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PROSPECTS FOR THE KOREAN PENINSULA: VIEWS FROM JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BUSH: Why don't we go ahead? I want to thank you all for braving the cold, and all the other problems of Washington, D.C. It's a pleasure to welcome you here for our program, “Prospects for the Korean Peninsula: Views from Japan and the United States.”

I'm Richard Bush, the director of the Center for East Asia Policy Studies here at Brookings.

And this is a series of programs, part of a series of programs that we have had over the last couple of years, where we bring together American specialists and Japanese specialists on a particular issue. Looking forward to next year, I think North Korea is a good issue to be examining. North Korea usually does something at the time of the inauguration of a new U.S. President, and maybe they will, maybe they won't.

But as allies, the United States and Japan need to be ready for that, and need to align our views and policies as much as possible so that we can do the best possible job as allies. And, you know, we have to have a common -- as close to as possible a common assessment of the threat. What are our goals? What are the means to achieve those goals, and what's our division of labor?

I'm really pleased with the group that we have assembled to offer commentary on this. First is Hitoshi Tanaka, who is an old friend. He had a long and distinguished career in the Japanese Foreign Ministry, rising to the rank of deputy minister, and he was a key advisor to Prime Minister Koizumi in the early part of the last decade. And there was a period there, where Hitoshi's weekday job was to be at the Foreign Ministry, and then his weekend job was to secretly sneak off to Pyongyang and talk to people there about the possibility of his prime minister visiting; which eventually happened.

The second will be -- Hitoshi is now the chairman of the Institute for International Strategy at the Japan Research Institute. And for friends of the late Tadashi Yamamoto, he is also a senior fellow -- yes, senior fellow at the Japan Center for International Exchange.

Second is our old friend, Scott Snyder, who is a senior fellow for Career Studies and the director of the Program on U.S.-Korea Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, down the street.

Third, Sugio Takahashi; he is the chief of policy simulation at the National Institute for Defense Studies, and has worked on North Korea for a long time.

And then my friend and colleague, Jonathan Pollack; who is the interim SK Korea Foundation chair in Korea Studies, here at Brookings.

So, without further ado; Hitoshi, the floor is yours.

MR. TANAKA: Good morning. I spent, as Richard Bush just said, it's been 37 years in the Japanese Foreign Ministry, retired about 10 years ago. It's a great pleasure for me to be able to speak at the Brookings Institute. I have been here for several days, New York and here, and I gave a speech several places in New York and here. Yesterday I was at (inaudible) trying to explain Japanese perspective regarding U.S.-Japan relations and President Trump.

And everything said, no way to verify so much unpredictability in relation to the future U.S. presidency. But it is an important subject. So, I decided, myself, I would like to come back to Washington as many as possible. Now, let me talk about the question of Korean Peninsula. I think you may be able to agree with me on a couple of basic points.

First, the question of North Korea nuclear development has come to a different stage, new stage, in which North Korea is almost completing their full-fledged

nuclear weapon system.

Point number two, the U.N. sanction regime is useful but not sufficient to dissolve the question of North Korean nuclear development.

And the third: It is increasingly clear that North Korea will not get rid of their nuclear weapon, but this doesn't mean that we should stop looking to achieve a negotiated settlement, but we all should be aware that it's increasingly apparent that North Korea will not get rid of their nuclear weapon.

The fourth point. There is going to be a change in the U.S. government, and there will be a change in Korea as well. This may be, as Richard said, this may create a risk because North Korea may be targeting the Inauguration Day, or the change in South Korean political scene, for their possible actions. But yet at the same time we must see this as a very significant opportunity to deal with the question of nuclear development because, after all, this is a new stage if we lose time, there will be no way for us to return to the negotiated settlement.

So, let us consider the change of the governments, in the United States and in Korea could create a very significant opportunity for us to deal with the question of North Korea and nuclear issue.

Let me describe to you my sort of perspective in relation to the possible way forward to make sure a kind of substantive, constructive negotiation, to take place. I took part in a very eventful benefitting negotiation with North Korea in 2001 to 2002. I spent about 30 weekends, Sunday -- Saturday and Sunday, mostly in Dalian, China, negotiating with North Korea military general on the question of abduction, normalization, nuclear weapons, missiles, and Prime Minister's trip to Cheongyang.

At that time the United States, the president of the United States was George Bush, and he made a very, very strong statement at the State of the Union that

Iraq, Iran, North Korea, "axis of evil" so North Korea were very much intimidated. That's probably the reason why they found a negotiation with Japan convenient for them, because Japan is a strong ally of the United States. So, improving relations would primarily seem -- may seem as sort of advantageous to North Korea.

We sort of took advantage of that sort of opportunity created by strong America, intimidated North Korea, type of thing. Now, the North Korean situation, you may see that after a while, since Kim Jong-un came to power, the regime of North Korea may have been consolidated. I don't think so, because while I was negotiating with North Korea it was, as I said, the Military General, and I visited his places in Cheongyang with his car, and I was quite surprised to see the kind of privileges and benefit the Military General received from the government. They are indeed, with huge amount of, you know, benefits from the government.

Now it appears to me that Kim Jong-un is creating a kind of political party above the military. And Kim Jong-un -- we used to call it military first regime, military first policy, it was indeed defense -- National Defense Commission who made all the significant decisions, and when I was negotiating with North Korea all the time, my interlocutor went back to North Korea, Pyongyang. And I'm sure they sort of consulted among themselves in the Defense Commission because he belonged to the National Defense Commission, and came back.

But I thought, once they made decisions, they stick to that decision, therefore rather solid decision-making process existed centering upon the military. Now, the military has gone to the sort of backstage, there is a political party, and Kim Jong-un, as the Head of North Korea Labor Party, I am not entirely sure. I mean, Kim Jong-un uses this political party centered governing system, but at the same time, governing by terror, and the target of this terror is often military.

I am not entirely sure all those military generals who had received benefit would keep silence. Sooner or later there will be certain irregular incidents, comments, which may lead to the confusion in North Korean governing system. So, having said that, let me talk about my scenario, what would be the best -- regarding what would be the best way for us to get North Korea to the negotiation table; not for the purpose of North Korea cheating us, but for the purpose of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

First we need to stick to each other, that is the need for absolute unity by the countries concerned, in particular five nations, United States, Korea, Japan, China and Russia.

Second, we need to be prepared for the worst. There is a strong need for both countries, possibly including China, to set a scenario for possible collapse of North Korea, or possible aggression on the part of North Korea, and to work out who is doing what. Meaning that there is a need for joint contingency plan among America, Korea and Japan, and possibly involving China, contingency plan and renewal, constant renewal of contingency plan would be very much needed.

Third, there is a need for us to talk about various scenarios, among ourselves, among ourselves meaning five parties. Let us talk, starting from contingency plan, to a possible plan in which North Korean regime is collapsed. And let us discuss about the basic guidelines each nation can furrow, in relation to the fact that we should not intervene militarily in the case of confusion in North Korea, let us talk about how to deal with leverages which would eventually come up from North Korea.

Let us even talk about how to help South Korea to redevelop North Korea as well. Let us talk about the eventual form of security of the North Korean Peninsula. The reason why I say this, is the question with China. We all know that in order for us to be able to find a right solution to the question of North Korea, China holds

the key, because even with the nuclear-related EUCOM (phonetic) countries, as long as China maintains certain trade, or secret trade, or the border trade, then not sufficient result will come.

Chinese used to say that, the collapse of North Korea does mean the kind of loss of their buffer zone, the collapse of North Korea will lead to unification by South Korea and the democratic capitalist nation comes to the border of China, and the Chinese have got their own Korean population inside China. Therefore, we assume that China has a strong view on this, they would like to keep North Korea as it is, but we need to present to them: Do you think that full-fledged nuclear state of North Korea would be beneficial to you? And they say it is not beneficial, it is a huge sort of difficulty if North Korea were to free -- acquiring nuclear weapon.

There has been discussion in South Korea that they should acquire nuclear weapon as well. I don't think that in Japan there is going to be a discussion on that because as you know very well, nuclear issue is a quite sensitive issue for the mind of ordinary Japanese people. So, the reason I don't consider that, but a person like President Elect Trump talks that if the United States so decided to withdraw troops from Japan, it's up to Japan to acquire nuclear weapon, so who knows? There may be that type of discussion to be taking place in Japan.

So we shall set down to Chinese that: does it serve your interest, a full-fledged nuclear state of North Korea, does it serve your interest? And Chinese stake in the international community about their economic relationship has gone up. But still, I think we need to give Chinese assurance. Assurance meaning that collapse of North Korea and eventual unification by South Korea may not be a bad thing for them altogether. And for that we would have to give assurances to China. That's the reason why I say there is a need for us to talk about the guidelines in the case of collapse of

North Korean regime today, such as non-intervention, such as how to incorporate economically, how to deal with refugees and all such things.

And only when we have meeting minds among ourselves, five countries, there is no reason why we should hold five-party talks. China was not favoring the idea, but it was a time when we thought six-party talks would give us a concrete result, but it's no longer feasible for us to have six-party talk at this juncture. So, therefore, why shouldn't we have five-party talk, and to discuss about scenarios starting from contingency planning up until the collapse of North Korea, and guidelines for that? Only when we do that, only when we stick to that scenario, we may be able to demand China to get North Korea back to the negotiation table, not for cheating purpose, but for the constructive negotiation to denuclearization.

I do think this is more or less the last timing, we cannot spend, you know, a huge long time from here. So, I would very much hope to see this happen in the course the early part of next year. I stop here. Thanks very much. (Applause)

MR. SNYDER: Good morning. It's a pleasure to be here at Brookings. Thank you for the invitation to participate. When I first got the invitation from Richard, and I saw the date of the program, December 16th, I thought that we were probably going to be doing some kind of five-year retrospective of the anniversary of Kim Jong-il's death. But it seems that we are more broad than that, and actually in some ways, the more interesting and challenging aspects of thinking about where we go from here, might actually not be focuses on what is happening in Pyongyang, which seems curiously stable compared the uncertainty that we face in actually both Washington and Seoul.

And so what I really want to focus on is: What do we think a new administration could do? Or, how would a new administration -- what might change in U.S. policy? And I want to do that toward North Korea, and I want to do that by looking at

the three prongs, pressure, deterrence and diplomacy, that have been named as really the core elements of U.S. policy toward North Korea. I think that in one form or another, those are all going to be elements of a policy in a new administration going forward.

You know, the interesting question is, how do they combine? And then maybe even more importantly what are going to be the drivers that are going to change the mix in terms of thinking about the North Korea problem going forward. And so I see three drivers, or three big issues out there, that could be forces that will change the mix in terms of how the U.S. approaches North Korea. And the first one is really the shifting time factor. The previous administration I think operated -- could afford to operate on the presumption that time was on our side, and that it would be possible to have an element of patience and then gradually ratchet up pressures as a way of trying to bring North Korea to the table.

But I think that for the new policymakers coming in with a four-year time horizon, what they are going to see is a situation with North Korea's continuing nuclear missile development, where it looks like time is not on our side. And so there's going to be a greater sense of urgency as related to thinking about the North Korea issue.

And the challenge of the sense of urgency as we think about policy options toward North Korea is to think, the greater the urgency that we have, the more it seems like the middle options, that everybody wants to recommend to a President are removed from the picture. And you are left with a set of options that, you know, at the extreme would end up being either acquiesced to North Korea as a nuclear weapon stage or use force in order to change North Korea.

And I think neither of those options are really acceptable, they are certainly not preferable. And so one of the initial things that I think a new administration is going to have to do is to figure out how to buy time. The new administration is going to

have the benefits of much more robust sanctions regime that has been set in place, over the course of the past year, and that's going to be a source of pressure and we'll see whether or it can lead to some kind of change in North Korean thinking about nuclear capability.

Frankly, I'm skeptical that pressure by itself is going to be successful in changing Kim Jong-un's strategic calculus. But it's something that the administration, the new administration will benefit from. Also, one might buy time by continuing to strengthen deterrence, and here I would say that it will be important to strengthen evidence of assurance regarding U.S. pleasures of extended deterrence. And here I think that actually brings together the interest of Japan and South Korea in the region.

And so, stronger deterrence measures and stronger defensive measures can be a way of trying to dissuade North Korea from taking advantage of any potential perceived opportunity. And then I think also a new administration should explore all diplomatic options really, multilateral and bilateral on the chance there's a way of actually having a conversation with Kim Jong-un on the issues that we care about.

Frankly, the big concern that I have as we look at Kim Jong-un's behavior over the course of the past few years, is that we don't see any evidence that external inputs are even possible. And that means that his entire calculus is being determined by his own domestic situation, and internal situation. But if there were a way of opening up a conversation, I think that it would be incumbent upon any administration to explore and exhaust those prospects before possibly considering other more forceful options.

Now, the second issue that I think is critical as we think forward about how to deal with North Korea, is really the role of China in U.S. policy toward North Korea. And I would say that we've had a debate in the policy community here now for

about 15 years, about how much we rely on China. To what extent can the U.S. subcontract its diplomacy to China? What can we relate that from China with regard to North Korea?

And I don't know, maybe President Elect Trump has already moved in a direction from any advice that I might give, but as I look at -- with regard to China -- but as I look at this issue, and I look at the overloaded agenda in U.S.-China relations, and I look at the possibility that U.S.-China relations may become more contentious, it seems to me that it would make sense to appoint a special envoy to isolate the North Korea issue from the rest of the relationship, and to send a message to China that the North Korea issue is a priority for the United States.

There is a perception that the Obama administration did not really prioritize North Korea. I'm sure that if we had an administration official here, they would debate that proposition, but certainly the perception, you know, could be out there that President Obama himself somehow didn't send the right signal. Well, this would be one way, especially given the fact that the relationship is so fraught with so many different kinds of issues, to show that these issue is a priority, and to deal with it on a special track. And also, frankly, the North Korea issue can be a time sink, so you need somebody who can really spend full time on it, who is not consumed with other duties.

Second aspect of approaching the China issue, is that I think we've come to terms with the fact that North Korea lives in the space created by geostrategic mistrust between the U.S. and China. Another way of putting it, is to the extent that the U.S. and China can agree on the future of North Korea it limits North Korea's options. But I guarantee you that to the extent that North Korea sees a gap between the U.S. and China, they are going to try to take advantage of it.

And so we need to have the strategic conversations that would be

necessary to enhance both U.S.-China, and U.S.-ROK-China understanding of the dangers of a nuclear North Korea, and the challenges posed if a peaceful denuclearization is not possible. And then with regard to sanctions I think that what we've seen through the U.N. Security Council Resolution process is that cooperation with China is necessary, but it's probably not sufficient, from a U.S. perspective, to bring North Korea to a kind of decision point.

And so I think that figuring out that balance, figuring out the alpha that we can do, it could be secondary sanctions, it could be additional diplomatic measures, there are a variety of measures that could be pursued in order to close the gap between what is necessary with regards to expanding U.S.-China cooperation and what is going to be sufficient in order to move forward, in terms of driving to a decision with North Korea.

And then the third issue that I want to raise, that I think is a big factor for potential change as we think about implementation of policy toward North Korea, is really the South Korea political vacuum. And as you know it's going to be probably at least 8 months, maybe 14 months, before we see a new political leadership in South Korea that is capable of moving forward. Yesterday, interestingly, we saw a speech by South Korea's main opposition leader, Moon Jae-in, which kind of seemed like the starting gun for the political campaign.

And, you know, if we look at what he said, and we think about the three elements of U.S. approaches toward North Korea, pressure, deterrence and diplomacy, you know, not presuming to know what a new U.S. administration would do, but I think that we can see some potential gaps. One way of framing thoughts about what it would be like for a Moon Jae-in administration with the Trump administration, is to think back to President Bush, and Roh Moo-hyun (phonetic), since Moon Jae-in was a Chief Policy Advisor to Roh Moo-hyun. So we can imagine that there would be potential divergences

that would have to be managed on diplomacy.

Moon Jae-in was very clear, he wants to talk directly to Kim Jong-un, and I think that that actually doesn't necessarily have to be a big problem. I'm wondering whether Kim Jong-un is willing to talk to Moon Jae-in, and so I would say have adage, as long as we can agree that denuclearization is still part of the picture, in terms of our shared policy objectives.

With regard to pressure, interestingly I did not detect that Moon Jae-in had any suggestions about lessening sanctions. And actually in the reports I read from his speech, he didn't really, you know, indicate any initiative on restarting economic initiatives with North Korea, which I think, if we think about Kaesung and Kim Hyun (phonetics), in the subsequent Security Council Resolutions that have been passed, I'm not sure how feasible it is to resume active large-scale economic cooperation between North and South Korea.

And then finally, with regards to deterrence there is an issue, the FAD issue that Candidate Moon mentioned, where he feels that it would be possible to renegotiate that in some way. My sense is that, institutionally, it's not something that the U.S. is interested in really reopening because the rational for the FAD deployment is really about U.S. Force protection under the idea that U.S. Forces are the critical element necessary to assure the defense of the Korean Peninsula. But we could have an interesting discussion alongside SMA and many other issues in the U.S.-Korea relationship.

My main point with regards to that, is really that we experience Bush, you know, and survived, and I think the institutional framework that supports the alliance is strong, and I think that it will be able to weather the uncertainties that currently exist both in Washington and Seoul. And I'll stop there. (Applause)

MR. TAKAHASHI: Good morning. My name is Sugio Takahashi of the National Institute of Defense Studies. At first I want to say, to give thanks to Brookings Institute to invite me to D.C. in this very exciting timing. You know, last year -- this year we have many surprising things in the world, and with the presidential election. And then when some foreign guests come to Tokyo recently, I always say: welcome to the least political surprising city. And they will know, you know, we have surprise also.

So, in that sense, you know, I'm very, enjoying my stay in D.C., and that is, surprising means we are stable, and I think a stable U.S.-Japan Alliance will continue to be a cornerstone for region securities, even throughout the next year.

And at first, you know, I want to make some excuse that I'm not -- by no means I'm not a specialist on Korean Peninsula, or North Korea, unlike Scott or Jonathan; and that, you know, I'm a specialist on the nuclear deterrence. So what I'm going to say is my thought from the perspective of deterrence specialist in terms of the North Korea threat.

And then the North Korea's nuclear missile development works continue -- has been very serious challenge in the Northeast Asia, from about the mid-1990s. And then, of course, the first question about this issue is: what the objective of North Korea, and to develop such kinds of things. And they form the (inaudible) since mid-1990s, or until the 2000 which still, six-party talks worked.

At that time some analyst said, this is for bargaining chip to get diplomatic normalization with U.S. or Japan. And that, you know, this bargaining chip theory is not longer, I think, promising, because with the continuation of their consistent defaults to develop nuclear tipped ballistic missile since the six-party talks period.

So, another hypothesis could be for regime survival, this is for regime survival, through minimum deterrence capabilities. Of course the minimum deterrence is

a kind of controversial concept, but because, you know, how do you define minimal is no easy question. But in the case of North Korea, one of the key components of their deterrence is actually their conventional artilleries against Seoul, not necessarily nuclear weapon.

So, in a sense, you know, they can -- rely on conventional artillery for (inaudible) deterrence against ROK, or U.S.-ROK Alliance. In a sense, strategically their nuclear -- nuclear tipped ballistic missile program could have even more aggressive objective. So, in a sense, you know, my thought process is in this brief, you know, my talks, is their objectives is to be escalation ladder, as a part of their theory of victory against the ROK, U.S. and Japan.

And, you know, if you look at their missile range, this kind of map can be downloaded from Japanese MoD website, and like, you know, that this (inaudible) shows they have variety of missiles which may have the different strategic implication, and that if you look at the -- if you -- how would I say -- if I decode this much (inaudible) from the prospective of escalation ladder. I think there could be three ladders. One thing is ICBM that could be a future threat, you know, intercontinental deterrence or intercontinental contra-intervention effect is expected to decouple U.S. and ROK.

And the second one is MRBM or IRBM, but maybe my real concept is product of the Cold War, so I'm not sure this is a viable concept now, but middle range ballistic missile, and that will create, theater-level of deterrence for North Korea. Now, a deterrence or counter-intervention, if I borrow the word from Chinese, as (inaudible); and the short range that, you know, SRBM or convention artillery, that intra peninsula deterrence for a force which will be provided to -- for North Korea.

So, these kinds of three levels of escalation ladder could be considered. And that, you know, the ICBM is, again, to decouple U.S.-ROK alliance. Once they

deploy -- success in deploying the nuclear tipped ICBM they can, or they may have some belief that North Korea can deter the United States commitment for ROK and Japan, if to access, to implement the U.S. extended deterrence commitment but, you know, if North Korea has nuclear-tipped SRBM if the U.S. retaliates for ROK and Japan, that could make -- because that could invite, so really retaliation from North Korea.

So, from the North Korean perspective, their ICBM is a key component to deter the United States. Of course how the U.S. responds to that threat is a different question, but my thought is how, North Korea ICBM could create North Korean perspective on their theory of deterrence.

And the second one, the MRBM middle range missile is maybe the objective is to keep Japan out of strategic calculation around the Korean Peninsula. And that especially, you know, if they believe they can deter U.S. commitment, or U.S. intervention through nuclear tipped ICBM, North Korea may conduct very extremely offensive coercion against Japan, because -- for apparent reason. And especially, you know, the nuclear tipped theater ballistic missile can be a kind geostrategic game changer in Northeast Asia that transforms basic alliance (inaudible) for our side. I will explain more from that, from these slides.

And since the 1950 Korean War, until very recently, Northeast Asia had almost the same geostrategic architecture or framework, that looking back to the 1950 Korean War, and in this case -- in this timing, you know, internal landing operation was the key operation to defeat -- to avoid the defeat of ROK and the U.S., in the command. And that operation was -- started from Japan. And not just in (inaudible), and there are many sorts of strategic bombing who are in -- their interdiction was launched from Japanese airbases.

And Japan provided -- got its support from Japanese inter (inaudible)

base. Let me say, at that time Japan was under occupation, so what I'm saying with Japan is not the Japanese Government; I mean, Japan as a geographic concept. You know, the Japanese islands, provide a very huge assistance for U.N. command. So, that even though Japanese islands provide the critical support for U.N. command, North Korea did not have any capability to attack Japan at that time.

So in a sense, you know, Japanese islands could enjoy a kind of sanctuary status with providing substantial assistance to U.N. command operation. And these kind of things -- and so in the sense, you know, this is a similar thing I'd say; so the red circle cover the Korean Peninsula. I don't think this circle does not cover some part of North Korea, because this is just a problem of my PowerPoint skill, but you know -- and the red circle shows, you know, a kind of the main battle theater.

So the battlefield was just in Korean Peninsula, and even though Japanese islands provide substantial logistic support of some kind, you know, provides some significant staging in the area; that was a kind of sanctuary for North Korean physical attack. So this architecture, this framework continued to exist until very recently.

So, in 1997, U.S.-Japan defense guideline which says Japanese government can provide the real support for the United States. Of course the defense guideline was -- does not assume any specific country or region, that if the first thing that happen in Korean Peninsula, Japanese Government could provide the support for -- various support for the United States. And at that time, you know, still a Self-Defense Force did not assume to conduct the kind of kinetic operation, just the full support operation.

So, in a sense, in this 1997 timeframe, still, U.S. and Japan can continue to think that Japan can be a sanctuary from the North Korean kinetic attack. So this was a long time geostrategic situation in Northeast Asia, but their MRBM changes this

geostrategic situation. And in short, you know, their middle range ballistic missile can be used to intimidate Japan, or can be used if Japan provides some support for Korean Peninsula (inaudible), they can use that to -- how to say -- physically impede that kind of (inaudible) Peninsula support operation.

Especially, what I really worry about is North Korea and a nuclear blackmail against Japan, not to provide any kind of support for the United States, not to provide any kind of permission to use U.S. force in Japan -- U.S. base in Japan. Or even, they may ask for Japanese Government not to meet for passage of the geo -- take their water in their space by the U.S. forces.

If that kind of a blackmail happened, and if some kind of warming shot, or limited strike to reinforce such kind of -- when nuclear blackmail happens, the Japanese Government may need to think very serious decision-making. Of course, I don't even know about that, even in that case the Japanese Government will support ally, the United States, but that kind of decision will be made with significant cost or risk to Japanese lives and the Japanese investment interests, the Japanese, you know, assets.

So, this is, I shall say, this is not easy decision-making. So to the conduct that Japanese Government will need a much more robust assurance, and deterrence from the United States. And do you know, if North Korea succeed in that kind of nuclear blackmail to (inaudible) to Japan from strategic calculation of the U.S. and ROK, then they can drastically improve their strategic situation in Korean Peninsula.

So in that sense there is no reason that they would not launch this kind of things against Japan. So what we need -- so, you know, that means their nuclear-tipped middle range ballistic missile, and if we were to combine with ICBM that would change the strategic balance within this area, this region, within Northeast Asia -- of Northeast Asia. And so we need to prepare for how to counter -- for countering North

Korean aversion of the fear (phonetic) of victory.

And there was the stuff that said, I want to say four components on that, one thing is needless to say, nuclear component of extended -- nuclear extended deterrence, and that thing needs -- before saying that, I would say one very common -- I would say was in the deterrence specialist, that is Healey's Theorem. Healey's Theorem, Healey is -- the name of Denis Healey who was UK's Defense Minister in the 1950s or '60s, and what he said was: 5 percent credibility would be enough to deter Russia, but 95 credibility is necessary to reassure Europeans.

So, in a sense, you know, deterrence and assurance is different problem. And even worse is if North Korea deployed their own nuclear ICBM, this Healey Theorem can also apply against Japan, you know, against Japan to the United States. So they could believe 5 percent credibility of North Korean ICBM could be enough to deter the United States. So, in a sense, this is a very difficult question about a kind of mutual deterrence things.

So, in a sense, you know, in this sense nuclear tipped ICBM is a very, very risky scenario. If you can you should do anything -- you should do everything to block it, the present capabilities whereas but to this regional context, one thing is, we need a credibility of U.S. extended deterrence, but the question is credibility work. I mean, credibility of deterrence is usually set as credibility of retaliation by the United States.

So the question is retaliation happened after the first strike, so I mean, if North Korea starts to launch a nuclear blackmail against Japan, or you could they launched a kind of warning shot against Japan why -- even though they (inaudible) -- some kind of a military strike against Japan, a nuclear strike against Japan, as for me, I don’t have any doubt that the U.S. would retaliate against such kind of strike. But for

example, if Tokyo or Osaka is attacked by nuclear weapon by forced strike, retaliation does not necessarily matter for me.

I mean if their nuclear weapon is (inaudible) to Tokyo I would be very (inaudible), so how you respond doesn't matter at all, personally for me. So in a sense, you know, this kind of credibility of retaliation is sometimes not enough for assurance.

So in a sense, especially, you know, I want, personally I want the U.S., consider every prevention with choice to prevent from the launchings of nuclear missile in the first place, not to retaliating manner. So in that sense this kind of change of -- no not change -- this kind of notion, this kind of a guarantee for assurance is, I think, one of the things we need.

And of course, you know, nuclear component of extended deterrence is just one component which is very important. We have the other things, like missile defense, and the missile defense, you know, as you may know, now Japanese Government is thinking ground-based upper-tier system, basically against, you know, North Korean prolonged provocation campaign, but if it is deployed that would provide third tiers for missile defense for Japanese defense and, you know, if you have more tiers the interception probability will be thus far increased.

So in a sense that is an important, good thing, and the deployment of SM-3 block 2A, which is a product of Japan-U.S. Missile Defense Cooperation, and next generation R&D, that kind of missile defense, is also important thing. And the Alliance Cooperation based on security legislation, which Japan passed last year; and so that new legislature enables more effective logistic support for U.S., and for -- or maybe could be ROK, or some other countries which joined the military campaign.

And in some case the Japanese would come in and may exercise collective defense for the more substantial operation; operation cooperation. So this is

another thing to enhance deterrence against North Korea. And not just that, the important component is toward cooperation especially -- how to say -- U.S.-ROK alliance and we have to -- the ROK bilateral alliance, that is U.S.-ROK alliance, and the U.S.-Japan alliance, and Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Cooperation is actually to coordinate these two bilateral alliances.

And in the sense there were recent sign of the U.S.-ROK bilateral strategy is a positive but, you know, as everyone knows the comment, political vacuum in the ROK -- how to say -- and that, we cannot be optimistic on the future, but considering the importance of the Japanese -- Japan's strategic position, you know, the U.S.-ROK alliance is not enough to deal with North Korea, especially now we have -- we cannot treat these two alliances separately, because we have one big theater.

So, in that sense, you know, we need to collectively enhance trilateral cooperation. Again, these things -- is mix of assurance and deterrence. And from there specially, the Japanese side assurance is very important but Japan has not continue -- not continue -- Japan asks this in a kind of free riding way, also not just to enhance the deterrence or assurance, you know, the Japanese Government can provide more substantial support under the new security situation, which passed last year. So these kinds of things, I think they contribute to strengthen Trilateral Cooperation, and deter against North Korea. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. POLLACK: Well, good morning, everyone. Let me try to see if I can't put some of these issues in a larger context, if that's possible. We meet here at a time in what seems to be a quadrennial exercise. What to do about North Korea, is somewhat akin, of course, to the swallows returning San Juan Capistrano every year, but we are reminded endlessly of George Shultz's eternal wisdom that nothing ever really gets settled in Washington, D.C., the issues just return and return and return.

But the character of the debate I think as the presentations we've already had demonstrate, is there is a presumption of increased urgency, much of it triggered, I think, by the growth of North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities obviously, and the widespread expectation to which I will return later, of that there is an inevitability of an ICBM capability that would be able to reach the United States. Not by the way now from Takahashi's map. I noticed that here in Washington, D.C. we are, however, spared that.

But for me the real debate and the real understanding should not really begin in Washington, Seoul or Tokyo, except in terms of what we try to do under these trying circumstances; but the very source of our vexation which of course, is in North Korea and with the Kim regime. North Korea of course repeatedly in its propaganda and the like would wish the United States and others to believe that it's really the American hidden hand and villain that explains all the problems on the Korean Peninsula, and to say, in essence, it's all about you when, in fact, it's all about them, in terms of the character, of the decision-making they have undertaken, the choices they are making and their prospective behavior.

So where do we find things today? What can we realistically do to limit the dangers and risks, and ideally avoid the biggest potential crisis in Asia since the Korean War. I don't pretend to have any easy or magical answers, but anything we try to do should be grounded in known facts, observable realities, not undue speculation or magical thinking. In all of this I understand it's, I'm being audacious, I'm going to venture into the morass of intention and calculation in Pyongyang, which is a somewhat daunting exercise.

And yet I think in a way if we look at North Korean behavior, North Korean words, and the like, it's often not nearly as obscure as people make it out to be. More than this, I think we are now five years into Kim Jong-un's rule, as Scott reminded

us earlier. He is a different leader in an essentially unchanging regime, in terms of regime goals. But it is a society that is changing in appreciable ways, but all in the context of not only a much more capable nuclear and missile force, but one which North Korea, in its own ways, is far more transparent than in the past in terms of disclosure about certain kinds of information, and the like.

Now in the interest of time today, I mean there are many issues we could talk about with respect to North Korea, a lot of debate, for example, right now, highlighted when Ambassador King spoke here at Brookings just the other day, focuses on the increased salience of the human rights issue, which has clearly gotten under the skin of the leaders in the north, but our intent here today, or this morning, at least in my presentation, is to somewhat narrow the focus in terms of what we do with respect to defense, deterrence and so forth.

So some basic questions: What has North Korea, in fact, achieved in particularly or in recent years, and maybe this year in particular? What has it not done yet, and for whatever set of reasons? And third, what is it that we believe that North Korea would like us to believe they are capable of doing? All of this pertains of course to the multiple audiences that leaders in Pyongyang have.

First, an internal audience, their own citizens, their own elites who have a stake, shall we say, in the future of the system; but there is a series of other target audiences in the Republic of Korea, in China, in Japan, and then of course in the United States. Now we are all awaiting what might come next, clearly there are capabilities that North Korea has today that they did not possess until quite recently. I would acknowledge for one that the rate of testing, and the breakthroughs in various programs came as a surprise to many people, including myself, that I don't want to describe their previous efforts as somewhat desultory but, for example, if you look at the nuclear testing

program, until this year, essentially North Korea would test every three to three-and-a-half years. This has been accelerated more than that, of the yield of the of the test, at least at best we can estimate it, the latest yields, particularly the last test, are getting closer to a Hiroshima type level.

Of course North Korea claims it is in fact a test of a nuclear warhead. In essence we have to take their word for it, because they've never -- one of the things they have not done is to put a warhead on a missile. Indeed, I would argue that this is one international norm that North Korea has not violated, yet. The last time any country tested a nuclear weapon in the atmosphere with a missile, was in October of 1980, a medium range missile test by China.

So, North Korea of course, the good news for us, is they are very, very constrained by geography, in the case of a country like China or Russia, you could do testing easily within the confines of the physical domain of those states. North Korea does not have that option, so shall we say a decision of the sort would not exactly be what I would call risk-free. Nonetheless, we have a situation where North Korea is trying to demonstrate there is an arriving nuclear power, even if the international system, as a whole, refuses to recognize it as such.

That, we of course use a lot the label, we talk about North Korean provocations. It's a very unsatisfactory label. A lot of what North Korea does today reflects the kind of heightened commitment they are making to various kinds of ongoing programs that they have, so they are much more akin to developmental efforts. I mean the fact that they alarm the outside world, I don't dispute it, but in some send it is a direct outgrowth of goals that have been set for these programs.

So, just as a point here again to highlight, if North Korea wanted to do something extremely -- truly provocative, and in this case the label would fit, it would, in

fact, at a moment of its own choosing, do something demonstrable with a test in the atmosphere. Now, again, everything in North Korea's presentation of its capabilities and its actions seeks to imply that this capability exists. We've seen Kim Jong-un in photographs for March, where he was examining what seemed to be at least he prototype of a nuclear warhead.

It could be, it could not be, we have no independent way to judge it. We've even seen North Korea try to simulate higher heat against the presumed warhead, but on the ground not anything in the air. And this truly is rocket science, and it is not easily done. And whatever the uncertainties with respect, the ability to deploy something on a missile in a more regional basis is compounded hugely by the question of an ICBM, to which I'll return in a few minutes.

So, what motivates the North? Why the acceleration? And how, if at all, does an emerging nuclear capability give North Korea options that heretofore they have lacked? At one level I think we can understand this is part of what the French used to call an all (inaudible) strategy. This is the capability that is directed against everyone, not just the United States, not just the Republic of Korea, not just Japan, but equally so, China.

In essence, to keep the outside world at bay, to give yourself some fundamental means by which you believe you can withstand any kind of pressures directed against you, and deny any outside actor, any kind of meaningful influence, or egress inside the North Korea system. This of course reflects in part, what the North Koreans, not unreasonably, present as what Iraq lacked, what Libya lacked, send capabilities that they gave -- either didn’t have or gave up, leaving them, therefore, vulnerable to pressures, or outright attack from the outside world.

The counter to all of this of course, is that there has been deterrence on

the Korean Peninsula with our without nuclear weapons since the Korean War. So, in a way it is the very severity of what another Peninsula crisis would entail, that has, in fact, contributed to deterrence over time, much of it conventional deterrence, capabilities, that the North has, to put South Korea at risk; to put Seoul at risk, in particular. You didn't need nuclear weapons in order to be able to do that, but North Korea has doubled down on this investment, if you will, and sought to justify its programs in the light of what it sees as the threats directed against it.

Now, all of this, if we ponder it, you know, we are talking here about an economy in the North, that maybe about 125th, the size of South Korea, a belief somehow that North Korea cannot endlessly defy the laws of gravity, economic and political, and yet they have. This is a regime that has survived for nearly 70 years, much of it through outright determination and repression, but they are still standing and the great irony, as several speakers have already noted, is that when we are talking about regime change these days, we are talking about regime change in other capitals including the one which we are currently sitting, or where I'm standing.

But all of this is related, I think, to the fact that if you are sustaining this system, there is an abiding need for external enemies. I almost want to say the more the better, although this devise defies all plausible logic, but it justifies the system over which Kim Jong-un and those close to him reside. It enables, also, North Korea, in some measure to punch above its weight. There are, of course, concerns about the character of what they claim they would do, even if Takahashi's own map shows they can't reach Washington, D.C., we can look North Korean video and see the White House in flames.

Just a few days ago North Korea undertook military exercises which had the Blue House in flames, so the question is: would they regard these capacities that they have as sufficient or necessary to undertake this profound role of the dice? We can't of

course just idly speculate about this, you have to allow, in some measure, that it could be a serious possibility. I would though, nonetheless emphasize that North Korea tends predominantly to be suicidal in its language, not in its actions.

Those who sit atop this system would like to stay there, and I think as our discussion here this morning already highlights no one in Pyongyang should doubt that if there were any kind of significant aggression or coercion against whether Korea or Japan, or against American Forces that the U.S. would sit idly by.

So, what kind of a capacity do they have? People project the amount of both plutonium, and military usable plutonium and enriched uranium that North Korea may or may not possess. Does it have an end point? Is there a point at which what they have is sufficient for their purposes? We don't really know. They haven't really elaborated on a nuclear doctrine, as such, there is some intimation from some of their writings. But I think it reduces analytically to three or four possibilities. And let me just run through these quickly and then try to conclude.

The first presumption that existed for some time, was that North Korea simply wanted a symbolic capability, a political weapon that might be useful for various forms of the status of the system, maybe under potential circumstances for negotiating purposes, that question has been asked and answered. This is not a political weapon; this is something much more significant than that.

So, the second level would be a capability that looks more or less like the capabilities of other developed nuclear states that you have a requisite set of delivery systems, you deploy warheads and missiles and so forth, and they take you a long time, but you try to achieve some measure of technical equivalency with other states.

A third possibility, however, is that amidst all of this activity, the real core goal is what I would call a pure deterrence capability, that you would utilize only under the

extreme duress, extreme threats to the viability of the system. In other words, of a hypothetical case of the walls of the kingdom coming down, with North Korea they would certainly be capable of detonating one or more nuclear weapons, pushing the issue, therefore, under those extreme crisis conditions of, would external forces be prepared to intervene in a nuclear-charged environment. It's worthy of some thought.

And then last, and I think most relevant, frankly, among these different possibilities, because they are not exclusive categories, is the possession and the enhancement of these nuclear weapons provide North Korea, a coercive capability that would otherwise lack, and that it would be usable under circumstances where they believe, or they would judge a capacity to take risks that until now they have rarely ever contemplated simply because of the possession of these nuclear weapons capabilities.

It would inhibit, the argument goes, the United States, in particular, from any kind of an intervention. But here again, what would be a sufficient capability by these standards? As I would see it, the fundamental challenges remain local and regional, not yet intercontinental. The question though is: Is North Korea's calculation such that ultimately they would only be satisfied by the possession of an international nuclear capability; because that, in their view, would seem much more akin to true equivalence to the United States and other nuclear weapon states?

Perhaps so, the discussion and tenor of the debate here in Washington has changed a lot. The argument being that to use that dreaded cliché, an ICBM would be a game changer. You know, whatever that may mean. The problem I have with that; is that there is the threat that exists here and now, that has already been highlighted in several other presentations. Indeed, if North Korea were calculating some kind of a capacity as a function of its possession of nuclear weapons, this not only endangers the citizens of Korea and Japan, it engagers the lives of many, many Americans, either

military personnel, or others who are in the Republic of Korea, or in Japan, every given day.

We are talking about significant numbers of people, and I don't think that the United States can or should do anything that implies that somehow an ICBM changes everything when we have to begin with the existing realities today. We don't want either our Japanese or Korean allies to think at all that the U.S. would be inhibited from responding under varying circumstances.

So, very, very quickly, and a little more speculatively: What happens next? Tanaka (inaudible) has highlighted that maybe North Korea has something planned for Inauguration Day. It's possible. Your guess is as good as mine; something with a bigger bang, something that we haven't really contemplated before?

On the other hand, a lot of this is counterbalanced by another factor that is now operative, that there is a meaningful, I would say more likely prospect or not, that in the next presidential election in the Republic of Korea, that North Korea could get the government in Seoul much more to its liking. That it would be quite likely prepared to walk back some of the innovations in defense, strategy and the like that South Korea has undertaken in recent years, in response to what North Korea is doing.

Would that be sufficient for them to withhold actions, withhold further tests? I don't know. I don't know. But it's worthy of thinking about it. So, I would emphasize, though, in my own belief, that we should not, even as we pause at that ultimately, inevitably, they will have the capability, some people would say it's going to happen very, very soon. Maybe it's based on intelligence data, I really don't know, to be able to strike the United States.

Let's not give North Korea credit for what it has not done, and has not demonstrated. We could talk ourselves into a situation that I think would not be

particularly helpful. In particular, if this becomes defined exclusively as a U.S.-North Korean bilateral issue. It's not. It's a regional issue, and it's global if you think in terms of non-proliferation strategy.

So, we don't have an optimal strategy, but then nothing in this world is ever is, but we must keep focused, I think, very, very much on denying North Korea any legitimacy, any perception that it is a legitimate arrive nuclear weapons state. We must find all available means, as others have demonstrated ways to curb and inhibit this.

We must develop means to respond in an acute crisis. We must unambiguously reaffirm, and strengthen this defense and deterrence commitments to our East Asian allies, and we must, wherever possible, build on quiet discussions that many Chinese are prepared to talk about, that even if official Chinese policy lags behind, that North Korea is as much a threat to China as it is to everybody else. I think I'll stop there. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BUSH: I'd like to thank each of you for outstanding presentations. I think you, each, in your way, have contributed to a deeper and nuanced understanding of the problem. And I think Jonathan capped it off by emphasizing the way in which North Korea's growing capabilities, at a minimum, permit greater freedom for intimidation within the East Asian region, whatever the long-term goals; and the long-term theory of victory should be.

So, to start I'd like to invite each of the speakers to pose a question or a comment to anyone of their colleagues. So if anybody would like to take that opportunity. And if not we can go to the audience. No? Oh, yes, please.

MR. TAKAHASHI: I will ask a question -- Actually I want to ask a question to Scott and Jonathan. Outside, you know, (inaudible) a specialist, you know. How to say? To look at the next year's potential course of action with North Korea; there

is two defined hypotheses, which might be, overestimates North Korean statistics. So one is, they may want the -- because they want a progressive liberal president, they would refrain from the very -- how to say -- strong provocation.

The other thing -- the other side is because, you know, ROK will have big (inaudible), they want to take out on this through some kind of provocation. I know, I know nobody knows that they -- I want to know which (inaudible) you guys buy.

MR. BUSH: Scott, do you want to go first?

MR. SNYDER: Sure. My operating presumption, as I watch Kim Jong-un and the development of the nuclear missile program is that it is driven by a desire to make a technical progress. I mean, it's driven by primarily by domestic political considerations. I think the nuclear program has become a source of domestic legitimation for Kim Jong-un, and as a result I think he's -- -- you know, tied to the program. And so really the political instability in South Korea in recent weeks has been the first evidence that has slightly challenged by operating hypothesis, and interested to see whether or not it proves to overturn my hypothesis, or whether my hypothesis is going to be confirmed.

MR. BUSH: Jonathan?

MR. POLLACK: I would agree with Scott. To me, the near-term question would be: can the North sustain the simultaneous programs that it has underway? Or is forced like any government ultimately to make choices? I mean, this is a regime that remarkably has persisted over time, but they face tradeoffs like anyone else particularly if you are getting to a point where it is less demonstrating a particularly capability, and actually putting resources against operational goals. And on that, I guess we have to wait and see.

One thing I should have emphasized, by the way, is that although I agree

fully with Scott that Kim Jong-un's own sense of identity whether because of compensation he has to give to key elites, or not, I don't know. Is so tied up now with the sustaining of these programs, but let's not forget that I think underlying all of this, is the abiding goal of North Korea from the very day the state was founded was to achieve the unification of the Peninsula under the control of the North Korean Workers' Party, period.

And that has not gone away, and it is clear that these kinds of capabilities are scenes and means by which you would in some measure undermine or weaken the kind relationship between the U.S. and the ROK. And that's one of the things we have to keep very much, and very much in mind as we proceed ahead.

MR. BUSH: Hitoshi, do you have any comment.

MR. TANAKA: No.

MR. BUSH: I have a comment on Sugio's question. I think we should recall that there is something of an annual cycle in North Korea's messaging, that when the flowers start to bloom, and the saps start flowing in the trees, and the U.S. and ROK conduct exercises, North Korea goes on high alert. And it does all kinds of things to alarm us, and more tests, is one way of alarming us. Then when summer arrives, North Korea goes on the peace defensive. And says, you know, we've done our thing, let's talk. So, in the context of the political crisis in North Korea --

MR. POLLACK: In South Korea.

MR. BUSH: -- in South Korea, they could -- well, one can hope, that they can see that sort of aggressive actions in the late winter early spring area way of conditioning, not only the new administration, but also the public in South Korea. You know, it may be difficult to calculate this though, because we don't know when the election is going to be. You know, we know the fine -- when it has come, but it could come before. There's an assumption, though, in your question, and in all of this

discussion, and that is that North Korea would like a Progressive Government in South Korea.

MR. TAKAHASHI: Oh, yeah. That's right.

MR. BUSH: But is that necessarily true? A Progressive Government in South Korea might force them to make choices that they don't want to make. A conservative government in South Korea validates their own policies to themselves, is a way of self-legitimation. So, I don't know the answer, I hope that they will cool it, but it could go anyway. I have --

MR. TANAKA: May I?

MR. BUSH: Yes. Please. I've provoked you now.

MR. TANAKA: I have the feeling that every single action on the part of North Korea is based upon their weakness, domestic weakness, the weakness vis-à-vis South Korea, the weakness vis-à-vis Japan, then China and all sort of thing. So I don't think North Korea today dreams of unification of Korean Peninsula under their terms. They are desperate in preserving their regime. So, I think this goal is out of their weakness.

MR. BUSH: Thank you. Okay. We'll start with Bill Brown, then we'll go to Joe Basco (phonetic) and back to (inaudible). So, let's go to Bill first, Bill Brown.

MR. BROWN: Actually you all both said opposite things in a way, and I wanted to highlight that because I think you are both kind of right, I really liked --

MR. BUSH: Both of whom?

MR. BROWN: Jonathan and --

MR. BUSH: Takahashi?

MR. BROWN: -- Takahashi, yes; who has just said, about North Korea is weak, can't really imagine unification. You are saying that's been the bottom line of

their goal forever. I'm agreeing with you, but I think their weakness is, they can really stand on their own, they really -- the North Korean regime really needs to have South Korea, the peninsula is too integrated really. Ultimately they can't have a huge rival in the south. So I think it's kind of one and both the same things, they are both -- they are very weak in a lot of ways, but the way to resolve that is to at least have an idea that they are going to conquer the south.

So, I'm quite with you on this idea that the whole nuclear program is not aimed at attacking anybody, it's aimed with nuclear weapons, but it's, like in the '60s, remember in the '60s the North Koreans did a lot of provocations in the south. They stopped that once our side got dominance in the military and they've actually been very good in the last 20 years. They've not intervened in the south except, it's a very important event, with Cheonan ship which they sank, and we did not retaliate.

A huge problem, I think, on our side. As Kim Jong-un has come into power, well, you know, he sinks a ship, nothing happens. Astonishing mistake on our side -- I mean U.S. and South Korea, that we were not able to, in some ways, retaliate for that. So, now if nuclear sort of deterrence, it didn't really matter what they -- just as you were saying, 5 percent, as long as the South Korea and us are a little bit afraid, a little of a provocation, a cyber attack, a financial attack, a political assignation, any kind of monkey business they should be much freer to do that, because we are not going to attack them back for kind of a -- we are not going to use a nuclear attack against a cyber attack.

So I guess I'm saying that North Koreans have -- it makes every sense what they are doing, I don't think there's any mystery. They've been doing this forever. You know, one misunderstanding I think is that this is sort of coming to some immediate crisis right now. The provocation that North Korea does every day is producing more

visual material, that's really much more important than the missiles, and they've been doing this, you know, probably for 20 years, they've certainly been doing HEU. I don't if there's any question about the HEU, they've been -- they've said, in the last three years, they are working on the plutonium and the HEU and, you know, we are just watching for missiles.

And so I guess I'm thinking that, you know, we have to understand what they are doing before we understand how to get back at it or stop it, and there's a whole lot of policies I think we could aim at sort of working on their weakness, through China, and especially through the economy. I'm thinking North Korea's economy is changing radically in a way that's discomforting to the regime. We should be able to help that.

MR. BUSH: Comments?

MR. BROWN: All right. It's more of a comment than a question.

MR. BUSH: Counter-comments?

MR. POLLACK: You know, I think Bill has raised a couple of very, very relevant points. Let's differentiate what I call their ongoing messaging propaganda strategies, if you will, which, to their own people if to no one else, they want to show themselves as really, very, very capable and having visions and aspirations to be able to do in their long-time enemies in the South, and do in the United States, but fundamentally underlying this I would agree with Hitoshi, that it really is an expression of the system's weakness rather than its strength.

But, if there's one thing that I think we all out to caution ourselves with, is that, you know, this is a regime and a system that has persisted through thick and thin in ways that we all try to understand fully. They are still at it. I like to say, every day when I get up in the morning I turn on my laptop, and they are still there. And that is certainly, particularly in this city, over time, has not been the expectation.

They will not go gentle into that good night, as Dylan Thomas once wrote. And we should we shouldn't -- we should disabuse ourselves that it's going to be so seamless and easy without my making at all any kind of a prediction about when and how this story comes to a conclusion.

MR. BUSH: Other comments?

MR. TANAKA: Are we sort of -- should we have an assumption that they will be able to do this. They will be able to go on doing this forever. Have we ever tried to stop this, by demanding China to stop everything? Or to tighten, sanction regime as we did vis-à-vis Iran? Somehow I think that North Korea is doing this out of their weakness that we never exploited their weakness. We just sit back and provide certain lukewarm functions. Under the circumstances, probably they can go on doing this. Why don't we stop it?

MR. POLLACK: I agree with you very, very much. I am unaware that -- and maybe it's more out of ignorance than anything else, I am unaware of any initiative on the part of the United States where we simply flat out said, cut off this, no more assessments of any sort instead, the U.S. and China engaged in a mutual shaming competition. They were both trying to outsource the problem. You know, you do it. No, you do it. You've created -- you know, we can see that kind of back and forth, and our President Elect already has been prone to some of this kind of talk of his own.

So, unless and until we -- we, the United States and others, with China, can find a way that we (a) acknowledge that this is a common problem. It is not a question for which any single actor is at blame and responsible for it, because all this does, is it creates, to the degree that we are offloading it on one another, it creates political space within which North Korea then can operate skillfully, and shows the capacity to exploit those differences in a very, very credible fashion.

MR. BUSH: Scott?

MR. SNYDER: I mean, Hitoshi in his presentation showed that what we are dealing with is a collective action problem. I highlighted that there's a gap created by geopolitical mistrust between the U.S. and China, namely differences over end state, preferred end state, where China wants a unified Korea, friendly to China. And the U.S. envisions a South Korea-led unification. And then we've got a North Korea that actually the real challenge that I think Sugio highlighted, is that, you know, this is a regime preservationist leadership that operates under a revolutionary ideology, and it's never had capabilities to match the intent of the ideology.

Now we've got new capabilities, how do we assess what that means with regards to what they might do, in terms of operational (inaudible)? And I think there is question there, that, really none of us is going to be able to answer with the level of assurance that we would need in order to sleep quietly at night.

MR. BUSH: Right, right, right. Joe Basco, (phonetic), towards the back on the aisle?

SPEAKER: Thank you, Richard. And thank you for really excellent presentations. Joe Basco, formerly with the Defense Department. The last discussion illustrates the question that I wanted to ask. Jonathan's last statement in his presentation was that China is as much threatened by North Korea as the rest of us. That is the conventional wisdom in this town, and it has been for 20 years since Henry Kissinger first stated it at that time.

The problem is that China doesn’t seem to have gotten the message. And I offer a different theory as to why it has not taken the action that Mr. Tanaka recommends. North Korea, it seems to me, has served China's strategic interests, it has been a major distraction and diffusion of attention, diplomatic and military and otherwise

for the United States. It has enabled China to portray itself as the responsible stakeholder that the more outrageous North Korean behavior the more China looks like the moderate alternative to which we must turn.

Mr. Takahashi's last -- his presentation pointed out the change in his geostrategic balance in Asia as a result of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. And I pose the question to you, doesn't that service China's geostrategic interest in the long run as well?

MR. POLLACK: I think that, Joe you raise some relevant points, but I would dissent from them. I think it's almost too clever by half a strategy for China. And I think we know enough about thinking in some circles in China, to know that there is a level at which, although once China and North Korea were joined at the hip, that they are not anymore, and yet China seems incapable or unwilling, and they may be relevant to the points you make to redefine its strategy, in particular its willingness to link up much more unambiguously with the U.S., with South Korea, and maybe even, prospectively, Japan.

China doesn't like to be tethered to anybody's strategy, they want to reserve those options. I mean it's kind of ironic that, you know, when you hear China state its opposition to unilateral sanctions, in a way that's really too clever by half because the things that we, I think collectively, we would dearly love to see sanctions go farther in U.N., and the reason we can't is because China and Russia oppose them going farther.

You know, but I would say the more we have learned of the history, and there's some ongoing very, very interesting historical work going on now about the Chinese-North Korean relationship, new documentation and the like, we can understand better that this has not been a joining of forces. I mean, in 1975, when Kim Il-sung went

to Beijing immediately on the heels of North Vietnam's victory over South Vietnam, he basically said, and he said this publicly, and we know more privately, now is the time, now is my moment, and Deng, and now we know Mao, both told them, no, it's not.

In 1964 after China first tested a nuclear weapon, Kim Il-sung went to China, said to Mao, I'd like some of this too. And Mao said, no, you can't. So it has hardly been what I would call a harmonized relationship, more than that, and the ongoing puzzle for me, is that for all the talk about the endless assertiveness of China, I do not see that assertiveness with respect to North Korea, when demonstrably North Korean actions undermine what I would take to be a reasonable approximation of China's vital interests.

MR. TANAKA: Let me make a rather bold provocation. We have new President of the United States, and it's been said that President Trump is good at kind of terms, optional (phonetic) thing, and suppose that the United States under Trump decided to go for ground bargain with China, ground bargaining at the end of the United States-North Korean issue, suggestion to the North Korean issue. Or that the United States would give certain things to China. Would it be a likely scenario?

MR. BUSH: Well, I think there are a lot of people who would oppose that.

MR. TANAKA: I'm sure.

MR. BUSH: I'd like to come back to Joe's question, and I think that clearly China has not done the things we want and Joe's hypothesis of why that is the case, probably has a lot of merit, but there have been cases where indirectly we have caused China to, at least, reassess for a while, the situation it faces. And that is when North Korea does something that threatens the security of South Korea, and then the United States and South Korea, together, take steps to increase the terms, that, have the

effect not only of making North Korea more vulnerable, but have the effect of making China more vulnerable, at least in its eyes.

And that has sort of, at least temporarily, brought the Chinese up short. The first case of this was the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011 after the shelling of Yeonpyeong-Do. The second is the case of FAD, this has gotten China all in a tizzy and, you know, we can simply say, we are going to protect our forces, we are going to protect our allies. You know where the problem, the original problem is, do something about it.

Lieutenant General In-Bum Chun, who is affiliated with SAIS and with Brookings.

MR. CHUN: Good morning, gentlemen. My question is to the two Japanese speakers. In case of a contingency to include a full-scale war, what would the Japanese Government/the Japanese Self-Defense Force be capable or willing to provide in the form of assistance in that kind of a scenario. And in order to give you time to think, I just want to comment that I really find and support Richards's statement about, does a progressive government, if it comes to form in South Korea, help the North Koreans? I mean we really need to think about that. So, thank you.

MR. BUSH: Please?

MR. TANAKA: I recall in 1994 when there was first North Korea nuclear crisis, we indeed engaged in preparation for contingency plan, which included the support to the U.S. Military operating to defend Korea. And we found out that nothing substantive can be done beyond the territory of Japan. That is the very reason why this new security legislation was put forward. And now, if I'm not mistaken -- if not mistaken, there is a clear mandate for making a plan.

That plan includes the activities on the part of Self-Defense Force for sort of providing logistical support to the United States, or even to Korea. And engage in

certain type of actions, which means is to combat (phonetic). As you know this legislation permits Japanese Self-Defense Force to use the right of corrective self-defense. So, in the past it was very difficult to distinguish self-defense and collective self-defense, therefore now, I think we better -- we will be able to make a plan in which we even exercise the collective self-defense, which would add much more substantive support to the U.S. Military.

MR. BUSH: And Sugio?

MR. TAKAHASHI: I'll say, the answer to that question is -- the answer to that is very difficult because it would depend on the future government's decision. And with, you know, what enables by the last year's legislation, I can say that that is one thing, is Japan can provide logistic support, much more substantial than 1997, defense of 1999 domestic law, that is more -- closer to the actual combat areas, or can be more substantial one; if the government decides to provide that.

If the government recognize legislation as important influence in the situation, and decide that kind of support, and if that suggestion is recognized as armed attack against a third country which has close relationship with Japan, and that armed attack endangers the enduring Japanese national survival, then Japan can -- may exercise the right of collective self-defense, which means the use of force by Japanese Military. But it depends on the situation, and it depends on the government's decision, so I cannot say, definitely think, or concrete, think in this timing. And I got one question before, from the previous, one.

MR. BUSH: Yes, please?

MR. TAKAHASHI: Yes. And that is, you know, how the new strategic landscape, how it (inaudible) itself to China? And I think the new geostrategic landscape requires strengthen the ring case (phonetic) -- not ring case -- to strengthen the

coordination between U.S.-ROK alliance and U.S.-Japan alliance, and the U.S.-Japan-ROK Trilateral Cooperation, which, I don't think that -- China does not want that. But at the same time, I remember eight years ago when the new administration started, and when Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Trilateral Cooperation was restarted at that time.

At that time one of the thoughts for our side is showing -- you know, responding to North Korean provocation with sanctioning the Trilateral Cooperation. That would give some kind of leverage for Chinese to corporate more, to squeeze North Korea because that's -- this (inaudible) is not good for China. But the reality is not that simple. It really was not that simple. So, maybe, you know, they make some judgment that (inaudible) Trilateral Cooperation is this was the -- perhaps of North Korea. At least that was -- how to say -- squeezing North Korea.

So in a sense, you know, I think this does not serve Chinese national interest, but the Chinese strategic interest, but they may have some defined -- they may need to go ahead with some defined things including continuation with North Korea.

MR. BUSH: We are running out of time. So, I'm going to take two more questions. The gentleman back here, on the aisle. Do you still have a question?

SPEAKER: It's a (inaudible).

MR. BUSH: And then the gentleman over here.

MR. TOKOLA: Yes. Thank you. I'm Mark Tokola, from the Korea Economic Institute. I'd like to push that China thread one step further if I can. Scott Snyder talked about the idea that maybe the U.S.-China relations are going to deteriorate further; it will be harder to cooperate with them. And that may spillover into making cooperation with North Korea difficult, maybe impossible. If China is totally uncooperative on North Korea, do the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, have any other option? What our Korea, North Korea policy be in the absence of Chinese

cooperation?

MR. SNYDER: The question is, whether we think that there's a road to Pyongyang that does not lead through Beijing? And I think that we will probably look at the same instruments, you know, that I laid out, there would be a deterrence component and really a hard part that actually Hitoshi is in the best position to talk about. It's, you know, how would you pursue a diplomatic option under those circumstances, is there a way of communicating with Pyongyang that could be useful and effective.

MR. POLLACK: I think what would be very important, Mark, and we should impart this to China, and we should be able to impart it to China. It kind of an if/then proposition, you know, if China is -- and I'm not trying to say that China has to unconditionally accept every element in a U.S. strategy, quite the contrary. The question is whether or not they can participate actively in that. But the point in, it's relevant with FAD, I would note parenthetically that in Chinese statements already, they are close to endorsing Moon Jae-in in the ROK, because they like what they hear about walking back FAD, walking back GSOMIA, so I know our Chinese friends, never, never interfere in the internal affairs of another state, but I guess that somebody in China didn't get the memo this time.

MR. BUSH: Just offering their point of view.

MR. POLLACK: What's that?

MR. BUSH: They are just offering their point of view?

MR. POLLACK: They are offering their point of view, right; but that, fundamentally, it's a question of choice. If we see dangers and risks that are not manageable, it's not intended to dismiss Chinese concerns, but we have core commitments that we have to make as allies, to the states with which we are aligned, and we have to manage those risks and we'd like to do that in congruence with China, but if

we can't, we have to act separately.

MR. BUSH: Final question?

MR. HURST: Christopher Hurst, KEI. I had a question about; Mr. Bush mentioned that a progressive government might be more of a challenge for North Korea. What might these challenges be and how would North Korea respond to these new challenges?

MR. BUSH: First of all I think that what is most validating for the regime is a sense of vulnerability from all directions, that everybody hates us, because then that has certain domestic implications. So, if all of a sudden you have a South Korean Government that loves you, or that is trying to love you, that creates some cognitive dissonance.

Second, it might evolve that the New Progressive Government wants to negotiate certain things and, you know, every state in thinking about resolving the issues through negotiations, you know, will consider: Is it in our interest to negotiate these issues right now? Or, is the time past when we can negotiate these? Or, is the time yet to come?

North Korea is on a path; it's doing okay on that path. It may not want to restrain itself by sort of being tied down by whatever it is that a progressive might have on offer.

MR. HURST: On the other hand, Richard, money is nice, and so --

MR. BUSH: Yes. Well, money is nice but --

MR. HURST: Is negotiating an --

MR. BUSH: Excuse me?

SPEAKER: Is negotiating an answer then to North Korea. I mean, if negotiating, if they want everybody to, they want an -- to be showing the world that -- their

fear, everyone evading them, attacking them. So is the real answer to North Korea negotiation, or looking like you want to negotiate to weaken the regime?

MR. BUSH: Well, I mean, I have to confess, all of this speculation, just out of my head, and we don't know but, you know, essentially, you want to be able to negotiate on your terms. And, you know, if there were to be a negotiation on a peace agreement, for example, North Korea's demands will probably be pretty high, at least at the outset, and those would be demands that even a progressive government couldn't count --

This conversation could go on for a long time. I guarantee you it will go on for a long time, because of our new leadership here, and the initiatives of various capitals in East Asia. We are going to take a time out for right now, but we will reconvene at an appropriate time to sort of resume the discussion. But thank you for your interest. Thank you for coming. Thank you very much, for each of our four panelists for stimulating such a great discussion. (Applause)

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