THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
CENTER FOR NORTHEAST ASIAN POLICY STUDIES

PERCEPTIONS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN EAST ASIA

CNAPS Visiting Fellow Presentation
The Brookings Institution
Washington, DC
June 28, 2006

Transcript prepared by:

MALLOY TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE
7040 31st Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20015-1402
(202) 362-6622

P R O C E E D I N G S

DR. BUSH: Ladies and gentlemen, why don't we get going? My name is Richard Bush. I am the director of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, and it is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to today's event.

I understand what a sacrifice you have made coming in from such a beautiful day after so many days of terrible weather. I myself found it hard to come in. You must really want to hear what these six fine gentlemen have to say, so we really appreciate your coming in.

My colleagues have been here for about 10 months, and they have really made a great contribution to The Brookings Institution and to the discourse about East Asia. We want to have one last chance to have them make their contribution.

Actually, my colleague to my left, Wonhyuk Lim, will make a final contribution tomorrow morning at 9:00 about his own research project, and there is an announcement about that outside, but today's session is different. We are going to have a conversation about perceptions of various countries and entities from which they come about U.S. policy in East Asia, and we will do this sort of as a conversation. I will ask them some questions, and then we will open it up for Q&A from the audience.

Let me start with Wonhyuk Lim and ask him first what are the different ways that people in South Korea feel about the U.S.-ROK alliance and Korean unification.

DR. LIM: I would like to thank Richard first for providing encouragement and guidance over the past 10 months. It has been a very intellectually stimulating and enjoyable experience at Brookings.

Turning to the question itself, I think a lot of people in Korea have some concerns about the relationship between the U.S.-ROK alliance and Korean unification because, if you look at the map, the Korean peninsula is divided into north and south. In order to achieve reunification, two possibilities are there.

One possibility is that one side becomes so weak, and that the patron of that side becomes so weak as well, that it becomes feasible for the other side to take over that side, sort of like the German scenario.

The other possibility is a gradual reconciliation and unification by agreement, and in order to have that, internationally you should also have reconciliation and cooperation in Northeast Asia as far as the Koreans are concerned.

What people tend to fear about the U.S.-ROK alliance and its relationship with unification is that the alliance itself is viewed as a force to contain China and possibly Russia as well. Consequently, the days of Korean reunification might be even further removed.

The majority view in Korea is that it makes sense for Korea to have and maintain the alliance with the United States and to hedge against a possible non-peaceful rise of China, but at the same time, it shouldn't be the policy of the alliance to make life difficult for China, and, in fact, instead that the policy should be to facilitate a gradual transition to a liberal market economy.

So, in order to have that kind of outcome, the alliance should work with China, making sure that its ill intentions would be contained, but at the same time to encourage China to gradually evolve in the right direction. So that is the way Koreans tend to see the alliance.

DR. BUSH: It seems, indeed, that the discourse has sort of gone beyond that. When we talk about a U.S.-ROK alliance, it is based on values. In fact, the words "value" and "alliance" seem to now be joined together.

DR. LIM: Right.

DR. BUSH: It is almost one word.

Moreover, the United States has come to depend on the Republic of Korea for assistance out of the East Asian area, most notably in Iraq. How do people in the Republic of Korea feel about both of these trends?

DR. LIM: Regarding values and the alliance, the left in Korea feels that it may be used as a code word for China containment, but at the same time, many people feel that the United States and the ROK do share values regarding democracy and market economy, but most people in Korea would argue that things like market economy and democracy reflect a stage of development. It is sort of a historical process, and you can't just say democracy, market economy, universal values and, unless you have them, we're not going to talk to you.

In fact, the ROK itself was not a democracy and not a market economy 25 years ago. So there is a sense of history that concerns the Korean people more so than our American friends.

With regard to Korea's involvement in regional and global conflicts, most Koreans have some reservations about the two prominent examples of Korea sending forces with the United States, they being Vietnam and Iraq, two of the most unpopular wars in American history. It is not that the Koreans are opposed to sending forces per se. In fact, Korea unilaterally decided to send combat troops to East Timor to stabilize the situation after its independence. If it is something like Kosovo, Korea would be very willing to go with the United States to help stabilize the situation, but as far as Korea's global involvement is concerned, I think Korea would like to have that as sort of part of its sovereign decision.

DR. BUSH: Let's turn to Russia now.

Alexander, I would like to start by asking you about the view of the government of Russia toward U.S. policy in general toward East Asia.

DR. VORONTSOV: East Asia and Asia also?

DR. BUSH: Yes. Sure.

DR. VORONTSOV: Thank you.

First of all, I would like to echo my friend Wonhyuk's appreciation of the great leadership during our time at CNAPS.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

DR. VORONTSOV: You have shown us great leadership and a really great program.

Coming back to the question, I think Russia basically is supports the American approach to Asia, including East Asia, because we understand that the United States is the only super power and they have a responsibility for regional stability, including Asia, and it is not an easy mission. It is easy to criticize. It is often more easy to criticize than to do something.

We appreciate the approach of the present government of the United States to improve relations, for example, with Vietnam to Indonesia, and, of course, we support the general ideas and support the spread of democracy in the world. It is indisputable and the same goal that Russia supports now, but, frankly speaking, sometimes Russia has a question regarding the methods and style of fulfilling these general tasks and fulfilling this mission in some regions where this policy exists.

Of course, we are united in the struggle against the global terrorist threat and counter-terrorist policy. I think it is a very strong policy that unites us, and cooperation is close in this area.

At the same time, once again, Russia does not always support specific actions of the present administration of the United States. For example, Iraq. From the very beginning, as you know, Russia was not sure that the unilateral use of military force in this case is the best solution, and, unfortunately, Russian expertise and assessment of the situation was perhaps more accurate. We are not happy, of course, about the situation in this country. It still continues to be not very manageable, which was predicted by Russian experts.

Unfortunately, again, you know of the recent tragedy of the Russian diplomats who were kidnapped and killed a few days ago in Iraq. It is also evidence of the ideas that unilateral use of military force that will result in complicated problems in this region and may not be the best way, and Russia's approach is not to spread its views in those regions through military force, not to

to repeat this experience of military actions against countries neighboring Iraq, and, of course, East Asia, including the Korean peninsula, but I think it will be the next question.

DR. BUSH: That is the Russian government's perspective. What about the Russian people? Do they have the same view generally or a different view?

DR. VORONTSOV: That is a very good question. Of course, Russian society now is a very pluralistic one, and there are lots of different points of view. Of course, there are very broad and very colorful assessments.

Of course, I know the East Asia situation better. There are quite influential intellectuals who argue that sometimes Russia's Asia policy and East Asia policy happen to be trapped inside two logics.

One logic, from their point of view, is that Russia is striving and trying to do the best in supporting the counter-terrorism struggle in the world, led by the United States. At the same time, some regions, including my region, are going to think Russia should strive to pursue their own national interests, and sometimes these interests do not coincide. These opponents to the government argue that you should follow the United States unconditionally. If you decide to become a very reliable partner in the anti-terrorist struggle, anti-terrorist campaign, you should be consistent. You should follow unconditionally in all cases, but the government sometimes decided Russia should also not forget about national interests.

DR. BUSH: Let me ask you about Russia's view of American policy toward the part of East Asia that you know best, and that is the Korean peninsula. How does Moscow evaluate Washington's approach toward the North Korea issue?

DR. VORONTSOV: Russia, unconditionally again, fully supports the idea of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, so our position is the same.

A nuclear North Korea is absolutely unacceptable for Russia from the point of view of Russian national interests. At the same time, Russia regards that the North Korean nuclear problem should be resolved in a peaceful, diplomatic way, through negotiations, and Russia fully supports a six-party talk process in Beijing to resolve this problem.

To be frank, I am not a diplomat. I am an absent-minded and irresponsible scholar.

[Laughter.]

DR. VORONTSOV: To be frank on the Korean peninsula, if the United States policy is aimed at liquidation of nuclear weapons in North Korea, which is officially the goal of the United States, Russia supports it 100 percent, but if, in some cases, there is some evidence that the real goal is liquidation not of the nuclear program, but of the North Korea regime itself, that is a

is a different matter. In this case Russia has concern because, from the Russian analysis, it can lead to the military conflict on the Korean peninsula, but military conflict on the Korean peninsula is absolutely also unacceptable for Russian national interests and will affect it strongly.

In this situation, we tried to argue with our partners in Washington to be more flexible and to follow the official agenda of the six party talks.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

Let's turn to Japan, Dr. Toshihiro Nakayama.

Toshi, you gave an invitational presentation yesterday, and you said something that was very interesting, that there is no consensus in Japan on how far to go in strengthening the U.S.-Japan alliance, and I think that contradicts the impression that people in the United States have that Japan has no choice but to bind itself to the United States.

We have an example of Japan's binding itself this week with Prime Minister Koizumi coming to Washington and going to Memphis to worship at the shrine of Elvis, but elaborate a little bit on what you meant and the complexity of Japanese opinion about the alliance.

DR. NAKAYAMA: I am going to skip the formalities to save time.

DR. BUSH: Yes, please.

DR. NAKAYAMA: In thinking about Japanese foreign policy, there are, I think, three pillars. One is, of course, the U.S.-Japan alliance, the second is the UN, and the third is sort of diplomacy or our relations with Asia. Our relations with Asia, as you all know, are not at the best right now. The UN issue, of course, we tried to get in the Security Council, but that was also unsuccessful. There is only one option left. That is sort of the background.

After the cold war, we faced some new threats, and in addition to that, in Japan people are trying to become more assertive and proactive. The U.S. wants Japan to be proactive, or they had been pressuring us for some time. So I think it is quite natural that Japan would increase its interoperability, intelligence-sharing, with the U.S.

In making the U.S. alliance's quality better, there is a general consensus, but like you just mentioned, how far should we go? I wouldn't say there is a split, but there is a big question mark there.

The reason is that in Japan, there is no so-called "anti-Americanism," but there is this feeling of what I call "anti-Americanism light." Those feelings are not politicized yet. As Alexander mentioned, is it the right way for us to keep on beefing up the relations with the U.S.?

It is not a political sentiment yet, but there is a question, and this question at the moment has not been raised at the policy level. So, at the policy level, if you talk with the officials from Japan Defense Agency (JDA) or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they would say the U.S.-Japan alliance has never been better. So I call them the "Never Been Better Crowd," but there is another crowd, too.

When I say there is no consensus, I am talking about the other crowd, but within the government, I think this consensus is pretty strong. Maybe I sound critical of the Never Been Better Crowd. Maybe I am part of that. So I am criticizing myself, but like I said, this anti-Americanism light is, I think, pretty widespread, and we have to see how that would evolve, whether it will become more politicized if some issues occur regarding the basis and all that. So that is the sort of thing I was talking about.

DR. BUSH: In addition, we have seen from Japanese visitors, Japanese writings, a concern that the United States is not sufficiently embracing ideas like the East Asian community and regional multilateralism. Does this reflect an anxiety about the overall U.S. approach to Northeast Asia and East Asia in general?

DR. NAKAYAMA: Yes. I think at the moment, the U.S. has bilateral policies, but my impression is that you lack a firm East Asian policy.

The reason is quite understandable, and maybe it is not only the U.S. Many of the countries in the region are, and that is partly because the IR, or international relations, is structured that way. It is regional.

If you study countries, for instance, when a high-ranking official is filled by a Japan hand, we sort of cheer. If he goes out and a China hand comes in, we sort of get depressed. It is that kind of atmosphere. There is no regional community.

You have regional specialists, area specialists, but you don't have the regional thinking. To think about region, you have to be very imaginative because region is not like a nation state. A nation state is quite firm, but a region, borrowing the term of Benedict Anderson, is an "imagined community." So you have to imagine about the region, and I think this imagination now is lacking in the United States.

I understand that this East Asian summit or community process is slow and very frustrating for the U.S., and I can understand that, but we in East Asia believe that although the U.S. is not geographically a part of East Asia, you are functionally maybe one of the most important in existence in East Asia, so I really hope that the U.S. would be more sort of proactive in imagining the future community of East Asia.

DR. BUSH: I know that one of the interests you had in coming here was understanding

more about civil society in the United States and how it might be applied to Japan and specifically the role of think tanks. Do you want to say just a couple of words about your observations on that?

DR. NAKAYAMA: Back in Japan, we have been talking about building a public policy research institute for so long, but there isn't any, and I thought this was a good chance for me to actually study how it functions.

What I learned was quite fascinating. Before coming here, I thought a think tank was all about gathering the best scholars and publishing a report and a recommendation, and, of course, that is an important part of it, but much more important, it sort of prevents the discussion or the culture on policy from stagnating. It keeps the flow, and I thought that was a very important function or role of think tanks.

For a think tank to play that role, I think a culture surrounding the policy has to be open. In Japan, as you know, the bureaucracy dominates the policy. So, in Japan, if you collect the best scholars, you collect funds, build beautiful buildings, you think the think tank's there, but the culture is so different that, quite depressingly, I think it is difficult in Japan to build an independent public policy research institute. So it is a depressing conclusion, but that is the kind of impression I have.

DR. BUSH: Sorry about that.

[Laughter.]

DR. BUSH: Okay. Let's turn to China now and our colleague, Yang Bojiang.

Yang Bojiang, give us your impressions about PRC views on U.S. policy towards Northeast Asia.

DR. YANG: Thank you very much, Richard.

My impression in that regard is that there were two or three "positive moves" taken by the Bush administration since the beginning of his second term, which I call a "dual pivotal policy." This means strengthening the traditional alliances with the countries in that region, like Japan and South Korea; meanwhile, to improve cooperation with rising regional powers like China. So this is something I call "dual pivotal policy."

The second positive move, in my eyes, is, unlike the policy in other parts of the globe like the Middle East, the Bush administration is trying to do something new in Northeast Asia, to try something new like a more peaceful and multilateral approach which we can see from the DPRK nuclear case.

The third point I am going to bring up, this is not a positive one, actually, not 100 percent. It is just sort of a feeling. I think the Bush administration, as well as the entire bureaucracy here, is getting a better understanding of what is going on in Northeast Asia. For example, the booming regional cooperation is where they experienced the first East Asian summit, late last year. I guess the Americans, including the officials of the government and scholars as well, came to figure out the U.S. forever will be kicked out by any country in that region.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Talk a little bit about China's view on the regional order in East Asia, East Asia in the future.

DR. YANG: Thank you.

As for this question, let me add some words, a sentence in the beginning. I think that the future of China will be full of challenges. There will be a bumpy, long way for China to go. There are also some uncertainties, especially in our domestic society and economy. Being Chinese, I can take responsibility for a discredit like this.

There is only one thing that is for sure, and it is that I think it is safe for Chinese to say that China will absolutely not follow the traditional way for a power to rise because the timing is different, because the scale of that country is too huge, and because of a lot of characteristics of China, per se.

Back to the question, I basically have three or four points. The first one is there should be a source of a power, cooperation-based, multi-layered, regional/international order ahead in East Asia or in Northeast Asia, although they won't conjure in the near future, but maybe in 8 or 10 years. I myself am in favor of that scenario.

The second one is the only way out for East Asia, for our countries and for the U.S, which, as Toshi mentioned, is functionally maybe one of the most important countries in that region. The only way out for every country's sake is a multilateral arrangement. We have no alternative.

The third one is how to enlarge or blend the traditional security architecture; for example, how to enlarge or open the traditional bilateral alliances between Washington and some regional countries like Japan and South Korea.

The fourth point is actually a concrete example. We can start with what I call “multilateral cooperation” or enlarging the alliance, opening the alliance, with some very concrete security cooperation. For example, we can jointly guard or secure the seacoast, which is of increasingly significant importance not only for the United States, but for Japan and South Korea. It is also

Korea. It is also increasingly important for China because China's foreign trade is getting larger and larger.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Finally, although you have been focused while you are here at Brookings on the Korean Peninsula, I know that you are one of China's leading specialists on Japan. Could you talk a little bit about China's relations with Japan?

DR. YANG: I don't have a very clear point here, but the first point that comes to mind is my talk on the scenarios in February of this year, almost 5 months ago. There is a window of opportunity for China and Japan to sit down quietly and discuss their potential cooperation and improve the relationship between Beijing and Tokyo. Such a chance is coming, namely, the coming September presidential election of the LDP.

Actually, we have seen a lot, more than one phenomenon in the past half-year. We have had some talks with the Japanese side, actually among which the most successful one was the foreign ministers' meeting. There are more than five agreements or consensuses achieved between the Japanese Foreign Minister Aso and the Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

Even Chinese President Hu Jintao told the press that he would like to visit Japan under certain conditions.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much.

Let's drift to Taiwan and our colleague Yuan-Kang Wang. Yuan-Kang, how would you grade U.S. policy in East Asia?

DR. WANG: Thank you, Richard. I haven't done grading for a while. So the grade I give may not be correct.

[Laughter.]

DR. WANG: I would say that I would give it probably a B, and the reason is really tough love. I think there is room for the U.S. to do better, and the reason is because the U.S. is distracted by Iraq right now and has forgotten what is really important for long-term American foreign policy. That is Asia in general. I am not just talking about China. Also, there is India. If you read *Time* and *Foreign Affairs*, the current issues are about the rise of India.

So, with these two major geopolitical changes taking place in the world, the greatest power in the world, the United States, has its attention and efforts focused on Iraq and the Middle East. That, to me, is not a good situation; that is, it causes loss of resources. While Asia is a dynamic region, it is growing, and it is becoming more and more important, America is sort of putting it on

of putting it on the back burner and not paying enough attention to it. So, in general, I think there is room for the U.S. to do better.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

Switching the matter, what is the temperature in Taiwan's relations with the United States?

DR. WANG: I would say it has gone from the best to the worst right now. Just think of 2001 when Bush took office, he said that he would do whatever it took to help Taiwan to defend itself, and U.S.-Taiwan relations was at its best at that time. Bush also approved the largest arms sale package to Taiwan.

Then, later on, it became much worse, and there were a lot of surprises, especially coming from the Taiwan side, leading Bush to criticize Taiwan's president, Chen Shui-bian.

Then, more recently, there were these issues over the evolution or the cessation of the National Unification Council.

It seems that the bilateral communication is in trouble, and both sides do not communicate. They wail, and you see some emotional aspects at play, especially during President Chen's transit to Latin America. You see a lot of personal emotions involved, retributions and those sorts of things.

So it is not as good as we would like it to be, but my view is that the long-term prospects remain good, and the reason is because both countries share common values. Taiwan is a democracy. For the American people, it appears to them as well. There is also the strategic issue in that Taiwan has a key strategic location.

I think in the short term, you will see some rise and fall, but in the long term, I would say that it will still be good.

DR. BUSH: Final question. How does the Taiwan public, which is a very complicated entity, view the United States?

DR. WANG: I think there are two ways to see this. The view of the U.S. is generally positive; that is, most people in Taiwan like the U.S. So, when you tell them, "I am taking a vacation in the United States," people will look at you with envy, "Oh, you are going to a nice place. Enjoy your vacation." When I was going to school in the United States, this was considered to be something good. So people look up to the U.S. as a model, actually, especially with regard to political issues or the media. People will say, "Look at the American media, how they can restrain themselves," because Taiwan's media is -- how should I say it? -- dynamic, to put it in a nice way.

[Laughter.]

DR. WANG: They look at the self-restraint in the U.S. media, and also in politics as well because Taiwan has constitutional issues and institutional issues. They look up to the U.S. and to the U.S. example.

So, in general, we view the U.S. as a good model to emulate, but there is still criticism, and I think the criticism is mostly about U.S. policy, not the U.S. itself, but American foreign policy. The perception, or criticism, is that there exists a double standard; that is, you are not consistent in your foreign policy.

On the one hand, you say you want to promote human rights and spread democracy, but on the other hand, we see you are not really serious in some cases of human rights abuses. On the other hand, some people may think of U.S. policy as too imperial, that is, too high-handed, because it is the greatest power in the world. So, living under the shadow of the United States in some ways is not pleasant. You see some criticism of U.S. policy, but, in general, the U.S. is a country that I think most Taiwanese people hold in positive view.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much.

The reason I am here today is because of Hong Kong. So, last, but certainly not least, we will move to Hong Kong, James Tang.

James, first of all, how do the Hong Kong people perceive, on the one hand, the U.S. as a major sort of status quo power and China, on the other hand, as a rising economic and political power?

DR. TANG: Thank you, Richard.

Since I am the last person to speak, maybe I will say a few things about formalities -- actually not formality. I remember you told us when we first arrived that you were envious of us having this opportunity at this stage in our career to spend 10 months in Brookings and in CNAPS, and today, I am also envious of myself of having spent time here. I think you understand partly because of the atmosphere and everything that other people talk about, and probably the insights provided by other colleagues that you just heard, so thank you, Richard, for that.

DR. BUSH: Sure.

DR. TANG: On the Hong Kong people's perception about the U.S. and China, it is a very difficult question for Hong Kong. On the one hand, there hasn’t been, really, a very systematic sort of study of Hong Kong people's views. So this is really more my impressions interacting with

interacting with people and with students.

I think Hong Kong people have, in a way, a very globalized sense of the world in terms of their daily lives, in terms of their interactions with other places, traveling and doing all sorts of other things, but never had a very strong sense of a state-guided perception of other places. Hong Kong views on international relations and major power politics, therefore, are not always very coherent.

To the extent that Hong Kong's views about other major countries could be formulated, that would be sometimes quite influenced, particularly in recent years, by the view of Beijing, even though there are all sorts of differences in terms of political culture and institutional developments in Hong Kong and the rest of China.

In a way, if you asked the people in Hong Kong about high politics and what do they think about the United States as a super power, I think quite often the way they would look at it would be very often influenced by the Beijing perception about the United States being a very dominant power, sometimes playing the role of the world police and acting in ways that might not be consistent with the interest, particularly of other smaller, lesser countries.

Hong Kong is a free economy and has institutional foundations. Its British nature, was very much rooted in the western tradition in many ways. It always had, I think, a very positive view about the practices in the U.S., of course, in terms of institutions of education, in terms of popular culture, and many other things, like other places and cities in Asia.

I find my students sometimes have these very split views, and the more nationalistic dimension is usually expressed when there are major issues, like the bombing of the Belgrade embassy. Then I think the people in Hong Kong could become relatively nationalistic, but unlike many other Asian places, I don't think the people in Hong Kong would be pro-American in the sort of sense as I suppose the people in the Philippines would be. There is also no anti-Americanism.

So I think Hong Kong people are very comfortable and really look upon the U.S. as modern in many ways, too, but when there are major sort of crises and issues involving China, I think most people publicly would then feel that they would understand and interpret things more from the Chinese perspective, but this is, of course, a complex issue.

Turning to China, even though when I say that people in Hong Kong would probably interpret things from more of a Chinese nationalist perspective when it comes to national relations issues -- and obviously people in Hong Kong are very happy to see China rising as an economic and even a political power, if we -- actually, I don't have data on Hong Kong people's views about the U.S., but we do have data on Hong Kong people's views about Mainland China. There is a rising degree or a sense of identifying with China's success, particularly in economic views and science and technology and many other areas.

Take sports, for example. People are usually very excited over Chinese teams' victories in major international events. I still remember when Beijing made a political decision about sending the Olympic team from China to Hong Kong first. That is the first city I think that the whole team visited, and some of the people involved with the team felt that it actually put tremendous pressure on them: “Now why are you going to Hong Kong and Macao and not going to Tianjin or Chengdu or some other cities?” Obviously, that was an attempt by the Central Government to generate a greater sense of support for people in Hong Kong; it was a huge, overwhelming, very positive response.

If you look at our data, the people in Hong Kong are also very direct in expressing their views that they are not very proud of certain other things, the so-called "darker side" of what's going on in China: corruption, abuse of power, the lack of transparency and freedom of speech, and those sorts of issues are also coming out quite strongly. I think there is that kind of ambivalence, too.

DR. BUSH: Let me push you on this to a specific case or issue. What would Hong Kong people think about the U.S. playing a more direct role in the promotion of democracy in Hong Kong? This is a goal of the United States. We know that from President Bush's second inaugural address. This is something that the Hong Kong people want, based on polls. This is something that China opposes, at least on the issue of universal suffrage. So should we do more? Should we do less? Are we just about right?

DR. TANG: For me, it is actually quite interesting when I read Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill's recent remarks in the congressional hearing, as he specifically mentioned there are areas of difference between China and the U.S. He mentioned Taiwan, which is quite logical, but I was taken aback when he actually specifically mentioned Hong Kong, too. I suppose that might be a shifting agenda.

I think the U.S. position over the democratic change in Hong Kong has been very consistent, and at the same time, I think the U.S. has also specifically and repeatedly stressed that Hong Kong is a positive model in the East Asian region, the more positive things about Hong Kong being a very good partner to the United States actually over anti-terrorist arrangements and port security and a whole range of issues; public health issues, for example.

The sore point, of course, is democratization, and as you said, there is very consistent data that the people of Hong Kong, at least the majority, not only in terms of opinion polls, but also in terms of the way they voted in all our elections, over 60 percent of the people would like to see faster democratization.

I think most people would feel that U.S. concern and positive moves toward democratization are good things, but yet at the same time I think there is also ambivalence, probably because of this perception about what does it mean when the United States tries to do

something, the sort of broader agenda and various issues about the relationship between the U.S. and China. Also, I think there is a sense that eventually this still is an issue for the people of Hong Kong to deal with ourselves.

So, on the one hand, I think there is a sense that this is something positive. At the same time, I think the people would probably prefer a lighter touch rather than a very strong U.S. push for democratic change in Hong Kong.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much.

That is enough from us here on the panel. We will now open it up to questions. We have about 40 minutes. When you want to ask a question, please identify yourself and wait for the microphone. Keep your questions brief. All of my colleagues are very smart. They will be able to interpret the meaning of your question if you ask it in a short way.

Mr. Berry has the first question.

MR. BERRY: Nick Berry, Foreign Policy Forum.

A number of you have mentioned the fact that the United States is sort of bogged down in Iraq and also another losing war in Afghanistan. This clearly has affected U.S. policy in Northeast and East Asia -- less consensus on it, fewer resources, less focus, less robust kinds of developments there.

Can you give me one instance for each of your countries where this has given you space or an opportunity to do something in your relations with the United States that wouldn't have been possible had the United States not been bogged down in these wars?

DR. BUSH: Answers, anybody?

DR WANG: Maybe it is not an answer to your question, but there was a positive effect in that the U.S. chose with regard to North Korea, the six party talks, basically to talk, and if the U.S. wasn't bogged down in Iraq, maybe something else might have happened. So there is a positive effect, too.

DR. BUSH: Anybody else?

DR. VORONTSOV: Coming back to the Korean Peninsula, I am reminded of when I was in the Russian Embassy in Pyongyang in 2000-2002. It was partly during the period of Madeleine Albright as secretary of state. I was a witness to how quickly the anti-American mood and attitude decreased in North Korea every day, reading very attentively the newspapers of North Korea. It was fantastic to see positive relations to the United States, a positive attitude, during one month. It was an evolution, and I think it was a result of the prudent and effective policy of

policy of the United States towards this country.

Now we have a little bit of another situation, really within the last month. Now we have a basis of data to compare.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Anybody else? Wonhyuk?

DR. LIM: Yes. I don't have an answer to that question, but I just wanted to mention something related to the Middle East policy. I think some lessons have been learned by the Bush administration here in Washington, D.C. We can see the effect of the Iran nuclear issue from which I realize that the administration is trying something new, something better in comparison with, say, the Iraqi case.

DR. BUSH: Bojiang is very humble, but I would say that the Chinese diplomatic successes in Southeast Asia in particular reflects, in part, our inattention as a result of preoccupation elsewhere.

Mike Miyazawa?

QUESTIONER: Thank you, Richard. Mike Miyazawa.

After visiting the shrine of Elvis, Prime Minister Koizumi will most likely visit another shrine in Tokyo, either before or after stepping down in September, and I have heard enough about what people in China and Korea think about this Yasukuni visit, but I have heard nothing about how people in Hong Kong and Taiwan think about this Yasukuni visit by the Prime Minister of Japan. So I am very much interested in what you believe people in those two areas think about this thing.

DR. BUSH: Good question.

James?

DR. TANG: Yes, indeed, a good question.

Richard, can I just go back quickly to the previous question? I think the attention to the region, as far as we can look at it now, might have created sort of the consequences of China being more successful in the region or perhaps a relationship between China and the U.S., which seems to be set for some stronger confrontation that shifted into a more cordial relationship, but, actually, I thought if the United States has to pay far more attention to the region than to the realities, despite what the Bush administration might have wanted, the realities or the complexities and the challenges of that part of the world might actually push the U.S. government to be far

government to be far more imaginative, in Toshi's words, and then we might have a very different situation in the region now.

DR. BUSH: That's a good point.

DR. TANG: Anyway, that is my personal thought.

On Hong Kong's views about Japan and the shrine, if there are any more anti-foreign sentiments, probably Japan would be the country for Hong Kong, even though, again, it is very different on the Mainland, for example, where we had demonstrations. I think the way people expressed was, I would say, forceful.

I remember the amount of the previous anti-Japanese demonstrations when there were groups that tried to protest to middle-aged Japanese housewives who were tourists in Hong Kong, and they painted things outside of the Japanese school in Hong Kong. Then there were very strong societal comments saying that this is not the right thing to do.

So on the one hand, I would say in general people are very unhappy about that, too, and Hong Kong, after all, was occupied by the Japanese during the war, and there are still people around who have a rather negative memory. So I think that is still something quite strong.

By looking at international issues through the lens of Beijing, I think that would reinforce these two things, and yet, the Hong Kong people travel to Japan. They have all sorts of interests -- popular culture, TV, drama, toys, cartoons, comics. So that is another powerful side and there is a lot of engagement and a lot of interest in studying Japanese language and all sorts of other things.

Again, I think this is really a city of a certain degree of ambivalence about all these sorts of things.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Yuan-Kang?

DR. WANG: Thank you.

I think it is hard to say if there is a general view in Taiwan about the Koizumi visit, and the reason is because Taiwan is quite polarized. If you ask people who support the ruling party, they chose either to be silent or some are even -- the more extreme will be even more supportive [of visits to Yasukuni].

If you talk to people from opposition camp, they are generally more critical of the Koizumi visit. They view it as paying tribute to the war criminals. and Some of the Taiwanese

aborigines who fought for Japan during the colonial period are enshrined in Yasukuni. Some legislators in Taiwan's parliament who are aborigines actually went to Yasukuni and staged a demonstration asking for those deceased to be returned to Taiwan, but it didn't work.

So it gives you two different views in Taiwan about these two issues, but, in general, I think Taiwan in Asia has a more positive view of Japan than any other countries in Asia. If you talk to elder Taiwanese, they generally have a positive view of Japan, and that is quite different from other parts of Asia.

DR. BUSH: Another question? Scott?

MR. HAROLD: Two quick questions. Alexander and Bojiang, could you address the future role that your two countries see for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and for the rest of you, could you comment on the future of U.S. trade with your countries, particularly with the FTA, proposed Japan-U.S. FTA, and a proposed Taiwan-U.S. FTA?

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: That's a MIRV question if I ever heard one.

[Laughter.]

DR. BUSH: First on the SCO, Alexander and Bojiang.

DR. VORONTSOV: Thank you. It is, of course, a very key question.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization; yes, it is a very new phenomenon, but as everybody knows, it has developed quite rapidly.

I think that the Russian point of view and attitude toward this organization are close to those of the Chinese. Russia regards this organization as an important instrument and a regional organization providing for regional stability and, of course, cooperation. These two are official tasks, the political and cooperation development. I think there are good and reasonable grounds to show this because, for example, in the last summit that was called a couple of weeks ago, it was an interesting manifestation when two countries with one history of hostile relations and rivalry in war, meaning India and Pakistan, simultaneously expressed readiness to become participants in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

This, of course, reflects the rise of authority and trust to this organization inside those regions. It is manifested in many countries in the region, not only the country that founded the organization, an organization that is realistic and a real element of stability enhancing and increasing in this region. I think Russia is striving to support the positive development of this organization.

Regarding American-Russian trade, FTA, the specific question, Russia still has not become a member of the World Trade Organization, and only one country remains that has some contradictions and that is the United States; an FTA, I think, is a question of tomorrow, not today.

At the same time, I am sure that Russia and the United States have a very good agenda and records of the economic cooperation and a good future, and one of the key elements is we are a partner in the global energy cooperation structure, an organization of the future. I think we are open to the possibility of positive cooperation in finance, trade, and economic areas.

DR. BUSH: Bojiang, do you want to talk about the SCO a minute?

DR. YANG: Thank you very much for the question.

Before I try to answer the question, I would like to just add one single word to the previous question. Scott told us that he heard enough about the reaction in China and South Korea about -- [audio break].

[Side B of audiotape begins.]

DR. YANG: There were anti-Japanese demonstrations going on in China, in some major cities. What I prefer to call it is anti-Koizumi demonstrations. I am so sorry to say that because I know Prime Minister Koizumi's son is sitting there in the back. So this is my job. I have to make it clear.

Back to the question, let me first describe the SCO. I totally agree with my Russian colleague. Actually, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has two bases or two start points. One is border security, especially from the Chinese perspective of anti-terrorism. I mean the western border with several Central Asian countries. I am not so familiar with parts, but I heard this from some of my colleagues at home.

The second point is regional stability. Here I would like to say that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is absolutely a defensive organization, not an offensive organization.

We also have some observers, maybe three or four, who had their meetings with the others in Shanghai a couple of days ago. Actually, my impression and perception, like the Chinese side, has been cautious all the time.

For example, the Iranian president was there as one of the observers, but he was only given 5 minutes to make his remarks, much less than what we have today. Finally, he spoke for 7 minutes, but it was a relatively moderate contact he made.

Finally, back to the question of what is the role for China to play in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization? I think maybe two points could be made. One is that China will continuously insist on the principle to be honest, walking a line, and between different powers to be realized, and I think this is a basic point for Chinese foreign policy because this is just determined by China in the current international community. We in China are just in the process of a transition. So, in most cases, you have to walk a line even for DPRK issues, for Taiwan issues, for the same with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The second point I would like to make is that China is not going to take the lead in that organization, although this is the only regional or international organization which has an office in China, in Shanghai, but I don't think I can make a distinction between the six-party talks and this one.

Anyway, my conclusion is that China is going to be cautious. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

Wonhyuk, do you want to talk about U.S.-ROK trade and the FTA?

DR. LIM: In my view, KORUS negotiations created an unnecessary and unfortunate problem. In fact, trade relations between the ROK and the U.S. were quite good. They had regular quarterly meetings to resolve trade problems, and Korea now is the seventh trading partner for the United States. The conventional wisdom before the negotiations was that Korea should try to work for a bilateral FTA with a country like Japan first and then address agricultural and services sector problems through multilateral channels where things are less politicized and then maybe turn to the United States when Korea has done its homework and done the necessary adjustments prior to negotiations, but now the situation is rather tense because, although the negotiators and the government are trying to justify this FTA, there are many groups within Korea that would be affected by the FTA, and it is not a sure thing that this FTA will succeed.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

Yuan-Kang, do you want to talk about a U.S.-Taiwan FTA and the larger trade picture between our two countries?

DR. WANG: I think Taiwan wants to have an FTA with the U.S., but because of political reasons, the U.S. has a lot of hurdles. I think the reason Taiwan wants to have an FTA is because, economically, Taiwan is being marginalized in East Asia. If you look at all those East Asian summits, East Asian meetings, Taiwan is generally not in the picture. So Taiwan wants to have an FTA with the United States, but because an FTA sometimes symbolizes state-to-state relations, you know there will be some political issues involved. That didn't really get off the ground yet, but in a way, Taiwan wants to use it as leverage for its economic place in Asia because Taiwan

Asia because Taiwan wants to play a larger economic role in Asia.

DR. BUSH: Do you want to say anything about Japan? Okay.

Another question back there and then Carlos.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you. I am Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report.

I also just want to say at the outset that, on a personal level, I am really grateful to Richard for you bringing your colleagues here today so that we get to listen to them firsthand.

DR. BUSH: Thanks.

MR. MITCHELL: It's very helpful. It means a lot.

So you are all headed home. You have been here for 10 months. There comes a point at which you sit down with families or colleagues. You get through talking about what a great experience it was at Brookings, and then someone says to you, "So what do you think about the United States?" What is the most significant thing that you learned or were struck by in your 10 months here that you carry home with you for better or for worse?

[Laughter.]

AMBASSADOR PASCUAL: Richard, can I add my question on there as well?

DR. BUSH: Sure.

AMBASSADOR PASCUAL: It is actually in a similar vein, if I could.

DR. BUSH: Okay. That will give people a chance to think what their answer to the first one is.

[Laughter.]

AMBASSADOR PASCUAL: I am Carlos Pascual from The Brookings Institution, and I again want to thank all six of you and you, Richard, and your team at CNAPS for pulling this event together.

In addition to the reflections on the United States, as Gary has indicated, one of the things is that you have had a lot of time together in discussing, I can imagine, a whole range of different issues.

I am curious, as you leave, are there areas that you are surprised at on common areas of

understanding or agreement that tie your countries or your interests together in some way, and are there specific points of disagreement that potentially surprise you that, as you leave, make you realize that there are some specific points that you yourselves want to address further in the future to actually address potential points of tension?

DR. BUSH: Those are pretty cosmic questions. Does anybody want to start?

DR. LIM: I will start.

DR. BUSH: Okay.

DR. LIM: I will address the first question. I went to high school in the United States, went to college here. I got a doctorate and went back to Korea in 1992 and came back last year for this fellowship. What struck me most about the United States is sort of the changed political landscape, and two things in particular really struck me. One is the disappearance of adults.

[Laughter.]

DR. LIM: Back in the 1980's, there were twin deficit problems, the budget problem and so on, but still some Republican leaders and Democratic leaders could get together and find the mature solution, responsible solution to that problem and also in the foreign policy front too, but it seems like these political leaders are now marginalized.

The second thing that really struck me is [inaudible]. Back in the 1980's, even if you had very different political ideas, still if someone has put his or her life at risk, then you would actually give credit to that and talk about political things, not try and smear that person, but it seems like [inaudible] is now working in the United States, and I don't know why people can get away with that.

We had a talk from Thomas Mann at Brookings, too, but that really was never discussed, and I am still puzzled as to why things have changed so much.

DR. NAKAYAMA: I share Yuan-Kang's view, this ideological divide or partisanship or whatever you want to call it, the divide is quite big, and I was also struck by that.

Visually, it was September when we all came here, and it was the time Katrina hit New Orleans. That was very shocking, not the ideological divide, but the social classism that we seldom sort of -- you know, if you are working in a think tank, you never get to meet the people who suffered in Katrina. The fact that -- I don't know the right word -- the third world sort of exists within the United States, the other America that people are denied to see. That was a very shocking experience because it was the first thing that we saw when we came here to D.C. on September 2nd or 3rd.

DR. BUSH: Other observations, particularly on the points in common or points of difference? Alexander, anything?

DR. VORONTSOV: Yes. I try also every time to be the first. Today, Wonhyuk was the first, and he was right. It was partially my answer, too. Of course, I have no capability to compare my experience to a previous time because, I have no such experience.

When I came to the United States, of course, I knew that it is a very pluralistic society in political science and policy. There are at least two lines. I will speak about Korea policy here because I have a professional engagement in Korean studies. When I came here, I understood and I was told by my American colleagues that there may be five approaches to Korea. Even inside one body, the State Department, there are now several different approaches. The White House and the National Security Council has one approach. Capitol Hill has another approach. It is really a little bit amusing.

From my point of view, it is great. Yes, it is a little pluralistic, a reflection of pluralistic culture and tradition, but how to exercise practical, everyday policy-making in such a situation?

Another thing -- once again, I am very frank -- I met many excellent, impressive, highly experienced North Korea specialists, high-ranking people in America who themselves served in a previous administration. I agreed with their analyses because they knew and understood the North Korean policy, but they are outside of the mainstream now and not in the decision-maker circle.

My personal impression -- and maybe I am wrong -- I want to be wrong – is that their expertise is neglected purposefully, and this is not a strong point, it seems to me.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Other observations, please?

DR. WANG: I first came here in 1993 to SAIS, right across the street, to get my master's degree, and my first impression coming into this country was this is really a free country. I could get my Social Security number. I could get a driver's license and even go into the airport. I could even go to pick up friends at a gate at the airport. I never thought that it was possible in my country. When you check out of the airport here, you don't need to go through customs. In other countries, they have a section of customs there. So I felt this was really a free country.

But this time, September 11th had happened, and things have changed quite dramatically. Just to give you a personal example, my driver's license expired, and I tried to change it, to renew it in Maryland. I tried it twice, and both failed. The reason was because they have a quota of licenses for only 50 foreigners.

So the first time I went there at about 8:00 am, they said, "Sorry. The quotas are gone." The second time, I said maybe I should go at 8:30 am. Then I should be able to renew my license. I got there earlier than 8:30 am, and a colleague and I waited for about 30 minutes to 40 minutes. Then they told me, "Sorry. The quotas are already gone." I said, "Why? This is the second time here," and the good people there told me that, "Well, some of the people, they were already there the night before. Some even camped out there." I said, "This is really crazy. What can I do?" They said, "Write your congressman." But I am not a citizen. Well, how do I write a congressman?

[Laughter.]

DR. WANG: So I feel, gosh, I am really stuck here. I think life has become more difficult for foreigners here.

DR. BUSH: James?

DR. WANG: By the way, my license still hasn't been renewed yet. I asked my relative to send me an international driver's license.

DR. VORONTSOV: I can testify he drives frequently.

[Laughter.]

DR. TANG: So, Yuan-Kang, you were actually legal when you were driving around these past few weeks. Okay. Good to know.

[Laughter.]

DR. TANG: Unlike my other colleagues, I didn't study in this country, although my brother is actually American and lives in Minneapolis, but I have only been there once.

I had a lot of American friends in the past, but they were usually Asian specialists or China specialists or people who spent time in Asia, and quite often, many of those, people like Richard who are fluent in Chinese, have common friends in Beijing, Taipei, Shanghai, and all these other places. So my American friends and my connections in the United States, apart from my brother, didn't talk about the U.S. that much. If I go to Minneapolis, I would go straight to his place without exposing myself to a wintery time in Minneapolis.

So my knowledge of the U.S. was through the lens of Asian specialists, and I spent time here visiting short-term conferences, courses, this and that. This is the first time I am actually here and meeting, apart from Asian specialists, other people. It does change, I think, my perception. Probably, of course, I know these people can also be very friendly and nice and wonderful people, but it also gave me a different sense of looking at these various other concerns

of the United States, and Asia is really very far away. There are so many other issues such as poverty and all sorts of other issues. That sort of put things in perspective for someone who is from Asia and also thinking that Asia, which even I think is true, particularly in the next couple of decades, will really be a very critical region for the United States, but still we have to take things into perspective.

The second thing is that I have been a China foreign policy person for a long time, trying to understand Chinese policy-making and those sorts of things. Coming here, I actually realized that the complexity of policy-making and the political process in the United States is probably even greater than in China. How to really understand what is really going on here is very difficult. When you have great transparency, you also have a huge amount of information and a huge number of players, and you see a very complex process. I think that is the other thing I learned.

There are a couple of negative things. One is the American way of life. In a way, as Yuan-Kang said, there are a lot of wonderful things about it, but for a non-American, I think sometimes there are certain things that people here are so used to and accept it, that someone who is not used to the system will actually find very difficult. Washington, D.C., is already an exception in terms of guiding people to do things. There are certain things that are very set, and if you do something different, then it is very difficult.

The other thing I was talking about were the regions of the United States and society and people, and there are so many things that the United States is very good at. Looking at that positive side, let's not talk about this surprise at failure and other things. However, I am also struck by how poor the public diplomacy of the United States has been in terms of really promoting that much broader agenda of things that the United States is very good at and willing to engage in. All sorts of people are doing it, but how that agenda is linked up to broader American foreign policy is another question.

The one negative thing I feel is that politics, at least in my impression -- I may be totally wrong -- I think there is some sort of a certain dominant thinking. I am not really thinking about sort of U.S. hegemony, but more about elections being so important. People, particularly at the political level, are so shaped by that. Then it is very difficult sometimes I think for people to come out and really speak out of those kinds of considerations and address some of the critical issues and problems -- to really be coming up with ideas that are good ideas, but not necessarily politically attractive. I suppose this is something that would probably be similar everywhere, but I am still struck by that, given the fact that I had always thought that the United States would be able to rise above it, given the richness of the country.

Having said that, I think I will end on a positive note. I am still struck by the richness and diversity and dynamism of this country and continuing ideas and people I met, and I am very impressed by that.

Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much.

Is there one more question that somebody has that we could close on? The lady right there.

MS. PERRY: My name is Becky Perry. I am with the Oxford International Review.

I had a more specific question. I wanted to know to what extent is recent military modernization in China influencing or strengthening the lobby for the re-militarization of Japan, and what are regional views on Chinese military modernization more generally?

DR. BUSH: Okay. Do you want to start?

DR. NAKAYAMA: Lobby for re-militarization of Japan? I don't know whether "lobby" is a good -- I think in terms of Japan, I think it has more to do with our own assertiveness, and, of course, the China threat is in the background, but that is not the main motive.

We have been relying on the U.S.-Japan alliance for so long without containing our own power. So I think the Japanese people are frustrated with that, and we see a more positive and constructive role in expanding our capability.

So our first thrust was not to be a military power. It was to become more internationally active, engaged in UN operations and all that. So we didn't even have those legal structures. We needed that, but then the new threats emerged. So we wanted to start thinking about dealing with those threats ourselves.

This re-militarization component is not the first thrust. The first thrust is that we would become more of a -- it is a rather unused word, but a global civilian power. That was our thrust. So the China threat is in the background, but I would say that is not the main point.

DR. BUSH: Wonhyuk, do you want to say anything about the Korean views of China's growing military power?

DR. LIM: Well, Koreans are more concerned about Japanese re-militarization than Chinese military modernization. So that is less of an issue, but I would like to respond to Carlos' question.

During my stay here, I was actually surprised by the ease with which we could achieve agreement and understanding on contentious history issues. We were able to strip away the nationalist rhetoric and look at contentious history issues like Yasukuni shrine, the Koguryo issue between Korea and China and even cut through an agreement between the U.S. and Korea,

especially with respect to Yasukuni.

I think Koreans can understand that imperialist Japan was not on par with Nazi Germany. It was just a regular kind of imperialism. It was an ethnic-cleansing kind, and at the same time, Koreans hope that the Japanese can understand that most of the Koreans and Chinese don't feel that the Japanese invaded Korea and China to liberate the Korean and Chinese people.

I think Toshi and myself and Bojiang could come to an agreement on that front, and that was much, much easier than I had thought.

DR. BUSH: Go ahead.

DR. VORONTSOV: I would like only to add that when we speak about this historical issue, everybody understood that this emotional discussion comes from not history, but the future of the region, and that is why it is an important point of agenda.

DR. BUSH: Yuan-Kang, do you want to say anything?

DR. WANG: Just quickly, I think Taiwan is more concerned about China's military modernization, and I think the reason is quite easy. China's military modernization is, in the short run, inside the Taiwan scenario because Taiwan will be influenced. Of course, we are watching it carefully, and we are very concerned.

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

With that, let us bring this session to a close. Please join me in giving a farewell round of applause to my colleagues.

[Applause.]

DR. BUSH: Thank you all for coming.

[End of CNAPS Visiting Fellow Panel Discussion of June 28, 2006.]