reconciliation with the North would be pursued simultaneously. He stressed rhetorically the need for domestic consensus. And he promised that his approach to Pyongyang would be open and transparent. President Kim also gave key government security posts to well-known conservative heavyweights, such as Kang In-duk (Minister of Unification) and Lee Jong Chan (Director of the National Intelligence Agency), in an effort to mitigate widespread suspicions about his ideological affinities. As a further sop to conservatives, he allowed his Unification Minister to announce that engagement would be pursued only on the basis of strict reciprocity.<sup>47</sup> All this was designed to reassure a suspicious public and buy time for his sunshine policy to work.

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<sup>47</sup> Applying this principle during inter-Korean talks in Beijing two months after the President's inauguration, the Administration offered to provide North Korea fertilizer assistance in exchange for North Korean willingness to allow the reunion of families separated by the Korean War. North Korea denounced this offer as "horse trading" and cut off all bilateral meetings.

At the same time, however, the President was beginning to move forward. In February 1998, he publicly ruled out any South Korean efforts to undermine or absorb the North and pledged active efforts to promote inter-Korean reconciliation. In March, the government announced the principle of separating economics from politics in order to create a more favorable environment for the resumption of inter-Korean relations. And in April, it promised to simplify legal procedures for inter-Korean business interactions, ultimately lifting ceilings on South Korean investment in the North. Shortly thereafter President Kim authorized the Hyundai Group to donate 1,000 head of cattle to the North to facilitate efforts by its chairman, Chung Ju-yung, to establish tourist and investment activities in North Korea. To assure smooth implementation of his sunshine policy, moreover, he delegated authority to Ambassador Lim Dong-Won, then National Security Advisor at the Blue House, to appoint the senior members of the National Security Council and supervise the activities of anyone involved in policy toward North Korea.

An early fruit of these efforts appeared in November 1998 when a luxury cruise ship carrying about 900 South Korean tourists set sail for North Korea's scenic Mt. Kumgang. This historic trip marked the first time that any South Korean legally entered the North as a tourist since the two governments were established fifty years earlier.<sup>48</sup>

Unfortunately for President Kim and his sunshine policy supporters, this fruit came with lots of flies. Not only did North Korea dismiss the series of South Korean signals and cooperative gestures, it maintained and perhaps even stepped up its military provocations. These included a series of armed infiltration attempts (June 1998 submarine incident, July 1998 dead North Korean agent discovery, November 1998 submarine intrusion, December 1998 sinking of North Korean spy vessel, June 1999 North-South naval clash, etc.). It also included the August 1998 attempted launch of a long-range ballistic missile (allegedly a

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<sup>48</sup> The Mt. Kumgang tour was a product of Chung Ju-yung's agreement with Kim Jong Il to pay the North Koreans nearly \$1 billion over the following six years in exchange for the rights to develop this and several other projects. For details on this project and its role in the public debate, see our first report (especially pages 28-29).

North Korean satellite) and construction in late 1998-early 1999 of additional launch facilities. The discovery of large underground construction in the summer of 1998 that suggested a continuing North Korean nuclear program in contravention of the 1994 U.S.-DPRK "Agreed Framework" completed the package. North Korea paired these provocative actions with increasingly belligerent rhetoric.

Not surprisingly, this behavior provoked anger among South Korean conservatives and sharp criticism of the government's approach toward North Korea. The intense U.S. focus on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities during this period indirectly reinforced this criticism, by bolstering South Korean skeptics who questioned the wisdom and efficacy of the sunshine policy.

President Kim responded by reiterating the need to maintain deterrence and pursue dialogue simultaneously. He also increased his declaratory emphasis on national security and used the sinking of a North Korean spy ship to demonstrate his determination not to tolerate military provocations. This bolstered his position at home and helped dampen public debate. At the same time though, he made clear he would continue to pursue engagement with North Korea. Giving early substance to this intention, he authorized the Hyundai group to proceed with the Mt. Kumgang tourist project in July 1998, despite the absence of a North Korean apology for the submarine incursion one month earlier.<sup>49</sup> Six months later, less than a month after South Korea had sunk a North Korean spy vessel, he scaled back the Administration's prior insistence on strict reciprocity in inter-Korean interactions to "flexible" reciprocity in a renewed attempt to establish government-to-government contacts. Insisting that there were signs of cautious change in the North, President Kim emphasized that he would continue to seek active engagement if Pyongyang showed a positive attitude.<sup>50</sup>

Administration leaders also moved to counter the growing disquiet in the United States over North Korean actions, which they understood could seriously jeopardize their sunshine policy. In intensive

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<sup>49</sup> *The Korea Times*, July 23, 1998.

<sup>50</sup> See the text of the President's "New Year's Message to the Nation," *The Korea Herald*, January 1, 1999.

consultations with U.S. officials, they pressed the U.S. hard to seek a resolution of the nuclear and missile issues through diplomatic engagement, a posture subsequently adopted in the U.S. policy review conducted by William Perry. They also pursued the idea of a comprehensive deal between Washington and Pyongyang involving resolution of the nuclear and missile issues in exchange for U.S. diplomatic recognition of the North and the lifting of economic sanctions.<sup>51</sup> One product of these intense discussions was the establishment of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) to coordinate policies among the U.S., Japan, and South Korea.

These dual sets of efforts to dampen domestic debate were aided by several other developments. One was the nationwide economic crisis, which focused almost everyone's attention on the implications of economic restructuring for his or her immediate situation.<sup>52</sup> Another was continued North Korean hostility. The absence of much actually happening in inter-Korean relations gave the debate about the Administration's assumptions a somewhat theoretical quality. And a third was the disarray in the GNP. This was caused partly by the difficulty it had adjusting to its new position as an opposition party and partly by its need to defend itself against allegations of involvement in a number of major scandals.<sup>53</sup> President Kim's coalition with Kim Jong-pil probably also played a role. While the ULD leader criticized the sunshine policy and worked to derail it from within, he also publicly emphasized the importance of avoiding war, even at the cost of delaying unification, and suggested that the public could have

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<sup>51</sup> *The Korea Herald*, December 8, 1998.

<sup>52</sup> As one measure of this focus, the number of articles published by the conservative *Chosun Ilbo* and the progressive *Hankyoreh Sinmun* in 1998 and 1999 on economic reform and restructuring was more than ten times the number each paper published on the sunshine policy during the same period. Doh-jong Kim, "The Sunshine Policy and Domestic Political Dynamics: Political Implications for South Korea's Engagement Policy Toward North Korea," *National Strategy (Kukga Junryak)*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Seoul: Sejong Institute, 2000).

<sup>53</sup> The party and its leader were accused of having colluded with North Korea to help determine the outcome of different elections in South Korea and having diverted tax revenues for use in the party's presidential election campaign. All these accusations proved unfounded except for the last one, which is still being adjudicated.

confidence in the government because he was in it. Such statements undoubtedly helped alleviate concerns among South Korean conservatives about the intent and direction of the sunshine policy.

In response, the general public's support for the sunshine policy remained high throughout this period. Preoccupied with the economic crisis and seeing little change in North Korea, most citizens were happy to have the focus shift away from unification - with its huge attendant costs - toward long-term peaceful coexistence. While they had little confidence that the government's new policy would produce significant changes in North Korea, they sensed that the threat from the North was declining and welcomed a more protracted approach to unification.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, the public debate was relatively restrained throughout this period. Although public criticism always existed, and was strong in certain quarters, it was not strong enough to precipitate a major national debate or significantly affect the direction of government policies.

#### **SUMMER (JANUARY 2000 TO JUNE 2000)**

Despite the relatively restrained debate, the President faced substantial obstacles to moving forward with his policy agenda, not only in the National Assembly but also within his own governing coalition. With the South Korean economy beginning to show signs of recovery from the financial crisis by the beginning of 2000 and his sunshine policy at a standstill, he looked for ways to change the underlying conditions. What he came up with was a new political party. Although not widely appreciated outside of Korean political circles, the President's decision to found the MDP marked a significant turning point both in the public debate over the sunshine policy and in South Korean politics.

The decision reflected the President's determination to overcome his domestic political difficulties - caused in large part by his party's minority position within the National Assembly - as a means for pursuing his larger policy objectives. At the top of these objectives

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<sup>54</sup> Norman D. Levin, *The Shape of Korea's Future* (RAND, 1999). This report analyzes the findings from a February 1999 public opinion poll conducted jointly by RAND and the *JoongAng Ilbo*. The survey focused on South Korean attitudes toward unification and long-term security issues.

was engineering a historic breakthrough in ties with North Korea. The President made the linkage between the establishment of a new party and his North Korea policy ambitions explicit himself. On the day the MDP was inaugurated (January 19, 2000), he communicated his plan to seek a North-South summit if his new party did well in the upcoming (April 13, 2000) parliamentary elections.<sup>55</sup>

From this point on, the name of the game changed. Instead of pursuing his sunshine policy goals by seeking a broad national consensus based on his coalition with the conservative ULD, President Kim sought to expand his own independent power base so as to give him greater latitude in making policy. His calculation was clear: Increased latitude would increase the likelihood of policy success; policy success would not only advance his goals vis-a-vis North Korea but further strengthen his domestic political position. A successful summit with the North, he clearly was wagering, was essential to both.

Having made this decision and founded the MDP, Kim worked hard to induce members of the other parties to defect and join his new party. He also encouraged progressive NGOs to support the MDP and cooperate with the government in seeking to change South Korea's politics and culture more broadly. As a downpayment, the President endorsed the campaign by a large coalition of civic groups and NGOs to blacklist "corrupt" or "unfit" politicians. The goal was to either deny them party endorsements or, if endorsed, prevent their victory in the April parliamentary elections. All this, to no one's surprise, outraged the GNP and ULD since they were the primary targets (as well as chief victims) of the President's actions. In the process, it became a major source of friction and distrust between the ruling and opposition parties.

At the same time, President Kim moved on his second track of seeking a North-South summit. Internally, he switched his right-hand man, Lim Dong-Won, from Minister of Unification to Director of the National Intelligence Service, where Lim had more opportunity to pursue

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<sup>55</sup> *The Korea Herald*, January 21, 2000. President Kim formally proposed this summit one week later (January 26) in his annual New Year's press conference.

secret contacts with North Korea. Externally, he looked for a site where he could send a major public signal to the North without provoking heated political reactions in South Korea. The site chosen, replete with symbolism, was Berlin, the capital of a unified Germany. On March 9, President Kim gave a speech there on the last leg of an extended European visit outlining a new set of proposals to North Korea for ending the Cold War structure on the Korean Peninsula.<sup>56</sup> Subsequently labeled the "Berlin Declaration," the speech made four points explicit:

- The South Korean government would support North Korea's economic recovery - for which the two governments should assume responsibility given constraints on the private sector - and would actively promote large-scale economic collaboration in a broad range of industrial, infrastructure, and other areas.
- It would participate in joint efforts to end the Cold War on the Peninsula and create a system for peaceful coexistence.
- It strongly wanted to arrange reunions of families separated by the Korean War.
- It wanted to re-open political dialogue and exchange official envoys between the two sides to explore how to move forward in these areas and resolve outstanding problems.

Perhaps as salient to North Korean leaders as any of these four explicit points was what was missing from the Berlin Declaration: any suggestion that South Korea would link its economic assistance to concessions by North Korea on military threat and tension reduction measures.

Following the speech, secret contacts between the two Koreas to arrange a summit meeting intensified. As a result of these contacts, and expressed North Korean willingness to exchange special envoys to discuss such a summit, President Kim appointed Park Jie-won, then Minister of Culture and Tourism, to be his representative. After four secret meetings between March 17 and April 8, the two special envoys

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<sup>56</sup> "Address by President Kim Dae Jung at the Free University of Berlin, March 9, 2000," *Korea and World Affairs*, Spring 2000, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 131-137.

reached agreement.<sup>57</sup> On April 10, three days before South Korea's national parliamentary elections, both sides announced they had agreed to hold an inter-Korean summit.

President Kim's bet that success with his sunshine policy would yield domestic political dividends paid off almost immediately, at least somewhat. Although the MDP did not succeed in becoming the majority party in the National Assembly elections three days later, it did increase its seats from 79 in the previous elections to 115, as shown in Table 1, narrowing its gap with the GNP to only 18 seats. It also won

**Table 1**

**Distribution of National Assembly Seats by Political Party**

	NCNP(1996) / MDP(2000)	NKP(1996) / GNP(2000)	ULD	OTHER PARTIES
APRIL 1996	79	139	50	16
APRIL 2000	115	133	17	8

seats in districts virtually throughout the country (the main exception being the conservative stronghold of the southeast Yongnam region), effectively establishing itself as a national party rather than simply as a party based only in a single region (the southwestern Cholla provinces).<sup>58</sup> As a result of the election, the MDP expanded its share of total National Assembly seats from 26.4 percent in the preceding election to 42.1 percent, a significant increase.<sup>59</sup> Kim Jong-pil's ULD

<sup>57</sup> Ministry of Unification, *Peace and Cooperation - White Paper on Korean Unification 2001* (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2001), pp. 31-32.

<sup>58</sup> Doh-jong Kim and Hyung-joon Kim, "Analysis of the 16<sup>th</sup> National Assembly Election," *Korea Focus*, May-June 2000, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> The MDP triumph, to be sure, was qualified: The GNP still out-pollled it 39 percent to 35.9 percent. Moreover, the GNP actually

suffered a particularly severe defeat, falling from 50 seats to 17 and losing its status as a negotiating body in the National Assembly. The party garnered only 9.8 percent of the total popular vote, a whopping 10 percent less than it had received in the previous election. Splinter parties did poorly.

Along with this short-term benefit, however, came some longer-term costs. The biggest came from the announcement of the summit meeting only three days before the elections. It is hard to exaggerate the importance of this event. First, it infuriated the opposition parties, who saw it as an egregious attempt to influence the outcome of the elections and manipulate a non-partisan issue - the universal Korean desire for reunification - for domestic political purposes.<sup>60</sup> Second, it spawned a range of conspiracy and corruption allegations that fostered public cynicism and undermined support for the government's policy.<sup>61</sup> And third, it re-ignited questions about the Administration's trustworthiness and credibility by demonstrating that the government had been dealing with the North Koreans behind the scenes, despite its repeated pledges to make its approach to the North completely open and transparent. Added to this, as described in our first report, are the intense personal feelings in South Korea toward Kim Dae Jung himself. For those who congenitally hate the President, the announcement that he

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*increased* its share of National Assembly seats from 46.5 percent to 48.7 percent of the total. Only four seats short of a majority, it remained the nation's largest political party. By receiving just 3.1 percent less of the total national vote than did the GNP, however, the MDP established itself convincingly as the only major contender to the GNP-led conservatives in an increasingly two-party dominant system.

<sup>60</sup> *Hankyoreh Sinmun*, April 10, 2000.

<sup>61</sup> While one could always hear strong, even scurrilous, comments about Kim Dae Jung, the way the summit was announced took these to a new level. One allegation, for example, had to do with the amount of money the government had to pay Pyongyang to secure its agreement to the summit. According to those who believe this allegation, the reason why the summit was delayed one day at the last minute was because the money that was supposed to be handed over to the North in exchange for Kim Jong Il's agreement to have the summit hadn't yet been transferred. The Administration allegedly then assessed South Korean companies the extra money required to enable the summit to go forward. Such allegations have never been documented or proven. That they are widely believed in South Korea, however, is one sign of the impact of the summit's announcement.

would be the one going to Pyongyang was simply anathema. While none of these groups could challenge the idea of a North-South summit itself, they were outraged by the Administration's handling of the whole matter and determined to seek retribution.

The summit, held two months later in Pyongyang, was the sunshine policy's crowning moment. As the first meeting ever between the leaders of the two Koreas, and with its demonstrable, if still implicit, recognition of the ROK by the Communist North, the fact of the meeting itself made the summit a truly historic event. The Joint Declaration announced at the end of the summit reinforced the sense of a momentous breakthrough toward inter-Korean reconciliation, by identifying a range of areas for cooperative efforts and committing Kim Jong Il to pay a return visit to Seoul. The warmth of Kim Jong Il's welcome to the southern delegates, moreover, visually reinforced this impression. Watching his performance on their television screens, many South Koreans wondered if everything they had been taught to believe about the man was sheer fiction.

No one was more swept away by the event though than President Kim. Returning to Seoul, he sounded more like a proselyte than president of the nation. "A new age has dawned for our nation," he said. "We have reached a turning point so that we can put an end to the history of territorial division." He then went on:

I found that Pyongyang, too, was our land. The Pyongyang people are the same as us, the same nation sharing the same blood. Regardless of what they have been saying and [how they have been] acting outwardly, they have deep love and a longing for their compatriots in the South. If you talk with them, you notice that right away... We must consider North Koreans as our brothers and sisters. We must believe that they have the same thought... Most importantly there is no longer going to be any war. The North will no longer attempt unification by force and at the same time we will not do any harm to the North...<sup>62</sup>

Unfortunately for the President, not all South Koreans shared this halcyon vision. Indeed, for many, both the substance and optics of the

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<sup>62</sup> Excerpted from the text of "President Kim Dae Jung's Remarks on Returning to Seoul from the Inter-Korean Summit in Pyongyang," as appeared in *The Korea Herald*, June 16, 2000.

summit raised profound concerns. The struggle between these two perspectives raised the public debate to an entirely new level and heralded the onset of a new season.

**FALL (JUNE 2000 TO JANUARY 2001)**

The South Korean political environment heated up almost immediately. Images of the televised summit and President Kim's remarks upon returning to Seoul lit a fire under those with a "one people" orientation and stimulated a wave of nationalism and unification euphoria throughout the country. The government encouraged this process by calling into question the validity of the image of Kim Jong Il traditionally fostered by South Korea's elite. This in turn stimulated broader debate about the legitimacy of the country's anti-Communism education. Progressive groups seized this momentum to try and undermine the position of conservatives in South Korean society more broadly, labeling them "pro-Cold War," "anti-unification," and "anachronistic."<sup>63</sup> Some branded anyone who raised questions about Kim Jong Il or suggested that the summit had certain shortcomings as a "foreigner" (i.e., not "true" Korean), a particularly inflammatory charge given Korea's history.

For his part, President Kim touted the success of his sunshine policy and mobilized progressive groups to rally behind the government. He emphasized three points in particular. First, that the summit talks ended the danger of war on the peninsula or any North Korean attempt to achieve unification by force. Second, that North Korea agreed to replace the provision in the Communist Party's platform calling for the liberation of the entire peninsula under socialism in return for corresponding steps by South Korea to replace its National Security Law. Third, that Kim Jong Il agreed to a continued stationing of U.S. military forces in South Korea, even after reunification.

All of these points were aimed at strengthening President Kim's supporters and countering critics of the sunshine policy. All were also, however, highly contentious. Members of the military and others sensitive to national security concerns challenged the first point,

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<sup>63</sup> *Hankyoreh Sinmun*, June 16, 2000.

noting the absence of any mention of the words "peace" and "security" in the summit's Joint Declaration and North Korea's refusal to discuss ways for reducing the military confrontation.<sup>64</sup> Conservative and even many moderate South Koreans dismissed the second point as designed by Pyongyang to stimulate instability in South Korea, rather than to renounce the North's historic goal of bringing the entire peninsula under its control. The mainstream press all questioned the third point, initially on the grounds that Kim Jong Il's alleged comment was made privately to President Kim and couldn't be authenticated and subsequently based on contradictory statements by North Korea itself.<sup>65</sup>

On top of this, the summit's Joint Declaration itself was highly controversial. As described in detail in our first report, this was partly because the Declaration appeared to reflect much more of the North's agenda than the South's - raising questions about whether the President had somehow been "deceived" into accommodating the North's position.<sup>66</sup> It was also, however, because many saw in the Declaration an Administration willingness to entertain a degree of political integration with Pyongyang not sanctioned by either previous government policy or prior national consensus. Critics assailed the Administration more broadly for having shifted the focus of the summit away from ways to implement the 1992 "Basic Agreement" and achieve peaceful coexistence - the ostensible goal of the summit as expressed originally by South Korean leaders - to how to foster unification. The President's decision to repatriate to Pyongyang all long-term North Korean prisoners in South Korean jails without a corresponding move by the North to return South Korean POWs held in the North further heightened domestic controversy and reinforced conservative charges of an imbalance in North-South relations.

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<sup>64</sup> Yong-Sup Han, "Did North Korea's Threat of War Really Disappear?," *JoongAng Ilbo*, June 20, 2000.

<sup>65</sup> The most explicit, albeit much later, example was the joint Russia-DPRK statement issued after Kim Jong Il's somewhat bizarre trip to Moscow in the fall of 2001, in which the North Korean leader explicitly insisted on the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

<sup>66</sup> See pages 24-26 and 41-42 in particular.

And this was just the beginning. With their sharply divergent ideological orientations and political agendas, progressive and conservative groups geared up for enhanced confrontation. The KCRC and other progressive NGOs organized collective activities to expedite North-South exchange and prepare for Kim Jong Il's return visit to Seoul. The *Hankyoreh* and other government supporters called into question not just the intentions of government critics in pointing out problems with the summit but also their patriotism. Liberal scholars pushed the bounds of previously accepted discourse on a range of taboo topics.<sup>67</sup> For their part, anti-U.S. and anti-U.S. military base groups took this as a cue to step up their own activities. Citing the changed conditions due to the summit's success, they intensified their questioning of the need for a U.S. military presence. Many joined in larger coalitions with the CCEJ, PSPD, and other progressive forces to seek the closure of U.S. training facilities and revision of the U.S.-ROK Status of Forces Agreement. They also sought U.S. compensation for the killing of South Korean civilians during the Korean War (e.g., at Nogun-ri), for environmental damage caused by activities at U.S. military bases, and for a long list of other alleged offenses.

Conservative groups responded in kind. The GNP attacked the government for its "one-sided" assistance to North Korea and having played into the hands of North Korea's Communist leaders. The *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and *JoongAng Ilbo* questioned the speed with which the Administration was moving to expand inter-Korean cooperation, as well as its appropriateness. Conservative NGOs mobilized to ensure that a number of pre-conditions - including a North Korean apology for starting the Korean War and for conducting a slew of terrorist acts thereafter - be met before Kim Jong Il is allowed to visit Seoul.<sup>68</sup> Many attacked President Kim for being soft on defense and neglecting, if not

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<sup>67</sup> One, for example, later went so far as to suggest that Kim Jong Il should not be held responsible for the Korean War since he was a child when it happened. Anything that even hinted at exculpating North Korea from responsibility for the Korean War was previously one of South Korea's major taboos. For Hwang Tae Yun's controversial remarks, see the *Chosun Ilbo*, February 27, 2001.

<sup>68</sup> Sung Won Park, "Conservatives Looking for Counter-Offensive," *Shindonga*, September 2000, pp. 76-94.

endangering, South Korean security. Some denounced him as being "anti-liberal democracy."

Two developments in the fall of 2000 heightened this confrontation further. One was the Nobel Committee's decision in October to award that year's Nobel Peace Prize to President Kim. Kim's supporters understandably saw the award as validating the President's sunshine approach toward North Korea, with some interpreting the award as confirming their broader political and ideological convictions. His detractors, however, while delighted that a South Korean had been so honored, were appalled that the South Korean honoree was their long-time antagonist. Many were alarmed that the award might stimulate further moves in a direction they considered injurious to South Korea's interests, if not morally inexcusable given the North's despotic rule and human rights abuses. Thus, in a curious sort of way, the award energized groups on both ends of the political spectrum.

The other, more serious development was the response of North Korea after the summit. This took the form of a two-track approach. One involved intensified efforts by Pyongyang to split South Korean society. North Korea reduced its public criticism of the ROK government by roughly seventy-five percent in the months after the summit, for example. At the same time, it repeatedly urged South Koreans to uphold the June 15 Joint Declaration and branded South Korean "ultra-conservatives" and "rightists" as being "anti-unification."<sup>69</sup> This track also involved a series of highly charged activities designed to stoke emotions, and divisions, in South Korea. These included, for example, allowing North Korean athletes to march alongside their South Korean counterparts behind a single flag at the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics and inviting leftist South Korean workers to visit North Korea for "debates" with their North Korean counterparts on unification.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> The North's definition of these latter folks included the GNP's Lee Hoi Chang, former President Kim Young Sam, and pretty much anyone who expressed reservations about the summit or criticisms of the sunshine policy.

<sup>70</sup> Later in 2001 North and South Korean labor unions drafted a joint manifesto calling for an inter-Korean labor forum for unification.

The other track involved efforts to bypass South Korea entirely and deal with the United States instead. North Korea sent National Defense Committee Vice Chairman Cho Myong Rok to Washington, hosted a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Albright to Pyongyang, and invited U.S. President Clinton to Pyongyang - all in an effort to utilize North Korea's missile program as a vehicle for normalizing U.S.-DPRK relations. At the same time, it dragged out a series of inter-Korean talks, apparently buying time to see what would come out of its talks with the United States. Except for two emotion-laden reunions of 100 families separated by the Korean War, it implemented almost none of the agreements it had reached with the South during this period. It did not rebuild its side of the North-South railroad, for example, or even show up at the South Korean groundbreaking ceremony for its reconstruction. It began to cancel scheduled meetings, with little notice and at times without any explanation. And, most important, it refused to arrange a return visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul.<sup>71</sup>

North Korea's decision to send a delegation to participate in the first-ever North-South Defense Ministerial Meeting in September 2000 appeared, for a time, to be another exception to this general pattern. Once there, however, the delegation refused to discuss any agenda items beyond the agreement reached at inter-Korean ministerial talks on July 31 to reconnect the severed Seoul-Sinuiju railway line. This refusal reinforced the view within the South Korean military that Pyongyang had no intention of discussing military issues with the ROK or of taking

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The draft advocated a formula for unification - "one people, one nation, two systems, two independent governments" - that was basically the same as North Korea's position. Such transparent efforts to exacerbate social tensions in South Korea by manipulating South Korean civic organizations violated North Korea's pledge at the summit to address inter-Korean issues directly through government-to-government talks. They also significantly inflamed debate in South Korea. *JoongAng Ilbo*, July 26, 2001.

<sup>71</sup> The reason for this refusal is not definitively known. South Koreans offer many "explanations," ranging from North Korea's nervousness over the personal security of Kim Jong Il to South Korea's failure to meet the agreed-upon conditions. Whatever the real reason, Kim Jong Il's refusal to schedule a return visit reinforced the divisions within South Korea and intensified the debate over the government's sunshine policy.

concrete steps toward the creation of a system of peaceful coexistence on the peninsula. In response, the ROK Ministry of Defense went ahead in December 2000 and published its annual defense White Paper, which noted the absence of any change in the North Korean threat despite the June summit and maintained its characterization of the North as the ROK's "main enemy." This further enlivened the South Korean debate. Conservatives endorsed the White Paper's characterization of North Korea and strongly defended its publication. Members of the ruling MDP and other progressives denounced the military for its "unreconstructed" attitude and criticized the government for allowing the White Paper's publication, which they argued was inappropriate to the new, post-summit situation.

Not surprisingly, North Korea's two-track approach in the months after the summit affected public opinion. The evolution here is striking. Shortly after the summit, according to a typical poll, only 4.6 percent of the general public said they viewed North Korea as an enemy. In contrast, nearly half (49.8 percent) saw the North as an equal cooperation partner to South Korea and another 44 percent said they considered North Korea a partner that South Koreans should help.<sup>72</sup> By the end of January 2001, the numbers had changed significantly: Nearly five times as many respondents (22.1 percent) indicated they viewed North Korea as an enemy (an increase of 16.5 percent since the August poll). In contrast, 43.4 percent said they considered North Korea an equal cooperation partner to South Korea (down from almost 50 percent) and another 32.7 percent saw the North as a partner that South Korea should help (a decrease of 11.3 percent from the August poll).<sup>73</sup>

This change, also not surprisingly, influenced attitudes toward the sunshine policy itself. According to a poll taken by Gallup Korea and the *Chosun Ilbo*, nearly half (49 percent) of all South Koreans supported the sunshine policy in February 2000 - before either the Berlin Declaration or the euphoria that swept the country following the summit. This number fell to only a third (33.9 percent) by June of the following

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<sup>72</sup> *JoongAng Ilbo*, August 3-6, 2000.

<sup>73</sup> *JoongAng Ilbo*, January 3, 2001.

year.<sup>74</sup> Such polls suggest that, within months of the summit, South Koreans had become increasingly confused about North Korean intentions, dubious that the regime was serious about moving forward with issues high on South Korea's agenda, and doubtful of the wisdom of the Administration's approach to dealing with North Korea.

North Korean inaction, decreased public support for the government's policy, and smoldering opposition party resentment over President Kim's alleged "politicization" of the unification issue proved to be a toxic mixture. National Assembly proceedings were tied in knots. This affected almost anything that required legislative approval, including the Unification Ministry's allocation of funds from the government budget for inter-Korean cooperation. Failure of the National Assembly to ratify four key North-South agreements (on investment guarantees, avoidance of double taxation, procedures for resolution of commercial disputes, and clearing settlements) were particularly consequential in dousing South Korean business interest in investing in North Korea. The Administration's later inability to secure Assembly support for electricity assistance to the North added to the difficulties. These further impeded North-South economic interactions and exacerbated the Administration's difficulty in demonstrating the fruits of its sunshine activities. Indirectly, they contributed to a more intrinsic Administration tendency to over-sell the results of its policies and reinforced the growing public confusion.

Along with this increased confusion came increased polarization. The political spectrum of South Korean society increasingly divided into what many on the left described as "pro-unification" and "anti-unification" camps.<sup>75</sup> The government appeared to see the situation in equally stark terms, officially characterizing the public as divided between "the Cold War era psychology and a new mindset of the post-Cold

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<sup>74</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, June 15, 2001.

<sup>75</sup> Jang-Hee Lee, "Domestic Tasks Left Behind the South-North Summit Meeting," an unpublished paper prepared for a Sejong Institute conference on May 11, 2001.

War world."<sup>76</sup> This trend toward sharp ideological polarization was bolstered by the tendency of both sides to search for evidence in post-summit developments for their respective policy positions. As attitudes hardened with the approach of winter, this evidence was not hard to find.

#### **WINTER (JANUARY 2001 TO FEBRUARY 2002)**

President Bush's victory in the U.S. presidential election became the last benchmark in the debate's evolution to date. South Koreans had long speculated on how a Republican Party victory might affect U.S. policies toward Korea, particularly the Kim Dae Jung government's approach toward North Korea. They knew that an important part of the party's base has a visceral distaste for North Korea, considers the Clinton Administration's approach to have constituted "appeasement," and strongly favors a tougher approach to alleged North Korean "blackmail." As a general statement, those on the South Korean left approached the prospect of a Republican Administration with concern and those on the right with varying degrees of anticipation.

North Korea preempted both sides, putting substantive progress in inter-Korean talks on hold pending changes in South Korea and clarification of Bush's "hard-line" positions.<sup>77</sup> It is possible that the North was alarmed by the prospect of potential policy changes in Washington and wanted to signal the new President not to alter direction. This interpretation is supported by North Korea's insistence

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<sup>76</sup> Ministry of Unification, *Four Years of Policy toward North Korea*, February 26, 2002. A copy is available online at the ministry's website, [www.unikorea.go.kr/eng/index.php](http://www.unikorea.go.kr/eng/index.php).

<sup>77</sup> The North agreed in inter-Korean talks in early February on a series of cooperative steps to facilitate the removal of land mines from the DMZ so as to allow the reconnection of the Seoul-Sinuiju railway line, as agreed upon the previous summer. It declared it would not implement the agreement, however, until South Korea stopped referring to the North as its "main enemy." It simultaneously stepped up its anti-U.S. rhetoric, threatening to end its moratorium on missile tests and abandon the Agreed Framework in view of the Bush Administration's new "hard-line" attitude. This was within a month of President Bush's inauguration and before he had even assembled many top members of his Administration. See Donald G. Gross, "Slow Start in U.S. Policy toward the DPRK," *Comparative Connections*, April 2001, pp. 34-35. The on-line text is available at [http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/0101Qus\\_skorea.html](http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/0101Qus_skorea.html).

that it would not engage in talks with the new Administration unless these talks began with the same positions taken by the Clinton Administration before it left office. It is also possible, however, that Pyongyang simply saw an opportunity to drive a wedge between Washington and Seoul, while increasing its bargaining leverage over the U.S. and inflaming South Korean opinion. Either way, the unspoken message was the same: Reconciliation with the ROK is subordinate to U.S.-DPRK relations.

Concerned about North Korean foot-dragging and anxious to enlist the new U.S. Administration in support of South Korea's sunshine approach, President Kim pushed hard for an early U.S.-ROK summit. Not nearly ready for such a summit but also not anxious to turn down a valued ally, President Bush agreed. The summit, held in Washington on March 7, 2001, must rank among the more curious in U.S.-ROK diplomatic history. Rarely has there been less correlation between cause and effect.

Here is what officially happened:<sup>78</sup>

- The two Presidents publicly agreed that reconciliation and cooperation between the two Koreas contribute not only to peace on the Korean Peninsula but to stability throughout the region.
- President Bush expressed support for the ROK government's policy of engagement with North Korea.
- He endorsed President Kim's leading role in resolving inter-Korean issues.
- And he shared the South Korean leader's hope that a second inter-Korean summit would make a further contribution to inter-Korean relations and regional security.
- Both presidents also reaffirmed their commitment to the 1994 Agreed Framework and called on North Korea to join in taking steps to ensure its successful implementation.
- The two leaders then discussed their respective worldviews, concurring that the global security environment is fundamentally

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<sup>78</sup> *Joint Statement between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea*, March 7, 2001. The text is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/03/20010307-2.html>.

different than during the Cold War and requires new approaches to deterrence and defense.

- They ended their official meeting by agreeing on the importance of close consultations and coordination on policy toward North Korea and the need to work together to support South Korea's economic reform efforts and address bilateral trade issues.

Even if this had not come from a Republican President, this would appear to have been a substantial achievement from South Korea's perspective. The fact that President Kim was the first Asian leader invited to the White House, reflecting an intentional effort by the Bush Administration to communicate the importance it places on U.S.-ROK relations, might appear to have reinforced this impression.

So much for appearances. As it happens, in comments to the press after the official meeting, President Bush alluded candidly to his deep suspicion of Kim Jong Il and emphasized the need for "reciprocity" and "adequate verification" of any missile agreement that might be reached with North Korea. He also expressed his personal doubts over whether this would be possible in the North Korean case given the extremely closed nature of the system. Noting that his Administration was in the midst of the policy review he had promised during his election campaign, he indicated that the U.S. would not seek to resume missile talks with North Korea until this review was finished.

The impact of these comments was almost instantaneous. North Korea denounced the U.S. for trying to prevent inter-Korean reconciliation and indefinitely postponed the next scheduled round of inter-Korean ministerial talks (as if *indefinitely postponing* North-South dialogue would *hasten* inter-Korean reconciliation). South Korea back-pedaled by giving new rhetorical emphasis to precisely those issues - how to reactivate the 1992 Basic Agreement, reduce military tensions, and establish a peace process on the peninsula - that had been omitted from the June 2000 inter-Korean summit agenda.<sup>79</sup> And everyone in South Korea

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<sup>79</sup> See, for example, President Kim's speech to a joint American Enterprise Institute/Council on Foreign Relations luncheon the day after his meeting with President Bush, described in *The Korea Times*, March 9,

blamed everyone else for what all agreed was a major diplomatic failure. Over the next several months public debate intensified sharply in South Korea, with U.S. policy becoming a central, hot button issue.

It is hard to exaggerate the role of the South Korean media in creating this situation. Although many agreements had been reached between Seoul and Pyongyang, and many more were constantly being predicted, little of substance actually happened in North-South relations in the seven months between the June 2000 summit and the January 2001 inauguration of President Bush. Despite this, the South Korean media explicitly and intentionally linked the "stalemate" between the two Koreas to the policies of the new U.S. Administration. The universality of this response might appear somewhat strange given the wide political and ideological differences among the media. In fact, it reflects a broadly shared interest.

On the conservative right, the *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and other media saw President Bush's personal reservations about North Korea as confirmation of their own position. As recently as one month before Bush's inauguration they had been forced to watch President Kim bask in world acclaim as he received the Nobel Peace Prize. They fairly jumped at this modest sign of external validation. Encouraged that South Korea's major ally shared their own doubts, they suggested that President Bush's "skepticism" was directed not only at Kim Jong Il but also at President Kim himself and warned of a split between South Korea and its chief ally over how to deal with North Korea.

For their part, the *Hankyoreh Sinmun* and other media groups on the left interpreted President Bush's comments as confirming *their* own views: The U.S. is driven by its hegemonic goal of dominating the world

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2001. The President reinforced this emphasis shortly after returning to Seoul, appointing Lim Dong-Won as the Minister of Unification to re-jigger the presentation, at least, of South Korea's policy. Ambassador Lim did precisely this. His inaugural speech as Minister of Unification: noted that cooperation without peace has obvious limits; stressed the need to implement visible measures for building military confidence and easing tension between the two Koreas; and emphasized the need to predicate policy on both domestic support and cooperation with the United States. Excerpts from his talk are in *The Korea Times*, March 28, 2001.

and sees Korean unification as a threat to its strategic interests. They saw in President Bush's comments the means for mobilizing South Korean progressives to advance their "one-people" unification objectives, while heightening anti-American feeling and opposition to the U.S. military presence in South Korea. They also found in U.S. policy a rationale for North Korean inaction. Not surprisingly, they seized on these comments to stimulate nationalist sentiment and portray the U.S. as an obstacle to North-South reconciliation.

What had actually happened at the March summit meeting, of course, was that the U.S. publicly endorsed South Korea's engagement policy - a message President Bush strongly reinforced two months later in a letter to President Kim - while it implied that its own approach would be more cautious. This general orientation became official policy when the U.S. announced the result of its policy review in June. The official statement by President Bush made three points explicit:<sup>80</sup>

- The U.S. would "undertake serious discussions with North Korea on a broad agenda." This would include "improved implementation of the Agreed Framework," "verifiable constraints" on North Korea's missile programs and ban on its missile exports, and a "less threatening conventional military posture."
- It would pursue these discussions as part of a "comprehensive approach" to the North that seeks to "encourage progress toward North-South reconciliation, peace on the Korean Peninsula, a constructive relationship with the United States, and greater stability in the region."
- And the U.S. would be willing to ease sanctions, expand assistance, and "take other political steps" if North Korea "responds affirmatively and takes appropriate action."

Secretary of State Powell underlined these points the following day.<sup>81</sup> In a briefing for the press after his talks with the South

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<sup>80</sup> The text is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/06/20010611-4.html>.

<sup>81</sup> The transcript was distributed by the Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, and is available through the <http://usinfo.state.gov>.

Korean Foreign Minister, Powell emphasized three things in particular: The U.S. is "prepared to resume an enhanced dialogue with North Korea on issues of mutual interest to both nations." It is "not setting any preconditions" for this dialogue but hopes it will be "an open dialogue on all of the issues that are of concern." And it is prepared in the meantime to maintain the Agreed Framework. Stressing the Administration's desire to move forward "in a more comprehensive way" to address the range of issues bedeviling North Korea's relations with the United States, he expressed the "hope" that the long-pending return visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul "can now be put back on track."

The June announcement of the U.S. policy review results was critical. Although the U.S. had made unmistakably clear that it was prepared to resume a "serious" and "unconditional" dialogue, North Korea refused to take "yes" for an answer. Instead, it accused the U.S. of attempting to put "conditions" on the resumption of talks and rebuffed the offer. Kim Jong Il also stiffed repeated pleas by President Kim to pay a return visit to Seoul and resume the North-South dialogue. Instead, he turned his attention to improving North Korea's ties with Russia and China, taking a long, meandering train trip across Siberia to Moscow in late July and early August and hosting a visit by Chinese President Jiang Zemin to Pyongyang the beginning of September. All this turned South Korean public opinion decidedly against North Korea and discredited the government's sunshine policy.

The state of the South Korean economy contributed to the mounting domestic tensions. After showing signs of recovery from the financial crisis at the beginning of 2000 (growth increased by 10.7 percent in 1999), the economy slowed significantly in 2001 due in part to the larger global slowdown. Growth rates projected in the 6-7 percent range at the beginning of the year were more than halved as both exports and imports dropped sharply and corporate investment faltered.<sup>82</sup> Economic anxieties further weakened diminishing South Korean willingness to provide assistance to North Korea. Among other things, this exacerbated the government's difficulties in trying to prop up Hyundai's floundering

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<sup>82</sup> Korea Economic Institute, *Korea Insight*, February 2002, Volume 4, Number 2.

Mt. Kumgang project. It also hindered its ability to use aid as a lubricant for broader North-South interactions.

In response, the progressive media and NGOs stepped up their efforts to defend the sunshine policy, shifting blame for the stalemate in inter-Korean relations almost entirely to the United States. To make this argument they broadened the bill of particulars. According to them, the U.S. was exaggerating the threat from North Korea not only to force the ROK to buy advanced U.S. weapons and ensure a continued troop presence in South Korea but also to provide an excuse for developing missile defenses which would ensure U.S. global hegemony. This effort would prevent North-South reconciliation, while provoking a major arms race and ushering in a new Cold War in Asia. One of the networks created by these groups, the Committee for Collective Measures to Prevent Missile Defense and Realize Peace, generated within a couple days a letter signed by more than 100 civic group representatives demanding an end to missile defense and America's "Cold War" mentality.

The GNP, conservative media, and other groups on the right launched a counter-offensive. They denounced their leftist opponents as dangerous, destructive forces, tearing South Korean society apart in the name of "one people" and maliciously fostering anti-American sentiment among the public.<sup>83</sup> They also attacked the government for a wide range of alleged offenses. They criticized the government for its lax handling of North Korea's repeated encroachments of South Korean territorial waters in June, for example, denouncing in particular its alleged "political intervention" to prevent a tough military response that might further set back North-South relations.<sup>84</sup> They challenged the Administration's effort to divert government funds to aid Hyundai, which was facing bankruptcy from losses stemming from the Mt. Kumgang project. And they assailed the government repeatedly for its "one-way" assistance policy, citing the Bush Administration's emphasis on reciprocity and verification as the only way to deal with North Korea.

In this environment, three developments significantly weakened the government and raised the volume of debate to yet a new level. One was

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<sup>83</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, June 8, 2001.

<sup>84</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, June 6, 2001.

the visit by Kim Jong Il to Moscow mentioned above. At the end of his talks with Russian President Putin, the two sides issued a joint communiqué that publicly alluded to North Korea's insistence on the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea. Normally such boilerplate rhetoric from North Korea would not receive much attention. But in the heated environment existing at the time, opponents of the sunshine policy rushed to point out the contradiction between this official document and Kim Dae Jung's assertion that Kim Jong Il said he accepts a continued U.S. military presence in South Korea. Gaining this acceptance in his private conversations with the North Korean leader, President Kim had long insisted, was one of his major accomplishments at the June 2000 summit. The clear contradiction between these two statements undermined the President's credibility and political standing in South Korea.

The second development was the government's decision to prosecute the leading conservative newspaper companies for alleged tax evasion and other financial wrongdoing. Technically, this decision was much broader than just the conservative papers. The government brought civil charges against twenty-three major media institutions, including virtually every national news organization, and assessed them fines of nearly \$400 million for having evaded taxes.<sup>85</sup> It also fined sixteen individuals within these companies roughly \$23 million for irregular business transactions. But the clear target was the major conservative press - the *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, and *Kookmin Ilbo* - which was fined the overwhelming bulk of the \$400 million in back taxes and penalties. The magnitude of the fines was without precedent.<sup>86</sup> The government followed up in August by arresting the owners of the *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and *Kookmin Ilbo* on charges of embezzlement and tax evasion.

Predictably, the left and right were sharply split in their reactions. Progressive groups - in what appears to most Westerners as a clear case of ideology trumping principle - supported the government's

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<sup>85</sup> *The New York Times*, July 3, 2001.

<sup>86</sup> David Steinberg, "The Korean Press and Orthodoxy," *Chosun Daily* (English edition), July 17, 2001.

attack. They denounced the "shamelessness" of the "corrupt family-owned press" and demanded major "reform" of the (conservative) media. Conservatives, on the other hand, strongly criticized the government, while the major newspapers waged a life and death struggle in the name of "freedom of the press."<sup>87</sup> Although the public generally agreed that financial wrongdoings should not be permitted, it almost universally saw the government's escalating war on the press as a transparent attempt to silence its critics - particularly those opposing the sunshine policy. The general presumption was that, in trying to stifle or at least intimidate these papers, the government was seeking to improve both the prospects for a return visit by Kim Jong Il to Seoul and the ruling party's prospects in the upcoming presidential election.<sup>88</sup>

At the height of this war between the government and the conservative media, foreign press organizations and public figures began to express concern over the South Korean government's actions.<sup>89</sup> The conservative Korea Bar Association adopted a resolution criticizing the government for having "regressed away from the real rule of law" and urging it to pursue its reform programs "based on the rule of law, not on [the] rule of power."<sup>90</sup> And members of the opposition parties began talking about the need to consider impeaching the President.<sup>91</sup> Rumors spread among conservatives that the MDP was planning to revise the constitution to enable President Kim to remain in power and promote his unification objectives.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Even the ULD, although still in the ruling coalition at this point, opposed the government's attack on the media and publicly asked the ruling camp not to arrest the owners of the major newspaper companies. *The Korea Times*, August 20, 2001.

<sup>88</sup> A political reporter for the *Hankyoreh Sinmun* suggested in a book published that year that the effort to destroy the big three newspapers was pre-planned by the Blue House. Han-yong Sung, *Why Did DJ Fail to Resolve the Regional Conflict?* (Seoul: Joongsim, 2001).

<sup>89</sup> A letter by eight U.S. Congressmen to President Kim expressing concern over a possible infringement on press freedom received particularly big play. *JoongAng Ilbo*, English edition, July 19, 2001.

<sup>90</sup> *JoongAng Ilbo*, English edition, July 25, 2001.

<sup>91</sup> *The Korea Herald*, July 26, 2001.

<sup>92</sup> Reflecting the intensity of the distrust they feel for President Kim, if nothing else, many conservatives believe that the original plan was for Kim Jong Il to come to Seoul in the second half of 2000, whereupon both sides would issue a joint declaration of unification. On

All this further inflamed the debate over the government's handling of policy toward North Korea and sharply constrained the government's latitude for action. It also fed the growing mood of scandal surrounding the Blue House, as the mainstream press went after government officials (including several government prosecutors and tax officials who were subsequently sent to prison for bribery) and close associates of the President for their own wrongdoing. Progressive leaders in particular emphasize the importance of these scandals in damaging the President's moral legitimacy among the public and weakening his political authority. Perhaps the biggest effect, though, was that it contributed to Kim Jong-pil's subsequent decision to bolt the ruling coalition. As a result of this decision, the government lost its majority in the National Assembly, the Blue House Secretary for Policy stepped down, and President Kim resigned his position as President of the ruling party.

The third development was North Korea's August 15 celebration of Korea's liberation from Japan. A group of more than 300 delegates from South Korea participated in this highly politicized event. While there, some of the delegates attended festivities at a site honoring former North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's unification formula and engaged in other political activities praising the current leader, Kim Jong Il. By doing so, they knowingly violated both South Korea's National Security Law, which forbids these kinds of "pro-North Korea" activities, as well as an explicit pledge the delegation had made to the South Korean government not to do so in exchange for permission to attend the event.

News of this development hit South Korea like a nuclear explosion. The conservative press viciously attacked the government's handling of the incident and called for a review of its engagement policy toward Pyongyang. The opposition parties demanded the arrest of the perpetrators and the resignation of Minister of Unification Lim Dong-Won.<sup>93</sup> A confrontation occurred at Kimpo Airport when the delegates

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this basis, the Administration would then change the ROK constitution to adopt a parliamentary system of government. This would obviate the need for presidential elections, hence terminating the "one term" restriction against President Kim remaining in office.

<sup>93</sup> *The Korea Times*, August 22, 2001.

returned to Seoul, with members of the Korea Veterans Association and other conservative organizations on one side and leaders of the Korean Association of Students and other progressive groups on the other. Although Minister Lim apologized for the entire incident, he refused to resign.

North Korea then stepped in to try and rescue the architect of the Administration's sunshine policy. Breaking a six-month refusal to engage in talks with South Korea or even respond to the Administration's repeated entreaties, it proposed restarting inter-Korean ministerial meetings on the eve of a National Assembly no-confidence vote in Lim Dong-Won in early September. Kim Jong-pil, along with most other South Koreans, saw this as a transparent attempt by the North to influence the outcome of the Assembly vote. Outraged, he joined with the opposition and the vote passed. Minister Lim resigned the next day, bringing down the entire cabinet in the process.

The Administration put on a brave face and tried to move forward. It accepted the North's proposal for restarting talks. No sooner was a lengthy list of agenda items announced, however, than the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States occurred. The South Korean government immediately put its forces on high alert as part of its response to the terrorist actions. North Korea promptly used this as yet another pretext to call off the talks. This sent almost all South Koreans to the exits. Even North Korea's strongest Southern soul-mates, like the *Hankyoreh Sinmun*, criticized its action. No one, it seemed, could say anything positive about Pyongyang.

President Kim's lame duck status effectively dates to these developments. The Administration limited itself from this point on to a handful of efforts - preventing the collapse of the Mt. Kungang project, connecting the Seoul-Sinuiju railway line, and pursuing talks on the Kaesong industrial complex - while it continued to urge Kim Jong Il to resume the dialogue and come to Seoul.<sup>94</sup> As the world turned its

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<sup>94</sup> As indicated in our first report, President Kim publicly urged Kim Jong Il to visit Seoul eight times in one month alone in 2001. This remains today a conspicuous characteristic of the Administration's efforts.

attention to the war on terrorism, much of the remaining air was sucked out of the sunshine policy. With this, winter settled hard over engagement with North Korea.

President Bush's speeches at the end of 2001 on weapons of mass destruction, his State of the Union speech in January 2002 identifying North Korea as part of an "axis of evil," and his comments about the North during his trip the following month to Seoul came in this environment. How these remarks and the broader U.S. war on terrorism are likely to affect the debate over policies toward the North, and what their long-term implications are likely to be for South Korean policies more broadly, will be addressed in the final report.

## **5. CONCLUSION: SOURCES OF CONTROVERSY AND SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS**

The situation on the Korean Peninsula, like that in many other parts of the world, constitutes something of a Rorschach test: People look at it and see different things. This has long been true of North Korea, with its opaqueness and unpredictability. But it is also increasingly true of South Korea, where the aspiration for greater democracy co-exists with demonstrably undemocratic practices and where the desire for a modern, market economy runs up against the reality of heavy state intervention and dominance by the large conglomerates. While many observers stress the "reform" and "transformation" of South Korea over the past several years, a more accurate way to describe the actual situation is probably a mixture of the old and the new.

This is relevant to the main question posed in this report: How did the public consensus in South Korea behind the government's efforts to engage North Korea evaporate so quickly and the sunshine policy become the core issue in a much larger political and ideological struggle? The answer varies widely depending on the observer. It is also more complex than provided by any one image.

One view, widely held among ROK government supporters, intellectuals, and progressive groups today, identifies the United States as the principal cause of the difficulties facing the sunshine policy. According to those who hold this view, the new "hard-line" policy of the Bush Administration and distrust expressed toward Kim Jong Il alarmed and offended North Korea, causing it to back off from dialogue with both South Korea and the United States. This in turn stimulated both the opposition parties - who allegedly don't want to see progress in North-South relations anyway because the MDP would be the chief beneficiary - and other conservative groups with their own "anti-Communist" agendas to do everything they could to prevent the Administration from achieving its objectives. The new U.S. policies also seriously "embarrassed" the South Korean President, those with this view argue, undermining his position with both North Korea and the South Korean public. From this perspective, the U.S. squandered the "golden

opportunity" created by the Clinton Administration in its last three months in office and - only a few months after the historic summit - cut off the most promising prospects for North-South reconciliation since the two Koreas were established.

Other people stress the role of North Korea. According to them, the North squandered valuable time in not responding to the Administration's entreaties. When it did finally respond, it failed to honor most of its commitments. It also frequently gave the impression as if it were toying with the ROK government, canceling meetings at the last minute without any explanation or, when allowing them to be held, refusing to discuss previously agreed-upon matters. The North Koreans also passed up countless opportunities to support those in the ROK government who argued that Kim Jong Il is a genuine partner for peace worthy of assistance. The one time Pyongyang did try to be helpful - offering to re-start inter-Korean ministerial talks on the eve of the National Assembly no confidence vote on Lim Dong-Won - the attempt backfired. The offer, which most South Koreans saw as a transparent effort to influence the outcome of the Assembly vote, set off a firestorm of criticism in South Korea. Meanwhile, the North significantly stepped up its efforts to exploit the divisions in South Korean society. It maintained its military buildup and other threatening behavior. And it repeatedly did things (naval intrusions, Russia-North Korea joint communiqué, etc.) that undermined Kim Dae Jung's credibility and political standing with the South Korean public. The best policies in the world, those with this view maintain, could not succeed in the face of this kind of behavior.<sup>95</sup>

There is undoubtedly some merit in each of these interpretations. To be sure, emphasis on the importance of the Bush Administration's

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<sup>95</sup> Many South Korean conservatives had long suspected that Pyongyang had changed its basic strategy - use South Korean democratization to support "pro-unification" and "pro-North Korea" elements and let them take over the ROK government - but not its longstanding objective of reunification on North Korean terms. This alleged change, plausible given the effect of North Korea's economic difficulties on its military capability, effectively shifted the main battlefield from the de-militarized zone (DMZ) to Seoul. North Korea's general behavior continually reinforced the conservatives' suspicion.

"hard line" overlooks the considerable continuity in U.S. policies. The Administration's emphasis on the importance of North-South reconciliation, repeated public endorsements of the South Korean government's engagement policy, and stress on President Kim's leading role in resolving inter-Korean issues are all aspects of previous U.S. policy that survived the transition. So too are the Bush Administration's pledge to adhere to the Agreed Framework and repeated calls for a serious, unconditional dialogue with North Korea. Other examples are the Administration's decision to have President Kim be the first Asian visitor invited to the White House and its active efforts to revitalize U.S.-ROK and U.S.-ROK-Japan consultation mechanisms. Emphasis on the Bush Administration's allegedly "hard line" both overlooks the fundamental continuity in U.S. policy and understates the lengths to which the Administration has gone to be supportive of what it considers a valued ally.

Still, the advent of the Bush Administration gave Pyongyang yet another pretext for breaking off dialogue with South Korea, and the more distrustful stance taken by Washington - as filtered through a South Korean media explicitly focused on furthering its own interests - bolstered those in the ROK who shared similar views. This undoubtedly reinforced the divisions already existing in South Korea and contributed to the decline in public support for the sunshine policy.

In the case of North Korea, the contributions are even clearer. Put simply, Pyongyang was its own worst enemy. Whatever its goals or intentions, its conduct communicated a fundamental unwillingness to come to terms with South Korea. This, together with its demonstrative effort to inflame social tensions in the South, undermined the willingness of most South Koreans to explain away North Korean behavior. It also undermined several key ROK government arguments: that Kim Jong Il could be trusted; that the regime was no longer a threat; and that the sunshine policy was effective in producing broader change in North Korea. In this sense, North Korea's contributions to the struggle in South Korean politics over North-South issues and the loss of support for the government's policies were both real and direct.

Despite the importance of these two external actors, the fate of the sunshine policy has been heavily shaped by South Korea's own *internal* dynamics. The debate over the government's approach re-opened deep fissures within South Korean society and divided the public sharply along political, ideological, and regional lines. The list of contributing factors here is long:

- *The government's minority status:* President Kim was elected with a plurality of some 300,000 votes. Even then he was elected only by forming a strange coalition - in political and policy terms - with Kim Jong-pil's ULD. His own party, moreover, was a distinct minority within the National Assembly. This was a major constraining factor from the beginning, both within the government and between the government and National Assembly. The logic of the situation suggested the need for the President to broaden his base of support in order to build greater consensus behind his policies. Although he moved cautiously in the early period of his Administration, on the whole this was not his general inclination. Instead, he used his sunshine policy overtly and intentionally to improve both his personal political position and his party's electoral prospects. This was not unreasonable, given the President's particular situation. But it helped rile the political opposition, politicize what had generally been considered a non-partisan issue, and increase the perceived stakes in domestic political terms. As reflected in the Administration's inability to secure support for electricity assistance to the North or funding for other planned government initiatives, it also exacerbated the task of gaining legislative approval for government policies. One by-product was an increased National Assembly role in and influence over government policy.
- *The role of reciprocity:* Reciprocity was important in its own terms of course. Support for government policies in any democratic society hinges ultimately on a public view that such policies are effective in advancing important national interests. Absent clear manifestations of North Korean

reciprocity, the "payback" for South Korea's largesse became increasingly hard to demonstrate. One effect was an Administration tendency to oversell its policy successes, which over time corroded its credibility. The failure to insist on reciprocity was important in another respect as well: It magnified the effect of the ruling party's minority status. By not educating Kim Jong Il about the importance of public opinion in a democracy and insisting on specific reciprocal gestures for specific South Korean acts, President Kim denied himself an important tool for shaping public opinion. Many South Koreans believe he may also have oversold North Korean leaders on his ability to deliver on his promises, reinforcing Kim Jong Il's emphasis on relations with the United States and reluctance to develop a serious relationship with South Korea.

- *The approach to domestic critics:* The President's confidence and conviction were valuable in at least two ways: They provided a compass that kept policy focused despite many challenges; and they succored the Administration in the face of severe domestic criticism. The downside was a certain hard-headedness that closed the policymaking process to all but the closest of the President's aids and blinded the Administration to the dangers of mounting domestic opposition. Many South Koreans insist that the Administration exacerbated its difficulties further by how it chose to deal with its critics. Although there wasn't much actual criticism of the sunshine policy in the early period, the Administration was harshly critical of those who did express doubts or reservations almost from the beginning. Indeed, the rhetoric used was often so harsh - accusing those who criticized the policy as being "anti-unification" and, in effect, unpatriotic - that it validated longstanding suspicions among South Korean conservatives about the President's ideological propensities and intentions. This had a predictable effect: While it heartened the radical left and secured its allegiance, it alienated many more in the middle of the political spectrum and narrowed the potential base for national consensus.

Informed South Koreans suggest that the President's rigidity and intolerance grew worse over time. Although he was always knowledgeable about the domestic situation, according to these observers, he simply stopped listening.

- *The war with the press:* The Administration's attack on the media under the rubric of "reforming" the press is widely seen as at least partly a manifestation of this intolerance for domestic criticism. The attack was even more consequential than the Administration's harsh rhetoric, however, in consolidating opposition to the sunshine policy. Admittedly, the Administration faced a couple of problems in dealing with the press that were beyond its control: Most of the dominant, mainstream press is very conservative in its political orientations, and most have long held attitudes toward President Kim that range somewhere between distrust and antipathy. Still, the Administration's effort to silence the press and force it to adopt reforms dictated by the government was more than simply anomalous, given the President's reputation as a champion of democracy and human rights. It was also counterproductive. The attack severely alienated the mainstream press and stimulated a de facto alliance between them and the opposition parties to prevent the government from achieving its objectives. It also exacerbated the Administration's difficulty in mobilizing public support for the steps it wanted to take with North Korea, since it could enlist only the leftist media in efforts to rally support for its policies. In a populace as inherently conservative as that of South Korea, a battle between the overwhelmingly dominant *Chosun Ilbo* and the more fringe *Hankyoreh Sinmun* was one the government was destined to lose.
- *The lack of trust and willingness to compromise:* These cultural characteristics have historically bedeviled Korean politics, contributing among other things to political rigidity and a "winner takes all" orientation. South Korea's short experience with democratization has provided little time for alternative approaches to be developed. This affected the political

dynamics at virtually all levels. Within the ruling coalition, the MDP and ULD each used the other to maximize its own political position without reaching a viable compromise on their very different views about policy toward North Korea. Similarly, the opposition parties - containing both conservative and progressive National Assemblymen - had to deal with their own internal confrontations. This made it difficult to even reach intra-Party accord, let alone adopt a more accommodating stance vis-à-vis the ruling coalition. Attempts by the government to exploit these internal confrontations intensified the distrust between the ruling and opposition camps and further fueled the opposition's unwillingness to compromise.

Other internal factors contributing to the evolution of events could easily be identified. The extreme personalization of policy, for example, saddled the effort to engage North Korea with all of the President's personal baggage. The Administration's reluctance to acknowledge the underlying continuity in South Korean policies removed an important shield against both North Korean manipulation and domestic partisan attack. And the government's refusal to convey the actual state of the North-South relationship to the public - its tendency to emphasize only what North Korea had "said" it would do rather than what it actually wound up doing - generated continual disappointment and public cynicism. More broadly, the Administration's emphasis on "trusting" the North in the absence of a widely apparent basis for this trust, and its periodic efforts to palliate the North through policy and personnel changes, created an impression of governmental naivete and weakness. North Korea's behavior made it easy for critics to exploit this impression. These factors combined to dissipate support for the government's engagement efforts.

Ultimately, however, the story of how consensus evaporated so quickly is less about particular governmental "mistakes" than about the broader interactions among politicians, press, and public opinion, with civic groups on both sides of an increasingly polarized citizenry serving as flag bearers in a larger political and ideological struggle.

This struggle reflects both the continued hold of old, unresolved issues, as described in our first report, and the impact of South Korea's new process of democratization. It also illustrates how, after decades of repressive, authoritarian rule, democracy has become a permanent feature of the South Korean landscape.

The bad news for government supporters is that engagement with North Korea has been dealt a significant blow. The sunshine policy is now wrapped up in ideological, regional, and partisan bickering. The obstacles to unwrapping the policy, moreover, are substantial. The government lacks a majority in the National Assembly. Its popularity is now limited mostly to President Kim's own home region. And public confidence is at an all-time low. Not surprisingly, few South Koreans see much potential for forward movement in the absence of major North Korean concessions. Even fewer expect such concessions to be offered, given Pyongyang's track record and reactions thus far to the U.S. call for renewed dialogue. Were they offered, however, the effect would be explosive. Most South Koreans would see any such concessions as reflecting a blatant North Korean attempt to influence the outcome of South Korea's upcoming elections.

All this will make it difficult for the Administration to move far forward in inter-Korean relations for the remainder of its term. This is not necessarily a statement about either the intentions or abilities of the current Administration. The truth is that it would be hard for any government to pursue an effective engagement policy today. The bedrock requirement for any such policy is a strong national consensus. Achieving such a consensus, in turn, requires many things: a favorable international environment; a responsive North Korean partner; a perceived balance between South Korean initiatives and North Korean reciprocity; a supportive economy; and public trust. None of these appear to exist today. Instead, South Koreans are divided sharply not only over *how* to engage North Korea but over *whether* to even try. Many believe that efforts at engagement are futile in the absence of major change in North Korea. Some believe they are worse than futile: Political support would simply bolster a recalcitrant, unreconstructed

North Korean regime, while economic assistance would directly or indirectly strengthen the North Korean military.

The most likely short-term prospect, therefore, is for more of the same. The Administration is likely to focus on keeping the family reunions and Mt. Kungang project afloat and successfully implementing the railway, Kaesong Industrial Complex, and other already agreed-upon projects. Achieving even this modest agenda will be difficult. North Korea's interest in these projects remains uncertain, and both the opposition parties and large parts of the South Korean public are dubious about their wisdom and value. This will necessitate a rather narrow focus. The task of building a new domestic consensus that enables South Korea to proceed with a broader attempt at North-South reconciliation will likely fall to President Kim's successor.

There are, however, two wild cards. One is North Korea. If the regime sees a major opportunity to exploit divisions in South Korea, it could conceivably shift course and offer a new proposal for expanded North-South cooperation that would be hard for the Administration to reject. The other is the upcoming presidential election in South Korea. If the prospects for the MDP candidate appear to be poor, the President could be tempted to seek a dramatic breakthrough in North-South relations as a means for improving his party's prospects in the elections. A combination of these two cards - an effort by the South Korean government to achieve a surprise breakthrough coupled with a North Korean perception of a chance to destabilize South Korean society - would be particularly incendiary. That awareness will likely decrease the prospects of major new departures. But it will not rule them out.

The internal dynamics of the debate over the sunshine policy are likely to have several short-term implications. Some of these were identified in our first report:<sup>96</sup>

- South Korea will continue, for example, to be weighed down by the unresolved issues from its past.
- The domestic political situation will probably get worse before it gets better.

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<sup>96</sup> See pages 53-55.

- And the tendency of some South Koreans to blame the U.S. for particular problems and conditions will likely persist, if not increase further.

At least two others emerge from developments over the last few months:

- Exploring ways to ease military tensions on the Korean Peninsula will likely become more important as North-South relations sputter and greater attention is paid to problems caused by North Korea's conventional forces.
- Dealing with potential crises, such as one caused by an unraveling of the Agreed Framework or a continuation of North Korea's missile and weapons of mass destruction activities, will likely rise on the policy agenda.

Strong emphasis on the importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance and the need to work together to address such issues will be a continual requirement for U.S. policy over the coming period. So, too, will be a continued demonstration of U.S. sensitivity to South Korean concerns as Washington necessarily pursues its larger strategic interests.