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SOUTH KOREA'S DEMOCRACY AND DIPLOMACY

Opening Remarks:

THE HONORABLE STROBE TALBOTT

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Panel I: Diplomacy

RICHARD BUSH, Moderator

HAKSOON PAIK

VICTOR CHA

DONALD GREGG

Panel II: Domestic Reform

KENT CALDER, Moderator

KISUK CHO

DAVID STEINBERG

SCOTT SNYDER

JAE KU

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TALBOTT: I'm Strobe Talbott. I want to welcome all of you, not just on behalf of the Brookings Institution but our Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies and also our co-sponsor of this event, the SAIS Korea Initiative. Particularly I want to thank you on behalf of Richard Bush, here at Brookings, and Kent Calder at SAIS for coming out to be part of this event this afternoon.

I think it's a credit to the foresight of both programs to have scheduled this event for today. Richard and his colleagues both here at Brookings and in Think Tank Row seem to have a knack for timing these things when the subject at hand is very much in the news, as it certainly is today. I can't imagine a more appropriate time to be talking about the Republic of Korea's domestic politics and also its diplomatic relations.

It is for me personally a special pleasure, yet again, to welcome Ambassador Han Sung Joo. He is a friend of the United States, he's a friend of the Brookings Institution, he's a friend of CNAPS and, indeed, was on the advisory board of CNAPS, the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, until government service once again called him to action. And I might add he's a friend of a number of us in this room, myself included.

I have known Ambassador Han and worked with him off and on for 10 years. We first got to know each other when he was Korea's foreign minister and we were in harness together at the ASEAN Regional Forum in Bangkok. He is, very much in the spirit of both of the sponsoring institutions today--that is, the Brookings Institution and SAIS--a scholar/diplomat. And also, I might add, to a degree that is highly unusual, he is an ambassador of immense influence both in his home capital and also in the capital where he is posted. And we're always very glad to welcome him here to Brookings, and particularly today, Ambassador Han, to get the proceedings under way. Thank you.

[Applause.]

AMBASSADOR HAN: Thank you very much for that overwhelming introduction, which I really don't deserve. Thank you.

We've had a few seminars on Korea lately. And fortunately, things always happen back home so that we always have something new to talk about. I'm supposed to give an opening remark, but I was also asked to speak for more than one or two minutes, so I thought maybe I'll give a brief historical review, or view, of where we are today.

I wanted to take advantage of the title of the seminar, which is Korea's Democracy and Diplomacy. It can mean, on the one hand, to talk about Korea's democracy and then Korea's diplomacy. Another way to construe that is to talk about the relationship between democracy and diplomacy. I'll try to do a little bit of the latter and share my thoughts about the linkage, especially as it relates to Korea during the past one year and more.

When I was going to graduate school, I heard so much about linkage politics. And right across town here, Professor James Rosenau of George Washington University is, of course, the most famous person on that subject. There is even a sub-discipline in the field of international relations named Linkage Politics.

On the most general level, they talk about things that we all know very well--that foreign policy needs domestic support, that there are domestic constraints, especially in areas such as trade. In many cases, trade issues are more politics than economics. They also talk about the relationship between democracy and war. And we know without being told by President Woodrow Wilson or Sam Huntington that democracies tend to promote peace. But at the same time, democracies also go to war--perhaps not against other democracies, but against non-democracies and also emerging democracies.

In the case of Korea, the linkage between domestic politics and foreign policy is especially significant, and I think so for two reasons. The first is Korea's history. Korea has been under

foreign rule during much of its history, most recently, of course, Japanese rule of 35 years. Even though almost 60 years have passed since liberation, it is still an issue. Our experience under the Japanese is an issue for two reasons: one, the Japanese colonial legacy--issues of collaboration and retribution have not been settled to people's full satisfaction; two, the way Japan has dealt with its own past recent history, which is certainly different from the way some of the European countries have done.

Secondly, Korea remains a divided country. So, for example, the U.S.-Korea alliance, in the minds of the Koreans is principally and originally not against a third country or a group of countries but against North Korea, which is another part of Korea. Naturally, the alliance and its strength are going to be affected by the state of the relationship between the two Koreas. And naturally also, Korea-U.S. relations becomes more of an extension of domestic politics than foreign relations.

As we focus on Korean domestic politics, what is happening there that will have a serious impact on its foreign relations, especially relations with the United States, is a point of our interest. Let me broaden our time perspective a little bit.

Back in 1974, I wrote a book with the title, "The Failure of Democracy in South Korea," that was published by the University of California Press. The book focuses on the failure of democracy to survive and to function during the 1960-61 period. Without going into details, since you can still buy it through Amazon.com--

[Laughter]

AMBASSADOR HAN: --my main argument was that, simply put, democracy failed in Korea then primarily because of ideological cleavages. I had identified two sets of cleavages--one between

those who supported authoritarian and government and those who supported democracy; the other between those who had more progressive ideas and those who had more conservative ideas. Clearly, I must have been smarter and more prescient 30 years ago than now, because at that time these ideological cleavages were not really apparent.

Even though ideological cleavages were never apparent because of the succession of dictatorial or authoritarian regimes until the late 1980s, and because of the clear and present danger posed by North Korea, they became the main sources of a democratization process in which the leftists piggy-backed on the democratization movement, which encompassed both the left and the right. As it happened, the democratization process proceeded, albeit in a slower speed than people wanted and with some detours, especially during the '80s. Nonetheless, the era of military-led authoritarian government ended in 1987 and democracy found a home in Korea.

Here I would like to introduce an episode. As you know, I was writing columns for Newsweek magazine then and often had discussions on Korean politics with foreign correspondents. Sam Jameson of the *Los Angeles Times* still teases me, saying that in 1987 I predicted the outcome of not just one but three presidential elections in succession: Mr. Roh Tae-woo, Mr. Kim Young-sam, and Mr. Kim Dae-jung, and in that order. I thought that was not only likely, but a good way of making the transition from an authoritarian rule to a bona fide democracy, considering the latent and apparent ideological cleavages in the country.

And that is what actually happened--not because I was smart, but because there was the natural process that was going to take place if you looked closely at all the sociopolitical elements in Korea at the time. By the end of last century, the first of the ideological cleavages, authoritarian versus democratic, was settled in favor of democracy, at least from the point of view of institutions such as elections, although authoritarian behavior and attitude still linger on. However, in Korea, the left-right cleavage has never been adequately dealt with, neither intellectually nor politically, not even in party politics.

As we look at the Korean political situation today and try to understand the meaning of it and make sense of it, what kind of observations can we draw?

First, I think the election of Mr. Roh Moo-hyun in December of 2002 and what has transpired since then represent a fundamental change in the makeup, the support base, the personnel composition of the government, the ideological and attitudinal attributes, and the operating style of both the leadership and followers of the government. It represents a new generation, exhibits greater ideological clarity, and is more civil society-based than any of the previous governments. What it lacked in ideological and political inclusiveness it has more than made up, at least for the time being, with the galvanization of new and existing support since the National Assembly voted on the president's impeachment. It remains to be seen how and whether the seemingly broadened support base is utilized, maintained, and even expanded in the future months to come.

What are the implications for foreign relations? In the short- to medium-term, there seems to be no immediate impact or repercussion. In fact, ironically, the appearance of a more self-assertive progressive leadership has made it possible to adopt what are basically realistic policy decisions, such as the original dispatch and additional dispatch of Korean troops to Iraq. Rhetoric often compensates for recent decisions that can be rather unpopular, particularly among the populists, which constitute the support base of the government.

For its part, the government places emphasis on stability and continuity. Just count how many second-timers, including the prime minister, at least one ambassador, and key ministers, there are in the present cabinet and government. Just consider how many of the ministers are actually older than the president himself, despite the fact that it is deemed to be a very young government.

These are some of the questions that we might ponder and seek the meaning, and see what kind of answers we get to these questions for our government and policies.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much, Ambassador Han, for setting the framework for our discussions today.

If I could now ask Ambassador Gregg and Professor Cha to come up to the dais, we will proceed with the next part of the program. And that is a discussion of the diplomacy of the Roh Moo-hyun government. We have a really expert panel today, and so I don't feel any need, particularly after Ambassador Han's excellent remarks, to waste any of your time trying to elaborate on a framework for discussion.

The first speaker will be Dr. Haksoon Paik, who is one of South Korea's leading experts on North Korea. He is director of the Center for North Korean Studies at the Sejong Institute. Then Dr. Victor Cha, a very well known Georgetown University specialist on Northeast Asia; and then Ambassador Donald Gregg, who served his country faithfully for more than 40 years, culminating in his appointment as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, and he is now President and Chairman of the Korea Society.

So let us start first of all with Dr. Paik.

DR. PAIK: Thank you, Dr. Bush.

Coming a long way from Korea, I don't have the energy to speak loudly, so I hope the microphone works well to compensate my potentially weak voice.

I am honored and privileged today to participate in this very special seminar that reviews President Roh Moo-hyun's first year of diplomacy and domestic reform. I was asked by the organizer to focus on North Korea, and I hope I can provide the context for the other speakers to talk about North Korean issues and the North Korea-U.S. relationship and the South Korea-United States relationship, particularly with regard to North Korea.

I guess my presentation today has four objectives. First, to shed light on the basic contradiction in North Korea's policy of pursuing two conflicting goals--a nuclear weapons program on the one hand and economic recovery and development on the other. Second, to show how North Korea handled this contradiction by restructuring its priorities, particularly by introducing economic reforms and making cooperative moves on the North Korean nuclear issue in its own very serious way. Third, to explain how President Roh Moo-hyun's policy toward North Korea has been virtually tied to the top priority of removing North Korea's nuclear weapons programs. And fourth, to advise what kind of policies could be adopted by the United States, South Korea's ally, in order to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and to help North Korea's market reform and opening as much as possible.

I've written about two pages on the three critical choices North Korea made in the early 1990s during the period 1991-94 in order to provide some background information for the analysis of the current economic and political situation in North Korea.

You may recall what happened during the period in the early 1990s. North Korea introduced quite important reform measures--free trade and economic zone in North Korea and high-level diplomatic talks with the United States, normalization talks with Japan, basic agreements with South Korea, United Nations membership, and, more than anything else, you can remember the framework with

the United States in 1994. And North Korea made another critical choice in the year 2000, inter-Korean summit talks and a dramatic improvement in North Korea-U.S. relations during the last month of the Clinton Administration.

And finally, in the latter half of 2002, about two years ago, North Korea made another critical choice. It announced a truly epoch-making policy designed to improve its economy by introducing market elements in its economic system. It should be pointed out that this policy was designed to introduce reform in domestic economic realms, unlike the two previous critical choices which basically dealt with external areas. North Korea also took dramatic measures to enlarge economic opening to the outside world and improve relations with Japan.

The three critical choices I mentioned indicate that North Korea was flexible enough in its own way in order to adapt itself to changing environments, domestic and external. I personally want to say that this has significant implications for the future choices of North Korea, particularly in relation to the nuclear issue and in establishing its relationship with the United States.

Now, what does the current situation in North Korea look like? First, the political situation. Currently, Kim Jong Il is firmly in control and North Korea is enjoying political stability in its own way. The party, the government, the military are loyal to Kim Jong Il and his policy lines, and Kim also appears to be competent and accommodating in balancing and in controlling the power elite and in mobilizing the people for loyalty and compliance. However, Kim Jong Il constantly faces the nagging question of how to strengthen the legitimacy of the North Korean regime and system in a deteriorating situation, and how to prove his ability as a leader to make a breakthrough in this predicament.

Two of the problems Kim Jong Il faces loom large. He must encourage economic recovery by curbing the high rate of inflation through more domestic production and more supply of goods from the outside world, on the one hand, and he must also resolve the nuclear issue, on the other.

Finally, I would characterize the North Korean politics today by the concept of secularization. The first indicator of the secularization of North Korean politics is so-called, you know, the "military first" of politics. The precedence of the military over the party is a sign of a breakdown of an orthodox socialist rule in North Korea, where the party traditionally took priority over the military.

The other sign of secularization of North Korean politics is the decline of the [inaudible] idea, which emphasized independence and self-reliance as the orthodox ruling ideology not only in the government palaces, but also in the people's daily lives. Instead, currently the practical gain mind set and practical gain socialist idea prevail in North Korea, which, consciously or unconsciously, emphasize the importance of interacting and cooperating with the outside world.

How does the economic situation in North Korea look these days? You may all recall that North Korea introduced some market elements in its economic management reforms, announced on July 1, 2002: the abolishment of the food and commodity rationing system, no provision of subsidies to factories and firms for carrying out production or distribution activities, the introduction of prices based on actual costs, the raising of salaries to meet the rising cost of food and daily necessities, and the devaluation of the North Korean currency against U.S. dollars, from 2.1 North Korean won to 151.

These reforms were basically designed to encourage production increase in agricultural and industrial sectors more than anything else, and also to affect foreign investment and promote outward economic activities. A widespread mind set, market mind set and expanding markets in which practical gain is most valued characterize the current North Korean economic situation.

In March 2003, farmers markets have been transformed into general markets, so-called, where every good is sold. The number of general markets in Pyongyang is 38 now, two markets in each district. I think one of the markets on [inaudible] Street was very well described by Ambassador Pritchard

when he gave a presentation here at Brookings after he returned from Yong-byon in January. In his presentation, Jack Pritchard said North Korea has changed completely as far as economic life is concerned. I don't have the exact wording of this, but that's kind of the message he was trying to send to the audience at the time.

There are about 300 general markets in North Korea. North Koreans also introduced a sort of modern or experimental agricultural household responsibility system, one or two in each county. I believe it is a prelude to the full-blown household responsibility system you saw in China in the late 1970s and '80s. And, you know, that's a real potential for such reform in agricultural areas.

North Korea also introduced diverse business responsibility systems in service and industry sectors. Private individuals can get a license for business, and they can even run factories. And of course they can run small businesses without any difficulties. Of course, the problem for themselves is to make profit out of it.

One problem in North Korea now is the differentiation and gap in income among the people and regions. Such a gap is growing more and more since July 1, 2001, when economic reform was introduced. In general, urban factory works have fallen victim to soaring inflation. Government is not responsible for wages of the workers anymore. For workers to get more salary, they have to have their factories operating at a higher rate, but unfortunately the current average operational rates of North Korean factories are below 30 percent.

Here, it has to be emphasized that the energy shortage is the biggest difficulty to the operation of factories and economic recovery in North Korea. No doubt, North Korea's loss of electricity resulting from the failure of the 1994 Agreed Framework with the United States was the biggest blow to North Korea's meeting energy needs for economic recovery and development. This is the reason why North Korea was so persistent in getting the permit, sort of, of nuclear power generation the second round of the six-part talks in Beijing.

As a whole, the North Korean economy has shown a tendency toward increased decentralization and expanded operational markets. North Koreans have recently become far more dependent upon money than under government for their survival. And one of the [inaudible] phenomena is a widespread atmosphere of so-called "money's everything, money can do anything." It is no secret that North Korean defectors cross the North Korean-Chinese borders by bribing the border guards.

I was here in Washington two weeks ago and I gave this episode as a way to help the audience understand what's happening in North Korea as far as bribing is concerned. A North Korean woman defector wanted to have cosmetic eyelid surgery for beauty in South Korea. But she found it very expensive there in Seoul, so she decided to go back to China, but found it still expensive there; so she decided finally to go back to North Korea. And she got it there at a moderate price and came to Seoul through China. The [inaudible] had a very in-depth interview with her, and it was very interesting to understand how easy it is for North Korean defectors to come to North Korea through China.

Bribery is so widespread that not only academic degrees but even [inaudible], if he is not a prisoner, could be bought off by bribing. For instance, at one economic college a bachelor's degree could be bought at 30,000 to 40,000 won, and even a doctorate degree in economics at 100,000 North Korean won.

As far as economic policy and economic life in North Korea is concerned, it's not the North Korea you used to know. I want to emphasize that more than anything else.

Because of the limited time left for me, I will skip a detailed discussion of the nuclear issue here, but I simply want to point out that North Korea has consciously and rationally embarked on playing the nuclear card in order to fend off the Bush Administration's attempt to invade and change the regime in North Korea and, more importantly, to proactively engage the Bush Administration in building its

external survival structure in terms of getting a security guarantee and economic recovery, and economic cooperation and assistance through a negotiated resolution of the North Korean nuclear problem.

I think I have to point out one more thing here. In the second round of the six-party talks, North Korea proposed to freeze and dismantle its nuclear weapons development program. I think it is the first time where North Korea officially proposed a CVID of its weapons program. Even if North Korea denied the existence of its uranium-based program, we have a sense that North Korea will eventually agree to discussing that matter in the working group or plenary meetings at a later stage.

And let me cut off all of that regarding the nuclear issue here.

Now, let me have some points about President Roh Moo-hyun's policy toward North Korea. We all know that President Roh Moo-hyun came to power when there was an increasing threat from North Korea, particularly after James Kelly's visit to Pyongyang. And, you know, under those circumstances President Roh had to formulate and implement his North Korea policy. And President Roh's policy toward North Korea has been characterized by the simultaneous considerations of removing the North Korean nuclear threat through negotiations, and of helping North Korea's market transformation through economic engagement and penetration.

But the more immediate and important object was, of course, to remove the nuclear threat from North Korea. In order to solve the North Korean nuclear problem, President Roh elected to strengthen U.S.-Korea alliance cooperation and put less emphasis on improving inter-Korean relations. This caused a split in his support base in South Korea, and distanced North Korea to a significant extent.

One interesting thing about President Roh's policy toward North Korea is that his policy has been attacked from both the conservative elements in the United States and his own liberal constituents in

South Korea. The conservative elements in the United States criticize the Roh government because it did not stop economic and other cooperative exchanges in North Korea when North Korea was developing nuclear weapons. On the other hand, a large portion of President Roh's constituency who supported him in December, the critical presidential election in December 2002, think that President Roh betrayed his own pledge made during the presidential campaign that he would put more emphasis and importance on inter-Korean relations and pursue a more equal-based partnership with the United States.

So, you might think in Washington, D.C. that Roh was doing a very bad job in terms of North Korea policy. He was originally regarded as a pro-North Korean politician, sort of, but later, of course, that image was corrected after his visit to Washington, D.C. to help in summit talks. But still, I found it very problematic that the conservative elements here in Washington regard his policy toward North Korea as something they can criticize. I want to make sure that you know he is a kind of president who is very highly criticized by his liberal constituents because of policy toward North Korea. So I have to emphasize that.

I have some policy recommendations for the United States, but I will stop here. Thank you very much.

DR. BUSH: I'm sure that in the question period, people will want to hear that.

We now turn to Professor Victor Cha of Georgetown University, who's going to talk about the Roh Administration's relations with great powers. Victor?

DR. CHA: Thanks, Richard. It's a pleasure to be here. Thanks to Richard and Sharon for inviting me, and thanks to CNAPS. I think CNAPS is a great program and I think both the intellectual and the policy community here in Washington has been enriched by the Asian scholars and practitioners that they bring over every year. So kudos to CNAPS.

What I thought I'd do is--I couldn't help but be tempted to comment on the economic reforms, given the very good paper given by Dr. Paik. And then I'd like to talk a little bit about the nuclear issue, and then I'd like to talk about relationships with the United States and Japan, if that's okay.

First, I suggest that you read Dr. Paik's paper. It's a very good paper and an enumeration of the reforms that the North Koreans have undertaken. And by "reforms," we're all talking about these July 2002 economic reforms. I guess my point of departure here is to say that there's no denying the significance of these reforms. They are very significant reforms, and they represent the first attempt in the regime's history at wide-scale economic change. The North Korean regime now admits flaws in the socialist style economy as the source of the problem, rather than blaming it on outside actors. So that's a real--it really is quite unprecedented. And as Dr. Paik and others in this room know, you know, there's this new spirit of entrepreneurship, albeit limited, that we see in North Korea today.

But the fact that these reforms are significant does not, however, make them successful. And I think there are a variety of obstacles here that I want to touch on very quickly.

The first is that we shouldn't interpret the July 2002 measures as the equivalent of a North Korean religious conversion to capitalism. Many of the reforms, arguably one could say, are situationally rather than dispositionally motivated. And what that academic jargon means, essentially, is that many of these reforms could arguably be seen as constituting coping mechanisms to deal with immediate problems rather than a wholesale shift in economic ideology. For example, Pyongyang authorized the monetization of the economy and authorization of farmers markets to buy and sell goods largely because the public distribution system is broken down, not necessarily because they bought into capitalism.

Secondly, the economic reforms really test the ability of the government to deal with these triple horns of inflation, economic losers, and urban poor that have been created by monetization of the

economy. Low supply and low output have led to massive increases in prices, as Dr. Paik noted, devaluation of the won. Just an interesting factoid: In 1979, when China's initial price reforms were implemented, they drove up the price of rice by 25 percent. In North Korea, the price of rice has gone up by at least 600 percent, if not more, on the black market.

In addition, there is fragmentary evidence that even though sectors of the labor force that were favored with the largest wage hikes are still discontented. Defectors coming across the Chinese border complain that the promise of higher wages has not been kept, with workers receiving only 800 won and then nothing after October of 2003. So the upshot here is that money illusion is quickly wearing off in North Korea, giving way to a new class of urban poor, potentially numbering in the millions, that could be very difficult to control.

Third, the ultimate success of these reforms rests on the North's capacity to do three things that I think many of us in this room are familiar with. First, they need to secure international food supplies until the reforms start to increase agricultural output domestically. Secondly, they need to secure loans to finance shortages and cash flow for the managerial enterprises. And third, they need to obtain technical training in accounting, fiscal policy, finance, and other sort of requisite skills. And the only point here is that the likelihood of any of these things could come to North Korea in large amounts without a resolution of the nuclear crisis, I think, is very low.

But perhaps the most interesting discussions about North Korea's reforms are the political questions and the judgments they instigate rather than the success of the reforms themselves. And here I just want to pose a few questions that I think come up either explicitly or implicitly when we talk about North Korea's economic reforms and their relationship to the nuclear problem.

The first is the question of are these economic reforms really North Korea's ticket out of its current problems? I mean, is this really the way that North Korea will get out of its current box? And unfortunately, I think the answer here is no. My pessimism stems not so much from the flawed

nature of the reforms, but from the larger political lessons that history has taught us about closed regimes that attempt such reforms. Kim Jong Il faces a dilemma that many past leaders have faced; he needs to open up to survive, but in the process of opening up he unleashes the forces that could lead to his demise. Now, can he hold this together? Clearly, probably the leaders in Pyongyang think they can hold this together. But history's waste bin has been littered with past dictators who thought they could hold it together.

Second, the whole question of do these economic reforms really mean that North Korea has "changed," that they really are seeking to turn over a new leaf? This is a critical question, because many of the people who advocate all-out engagement with North Korea have accepted this as the implicit assumption. And if you accept this as the implicit assumption, it tends to color everything that you see with regard to North Korea. If you believe that North Korea really has turned over a new leaf and it's in the process of trying to trade its security threats for economic goodies, then every time they rattle the saber, you immediately interpret that to mean it's a sign of negotiation. Right? So assumptions here really matter.

And I think there the danger, at least for me, is that we have to be wary of fixating too much on the economic reforms because we may be attributing much more to North Korean security preferences based on these economic reforms than really exist in fact. In other words, there is not necessarily a logical link between North Korean desires to reform on the economic front and a wholesale change in their security intentions. The counter-hypothesis would be North Korea could be seeking economic reforms and pursuing a ramping up of their national power through nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. This is not an implausible hypothesis, and it's fully consistent with the notion of rich nation, strong army.

So the upshot here is that North Korea could be trying to divorce its economic attentions from its security preferences. As some of you have heard me say in the past, Pyongyang could in fact want

to have both, want to have its cake and eat it too--both have a nuclear deterrent and have economic reforms.

Let me now move on to some discussion of how I see the South Korean relationship with Japan and the United States. Here, I preface my remarks by saying that both Ambassador Gregg and I were at another meeting out at Stanford, I guess about a month ago, on U.S. alliances in Asia, and one of the things that--a recurring theme that came up over the two days was this notion that U.S.-China relations are going fairly well now, U.S.-Japan relations are going quite well, there's an intimacy in the U.S.-Japan relationship that we haven't seen for quite some time. The one relationship that everybody loves to hate now in Asia is the U.S.-Korea relationship. This is the relationship that is sort of the downside, while everything else looks as though it's more on the upside. And I think for a confluence of domestic political reasons, both in South Korea and in the United States, there's more of a tendency to pile on, to sort of looking at the U.S.-Korea relationship as being in really bad shape.

Detractors of the Roh Moo-hyun government who want to criticize Roh Moo-hyun as well as this younger group within the Blue House, will point to, sort of, the bad state of U.S.-Korea relations as an example of how they're not doing a very good job in the Blue House. Similarly, on the U.S. side, detractors of the Bush Administration who criticize the unilateral nature of this Administration, again, point to the U.S.-South Korea alliance front line during the Cold War, you know, the state of this relationship is in such disrepair, this again reflects on the unilateral tendencies of the Bush Administration. So you have domestic factors in both countries that lead to this piling on in terms of a negative view of the alliance.

And I guess the only point I want to make here is, as a scholar, someone who has studied alliances, I think alliances have been judged historically not by their process but by their outcomes. And in fact, if you took a snapshot of almost any alliance, any bilateral alliance out there today, and you looked at the process, it would be fairly ugly. In many ways, alliances are like sausage-making. You don't want to watch the process, you just want to know what the outcomes are.

And in that sense, if we look at the U.S.-South Korea relationship, if we look at the process, it has been an incredibly ugly process--ugly with a capital U. I mean, really ugly. Whether we're talking about demonstrations, statements, views, it's been a very ugly process. But if we look at outcomes in terms of this relationship, it hasn't been half bad--whether it was Roh Moo-hyun, despite his supposed ideological leanings, sitting down with certain civil society groups and telling them to tamp down on the anti-American statements; or whether it was his government being willing in the spring to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq, something I think probably nobody would have expected back in December of 2002; or whether it's the fact that this government has—if I'm correct--sent the third-largest contingent, basically, for the Iraqi occupation. These are all results, right--if we judge alliances by their results and not by their process--that don't look half bad.

And finally, quietly but very surely, the United States-South Korean relationship is going through the most important rebalancing and realignment that forces the most important fundamental change in this relationship since the end of the Korean War. And again, the process hasn't been pretty, but in terms of outcomes, it has gone fairly smoothly.

So I guess I want to try to end on an optimistic note, so I would end there. I think that if we look at these alliances historically, what we tend to focus on is not the process, but the outcomes. And I think if we were to look back on this relationship today on the outcome side of the ledger, it hasn't been half bad.

Thanks.

DR. BUSH: You didn't want to say anything about Japan?

DR. CHA: Well, again, I think on the South Korean-Japan relationship, it's sort of followed a very similar track. I write a quarterly column on these bilateral relationships between Japan and South

Korea. When the Roh Moo-hyun government came in the first quarter of 2003, there was a lot of concern, trepidation about which direction this relationship would be going. And again, I think if we look at outcomes, yeah, clearly there have been some hiccups over historical issues, but I would argue that those sorts of hiccups over historical issues would have been the case regardless of what type of Administration you had, whether it would have been a Lee Hoi Chang Administration or a Roh Moo-hyun Administration.

In many ways I think the historical hiccup is something that is the baseline in South Korea-Japan relations. It will always be there. And the real judgment of the relationship is what happens beyond that baseline. And what has happened thus far beyond that baseline, again, has not been half bad.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much.

Ambassador Gregg?

AMBASSADOR GREGG: Thank you. I'm delighted to be here. I think this is the first time I've ever been at this esteemed institution, and I hope I do well enough to be invited back in 10 years or so.

I want to show you a couple of things. I'm almost through a book which I think is really imperative to an understanding of the Bush Administration. It's called "Rise of the Vulcans," by James Mann, a reporter from the L.A. Times. I'm struck by it because I've been talking about the vulcans by name for the last--since the election of George Bush. Because very clearly, when he was governor of Texas, he didn't have a world view. He very quickly acquired one, and I think he acquired it from this very formidable group of people who have deep roots in history, intellectual history, have a great self-confidence in their own ability to deal with problems, and I think that they are very, very formidable. I really recommend this. This is not a polemic. It is a very balanced study of who these

people are, where they came from, why they think as they do. And I recommend it to you most highly.

Just to show you that I've been preparing for this talk, I show you a Northwest Airlines napkin.

[Laughter.]

AMBASSADOR GREGG: I was flying in from Arizona yesterday and reading this book, and this great thought came to me, which I immediately--the only piece of paper I had as the Northwest Airlines napkin. I'll get to this later. But I just wanted to show you that I've been thinking in advance of this talk.

I also am very much aware that the 7th of May this year is the 50th anniversary of a very significant event. Does anybody know what I'm talking about?

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu. Why do I mention that? I mention it as one who spent four years wrestling with the Vietnam issue, and the Dien Bien Phu event was a very key event in Southeast Asia which the United States completely misread. It was the event that ended the colonial era in Southeast Asia. We did not see it in those terms. We saw it in terms of the Cold War, and were dragged into a tragic involvement from which we are still recovering and about which we are still arguing.

I see the Pyongyang Summit in 2000 as a similarly significant event, even though it is somewhat tarnished because apparently there was a certain amount of transactions of cash to bring it about. Nevertheless, I think it was a huge milestone in the history of the Korean people and that it set the stage for what we now see, which is that for the first time in history the major countries in Northeast Asia are at peace with each other and anxious to work together with each other to unlock the great

riches of the region. I think it is the best time we will ever have to drag North Korea out of its isolation.

But whether or not we will take advantage of this remains a great question. And one of the reasons it's a question is that--my point on the napkin, is that I think the Bush Administration does not differentiate between the various types of opposition that it is dealing with in the world. It doesn't differentiate between those who hate us because of ideology or religion--i.e., the terrorists--and those who are opposed to us because essentially they fear us--which I think is the motivation of the North Koreans.

Keith Luse and Frank Januzzi, two very fine Senate staffers, recently went to North Korea. Their trip report is available for all to read. Their conclusions, the first three conclusions, are very appropriate to this discussion.

Their first conclusion, flat statement: DPRK officials believe the United States will launch a preemptive attack on their country. No hedging whatsoever.

Second, North Korea has restarted its Yong-byon nuclear reactor, which has the potential to produce 5 to 6 kilograms of plutonium per year. The North could at any time easily reprocess spent fuel from the reactor to harvest plutonium for use in nuclear bombs.

Three, North Korea is in the midst of a significant economic reform movement, the full implications of which remain to be seen. North Koreans intimately involved with the reform initiatives appear to be among those in the DPRK pushing the hardest for resolution of the nuclear issue.

Januzzi and Luse also raise the issue of human rights and the gulags. And this is not to be ignored. The North Korean regime in many ways is a horrific regime. I don't gainsay that in any way. The question is how do you get them to stop being what they are? How do you allow them to move to a

posture where they can reform the way they do it? The North Koreans are almost totally opaque on this issue. I think it is something they do not want to talk about. I think they do not want to deal with human rights groups. I think this is a part of their agenda which lies quite deeply in the future.

The Bush Administration, I think, is still moving toward, grudgingly toward a more engaging policy toward North Korea. I went last September to a track two version of the six-party talks. It was held in Chingtao, hosted by the Chinese. Several of the Chinese and Russian representatives had been at the official Beijing talks that fell just ten days before. It was a fascinating occasion for me. The Chinese were the dominating factors. The Chinese, the Russians, and the South Koreans formed the core group, agreeing basically on all major issues. And the three isolated parties were North Korea, because it was the cause of the meeting, particularly with its nuclear weapons; Japan because of its history, the unwillingness to really address the issues such as the comfort women, which the North Koreans attacked them on strongly, or things like the Nanjing Massacre, which the Chinese raised. I went out for a day's sightseeing with a distinguished Chinese economist the next day; he said it's going to take us 50 years before we finally get the Japanese to face up to these issues.

And the third isolated party was the United States, because nobody--as they put it-- We don't understand what your policy is toward North Korea; we see that you don't like them, but beyond that we don't see what your policy is. And the American representative, all he said in response was, well, the North Koreans don't have to do everything before we do anything.

And that led Fu Ying, the leading Chinese diplomat at the meeting, a very distinguished woman, to say it as follows: We all agree on Position 1, which is that we want a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. North Korea agrees to this. And we all agree on Position 2, the ending position--including North Korea--that we want a verifiably nuclear-free Korean Peninsula with North Korea's security and economic concerns being adequately addressed. The problem is we don't know how to get from Position 1 to Position 2. We don't know who's going to speak first, who's going to take actions first; we don't know whether it has to be simultaneous or choreographed or sequential or what.

I think, in a way, that is still what we are working on now. I think that the atmosphere at the more recent Beijing talks is a great improvement over the past, but I think that there is still a long way to go and a tremendous amount of mistrust between the United States and North Korea. A young friend of mine, Daniel Snyder, just wrote a column from Beijing, where he has quite a different take on these talks than we have been hearing here in Washington. The Chinese perception is that it is the United States' intransigence that really keeps the process from moving forward.

Behind closed doors at the Beijing talks, the North Korean negotiator Kim Kye-kwan was described by participants as diplomatic and pragmatic, ready to talk seriously. He asked Jim Kelly two questions: Is the U.S. willing to put in writing statements of President Bush that the U.S. has no intention to invade North Korea and no hostile intentions; and second, if North Korea carries out complete, irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear weapons program, what kind of actions will the U.S. take in response? And unfortunately, Kelly failed to answer these questions; he just repeated what he had said. The new mantra for the United States is, You must behave as Libya has behaved, with a CVID mantra.

I also am concerned that although the President's rhetoric has become much more moderate, he has consistently said since his visit to the railroad station in early 2002 that we have no intention of invading the North, but some of the other very tough spokesmen of the Administration have not been muzzled. I don't know whether anybody can muzzle John Bolton, but he continues to speak very harshly of North Korea, as do others. There was a recent statement by a very senior member of the Pentagon naming Kim Jong Il with Hitler and Stalin as sort of a triumvirate of evil people whose evil sooner or later spills out over their borders so that they have to be dealt with through the use of force.

I think that there is still a secret hankering among certain elements of the Bush Administration for a regime change in North Korea. There are two kinds of regime change. There's the externally

imposed regime change and there's the internally generated regime change. My view is that there is the process of an internally generated regime change under way in North Korea which ought to be encouraged.

I fear that the Bush Administration still falls into sort of the ding-dong, the witch is dead approach to regime change, i.e., you overthrow one evil person and everybody lives happily ever after. That is not working out in Iraq. I don't think it works out anywhere. I think regime change brought on by an external force creates a tremendous amount of long-lasting turbulence. As an old CIA hand, I watched as we brought about regime change in Iran and Guatemala, attempted it in Cuba, and with disastrous results in all there.

[Tape change.]

AMBASSADOR GREGG: --type of regime change for North Korea, and I think we ought to do everything in our power to encourage the economic transformation which they are undertaking. They don't know what they're doing. They don't have the qualified people to do it. We need to get them to send more people abroad. I'm proud to say that the Korea Society is supporting a very small program between Kim Chaek University in Pyongyang and Syracuse. It's an information technology exchange program. The second tranche of people has just finished their time at Syracuse. Syracuse has done similar things with the former Soviet Union and China, and rates these North Koreans as more talented and dedicated than either the Soviets or Chinese with which they dealt in the past.

So we're not without hope. I think that we need to continue the dialogue with the North. I'm very pleased that people who know something about Asia--Colin Powell, Rich Armitage, Jim Kelly, Mitchell Reiss--now have the ball, and I hope very much that they will be able to make some real progress toward lessening the gap of mistrust and disillusion that still lies deep and wide between the United States and DPRK.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Would you care to comment just briefly on how the Roh Moo-hyun government is positioning itself on this issue?

AMBASSADOR GREGG: President Roh Moo-hyun, the last time I saw him was at a conference on [inaudible] Island, where he was asked by Bill Perry why U.S.-South Korean relations had sunk to a point that Perry had never seen before. And Roh Moo-hyun responded that the only area on which there is real disagreement between the United States and Republic of Korea is on how to deal with North Korea. And he said 50 years ago Korea had undergone a fratricidal war which had killed millions of people, and under no circumstances would he do anything which would encourage the reoccurrence of such hostilities. And then he asked, rhetorically, "I don't understand why the United States insists on such a hostile policy toward North Korea."

So that's the clearest statement I can give you as to what his view is on that issue.

DR. BUSH: Well, thank you very much to each of our three panelists. I think all the key issues have been laid out, they're on the table: What are North Korea's intentions, what are the implications for the United States, what are the implications for U.S.-ROK relations, and if there is the possibility of a positive outcome, how do we get there?

The floor is now open to your questions and comments. We have about 45 minutes, if your questions last that long. Please identify yourself and your affiliation, and to whom you'd like to address the question.

QUESTION: I'm [inaudible], a student at SAIS. I have a question for Dr. Paik. And Doctor, Professor Victor Cha just mentioned that sending South Korean troops to Iraq may be a good outcome of the U.S.-ROK alliance, but I think that may be regarded as a failure of Roh

Administration by its South Korean people, because I think that the President's role and his Administration failed to explain specifically to the South Korean public why they're sending these 3,000 additional troops--that's additional to the hundreds of medics and construction units already working in Iraq--these troops to harm's way in Iraq, except for the fact that the U.S., the biggest ally of South Korea, wants it.

Do you think that there is another reason why, except for the fact that the U.S. wants it, South Korea sending thousands of young South Koreans to Iraq?

DR. PAIK: I think the Roh Moo-hyun government decided to send an additional 3,000 troops to Iraq was, first of all, as you mentioned, because of the importance of strengthening South Korea-U.S. alliance cooperation, but also I think the Roh Moo-hyun government anticipated a kind of more successful outcome in the negotiation of the nuclear weapons issue. And the Roh Moo-hyun government wanted to send a clear message to the United States in good faith, as a gesture, to make sure to let America to take a more positive and more negotiated way of solving the nuclear issue. And those are the two most important considerations on the part of the Roh Moo-hyun government when it decided to send additional troops to Iraq.

DR. BUSH: Victor?

DR. CHA: Yeah, just quickly. I think the Roh Moo-hyun government's decision to send troops for the Iraqi occupation was the right decision, but they did it for the wrong reason. In other words, to couch the decision in the language of, well, this is good for the alliance and let's hope that we can get--you know, the quid for this might be a more flexible policy on North Korea, I mean, I think that's the wrong reason to send the troops. And I think that's why his own constituency reacted so negatively to the rationale.

I mean, the reason that South Korea sent troops, or is sending troops, is because it believes in democracy in the Middle East. It's the most vibrant democracy in East Asia today. It believes in stability in the Middle East because it's heavily dependent on Middle East oil. You know, these are the reasons. These are the reasons that the decision should have been couched in. I think that sort of argument might have resonated more with a young nationalistic generation than simply to say we're doing it because this is good for the alliance.

QUESTION: Are they the real reasons, or do you think they should [inaudible]?

DR. CHA: Well, presumably the reasons they stated are the reasons that they believe they're sending them. It sounded to me that, unlike the Japanese rationale for sending troops, which was couched in the language of explicitly that this is not for the alliance--I mean, Japan does this because they believe in stability in the Middle East and the free flow of oil and all these other things. So, you know, my only point is that it's a counter-factual that's difficult to prove, but had the rationale been couched in a different language, it might have had a different effect on his constituency.

DR. PAIK: Can I add some more comments? As you pointed out, the North Korean issue--I mean, the less emphasis on inter-Korean relations by the Roh Moo-hyun government and the decision to send additional troops to Iraq are the two most important factors which are responsible for the split in his liberal constituency in terms of supporting the Roh Moo-hyun government's policy. But I think, you know, as I pointed out in my presentation, first of all, from the beginning it was preoccupied with how to remove a nuclear threat from North Korea. And so that cannot be over-emphasized as far as the mind set of the Roh Moo-hyun government is concerned. Of course, democracy in Iraq is important for everybody, maybe all the people around the world, but you asked the reasons why and I answered two factors that were involved in his decision to send additional troops.

QUESTION: Ken Quinones, International Action. I have a question for Victor. Victor, in your presentation you suggested that, on the one hand, economic reforms are under way in North Korea. Yet on the other hand, you implied that there is no real change, or helpful change, to the regime. I wonder if you could clarify that a little bit, because your answer tended to jump to the question of security rather than to the question of where the economic reforms are leading North Korea. Are they leading it toward a transformation of the regime or toward a sustaining of the regime?

DR. CHA: I think where my comments departed from was, Ken, the point that most people assume that the reforms are leading toward a transformation of the regime. And many people, I think, make the assumption that the reforms themselves are symptomatic of a change already in the intentions of the regime, not just on the economic side but also on the security side. I think many people make that assumption, in part because the reforms are so unprecedented.

My only point was to raise the counter, which is to say that, yes, the reforms are unprecedented, but there's a difference between actions that are taken that are taken because they're situationally driven--I mean, you take these actions because you have to, right? I mean you devolve responsibility onto local production units and away from the central government, not because this is symptomatic of change in your mind set and your view with regard to capitalism, but because you have to do something to deal with the high absentee rates that you're seeing. So you try something different.

So my only point is that I'm less willing to make the immediate logical leap from looking at the reforms and saying they represent a transformation of the regime, versus saying that these things are really situational. That's the only point that I was trying to make, that somebody has to raise sort of, you know--somebody has to be the curmudgeon, Ken. So I'll make the curmudgeon argument.

DR. BUSH: Why do you think we invited you?

DR. CHA: Right.

DR. BUSH: Dr. Paik has a comment.

DR. PAIK: I would agree with Victor that North Korea introduced reforms for the purpose of sustaining a system on the technical-- you know, maneuvering-- for technical motivating purposes of making the situation better for the government, not hoping to transform the society itself. But, you know, definitely they tried to keep their society, their system intact at the beginning. And definitely they are dealing with the unintended consequences at the moment.

But one important thing I have to mention is that North Korea is not simply dealing with the unintended consequences of the reform itself. But they have tried to more intentionally momentarily to keep the direction toward a more desirable economic outcome, economic resource in terms of having economic recovery and economic development, even though they are very aware, in my opinion, that there is a point where they have to deal with a so-called reform dilemma. So they are very conscious about the problems they might expect on the way. So what they wanted to do was reduce the trial and error as much as possible after reviewing all kinds of experiences that were done in other countries, from the Soviet Union and East Central European countries and China and Vietnam. And that's one point I want to make.

Another thing is that not only for North Korea but also any other country, security and the economy are the two most important priorities for any leadership. And I don't think North Korea is worried about security itself now more than its economy. Of course, they want a security guarantee from the United States. That's a very important thing for North Korea. But I think they regard a security guarantee as an absolute precondition for going beyond the current status of economic affairs. They want to facilitate more economic reform and they want to go more rapidly toward a better economic outcome.

So I think, you know, by introducing economic reform, they changed the so-called structural alternatives and they restructured the priorities. As I mentioned very briefly in my presentation, now their priority is their economy. And so in order to get out of this contradiction of pursuing two contradicting policy goals, security and a nuclear weapons program on the one hand and economic [inaudible] and foreign assistance on the other, they quite intentionally are getting out of this dilemma by making some concessions in their own way on the nuclear issue and trying to get more assistance for their economic reform and development [inaudible].

And the third point I want to make is that--of course, this is not related to North Korea, but before I forget I want to put this out. When I mentioned the Roh Moo-hyun government, you know, (being) criticized on both sides from the neoconservative establishment in the United States and liberal elements in South Korea, what I wanted to say was that the conservative elements here should be more sympathetic with his position. You regard his policy is not satisfactory to you, but in South Korea, as I mentioned, he is highly criticized by the liberal constituents of his support base. So particularly after having all kinds of problems, a confidence vote and a general election in front of him, I think he's maybe seeking a more sympathetic viewpoint from the American side. That's what I wanted to mention.

DR. BUSH: We have a question right there. Don't?

QUESTION: I would just like to sort of support the first point that you made, Dr. Paik, in the three critical choices that the North Koreans made and that this recognition of the need for economic reform goes back to Kim Il Sung. When the Chinese extended diplomatic relations to South Korea in September 1992, I was ambassador at the time, and the Chinese ambassador, Dr. Zhang, came to see me immediately upon arriving in Seoul. And he said I've spent 15 years in physician and I'm really glad to get out of there and into a real city.

But he described Kim Il Sung's last visit to Beijing, which had taken place in 1991 after the death of Ceausescu, who was one of the few people with whom Kim Il Sung had maintained a close relationship down through the years. Ceausescu had tried to bring about rapid change in Romania, and he and his wife were both killed very quickly as a result of that. And according to Ambassador Zhang, this had shaken Kim Il Sung deeply. He went to China and said to them, I recognize that we need to implement economic change in North Korea, but how do we do it without suffering the fate of Ceausescu--the same point you made, Victor, that he who rides the tiger is in danger of getting eaten if he tries to get off.

The Chinese at that point suggested the special economic zone, and the first crude attempt by the North Koreans to move in that direction was Rajin-Sonbong--which didn't work, but at the same time they still did sign the agreement with South Korea just at the end of 1991, which still is a blueprint for reconciliation if they can get back to it.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Over here.

QUESTION: David Sands at the Washington Times. Something that was just mentioned for the first time just a couple of minutes ago, but I was wondering about this whole impeachment drum. Is there foreign policy fallout for South Korea? Can South Korea make coherent foreign policy while this is going on? What do you see as the fallout for foreign policy?

DR. BUSH: Next panel.

QUESTION: Does anybody want to talk about the domestic--

DR. BUSH: That's the next panel.

DR. PAIK: Simply, I want to mention that there would not be any immediate impact upon South Korea security and foreign policy, as Ambassador Han pointed out.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Next question.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. Dmitry Ponomarev, Embassy of Belarus. It so happened that back in my country for many years I have been studying Asian Pacific affairs. And at that time, whenever Korea was mentioned, the theme of unification was immediately pointed out. Just now, this panel didn't even touch the subject. Moreover, in all the media coverage, at least, and official pronouncement of the American side, reunification is absent.

So I would like to ask all the members of the honorable panel maybe to say some words about the problem. I mean, what does it mean, the absence of the problem? Does it mean that it dies away, or does it mean that it is so complex that it is impossible to address it at the present stage? Thank you very much.

DR. BUSH: We'll start with Dr. Paik and just work down the table, whoever wants to make a response.

DR. PAIK: One of the most important impacts upon South Korean peoples dealing with the unification issue was IMF bailout. You know, simply [inaudible] bailout, the South Korean government and the South Korean people cannot afford discussion of any unification of whatever-- unification by absorption or unification by whatever means. We were so busy taking care of ourselves. You know, the economy was in shambles and so from [inaudible] policy toward North Korea, which was named, so-called, the sunshine policy, which was a reconciliation, cooperation policy with North Korea, and until President Roh's policy for prosperity and peace, I think, as you pointed out, yes, definitely there is an absence of the unification issue in South Korea's policy toward North Korea.

We feel that eventually North Korea and South Korea can have a peaceful unification on South Korean terms, which means, you know, a capitalist democratic way of unifying the country. But, you know, we strategically do not talk about unification or any related issues when we are trying to improve the relationship with North Korea, trying to induce North Korea to expand their reforms and transform themselves to a capitalist [inaudible] in the system.

DR. CHA: Two points. First, I'd like to just quickly address the earlier question of what the impeachment means for foreign policy. And there, I think, basically, as Ambassador Han said, I don't think that--you know, the good news is the bad news in a sense. The good news is that there won't be--you know, it will be pretty much steady-state in terms of policy with regard to the United States and with regard to North Korea. And some might also consider that the bad news in the sense that it also means there won't be dramatic shifts. I mean, the domestic situation is such that you can't really have dramatic shifts of new initiatives in policy.

But I think the other thing is, you know, when Ambassador Han was a professor, I once took a course with him when he was guest-teaching a course at Columbia. And one thing that came up was this discussion of paradigm shifts. And I think what we see in terms of policies by the United States and South Korea with regard to North Korea are paradigm shifts that go beyond the leadership in the two countries. So whether one is being impeached or not doesn't really matter.

And the paradigm shift is that, on the United States side, the North Korea problem is now a problem that's part of the global war on terrorism. It's a failed state; the potential for WMD production and possibly the facilitation of WMD terrorism. And for the South Koreans, as Dr. Paik and Ambassador Gregg and others have noted, it's a completely different situation, in which it's a combination of peninsula reconciliation after the June 2000 summit as well as the second questioner's question about unification. The subtext of the sunshine policy is the desire to put off unification for the very material reasons that Dr. Paik noted. I mean, South Korea's goal right now is

not unification, it's twenty-thousand dollars--you know, it's the “imanbul shi-de” [ph], the \$20,000 per capita income era. South Korea is an OECD \$20,000 per capita income country. The notion of having to absorb North Korea would be a real problem in terms of attaining that goal. And that in part, I think, informs this policy of trying not to press the North Koreans, not to do anything that causes instability.

DR. BUSH: Ambassador Gregg, do you have any--

AMBASSADOR GREGG: Yeah, just briefly, in response to the question. I think one of the few things that North and South Korea agree on is that neither side wants unification to happen quickly. Because if it happens quickly, it's more than the South can handle economically; and if it happens quickly, it means that the North has capitulated to the South. So I think there's hope on both North and South Korea's parts that some kind of evolutionary process can lead to a time when the ideological gap is less and that accommodation leading toward unification can take place.

Now, the economists will say that's never going to work because the tracks they're on, the economic gaps are going to grow wider rather than narrower and you have to acknowledge that fact. But I think there is a hope that somehow the Korean-ness of the situation on the peninsula can reassert itself at some more benign era in the future.

QUESTION: My name is Victor Okim, U.S.-Japan Research Services. I like Ambassador Gregg's idea that internal process moving toward democracy North Korea instead of external pressure. However, looking at South Korea's democratization, I remember Park Chung-hee was assassinated. And then you remember that [inaudible] the Christian churches in Korea. And then there were many students studying the United States went back to see the political process in South Korea. So it must have been tremendous external pressure in South Korea to move from a dictatorship to a democratic system.

So I'm wondering, if you prefer internal process to change North Korea instead of external pressure in terms of regime change, what type of things can you look for in North Korea to change that internally, sociologically, politically, and economically? I'm just wondering. I kind of like your idea of a peaceful process, but I'm not sure what you look for to do that internal process.

AMBASSADOR GREGG: That's a very good question. Before I try to say something about North Korea, let me just repeat a vignette from my experiences with Park Chung-hee. I once, after the only time I ever played golf with him, I asked him if he ever compared himself to Kamal Ataturk of Turkey, a man who had pulled all power to himself then built up institutions and really forced the distribution of power into Turkish society and, as a result is still the greatest hero in modern Turkish history. And Park's answer was, I don't know too much about Kamal Pasha, said he, but I would like to do for Korea what he did for Turkey, make it economically strong and militarily secure.

So, sure, there were times where we stepped in and there were bumps in the road in our relationship with South Korea, but I think that within South Korea there was always the seed of wanting to move toward democracy.

Now, I don't think that we can assume that that exists in North Korea, because where would they have heard about it? They have heard about [inaudible]. And as Dr. Paik has said and as other Americans have said, Kim Jong Il seems to be very clearly in control. But people are hurting, people are starving, people are in gulags. It's somewhat improved. I think there is a hunger for economic improvement, and economic improvement, if it comes through a liberalization of the economic process, brings with it unintended consequences which Kim Jong Il and his people can probably not perceive in advance. It will bring a loosening of procedures, a greater awareness of the need for cooperation, a greater awareness of the need for foreign trade, and a greater awareness of the need for foreign advice and the acceptance of it.

And I think from that kind of process, or within that kind of process, lies the greatest hope for North Korea changing itself into something better than it is now.

DR. BUSH: Other comments?

I would just say, if I could add, I think the decisions of leaders in this kind of situation are very important. If Kim Jong Il decides that the best way to keep himself in power is to open up the system, then he has a big incentive to do it.

Next question?

QUESTION: [Inaudible.] To my understanding, Korean people are divided into two concerning what the real intent of Kim Jong Il is, his vision of North Korea and unification. And I'm also witnessing the same division here among the panelists. My question is for Ambassador Gregg and Professor Paik.

The first question is, Ambassador Gregg mentioned the reason why North Korea is developing nuclear power stems from their fear of invasion of United States. You mentioned the Bush Administration's ignorance of the difference, acknowledging the difference. I think you are right. But North Korea, after the division of South and North, has infiltrated South Korean soil many, many times. And they exploded the airplane, the Korean Airline, and they tried to assassinate the Korean president. And they committed many brutal things.

I don't think--do you think that that kind of brutal action stemmed from fear? So that's my first question.

The next question, for Mr. Paik, is that you mentioned a North Korean defector who wanted to have the cosmetic surgery and went back to North Korea and got the surgery. I heard this several times

from you. And it is really contradictory of all the statements describing the North Korean situation. I've never heard of that kind of situation. It is easy for North Korean defectors to come and go to North Korea, China, and South Korea. I heard that there are 2 million people starved and died and 200,000 political prisoners in North Korea. And they have cosmetic surgery? I can't understand, so please, this is just for the journalistic interest. So if you make it public, I really want to interview her or I'll call my newspaper to please interview her. So, please--

AMBASSADOR GREGG: Me first? I'll be very quick. I think that's a very good point. Did those brutal acts by North Korea in the past spring from fear. And the answer to that is no. Because when Korea was divided, everyone assumed that North Korea was the stronger part and that eventually South Korea would be taken over by the North. When I was in Korea in the mid-'70s, North Korea was busily digging tunnels under the DMZ through which they infiltrate the South.

I think that the blowing up of the aircraft in 1987 was their last-gasp attempt to head off the Olympics, to sour that. I think the collapse of the Soviet Union brought, really, an end to their hope to be able to conquer the South. I think that at some point, and I've heard a few indications that they may be doing this, they have to begin to put an end to the kind of covert operations, the sending of secret submarines and that kind of thing, which are the mark of a totalitarian state.

I visited Zimbabwe once and I went to the head of the special police in Zimbabwe and said, What's it like to live next to South Africa? And he said it's like living next to an octopus. He said, With one tentacle they'll sort of pat you on the head, and with the other tentacle they'll try to choke you. And that's, I think, often the way my memories of the Soviet Union. They used to do the same kind of thing.

I detect a tendency toward North Korea to move away from that kind of multifaceted approach. I think they have to learn to speak with one voice. They still don't do that, but they're doing it better

than they did before. But certainly the brutal acts that you describe came from a bullish sense that they were going to win the conflict between north and south, and that's finished.

DR. PAIK: I don't think the woman defector's case is a common case. It cannot be applicable to all defectors who want to go back and come back again to South Korea. But that case was a fact. I'm talking about a factual happening which is well recorded. And also, you know, I have text of her interviews in my office. So when you are in Seoul, please come to my office so that you can read it.

The point I'm trying to make is that North Korea is very--is plagued with a lot of problems, unintended problems because of the policy of loosening up and decentralization and economic reform. And I think there are many cases who can easily go in and go out by bribing the border guards. It's just not difficult in these times for people to bribe the border guards, and I don't think you have to keep the kind of image you have kept about North Korea. As I mentioned, North Korea is not the North Korea you used to know. Maybe the atmosphere in Washington, D.C., conservative and they're not trying to see really what's happening in North Korea, may help you understand it that way. I hope you will come to Korea and see the picture more correctly.

QUESTION: Daniel [inaudible] from [inaudible] University in Seoul. I have a question to Victor Cha. This is a question related to U.S.-South Korea future relationship. He mentioned that forging relationships is like making sausage--the process can be quite ugly, but we have to judge it from outcome. Which I do not quite appreciate because, when you concede one of the most important decisions during your presentation, which Roh did during his first year, the decision to send Korean troops in Iraq. But when you concede the process, it is not his ruling party, which happened to be minority at that time; not civil society, which it was based on, but is rather the opposition party, which was taking majority at the time, now assuming the role of [inaudible] impeachment. And assuming that this minority ruling party is going to take majority party in light of all these indications, then on what basis do you continue to believe the future U.S.-Korea relationship is going to [inaudible] the process?

DR. CHA: Well, I mean, your question presumes that had we had a different composition of political forces in the legislature that we would have had an entirely different outcome. And, you know, that's a question that I can't address because I don't know the answer to that. And I don't think anybody else in this room knows the answer to that.

I think the way to see whether your argument is right or my argument is right is something that we'll find out later this spring. Because depending on how the new composition of the National Assembly looks, we can then trace how decisions and outcomes are made relative to what the political balance of forces is in the national legislature.

If it is the case that the opposition, however defined, is in the minority and doesn't command enough power to make decisions, according to your argument, the Roh Moo-hyun government will move in a completely different direction in terms of Iraq or in terms of the alliance or in terms of these other things. So, you know, the answer is we'll have to see. We'll have to see if that's going to be the case.

But I don't know. To me it's tough for me to imagine in the current state of relations truly radical departures from the general direction in which the alliance has gone under the Roh Moo-hyun government. And Ambassador Han said, I mean, if you look at the ministers, they're not--if you look beyond sort of the thing that everybody focuses on with regard to this government, there is a lot there in terms of continuity and there are a lot of people there with a lot of experience who believe that they have Korea's national interests in mind when they make decisions.

QUESTION: Hello, my name is Bonnie Oh, Georgetown University. This conference is about one year of the Roh presidency, and the first part, obviously, is diplomacy. And about the foreign policy of President Roh Moo-hyun, people have not detected too much break from Kim Dae-jung's policy, despite the fact that the sunshine policy has been considerably discredited because of a lot of

reasons. And also, in South Korea, when you look at the way President Roh was elected, what Ambassador Han referred to, left-right issues, have never been really resolved.

So right now, the problem, it seems to me, both in domestic and foreign problems is that it's not just the right-and-left problem; it's also the generational issue. Obviously young people are more for reconciliation with the North, while the old guard and those people who remember the Korean War are very much concerned that Roh's policy to North Korea may jeopardize South Korea's security.

I'd like to know whether the distinguished panelists see any kind of shift in view of the way President Roh is having difficulty. If he gets reinstated, for example, do you see any shift in his foreign policy toward North Korea in order to reconcile this break in the South between younger and older generation and right and left?

DR. PAIK: One of the legacies of war and one of the successful legacies of Kim Dae-jung's sunshine policy was that it expanded the base of the forces for reconciliation, cooperation with North Korea. And I think, you know, even though his policy has been criticized much for various reasons, the expansion of the support base for reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea was one of the most valuable legacies of his policy.

And, yes, as you pointed out, there is a generational gap in terms of supporting a reconciliation policy toward North Korea. But as I pointed out, for various reasons President Roh Moo-hyun did not fully commit to continued reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea because of the nuclear threat from North Korea.

So I think there is some distinction between Kim Dae-jung's policy toward North Korea and Roh Moo-hyun's policy toward North Korea. And people are responding in various ways to this change in policy toward North Korea. There are some advantages and disadvantages for the Roh Moo-hyun government and also for the general public, the general national interest of South Korea.

But simply I wanted to point out that the situation simply compelled the Roh Moo-hyun government to divert its attention to various ways, at least in two directions--the importance of continuing inter-Korean relations even though to a limited extent compared to the previous time, and also the necessity to solve this nuclear issue as quickly as possible in a complete and comprehensive way.

DR. CHA: On the ideological divide, would it ever be--is it possible to reconcile it? I think the answer's no. And I think this is going to be a permanent fixture now in South Korean domestic politics, largely as a result, as Dr. Paik said, of Kim Dae-jung's sunshine policy. What it did was widen the political spectrum and made it politically legitimate for South Koreans to talk about engagement with North Korea when that was really not the case before. So that's a permanent widening of the spectrum that I don't think is going to change.

In terms of the differences of Roh Moo-hyun and Kim Dae-jung on policy towards North Korea, my stab at this would be to say that if you had to sort of say what the differences are, one difference arguably is that probably Kim Dae-jung's policy of sunshine toward North Korea is--was more ideologically motivated than Roh Moo-hyun's. I mean, I know there are all these different caricatures of the current South Korean president, but I see him more as a political pragmatist than a political ideologue. And I think that we've seen that in certain decisions that this government has taken, you know, in the one year that it's been in office. So I think the difference is probably that -- his sunshine policy was much more ideologically informed and based than Roh Moo-hyun's.

And then finally, with regard to the impeachment--I can't stay, because I have to go back and teach-- I mean, the one thing I would say there is that, you know, the opposition and others probably think they have Roh Moo-hyun right where they want him, you know, because they've got him on the ropes and everything. But if anything, the history of this fellow shows that this guy is always able to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. So in many ways, he may have the opposition right where he wants them.

DR. BUSH: Okay, thank you very much. We're going to take about a 15-minute break now. I want to thank you all for your outstanding questions. I have two requests. First, please don't leave. We have an outstanding panel now coming up here on the domestic side of the first year of the Roh Moo-hyun government. Victor Cha has to go teach, so he can leave, but the rest of you have to stay. It's warm in here, it's cold outside, so please have a cup of coffee.

Second, please join me in thanking our three panelists for their outstanding presentations.

[Applause.]

[Break.]

DR. CALDER: We're about to start with our second panel today, which, as you know, deals with the domestic side of many of the issues that we were just considering.

I'm Kent Calder, the director of the Korea Initiative at SAIS. We're delighted to be cosponsoring this with the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies. Of course, we've just considered a range of the international issues in some detail. And as you can see, obviously there are all kinds of overlapping issues. In many ways, of course, logically the whole question of domestic politics both of the nature of Korean democracy, the changes underway and their durability have a lot to do with the whole question of foreign policy.

Maybe by way of introduction I should say just a word, and I think it's worth our while reflecting in many ways on how remarkable Korean democracy itself is. I can remember back in 1982, when I was a lecturer up at Harvard University, being involved with the JOSPOD, the Joint Political Economy Seminar at Harvard-MIT, and Sam Huntington was speaking. And he was talking about how Confucianism in certain key parts of the Northeast Asian region was not only in tension with

democracy, but how it fundamentally would prevent democracy and hierarchical non-democratic systems would likely persist in Northeast Asia, and in particular in Korea, for some time to come. That was 1982. As you know, in his later work, Huntington significantly changed his stance with his book, "The Third Wave," and so on. But it really was developments in Korea after that that proved him strikingly wrong.

So I think in Korean democracy we have a historic development, one that a lot of people doubted for many years. We've got a fragile development, it's probably fair to say as well. If one looks across the developing world, in other countries, certainly in Latin America, many of the middle-range developing nations have alternated back and forth between democratic and military regimes before establishing their democracy. Ambassador Han, of course, was mentioning Korea's own experience in '60-'61, where of course there was a military coup that ended that early experience with democracy.

We've already seen in our previous panel that democracy can have, or political systems can have, of course, major implications for foreign policy. And in what we're going to be looking at today, our panel, we'll focus, of course, on the domestic system itself, not simply the impeachment but including the impeachment issues, the nature of Korean democracy, its implications for policy, political reform, and then also for economic reform and ultimately for foreign policy.

So I think it's an exciting agenda. We've got an excellent group of people who are going to be speaking. Our first speaker is Dr. Kisuk Cho, who is the associate dean of the Graduate School of International Studies at Ewha Women's University. Then Dr. David Steinberg, whom you know, many of you, director of Asian studies at Georgetown. Scott Snyder, who does both incisive analysis and lots of media commentary, as you also know, who is now here in Washington with the Asia Foundation. And then, finally, Dr. Jae Ku, who's currently at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University and recently also completed a Ph.D. at our school, at SAIS.

So with that, Dr. Cho?

DR. CHO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am greatly honored to have this opportunity to speak about a puzzle you might have.

The topic I have decided on is why is President Roh Moo-hyun not popular. I didn't say "unpopular," I said "not popular." You will see the implications later.

I think there are two aspects. One is that there are structural constraints that undermine presidential popularity. And the other aspect is the situational factors. This is related to the structural constraints but also President Roh Moo-hyun is mostly responsible for.

I listed three structural constraints, but these are all related. So you may understand it as just one factor. The reason I started with this question is because many pundits as well as scholars call President Roh Moo-hyun a populist. By contrast, he's not popular at all.

This is President Kim Dae-jung's popularity. As you can see, President Kim Young-sam's popularity was very similar to this. If we were able to measure President Roh Tae-woo's popularity, it might have been the same. This has been the traditional popularity pattern. Usually at the beginning of the term, it's very high and then declines as his power diminishes.

So as Scott (Snyder) pointed out earlier--I had a very interesting talk with Scott that the presidential popularity in Korea seems to correlate with the presidential power. So you can see at the later stage, the lame duck president is very unpopular.

If you look at the popularity for President Roh Moo-hyun, starting from '83(?) these are the other newspapers. I separated these two Chosen daily newspapers, because it's very important in lowering

the presidential popularity. The role of the press is important in South Korea. And anyway, it underestimates at least a 10 percentage of the actual presidential popularity. And right after a few months, sharply and rapidly declined, and then, right now, it's a little below 40. It's very unusual. So many people argued that the president will be soon a lame duck compared with previous presidents.

But if you look at the quality of the support, you will see his major support comes from the 20-30 young voters and white collar students and college-educated. So if you look at the quality of his support basis, very high-quality citizens are supporting President Roh Moo-hyun. In the past, the traditional--the low-educated and older voters and rural voters have been the strong supporters of the president. But this case is totally different from the previous supporters.

And then, why the impeachment? You might have a question why impeachment has happened in South Korea. As you can see, this is the president's party, the Open Uri Party, which is close to the president, and this is the major opposition party. This is the MDP, who made Mr. Roh Moo-hyun as president. But the new party split from the old party, so they consist of larger than two-thirds of the National Assembly seats. So practically, the impeachment was made possible by the coalition of the three opposition parties. They probably thought that, since the president is unpopular, presidential popularity is so low, if they passed an impeachment bill, then people might be supportive of the opposition parties. But they miscalculated. They didn't understand what's going on behind the low popularity of the president.

The reason I am showing this figure to you is because I want to talk about the last presidential election, when President Roh Moo-hyun got elected. This is the support for Candidate Roh Moo-hyun. One time, after his election at the primary, his popularity was up high, here, but the other times, probably the last five years, Lee Hoi Chang has been the number one candidate who has the highest probability to get elected as the president. And throughout the year, Lee Hoi Chang has been number one again.

So even after the--this is the unification of the candidacy made between Roh Moo-hyun and Chung Mong-joon, the FIFA president. Still, even if Roh Moo-hyun's popularity went up, still Lee Hoi Chang miscalculated that -- Lee Hoi Chang is going to win. And actually, most journalists and scholars predict that Lee Hoi Chang is going to win.

So going back to the structural constraints, the previous election was the hardest fought election between the two candidates. After the democratization in Korea, most of the presidential elections were a three-way contest. But the last presidential election, because of the unification of the candidacy, was a two-way competition, very fiercely fought between the two candidates. The two candidates were very distinct in terms of social backgrounds and policy platforms.

The GNP, they never expected they were going to lose the election. So after the election results, they couldn't accept the fact that they were defeated. So they requested a recount of the votes. And even after the recount of the votes, psychologically they couldn't accept President Roh Moo-hyun as the president. And also, the ideological cleavages and the GNP supported by the major conservative newspapers, these all created turmoil.

On the one hand, the president has the power who is strongly supported by citizens and citizen groups. But on the other hand, the power holders in Korean society is the establishment, represented by GNP and conservative newspapers. And judges are very conservative. And the National Assembly, as you can see earlier, the National Assembly is dominated by conservative politicians.

So as we discussed earlier in the panel, the supporters--when we talk about ideological cleavages, ideological cleavage is based on their attitudes toward North Korea. It's not something like government intervention in welfare policy, something like that in the Western society; it's only related with people's attitudes toward North Korea.

So in terms of their attitudes, the majority is supportive of sunshine policy. But the problem is that the minority, who has the power--they are the establishment, so they are making this conflict an ideological conflict. They don't accept the election outcome.

So I said that there is a power shift. Where I'm saying "power shift" is that power is shifting from the establishment to the citizen groups. When I say "citizen groups," it's not organized citizen activist groups; rather, it's the citizens. So citizens, who have been very passive in Korean society, are now becoming very active. They're not that well organized, but they are making voluntary associations and becoming very active and trying to get the power. So there's a power struggle between the establishment and citizens, the class.

And also, in this conflict the role of the conservative press is very important in shaping the public opinion. So that's why there is a gap between the election outcome and public opinion in everyday life.

So those are the structural constraints that are undermining the presidential popularity.

This is the model that I used in explaining how President Roh Moo-hyun got elected in spite of the-- not many people predicted that. I believe there has been some party realignment undergoing. And the evidence of party realignment you can see from the emergence of a new party, Open Uri Party, which is the most favored party by the public these days. Because of this process of realignment and realignment, we were able to witness the emergence of the new party, and--

[Tape change.]

DR. CHO: --Korean society but also applicable to any other Western societies. So we need macro conditions and micro conditions as a result of all this process. When macro conditions exist, there should be some politicians' mobilization -- make the issues, politicize the issues.

So "objective political conditions" means the North and South Korea summit by President Kim Dae-jung, and "realign voters" means voters have been realigned from the previous political parties, MDP and GNP, and they are sick and tired of regional parties and corrupt parties and the establishment. But there was no candidate who was able to mobilize these realigned voters.

Fortunately, the candidate Roh Moo-hyun emerged as the person who is capable of mobilizing these voters. Why? Because President Roh Moo-hyun has been viewed as an outsider, a progressive politician, where in Korea all the conservative politicians have prevailed. And then he has fought against regionalism four times. So he lost elections, even National Assembly elections. So he became the person who can galvanize the new issue. The new issue was the sunshine policy, attitudes toward North Korea.

And then, "micro behavior" means voter new issues. That means majority-supported sunshine policy and then they selected Roh Moo-hyun. And then there is a change in party-support basis.

But you might be curious--even in the previous presidential election the regionalism persisted. As you can see, Roh Moo-hyun got his most votes from here, this area, whereas Lee Hoi Chang got his votes from this area. The reason that regional votes persisted is not because people continuously vote based on regions, but the choices available were only regional parties. So that's why, you know, if the new party emerges, like Open Uri Party, it can capture the support from both regions. That's why I think President Roh Moo-hyun attempted to create a new party.

And as you can see, here is an age variation. And then, again, in elections Roh Moo-hyun got more votes from university graduates, whereas Lee Hoi Chang got more votes from middle school graduates.

Now I'd like to turn to the situational factors. I mostly talked about the external factors, but I think here the most important one is that President Roh Moo-hyun is inexperienced. He appointed many people who are inexperienced as well and incapable. That's why I think he replaced many of his ministers and Blue House aides after his inauguration.

So setting aside that internal factor, I'd like to talk about the external factors. The first one is independent counsel. Right after his inauguration he had to sign a bill passed by the GNP demanding the appointment of the independent counsel to investigate the North and South Korean summit. So President Kim Dae-jung's close aides were brought to a trial and sentenced. So because of this, his core supporters are the present Kim Dae-jung supporters. So he lost core supporters.

And the second one is the party split. As I mentioned earlier, by creating a new party--although he didn't get involved actively, but he kind of remained aloof, so implicitly allowed the creation of the new party. So party support also contributed to lowering his popularity among the core supporters.

And also, tension with the press. As you can see, whenever there is a mis-report or distortion by the press, the president didn't stay calm. They actively took actions to protest against press distortion. But as you can see, you know, the number of cases, number of actions taken are decreasing. That means at first you can imagine how hostile a relationship he had with the press. But the press is improving by these actions, so I think these actions were inevitable.

And then, around 58 percent of the cases the government won the case, this means that there was actual distortion of the unfair report of the press.

And also, the role of press is to make people believe that the bad economic situation in South Korea right now would contribute to President Roh Moo-hyun. So they made people to believe that President Roh Moo-hyun is responsible for the economy. But as you can see, you know, this is the financial crisis that we got bailout funds from IMF. So you cannot argue that the unemployment

situation was worse than this situation. But nonetheless, the GNP supporters argued that President Roh Moo-hyun was responsible for the bad economy. Which has been the major newspapers' argument, that President Roh Moo-hyun's labor-friendly policy ruined the economy.

And then, if you look at the GDP and GNI, again, you know, this was the worst time during the financial crisis. You can see this up period. Right at the financial crisis, Korean economic fundamentals were so good, so we recovered very quickly. But, you know, they couldn't overcome the structural problems of the economic system. So how come this was possible, the liberalization of the [inaudible]? So President Roh Moo-hyun boosted up the economy by liberalizing the credit cards.

So the President Roh Moo-hyun inherited these economic problems right after his inauguration. So now the economy is about to go up because he didn't do any artificial measures to boost up the economy. So naturally, the economy was about to go up, but still the people couldn't feel this economic upturn. So the people criticized Roh Moo-hyun for the bad economy.

And if you look at President Roh Moo-hyun's performance, in many of the issues related with democracy and participation, I think Roh Moo-hyun achieved greatly. But in economic matters, he had a very bad evaluation.

If you look at the polls, most people pointed out that the economy is the president's worst performer. There is a consensus that the economy is the culprit. And they demand, people also demand President Roh Moo-hyun to focus in the future on the economy again.

So as you can see, most of the low popularity stems from the bad economy, which President Roh is not much responsible. You know, if you feel the effectiveness, output of the economic policy, you have to wait at least one year--and it has been only a year, and President Roh Moo-hyun is responsible for all this bad economy.

And again, many people call the president a populist. If you look at these groups by class, the white collar people's support is even higher than the average citizens'. Usually in the past, the previous presidents had strong support bases among agricultural, fishery, and forest--these groups. And most populists are popular among these groups. Look at this. Not much difference. So President Roh Moo-hyun is not a populist at all.

If you look at the impeachment, although his popularity is very low, it does not mean that people want him to be out of his office.

Most people--again, look at the poll difference between [inaudible] Daily newspaper and other newspapers. It's huge. People oppose, and in every poll more than 70 percent of the public oppose impeachment. That means they do not believe the president did a good job, but they still have a great expectation about the president.

And as you can see here, future expectation, if you look at this, most people believe the president will be very successful. So people still didn't give up their expectation and hope for the president, and particularly among these citizens in these particular regions.

So in conclusion, what I'm saying is that President Roh couldn't get high popularity from people does not mean that people discredit him. Many people have great expectation about him. So once he's successful in National Assembly elections and political and economic reform, I strongly believe that he will be the first president who can be remembered as the most successful president in Korean history.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

DR. CALDER: Thank you very much, Dr. Cho. I'm sure that you've provided the basis for some vigorous discussion later on. You pointed to a lot of paradoxes, that someone could be so popular and the people wouldn't want him out. As you talk about his support base and the relationship to NGOs and so on, one wonders whether it's possible for a democratic president--a president with that sort of base, in any case, to really manage the Korean economy, just as one thing that occurs to me.

We have number of very distinguished speakers to follow. Our next speaker, Dr. David Steinberg from Georgetown University. Dr. Steinberg?

DR. STEINBERG: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here and an honor to be on the panel.

The organizers of the conference have found it convenient to separate foreign policy and domestic policy in considering President Roh's Administration. This is administratively and conceptually attractive, but it really can't be done, as we know. Domestic and international affairs are intimately interrelated.

We know that South Korean policies toward North Korea, whether considered internal or international from the South Korean perspective, have substantially affected the Administration of President Roh. The U.S. response to the North has also affected his internal administration. President Roh's core political support is in large part based on people--the youth, as we've seen--whose policies toward North Korea and the United States are not ones with which the U.S. Administration has been comfortable.

The announcement from Pyongyang on March 14th illustrates the interrelations between these domestic issues and foreign policy. Pyongyang charges that "the motion on impeachment has thrown this land, South Korea, into a bottomless abyss of political and economic catastrophe and brought the ROK the disgrace of being a politically underdeveloped country in the world. The

impeachment is the product of a despicable plot of the U.S. to attain in the April election what it failed to do in the last presidential election and its backstage manipulation."

That's very strong stuff. In the remarkable example of United States sensitivity, if the Internet report is true last week and it was in the press more recently, Vice President Cheney is scheduled to visit Seoul the very day that the National Assembly elections take place--which, whatever it may do to fuel the propaganda machine in the North, will cause much and unnecessary anti-American speculation in the South.

When one looks back on the first year of President Roh's Administration, one is hard-pressed to remember accomplishments that stand out. There has been really very little progress. Rather, the impression created is one of continuing political vituperations, scandals, political dramatics, such as threats to resign--but no real progress. Yes, the stock market has managed to increase by some 25 percent during the period, and even the impeachment dropped the market for only one day, after which it recovered and rose. But the tumult created in the past month may negatively affect the market and the level of economic growth in the year ahead, as well as foreign investment. But in the interim, management is in the prime minister's hands, and appears to be both competent and solid. So I don't think there is a worry about the way the government will operate.

In considering the past year, we should start with the end, which is the impeachment charges. It is instructive that, among Koreans, there are two diametrically opposed interpretations of that impeachment. The optimistic one is because this was handled through democratic procedures and there was no military intervention, this is a demonstration of the strength of Korean democracy. The negative view is the unprecedented impeachment of a president is shameful for the country; it indicates that democracy is really not that well established in Korea.

My preliminary assessment is that both are right. The civil processes prevailed, if not civility, and that's a plus. But the whole incident and the response of all parties to the problem indicate a fundamental fault line in the democratic processes in Korea.

The charge that President Roh advocated by any legal means the affiliation of those in the National Assembly and those running for office to switch parties to his Uri Party is a relatively minor violation of the extremely restrictive regulations regarding elections. His party is also charged with receiving illegal campaign funds. The impeachment must still be upheld by the Constitutional Court, as you know, by a two-thirds majority of nine judges, and it has 180 days to decide. Probably they will not decide before the April 15th election.

The passage of the impeachment is related to an apology that President Roh was asked to make about his statement but which he refused to do. Americans need to understand that apologies in Korean culture and in the Korean--and, I might add, the Japanese--legal system are exceedingly important. His refusal to apologize incensed enough voters of the National Assembly to change votes, resulting in enough votes to swing the vote against him.

As widely seen on international television, there was a riot around the speaker's platform within the National Assembly--shoes were thrown, tears were shed. This does not help Korea's national image. As I mentioned earlier, civility did not prevail. The impeachment and the National Assembly riot caused shame, and yet, as Dr. Cho said, 70 to 75 percent of the people are against impeachment, according to some of the polls. And this is a strong emotional issue tearing the country apart.

The U.S. will be dragged into the picture, even though the White House statement was appropriate, saying that this was an internal Korean matter. Yet, as was evident in the 2000 elections, many Koreans charge that the U.S. silently expected and hoped for the election of Lee Hoi Chang and the Grand National Party, and thus would be happy to see President Roh ousted. I don't say that's true; I just say that that is a common belief in many quarters.

If one reviews the domestic scene over the past year, corruption among all political parties seems the paramount issue that has pervaded the news. All parties have been accused of raising illegal campaign funds, and President Roh indicated that he would resign if his party received more than 10 percent of the illegal funds of the Grand National Party that it was said to have received. Press reports indicate that his party did receive more. But more importantly, since when does morality or law depend upon a 10 percent solution?

It is likely that the impeachment charges and the charges that the U.S. is involved in it, however spurious these are, they will probably increase anti-American sentiment among those so inclined. The deterioration of U.S.-Korean relations and the marginalization of the republic in relation to U.S. policies toward North Korea are related to the rise of anti-American sentiment that neither government wants to address holistically, but rather responds instead to incidents. The Korean government, on the surface, says there's no anti-American sentiment because there are no immediate incidents in the media, and the U.S. only responds to incidents that flare up in the press.

I argue that both are wrong and that there is a rising curve of anti-American sentiment that both sides need to address. It's interesting that many Koreans charge the American media with inflaming anti-Korean sentiment, and the Americans claim it is the Korean media that is responsible for anti-American feelings.

When President Roh advocated that legislators join his party, he was in fact demonstrating something that was fundamental to the political process in Korea, quite beyond his political party. That is, parties are the weakest link in the democratic process in Korea--and I've been arguing this for a very long time. Parties in Korea, at least in American terms, are misnomers. They do not train new young people, they have few programs or principles, they have little continuity, they change their names according to the political Feng Shui or Pung-su. People easily change parties when the

feel the political advantages are greater. They are entourages grouped around a leader who in turn has a regional following.

Our analyses usually concentrate on the regional character of parties, but we ignore the leadership issue. This entourage approach to Korean politics is a result of personal loyalties, where loyalty is to the individual, not to the institution or office. One is loyal to President Roh, Kim, Park, et cetera, but not to the presidency. This, of course, leads to factionalism, which is simply another way of saying that the entourage system is alive and well and living in Seoul.

This feature of Korean politics is further exacerbated by the proportional election system where a party gets additional seats in the National Assembly depending on the percentage of the vote it received. This means that the leader of a party is in a position to allocate seats to those he wants, thus increasing his already massive power. Those so chosen have no constituency except the leader and thus are even more dependent on the leader than the ordinary National Assembly person. Some charge that the system leads to corruption by individuals paying large sums to ensure a safe proportional seat. This may or may not be true, but what is more important to me is the concentration of power in the hands of the leader.

Korea, I would argue, is a procedural democracy. All the procedures associated with a democracy, except one, are there, and this is the concept of power which is finite and thus not easily to be shared. This concept of power, in contrast to the institutions, is highly traditional and Confucian and personalized. Politics is about power, not principles; compromise is anathema, as the leader speaks ex cathedra, as a father would within the traditional family--and we should continue to remember that the family is the Confucian template for governance.

As a well known Korean politician told me, Korea operates on Western hardware and Confucian software. As another eminent Korean said, Koreans would rather surrender than compromise, because if one surrenders, one keeps one's moral integrity intact, but to compromise is to lose it. Yet

the basis for democratic governance is compromise. One has long advocated a bipartisan policy if the republic wanted to deal effectively with the United States. But this has been impossible because compromise is so difficult. If Party A advocates something, Party B opposes it automatically. There are few free votes in the National Assembly; everybody usually votes the party line. The resort to fights and fisticuffs as we have witnessed the other day is not a monopoly of any party or regime. This has occurred with a depressing degree of regularity since the founding of the republic.

All this relates to the April 15th National Assembly elections. Will there be a backlash against the Grand National Party and the Millennium Democratic Party, thus giving Roh's Uri Party a majority or a greater voice? Press reports indicate public sympathy for President Roh and a great increase in those supportive of the Uri Party. But whether this will be sustained and translate into a majority or a plurality in the National Assembly is too early to tell. In a way, we might call this the Spanish syndrome, when a major event before an election can change the political landscape.

The United States, including many of us in this room and myself, are most comfortable with the Korean intellectual elite, who are world-class internationalists with whom we've had dialogues over a generation. The new group around President Roh are different--less English, more insular, more skeptical, less educated abroad, et cetera. There is a new group with a new voice in Korea. Americans know far less about them than we should if we wish our alliance to continue. Already there are Koreans calling for an end to the alliance as we know it today. The youth generally support President Roh, and there is talk in Seoul of a generational war as well as one based on income.

There is a need for any Administration in Korea to attract new people and train them and have newer personnel who can innovate policies in the society, and that is one that every Administration must do.

If I were forced to predict the results of the Constitutional Court's judgment, I would have to say that it is unlikely they will find the offenses sufficient for impeachment. If they find for impeachment,

there will be a special election. And this, as they say, will be a new ball game. If he's not impeached, then what sort of retribution, if any, will he and/or his associates bring against those who brought the charges against him in the first instance? What will the youth do? There are already reports that the youthful supporters of other parties are rebelling against their aging leaders. The future political role of youth is very important.

In any case, all those concerned with Korea and the well being of its people are in for trying times in the spring. President Roh, and indeed any Korean president, needs to rise above the partisan politics that pervades the political scene in Korea and show leadership based on a national not party interest, the Korean national interest. And this is a critical, if difficult, task.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Applause.]

DR. CALDER: Thank you very much. We've seen some very interesting elaboration, of course, as to what the nature of the problem is here, some different possible hypotheses--the support base, leadership, the particular problems of transition in Korean democracy.

As our next commentator, we have somebody that has just gotten back--well, actually, maybe a year ago, close to that, but Scott Snyder was the Asia Foundation's representative in Seoul from 2000 to 2003, and he's now back here in Washington at the Asia Foundation offices. Scott?

MR. SNYDER: Thank you, Kent. I want to thank Richard and Sharon for inviting me. It's a privilege to have the opportunity to make some comments on Professor Cho's paper, but actually, what I'm going to do is couch my comments a little bit more broadly than that.

One thing that hasn't been mentioned about Professor Cho is that she actually had a very interesting and critical role to play in the context of the last presidential election, where she wrote a very important piece for [inaudible] News, which I think helps to provide additional mobilization for President Roh. And also, she's been involved in a number of other ways, in analyzing current political developments. So I have a great deal of respect for what she had to present. So I'm going to do something that I hope will sort of complement and round out in response to current developments.

I think it's safe to say that currently in Korea, Korea is facing a political crisis. And I think that crisis also can be an opportunity. I think that this crisis in 2004 in some ways is analogous to the economic crisis of 1998 in that what we're seeing, I think, is quote-unquote creative destruction in the political realm. And we're seeing a transition that involves the removal of authoritarian legacies and the consolidation of democratic institutions within Korean politics.

I think it's well known that President Roh's top priority for his presidency is domestic political reform. And in fact, elections in recent years have been a catalyst for reform of politics and parties in Korea. President Roh was a beneficiary of the first primary election that the then-Democratic Party held in 2002. We've already seen pressures for change in terms of how party members are selected for this election. In the past, the political bosses of the parties, the head of the parties, essentially controlled the selection process, and this year has been different.

I think that most of these political reforms are generally overwhelmingly positive for Korea, and I think that they are the types of changes in the context of the Korean democratic system that should be supported by the United States, even if in certain cases it might make certain issues in our relationship more difficult to manage. I do think that the current situation, with the impeachment and an acting president, does slow down Korea's momentum in terms of foreign policy.

There are a number of factors, or aspects, that I think are very interesting about President Roh's presidency thus far that are important to note as we look at the current impeachment crisis. One is that I think that President Roh has shown restraint in the use of his presidential powers that are at his disposal. In some ways this might be a kind of remarkable story that has been somewhat overlooked, although I think that Professor Cho alluded to some of these in her presentation.

We see the Roh Administration giving up the option of vetting early editions of the papers. He's allowed the prosecution to independently do its job without interference, including the prosecution of members of his own staff who have been found to have taken illegal campaign contributions. And President Roh's quote-unquote weak presidency has made the National Assembly more important, and it's required the National Assembly to take more responsibility as part of the Korean democratic process.

The impeachment, I think, was deemed by the public as an abuse of the National Assembly's new position of responsibility in the context of Korea's democratic process. And so we've seen this strong negative reaction in terms of public opinion, interestingly enough occurring right before the next National Assembly elections. This is a rare opportunity where immediate gratification for the voter is available. And I think that, indeed, there already was a very strong anti-incumbent mood in Korea, and in fact I think that it's likely that we're going to see significant turnover in the National Assembly in terms of new members. And also, we may see some, I would suggest, realignment rather than de-alignment in terms of Korea's political landscape.

The reason that I would say "realignment" is that I'm not yet convinced regionalism is dead in Korean politics. I think that it's just taking a new form, and the reason is that, as Professor Steinberg has suggested, if Korean parties are organized around entourages, then they're organized around leaders. And we have new leaders in Korean politics, including President Roh and the party leader Chung Dong-young of the Uri Party, who are from [inaudible] and [inaudible] respectively. I have

to test this hypothesis. I'm going to be very interested to see what the map looks like in terms of the proportion of votes in the National Assembly following this election.

Another characteristic that I think we're seeing in terms of the type of campaigning that goes on, both in the 2002 election and in the current election that is going on right now in Seoul, is what I would call mobilization politics.

And essentially, this is a type of politics that I think was learned on the campuses in the 1970s and the 1980s. And the people who learned how to do this type of politics best were student activists. And they are now the ones who I think are mobilizing support for, in particular, the ruling party in terms of its influence, both in terms of public expressions of support, like demonstrations against the impeachment that occurred just last Saturday in Seoul and in terms of the approach, in terms of media and political strategy.

I want to say, in fact, I want to sort of emphasize two key points that I think are very important as we look at what is happening right now in Korea: One, the democratic institutions and mechanisms, I think, are working effectively, thus far. And we've seen, in fact, a kind of check and balance in action in the way Korean's are testing their democratic systems. They're kicking the tires to see whether this really works or not in a way.

And, of course, there's a lot of emotional aspects attached to this. And that brings me to my other key point and that is that, as others have suggested, as Ambassador Han suggested, the ideological cleavages have deepened. And I think that the immediate impact of the impeachment has been to further deepen those ideological cleavages and to make them a significant part of the campaign.

Now, I want to pick on one thing, one phrase that has come out of that process. And that is that some people have suggested that somehow the impeachment motion was a coup d'etat. And I don't think that is true because I think that, indeed, the National Assembly does have a right of

impeachment. It might, as public opinion polls suggest, it might have been really stupid for the National Assembly to use that power. But, again, the voters can demonstrate their response to this in less than a month.

There's another issue that's very interesting that I want to highlight because I think that very few people have looked at it thus far; and that is, in particular, the ruling party position has demonstrated what I think is going to be a very interesting unresolved contradiction in terms of Korea's own political development.

And that is the issue of the role of majority versus minority rights. And the way that I would point this out is within the National Assembly Uri Party, the ruling party, was a minority party. And they're very upset because the majority in the National Assembly sort of overrode their will. They didn't consult. They resorted to strict interpretation of the rules and the Speaker brought in the National Assembly guards and they took the Uri Party representatives out because they were obstructing the process.

At the same time the party has used the argument that the National Assembly action was invalid because it contradicted the will of the people. It contradicted what the majority of the people wanted.

And so I think this is--I don't have a solution for this, but I find it you interesting and I think it's going to very, in a way, problematic in the context of a society like Korea's where you have this, you know, ethnic homogeneity and the difficulty in terms of coming to terms with certain kinds of social contradictions, right now. How do you really resolve this issue of protecting the rights of minorities, while at the same time moving forward to express the will of the majority.

We do have a very key issue that is coming up, in terms of the court judgment. And I think that this is really the critical test to come with regards to the viability and sustainability of Korea's

constitutional democratic process. And that is the question of, will the Korean public accept the judgement of the court?

And I think that this is an absolutely critical test for the Korean public, regardless of which way it goes. I happen to agree with Professor Steinberg, I think that the likelihood is that the charges that have been put before the court, will not measure up to the standard of impeachment. But, you know, again, I'm not a member of the jury. I mean, the court, the Constitutional Court is really the group that has to decide on the basis of a combination of legal and political factors.

But I would suggest that if there is evidence that, you know, Professor Steinberg mentions that, indeed, we only had a one-day drop in the stock market. I think the reason was that investors and credit ratings agencies recognized that Korea's institutional democratic process was in tact and it was working. But a failure to, I think, acknowledge and recognize the constitutional role of the court as the arbiter for deciding whether or not this goes forward.

Defiance of that, in terms of public protest or other questions that could lead to instability or chaos in Korea, I think would have real implications for Korea's economy; in terms of foreign investors and in terms of credit ratings issues.

And it would be a real challenge, I think and a great difficulty for Korean society and the public at large in terms of trying to figure out a process by which to bring that under control.

Now, future prospects--as I suggested, I think that--we don't know what the court is going to do, but I think that the Roh Moo-hyun's party is going to be the largest party. It will be, I think, a mainstream party. But a coalition may be required in order to achieve majority in the National Assembly.

And I would just note that, thus far, President Roh has not shown himself adept at coalition building. So this is a real challenge, I think, for him as he comes back. I talked last week to several people in Seoul and they suggested that, you know, their hope was that regardless what happens with the impeachment, that President Roh would take some time to, you know, also reflect and think about what can be done in order to really provide a positive leadership direction for the country as a whole.

I think this is very consistent with the poll information that we've seen. The public is not satisfied with President Roh's performance. They want him to do better, but they don't want to get rid of him. And so, essentially, I think that during this sort of interim, this break, they're hoping that, indeed, President Roh will be thinking about how to improve his performance.

I think that President Roh will have a fundamental choice about whether to govern to his base or to govern to the mainstream, following the election. And I think that this choice will be, I think, very important in terms of testing whether or not it will be possible to lessen some of the ideological divisions and cleavages that we have seen develop over the course of the past months. And so, I think that this is really the challenge.

And the final point, we don't know what's going to happen with the opposition at this point--how strong it's going to be, what form it's going to take. I would simply suggest that, in a way, a worst-case scenario for President Roh and his party might be for them to gain a majority and for the opposition to be weak. And the reason why I say that is that I think that there may also be some internal cleavages within the ruling party that could then manifest themselves and create a whole different set of challenges in terms of moving forward with governments in the future in Korea.

So, sorry to be too broad, but I hope that helps to stimulate some further discussion.

DR. CALDER: Thank you very much. Thank you for your discussion of these broad themes--the nature of democracy, regionalism, where it's headed, whether ideology is going to emerge again, and so on.

Now, as our last speaker, we have Dr. Jae Ku of Brown University.

DR. KU: Thank you very much. It's nice to be back. I used to do my graduate studies right across the street at SAIS and I used to often sit out there and I feel very privileged to be on the stage, thank you SAIS and Brookings CNAPS.

Like Scott, let me comment on a few specific points from the speaker and then give a more general perspective on democracy.

The role of the clean-up batter is that when you have such a good team, I don't have to have a hit. So, I'm somewhat reassured.

But beginning with David's comments. Let me mention, on a couple of specifics, where he comments about the lack of programmatic success of the first year of the Roh government. While I agree, I think President Roh's supporters would argue, one, that it would be more successful had not the opposition obstructed in every way. But let's make no mistake about it that a reformist agenda has been firmly established and this agenda is really an agenda for both the ruling party and the opposition party as well.

If you look at their goal, I think Professor Cho alluded to the goal of this current Administration, which is to really dismantle the elitist political, economic, and social structure. And to look at some of the positive outcome, they will point out to the continued reformation of authoritarian cultural power to have personnel appointment that reflects more of Korean society, that is, less elitist--to give

devolution of power to the regions and to have more transparency, less corruption, more independence in both thought and in action.

While that is true, I think we have to measure the first year in terms of program, and that's where much is to be desired.

Now, Professor Cho, in her very interesting presentation of this paradox of why the President is, I should say, not as popular as he should be. Now, to rely on public opinion poll is somewhat misleading in Korea.

Let me just briefly talk about my own research. In social science, we ask typical questions, like do you trust the government, do you think the government wastes too much taxes? And here we are trying to get a set of questions to evaluate regime performance. In Korea and in a part of a size multi-country research, when we ask these questions in Korea, you get something like what Professor Cho showed, about 35 percent dichotomy of support.

And she showed, you know, the white collar, et cetera. But what is the most significant influencing variable is regionalism, is where they were born. And the fact that my research, opinion poll data came from Seoul, you know, supposedly the most cosmopolitan area, underscores how strong regionalist sentiments are.

So that if you ask the poll about President Roh's performance, you're always going to get a solid 35 percent. And if he did a fabulous job, you're going to get 35 percent, I mean, that's going to reflect the regional distribution.

Now, another point I want to address is Professor Steinberg's comment on the younger generation. And I think we all have heard the concept of this 3, 8, 6 generation, people, in their 30s, educated in the '80s, born in the '60s. And many academics would say that they tend to have sentiments that are

sometimes anti-American. Anti-American sentiments should not be confused with anti-American ideology. But I would say that doesn't matter because, in political behavior, attitudes do not always have 1-to-1 correlation with attitudes and political behavior. But attitudes can shift, sentiments can shift.

But it is one of many factors, competing variables that can filter and lead to a political outcome. And the fact that that generation has such strong sentiments--sometimes; not other times--can be a strong variable, such that when a crisis occurs or as a particular political event happens, like the last presidential election, you can channel that attitude to a political outcome. And that's why it's so dangerous and that's why we should address this issue.

Why should they have such anti-American sentiments, especially people in their 30s? And there are quite trendy answers. And I don't know, but when I teach my Korean politics seminar, I realized in my discussion with my students how repressive and brutal and violent Korea's industrialization process was and is.

And sometimes we gloss over that because Korea brandishes this 11th-largest economy and we tend--and we sometimes drive around in trendy cars, et cetera. We think of this as a model of excellence in terms of economic development. But to realize how brutal and violent and repressive Korea was under the authoritarian governments, we must all have had experiences in which we've had maybe a father, a sister, or a neighbor who were victims of a very repressive regime.

And this is the socialization process in which nurtured this current generation of the 30s, whereas the 20s may be living more faddish. It's kind of hep to be anti-American. But clearly, those who are in power, especially in the Blue House and other branches of the government, are clearly more ideologically bent on or anti-American.

Now, a couple of general statements about Korean democracy. If elections make democracies, then we wouldn't be having this discussion. Korea has had a fantastic level of turnout in the past presidential elections, something like 80 percent. But that comes only once every five years and, for National Assembly, four years. So what you have is people come in and they vote and they leave and they more or less leave the political arena.

Now, to institutionalize democracy, you have to have kind of good practices and values. We call that institutionalization. And we need to have a better system of checks and balances. But this process, as we have seen in Korea, is really held hostage to the politics--politics because of the division in Korean society. We talked about the ideological cleavages, but all of these somehow overlap.

Ideological cleavages overlap with regional cleavages overlap with generational gap. So that, if you look at Southwest provinces of [inaudible], you know, you have 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, whatever, all more or less behaving and having, sharing similar attitudes. Whereas different regions will have a different combination. So again, it's not--it's easy to pick exactly what cleavage is at work in Korea.

The one component that could somehow constrain the axis of the government is really the role of civil society. But the problem with the civil society in Korea is that it is really an elitist civil society and it is a very partisan civil society. And if we think of civil society in the U.S., we don't think of simply joining civic organizations to have a say in some sort of political realm. I mean, I get cards--invited to Audubon Society, newsletters, I mean, all of these activities that are simply non-political and that this gets me to be more active in politics.

But in Korea, Korea's had a history of a civil society that has been more or less partisan and political. And the fact that this President, while Professor Cho says is not popular, but the supporter base is largely among the populace base. And therefore you have to mobilize, as Scott said, that this democracy is really one of mass mobilization.

So that when we see it on the news and see the 100,000 people appearing in front of Seoul station candlelight vigils, that these are mass, mobilized people. And that they come out. But once they leave, do they actively continue the participation? The answer is no. And that's what makes civil society so thin, so elitist and so partisan. So that when you have 330 or 550 civic organizations joining in a particular movement, we don't know exactly what the membership roster is because you don't have dues-paying members and so there's a certain disconnect between the members who are on a membership list and those in the leadership.

So, again, civil society reflects the political nature of Korea's political culture, which is very elitist.

Now, let me conclude my comments with President Roh's character. Because I feel like I'm the least established here, that I could be risky and comment on such a thing.

Now, James David Barber, political scientist, in his book "Presidential Character," lists four topologies of presidential character. And I'm sure many of you have read this book in your poly-sci class as an undergraduate. And in these four topologies of the presidential character--active-positive, active-negative, passive-positive, and passive-negative--given everything that has been said by President Roh, his comments and his behavior, I would categorize him as an active-negative president, a category that best described Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon.

And this type of president is very active and informed and involved in the decision making process. Yet he sees his own actions and personal affect in a very negative light. The president's rhetoric is often voiced in tones of injured pride and threatening tone. And this kind of personality leads to inflexibility based on what he would consider a strong moral principle. Others would simply say arrogance. And this is, in a way, as Scott mentioned, is the characterization of the president.

But this kind of personality does not lead to political compromises, as the commentators have pointed to, and creates a society that at this time of social and political division needs someone who can reach out to the opposition. What Korea needs is the consummate politician. The late Richard Neustadt forcefully argued that the power to persuade is the power to bargain, and that power does not simply come from the office or the theory behind the constitution.

So if one accepts the presidential character of President Roh, one would likely conclude that he is not likely to reach out to the opposition. In fact, his rhetoric and the rhetoric of his supporters support this and describe that rather as a war and the need to complete the revolution.

So given this set of circumstances, what are some of the things we could look forward to? Well, I think the members on this panel have agreed that the constitution of Korea will probably reject the impeachment and that President Roh will probably be allowed to return.

While that resolves the constitutional crisis, the political crisis will continue. And as Scott mentioned, while the Uri Party will probably come to win maybe a plurality, there's probably not going to be a party which is going to dominate.

And, unlike the U.S., where a divided government can still be effective because we have, in a way, a proper institutional mechanism, depending on the nature of the coalition building in Korea, I think the divided government will sharpen the paralysis. So that if President Roh returns, I'm betting on even a more spectacular crisis to occur down the road.

I'll end with that provocative statement.

DR. CALDER: Well, that's a perfect note to perhaps end on and to begin some discussion.

[Applause.]

QUESTION: Thank you very much. Paul Chamberlin. I'm the author of "Korea 2010," which details Korea's transition to the knowledge age and, more importantly, on the impact of industrialization on the five major social institutions. The political institution is the most resistant to change. I'd like your views on what we're seeing now essentially is a backlash of the political institution in the National Assembly against the changes that Roh Moo-hyun is trying to institute. He ran on a reform platform, as Dr. Ku helpfully reminds us. Most Americans are insensitive to that. He's called for decentralization of the offices of the president, and Scott points out that he's not used his powers to the extent that previous presidents have. He's called for an end to regionalism-- the Uri-dang is an effort to try to move around the regionalism issue. And he's called for other measures, including moving the capital from Seoul to Daejeon. National Assembly politicians, I sense, are aghast at these kinds of changes, which presumably they think greatly threaten their base, or their own position.

So my question to the panel, and I think most of you have, certainly, some thought on that, is what were really the reasons for impeachment? It certainly is not persuasive that President Roh's call for people to vote for his party constitutes an impeachable offense under election law. Is the real reason some of these things that I just suggested, or is there something else? Thank you.

DR. CALDER: Dr. Cho, and then any others who'd like to.

DR. CHO: Okay. Regionally--in my paper, I wrote about the reasons that in my presentation I omitted due to time constraints. You have to notice that the--not the GNP, but the MDP initiated impeachment. Why? Because, you know, Korea has a plurality system, a single-member plurality system. That means the competition will be a two-way competition anyway. The MDP does not have any ground to gain seats. So right before the impeachment, I wrote an article predicting the election outcome. At this time I predicted that the Uri Party will be the largest party, close to majority, and the MDP will not gain enough seats to have the representative body at the National

Assembly. So they were threatened to survive. And GNP kind of, you know, hesitated to join the impeachment because they had lot to lose. But they decided to gamble.

So, many agreed that the Uri Party will be the largest party, but after the impeachment, my prediction has changed: Uri Party will be the majority party, and the GNP will secure their seats [inaudible] area, since Park Geun-hee, the daughter of President Park, is selected as the new president of the GNP. So GNP will secure a certain amount of seats, but in a very selected area.

So the reason behind the impeachment is the election.

DR. CALDER: Would someone else like to add? David?

DR. STEINBERG: I think that people here have talked about the social revolution taking place, and I think that really is the feeling that the establishment is most uncomfortable with the person who doesn't have the education, the international breadth, the social standing that they are used to. Now, in American terms, you know, we like this social mobility. This is an example--President Roh is really an example of social mobility. This appeals to Americans, because this is what we could call the Abe Lincoln syndrome. Those presidential candidates today in the United States, they're talking about--they're not talking about Yale or private schools, they're talking about I worked hard and I, you know, fought my way up the system.

So there is that appeal. But at the same time, in the Korean establishment and this hierarchical society, I think that these people feel very threatened and I think there is a kind of broad unease among the establishment groups--not just the politicians; I'm talking about the groups with whom we interact very easily because these are the guys we know and the guys we have been on panels with and see in the industrial community.

So that, I think, has upset them very much. And they are very fearful, some of them are, about President Roh's policies toward the North. This is a factor. It may not be the prime factor. I think the prime factor is the social revolution that is on the cusp, if you will.

MR. SNYDER: I'd just like to add two sentences. I agree with everything that the other panelists have said, but there's something very interesting in the immediate background. I think that the National Assembly people, you know, they talk with their friends, and they got the impression that everybody was against President Roh. And then they made the vote and they discovered that, you know, as politics as usual--

[Change tape.]

MR. SNYDER: --those parties members to be in touch with constituents and with broader members of the public.

DR. CHO: And adding on a comment, I have a comment on Professor Ku's discussion. You mentioned about President Roh's character. I agree with you--in terms of his character, he is uncompromising and very stubborn. But it's not a matter of character. Actually, the situation, the structural constraints, maybe President Roh cannot compromise with the opposition party because opposition parties are reading the trend. You know, historical trends sided with President Roh and citizens. And this establishment got threatened of their survival, not only of this election but also the coming presidential elections. They know that they don't have a chance to, you know, produce a president in the next presidential election. So their strategy is simply to attack the president, not compromising anything.

So it's not just a matter of personal characteristics. It's a matter of structural constraints.

QUESTION: Steve Solarz. Very interesting panel. The famous American columnist HL Mencken once wrote an essay in which he said that the sight of defeated presidential candidates was so pitiful to behold that, in order to spare the American people the agony of having to watch them mope about, they should all be executed.

[Laughter.]

MR. SOLARZ: In the case of South Korea, this advice might more appropriately be applied to the winners rather than the losers.

As I look at Korean history, I'm struck by the fact that virtually every president South Korea has had--Sigmund Rhee, Park Chung-hee, Chun Doo-hwan, Roh Tae-woo, Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jong--has either been exiled, assassinated, incarcerated, or disgraced. What is it about the Korean political system that has created a situation in which virtually every occupant of the Blue House leaves or is forced out under such circumstances?

DR. CALDER: Very interesting question.

MR. SNYDER: I'll just say one thing and let somebody else who's better equipped to answer, answer. Last year, before the presidential elections, there was a focus group done. I was talking to the pollster. And he asked, well, what are the qualities that you most want in your next presidential candidate? And the answer was that he have no sons. That may apply to brothers as well, I don't know.

DR. STEINBERG: I think that there is something here related to what I said earlier, that your loyalty is not to the presidency, but it is to this guy who's now out office. And so there is an extremist position, in a way, that you deal with each person after they leave office as being of no account. There's no honor in being a past president.

In the United States, still, if you're a past president, you are "Mr. President." You know better than I. And it seems to me that that says something about how we feel about these guys even if we vote against them, that there's something about the presidency that we respect. And in Korea, I don't feel that that is true, that the personal loyalties overpower everything else.

And that is a problem that I think eventually will change. I don't think it's in concrete at all. But this is a question of education. Koreans have changed their political culture a great deal. You know, one time they tolerated corrupt elections. They don't tolerate corrupt elections anymore; you've got to have a fair election. And the civil society that was talked about will come out and yell and scream about it and do something.

So I think things do change, but this is a slow process and we have to expect it to be slow.

DR. KU: I would add that Korea probably isn't unique in that kind of historical trajectory of young democracies. If we compare it with other democracies, it's probably at par, if not better. So while I agree with your assessment, it might be, as Mao Tse-tung told the French journalists about the French Revolution, it's a little too early to tell. I mean, here we work with in the U.S. less than 250 years, some 43 presidents, and with Korea we're working with a case of five. And as a social scientist, you can't really run regression models with a case of five.

But on the positive note, I think we've certainly made some of the more positive -- is to show how Korean civil society has become that much more civil. I remember when I was in college listening to some of Korean visiting scholars to say, you know, the kind of the National Assembly malaise, the throwing of your porcelain nameplate was, you know, a sign of charisma, that you were a charismatic leader if you got up from your chair and you threw these nameplates, et cetera. And except for the recent melee, in large part the Korean civil society has become much more civil. And I think politicians, in a way, have also become much more civil, and hopefully that's a positive trend.

DR. CALDER: Ambassador Gregg?

AMBASSADOR GREGG: Just to follow up on Steve's question, I was asked to attend the opening of Kim Dae-jung's library last fall. And I had lunch with Kim Dae-jung. And I asked him, I said why do you think it is that Korean presidents don't have any honeymoon period? We usually give our presidents maybe a hundred days--why is it that the Koreans start coming after a president the day after he's elected? And he thought for a long time before he answered. And he said, I think it's because Koreans still associate power with evil, because of the Japanese occupation and because of the series of military leaders which they first suffered under.

In your array of the fates of the Korean presidents, I feel that if Park Chung-hee had not run the last time and had stepped down, he would be Korea's greatest living hero. He stayed too long at the well. But he would have been the only president who could have voluntarily given up power, whereas all the others have served their time and they're finished--they also have had sons, and that's also made it difficult for them to preserve it.

But it's very, very interesting, I think. And your comment that Korea's become more civil. I think in a way it has, and I think that is why there's such embarrassment at what was perceived in the National Assembly, because that was a real step-back and a real setback to what Korea really has remarkably achieved.

QUESTION: Michael Marshall, United Press International. Just on the point of civility in politics, I remind everybody that in the British House of Commons, in front of each of the front benches, there is a line on the floor which is known as the sword line. And that is the line across which members could not carry their swords because they had been in the habit of using their swords on one another.

My question is for Mr. Snyder. I'd like you to reflect on the impact of mobilization politics on what you refer to as--what you saw as the successful working of the institutions of democracy in Korea. It seems to me that the character of mobilization politics is inherently polarizing. What impact is that type of politics, the demonstrations and so on, likely to have on the Korean people's willingness to accept the ruling of the Constitutional Court--one example you mentioned--or the whole idea that somehow the will of the people, however defined, should overrule sometimes obscure political processes? Thank you.

MR. SNYDER: Well, you know, I think that's really one of the critical challenges that is going to be faced in the coming weeks. So, you know, I do think that this type of politics, it can be potentially misleading in certain respects, in the sense that it could induce minorities to just go silent. It could inhibit certain types of public debate on certain key issues at particular times.

I think that, in a way, we saw this in December 2002 in the context of the relationship with the United States, where, at the height of the demonstrations that occurred at that time, you really couldn't find a good word about the United States in any of the media. And it wasn't that there weren't people who had certain contrarian views, it was that they didn't feel comfortable expressing those views.

So I think that mobilization politics can be a very effective way of trying to secure position and power, but, yeah, there are certain potential costs associated with it.

QUESTION: I'm Jason Manning [ph] from Georgetown University. I will direct my question at Professor Ku, but I'm sure I will benefit from comments from any of the panelists if they'd like to respond.

One practice of the Korean government that we haven't heard mention of today is the military draft. We've seen criticism from a variety of quarters within Korea of the draft, from military leaders who

say it lowers morale, to women's groups who've said it institutionalizes gender bias, to students taking desperate measures to avoid service, et cetera. And can we just hear some comment on what you think is the future viability of the draft as an ongoing institution, the way it is now? Thank you.

DR. CALDER: If I might, we're getting fairly close to the end. I wondered if we could--there may be some others of you. I saw one person in the back. Maybe have two or three or four more questions and then have our panelists conclude.

QUESTION: Yonho Kim with Radio Free Asia. I was happy to hear somebody on the panel said that the situation in Korea right now is kind of crisis. But I was wondering, whose crisis is this? I think Roh Moo-hyun is probably enjoying the situation now, and Open Uri Party, they're trying not to look happy about their expectation of the coming election.

On the other hand, the MDP, they're even losing their popularity in their political stronghold, which is [inaudible]. And as far as GNP's concerned, some people within the party are even saying why don't we just withdraw our decision of impeachment. And also, Park Geun-hee, the new leader of the party, reportedly decided to move their party headquarters from the existing fancy building in [inaudible] to a tent alongside the Han River to show eager they are to commit rebirth or reform.

So in that case--and a lot of people in Korea now express the upcoming general election is going to be a huge turning point, which might lead to reshaping the political landscape in Korea. If that expectation turns out true, then how will it fit your characterization of South Korean politics, which is based on regionalism or personal leadership?

DR. CALDER: Okay, thank you. Maybe one right here and one right there, and that will be it.

QUESTION: I'm from SAIS. I have a comment on Professor Jae Ku's characterization of President Roh as--I understand why you put President Roh in a category of active and negative, because his

priority is destruction of the regionalism in South Korea, and that is really a negative agenda, and he's really actively pushing forward with this agenda. So he is active and negative in that sense. But your assimilation of President Roh with LBJ and Nixon may be a little bit misleading to some Americans because, first of all, LBJ was a ranking member in the Senate for a long time. He was very good at manipulation and how the Senate and Congress works. Nixon was also a very famous insider in Washington, D.C. But the peculiarity of President Roh is that he was an outsider and underdog, outside of politics, outside of mainstream politics of South Korea for a long time, for almost 10 years. And he was pushing forward with this agenda of destruction of regionalism outside of politics for a long time. I think that is the main difference with the U.S. politicians such as Nixon and LBJ and President Roh.

DR. CALDER: Thank you. Maybe one last question.

QUESTION: [Inaudible.] I'd like to send this to Cho Kisuk. Professor, your topic, your title was why is President Roh not popular. But I couldn't find any explanation about that. Because your explanation, your description of Roh Moo-hyun was so wonderful that why he is not so popular, I couldn't understand that. You said that, you seem to have alluded that only a small amount, just a handful of the conservative newspapers and the establishment are opposing to President Roh. But it is contradictory. If they are just a small amount of people, how can they control, how can they affect the whole population, the poll--the votes? I couldn't understand.

And you said that the power shifting from the establishment to citizen groups, you mentioned that. And actually, I think I'm liberal, but being a conservative shouldn't be condemned by only that reason. And being an establishment shouldn't be criticized only by that reason. So the representatives in Korea, I think that the impeachment was a very, very poor thing. As all the panelists mentioned, it is a very absurd thing. But they have their rights. That's the rule. That's the rule of law. So why, if you are saying that change is from establishment to citizen groups, what does that mean? Isn't that a reason? That's my question.

DR. CALDER: Thank you. We only have five minutes or so total. So please, maybe a minute, minute and a half. Dr. Cho, would you like to start?

DR. CHO: Okay. I explained that if the economy was good, then the conservative journalism couldn't persuade people to believe that Roh Moo-hyun really did bad. But because the objective conditions say the economy's bad, so people seem to believe that. When the economy's bad, the people tend to blame the president. So if the economy is getting better, then the journalism will not be able to persuade the public. So I think I explained that clearly.

And I also said that it's been only a year, and there was no honeymoon. But with the previous presidents, like Kim Dae-jung or Kim Young-sam, as I showed you, the upper figure, at the beginning of President Kim Dae-jung's term, he enjoyed very high popularity and also he enjoyed the honeymoon with the opposition party as well as with the press. But in the case of Roh Moo-hyun, he didn't enjoy any honeymoon. So only after a year, the economy is so bad, and also President Roh Moo-hyun was not prepared--he didn't even know that he would be elected--and he's not experienced and his appointment of the ministers, as I said, was not appropriate. That's why he replaced all his ministers and aides. So all these factors contributed to the low popularity.

Low popularity means two things. I'm not saying he's unpopularity. His popularity is low means his core supporters, like people from [inaudible] or the young people, defected from a supporting role because of his pragmatic policy change. So he, in many ways, particularly in foreign policy, he approved sending troops to Iraq and also he changed his attitude from anti-Americanist to pro-Americanist. So in many ways his core supporters defected. That does not mean that he's unpopular, simply that he lost his support basis. But they don't want the other alternative. They still believe that Roh Moo-hyun is better than other conservatives.

And I'm not saying that the establishment is conservative. I'm a conservative, too. But what people, particularly the citizen class--I call it citizen class, not citizen groups--citizen class [inaudible] is not simply establishment, immoral establishment who didn't accomplish their duties as noblesse oblige [?]. So they didn't go to military service and they evaded taxes. So many of the bad things conducted by this establishment, particularly represented by GNP national assemblymen. So if you feel offended by my comments on the establishment, I'm not talking about just--I'm the establishment, I'm a professor. And I'm a conservative. I have a liberal ideology. Liberal means conservative.

[Laughter.]

DR. CHO: And I'm not condemning just liberalism or conservative ideology. I'm condemning immoral conservatives. And if you look at the figure, you have seen, you know, how Chosun daily newspapers are distorting the facts. And Chosun has the greatest number of readers and Chosun is the most influential newspaper still in Korea. So I'm talking about those establishments. So I hope you don't get me wrong.

DR. CALDER: Thank you. Dr. Steinberg, very quickly.

DR. STEINBERG: Very quickly. The military draft. I think it's archaic. It is still relevant today. Lee Hoi Chang, in his first bid for the presidency, may have been defeated because there were charges his two sons avoided the draft, and the explanation was not plausible. I have one friend who was an academic, who aspires to political office, who was overseas, who decided to go back to Korea and go in the army because, he said, if I don't go in the army, I'll never get elected. So that's still relevant even though it's not as important as it once was.

I think there's not any question of the growing gap with the youth culture, but there is an income gap. There is a growing disparity of income between the upper and lower classes. Now, this is very

important; we really haven't talked about it. But it relates to the youth but is not actually very coterminous with youth. I think we ought to be thinking about that in the future.

Whose crisis is this? This is Korea's crisis as a whole.

DR. CALDER: Thank you. Mr. Snyder?

MR. SNYDER: Well, I'm also going to talk about crisis. You know, there's a nuclear crisis going on right now, but nobody in South Korea is really focused on that either. So I guess what we can say is that Koreans are somewhat immune to crisis. And also, there are 10 people for whom this does have serious crisis implications--the nine Constitutional Court justices and poor Acting President Goh Kun.

DR. CALDER: Thank you. And finally, Dr. Ku.

DR. KU: Just one comment, from what David said about the military draft. I think as long as the entity of North Korea exists as it is today, I think the draft will survive.

As for the personal character issue, I think you're confusing one's political background and the personality which emerges from having experience--and that's what I was referring to. And the second issue of that, he is trying to destroy regionalism. While in theory I would like to agree, but let's not be naive about this. He came into power because of regionalism, and he as an elected constituency based on regionalism. So despite the public rhetoric of breaking down regionalist sentiments, let's look at their political party strategies. That seems pretty office.

And the second comment about the character issue is that this president did not come in with an overwhelming mandate. And we talk about him as if he has. I think I do agree with Professor Cho's comment that it is the obstructionist National Assembly that's blocking every way. While that is

true, the National Assembly is not the president, does not hold the office of the president and all of the kind of moral and political power that comes with the office of the presidency. And hence, leadership matters. How do we get democracy? Institutionalization. It's about practice, having good precedents over time. And those are done by political leaders.

DR. CALDER: As so common in Korean politics lately, we've seen a lot of diversity.

DR. CHO: Can I make one final comment?

DR. CALDER: Maybe, but I think very-- very, very briefly.

[Laughter.]

DR. CALDER: Very briefly. All right?

DR. CHO: I forgot to mention about populism. When we say populism, it's the mobilization of the people with low education or low political consciousness. The people mobilized right now are citizens with higher educational background, highly politically sophisticated. So we don't call it populism. So we have to separate between mass and citizens. Right now, people mobilized are not mass. They are citizens. So we cannot call it populism.

DR. STEINBERG: Elite populism.

DR. CALDER: Well, as you can see, this could go on for a long time to come.

On behalf of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies here at Brookings and also our SAIS Korea Initiative, we thank you very much for coming.

[Applause.]

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