Abstract

The post–Cold War US–South Korea alliance has been publicly pronounced as having become less cohesive over time. How can we prove this change of the alliance over time? This paper attempts to empirically test this change of the US–South Korea alliance after the end of the Cold War, using four significant operational indicators: homogeneity in goals, threat perception, strategic compatibility and command structure. After looking at how these four operational indicators have changed over time, the authors verify in more concrete terms the changes of the alliance cohesion in the post–Cold War period.

Key Words: US–South Korea Alliance, Homogeneity in Goals, Threat Perception, Strategic Compatibility, Command Structure

INTRODUCTION

It was commonly stated that the post–Cold War US–South Korea alliance has become less cohesive over time, even though it is in the process of being restored and transformed into a different mechanism during the current Lee Myung-bak government. For instance, when North Korea announced its withdrawal from the
NPT in 1993 and the Clinton government initiated its negotiations with North Korea to resolve the crisis, Kim Young Sam, who is "strong-willed and independent-minded", expressed his displeasure with Clinton's policy towards North Korea, when South Korea was excluded from the bilateral negotiations between the United States and North Korea.\(^1\) After the November summit meeting in 1993 between the United States and South Korea to coordinate their approaches, President Kim Young Sam was still suspicious about the possible exclusion of South Korea from the negotiating process and a possible secret deal to be cut between the United States and North Korea. He insisted on South Korea's inclusion in the negotiation process and requested resumption of the talks between North and South Koreas through the exchange of special envoys. Meanwhile, the United States continued to contact with North Korea over the next several months in order to find a way to come up with a deal in the US–North Korean negotiations, and reached an agreement on a four-point plan called the "Agreed Conclusion", which included the US commitment to suspend the US–ROK Team Spirit military exercises.\(^2\) At the same time, South Korea continued its efforts to participate in the negotiation process and play more roles in the US negotiations with North Korea, and on February, 1994, Kim Young Sam announced that he would pursue a North–South summit meeting in order to resolve the nuclear issue, followed by another announcement that it would resume the suspended US–ROK Team Spirit military exercises in case the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections and the North–South special envoy exchange would not take place.\(^3\)

With its initiation of the Sunshine Policy towards North Korea, the Kim Dae Jung government's relationship with the United

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\(^3\) Eric Larson and Normal Levin, *Ambivalent Allies?*, p.18.
States turned into a more troublesome one. During the US–South Korea Summit meeting in Washington on March 7, 2001, Kim Dae Jung asked George Bush to support the Sunshine policy and to resume talks with North Korea, but Bush's response was negative because the North was not transparent and he was not sure whether North Korea was adhering to existing agreements with the United States. He responded that he would talk "only when Pyongyang lived up to the commitments it had already made, especially on the nuclear issue." In January 2003, Kim Dae Jung criticized the United States: "sometimes we need to talk to the other party, even if we dislike the other party."

The adoption of the "preemptive use of force" in the National Security Strategy of the United States of America on September 20, 2002, added more strains to the US–South Korea alliance. The South Koreans think that it was more the US behavior, not the North Korean that causes security tensions on the Korean peninsula. In case the United States makes a preemptive assault on North Korea, the target of the North Korean retaliatory assault would be South Korea, not the United States. South Koreans already experienced this possibility in 1994 when the United States actually planned its strike on the North Korean nuclear sites, which caused the South Koreans to be in a fear of a possible war.

The relationship between two countries became worse during the Roh Moo Hyun government. President Roh Moo Hyun, during an election campaign debate, expressed his inclination for an engagement policy to North Korea which is different from the US policy. Also in a speech in Los Angeles, President Roh Moo Hyun

6 Dough Bandow "Ending the Anachronistic Korean Commitment", Parameters (Summer 2003), p.81.
stated his desire for the United States not to use hard-line measures against the North concerning nuclear development issues. In 2006, he stated that “I don’t agree with some opinions inside the US that appear to be wanting to take issue with North Korea’s regime, apply pressure and sometimes wishing for its collapse… If the U.S. government tries to resolve the problem that way, there will be friction and disagreement between South Korea and the U.S.”

His support for more independent and self-reliant South Korea was also linked to an anti-American policy. In January 2003, the new President Roh Moo Hyun stated: “South Korea ranks as the twelfth to thirteenth largest economy in the world and I want to preside over our strong nation as its strong president. All I am asking is an equal partnership with the United States.” Then he mentioned that “so far, all changes in the size of US troop strength here have been determined by the United States based on its strategic consideration, without South Korea’s consent.” In all these, however, how can we be certain about the less cohesiveness of the US–South Korea alliance in the post–Cold War period? How can we measure the changes in alliance cohesion of the post–Cold War US–ROK security relationship? The purpose of this paper lies in investigating this question since the end of the

9 Yonhapnews, (November 13, 2004).
10 The Associated Press, (January 26, 2006).
13 Concerning the evolution of the US–ROK alliance, there have existed two different arguments: that is, the alliance has become worse and weaker ever since the end of the Cold War; or it has been an alliance readjustment process into a different mechanism despite its less cohesiveness. Regardless of these two confronting arguments, however, this essay intends to investigate the changes in the cohesion level of the US–ROK alliance after the end of the Cold War.
Cold War until the Roh Moo Hyun administration. In order for this, we need first to clarify the concept of alliance cohesion.

According to Holsti, Hopmann, and Sullivan, alliance cohesion is "the ability of alliance partners to agree upon goals, strategy, and tactics and to coordinate activities directed towards those ends."\(^{14}\) They created two measures to analyze alliance cohesion: behavioral and attitudinal components. The former refers to the degree to which alliance members cooperate and suppress their conflicts with other members of the alliance, and the latter to the similarity of members' attitudes about external threats confronting the bloc, which constitutes the degree of attitudinal consensus of perceived external threats.\(^{15}\) These two components are closely related to each other, as Andrew Scott argues: "when the perceived interests of actors conflict each other, their attitudes will tend to be hostile, and their behavior will tend to involve conflict. Conversely, it suggests that when the perceived interests of actors are held in common, their attitudes will tend to be friendly and their behavior will tend to be collaborative."\(^{16}\)

Although there are some other scholars' definitions of alliance cohesion, most of them emphasize only one component of these two.\(^{17}\) In this research,


\(^{15}\) Holsti, et al., pp.93~94.


\(^{17}\) For example, according to Fred Chernoff, alliance cohesion means the distance between or among allies' objectives; Louis Richardson implies that cohesion pertains to differences between or among allied states' goals; Stephen Walt argues that cohesion is relevant to alliance duration; Earl Ravenal argues that cohesion concerns commitment; See Fred Chernoff, "Stability and Alliance Cohesion", *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 34(1), 1990; Louise Richardson, *When Allies Differ: Anglo-American Relations during the Suez and Falklands Crises* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); Stephen Walt, "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse", *Survival,* 39(1), 1997; Earl C, Ravenal, "Extended Deterrence and Alliance Cohesion", in Alan Ned Sabrosky (ed.), *Alliances in US Foreign Policy: Issues in the Quest for Collective Defense* (Westview Press, 1988) (cited from Patricia A. Weitsman (2004: 24)).
in order to define alliance cohesion broadly, we borrow the definition by Holsti, Hopmann, and Sullivan. That is, we define alliance cohesion as both "the ability of allies to agree upon goals, values, and strategy (attitudinal component) and to coordinate activities directed towards these ends (behavioral component)." Based upon this definition, we set up four operational indicators, two of which are attitudinal and the other two are behavioral: homogeneity in goals and threat perception (attitudinal); strategic compatibility and command structure (behavioral). Subsequent sections of this essay will investigate the alliance cohesion of the post–Cold War US–ROK security relations until the Roh Moo Hyun government through each of these four indicators, and the concluding remarks will provide prospects of the alliance during the current Lee Myung-bak government.

ATTITU DINAL COMPONENTS

Homogeneity in Goals

The goals of the United States and South Korea are well expressed in the Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America signed in 1953:

Article 2: "The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of either of them, the political independence or security of either of the Parties is threatened by external armed attack. Separately and jointly, by self-help and mutual aid, the Parties will maintain and develop appropriate means to deter armed attack and will take suitable measures in consultation and agreement to implement this Treaty and to further its purposes."

As explicated in the Treaty, both parties had their own concerns of external armed attack, The United States has possessed two strategic goals in the US–South Korea alliance, The first goal
was to deter the Soviet Union and China: “the strategic priorities of the United States are to protect its territories from the Soviet threat, to secure economic prosperity by constraining Soviet global expansion, to maintain democratic values and ideology in the free world, and to establish a world order favorable to the United States.”

Even though the relationship has changed over time, the major element of this relationship for the United States continued to be the containment of the Soviet Union and China.

The strategic importance of South Korea to the United States, thus, has been in South Korea’s contributions to security in Northeast Asia, in exchange for the US provision of security protections to South Korea against North Korea. The second goal has been absolutely to defend against the North Korean threat. As Victor Cha states, “the United States stationed forces in Korea for this purpose, and the South Koreans democratized and prospered from the stability provided by the US defense commitment.”

On the other hand, the goal of South Korea was more about the deterrence of North Korean invasion. For this purpose, South Korea has looked forward to “an enhanced US role, for example, a guarantee of a full and prompt military commitment in the event of war, increased credibility of the alliance, maintenance of an unfailing and binding relationship, and a guarantee of continuous military support.”

Thus, the two countries shared a homogeneous goal in the US–South Korea alliance: the deterrence of North Korea for South Korea’s security.

In the 1980s, the goals of the two countries in their alliance policies became more homogeneous compared to the previous Cold

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War periods. In the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, President Carter withdrew the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT II) from the ratification process in the US Senate, thus leading to a New Cold War period. This rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union contributed to the homogeneity in goals of the US and South Korea in the 1980s.

During the Cold War period, the joint rationale of the two countries in maintaining the US-South Korea alliance was very clear: the containment of the North Korean military threats, along with coping with the communist countries like the Soviet Union and China in Northeast Asia. The deterrence of the conventional military threat from North Korea was the major purpose of the alliance during the Cold War period. After the end of the Cold War, the two countries began to think differently about the validity of the alliance. For the United States, the traditional arguments that the United States Forces Korea (USFK) constrains the Soviet Union are no more effective. As Richard Cheney acknowledged, the situation in the Korean peninsula became only one of the contingency categories for the United States. The reduction of the US interests in the Korean peninsula was also insisted by Douglas Bandow: "In fact, the ROK doesn't even come up to the standard of an important interest—one that would materially affect America but not threaten its survival as an independent republic...the preservation of a mid-sized trading partner surrounded by competing great powers in a distant region is not strategically important." In the 1992 report to the Congress, A Strategic

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Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking toward the 21st Century, the United States defined one of its security objectives in South Korea as "transforming the US forces on the peninsula from a leading to a supporting role, including some force reductions", which has been materialized as the transfer of peacetime OPCON to the South Korean military in 1994.

Of course, the containment of North Korea is still an important issue for the United States. This task for the Cold War period was implemented in line with containing the Soviet Union, a global-level communist superpower to cope with. With the demise of the Soviet Union, however, the strategy of containing North Korea is not as significant as the Cold War period. A still ongoing significant issue might be the weapons of mass destruction of North Korea, but even in this case, the United States doesn't need to be stationed in the Korean peninsula, which is necessary only for the conventional military threats from North Korea.

South Korea, on the contrary, argues that there still exist significant threats from North Korea: "a massive conventional force of 1.1 million troops with a vast majority developed close to the DMZ; a growing ballistic missile threat; greatly improved special forces (some 100,000) with the ability to rapidly filter into key political, industrial and otherwise critical sectors within the ROK; and the specter of a nuclear—armed North Korea." With the continuity of the long—lasting Cold War mindset and the shortage of North Korea's reliability for security partnership, South Korea still considered the US military protection necessary for the containment of North Korea. Against this background, the goals of the two countries after the end of the Cold War became less convergent compared to the Cold War period.

From the late 1990s onward, the US rationale for the US—South Korea alliance became more focused increasingly on the maintenance

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of regional security in Northeast Asia rather than only focused specifically on the defense of South Korea against North Korea. For the United States, the alliance was being transformed from “a parochial to a broader-framed alliance with an increasingly ambitious security agenda”, and the goal of the alliance was shifting from the focus on the North Korean threat to “a more flexible alliance that is taking into account the possibility of a very different strategic equation on the peninsula.”

According to Ted Galen Carpenter & Douglas Bandow, the containment of North Korea during the Cold War period is no longer a vital interest for the United States. According to them, “the raison d’être for Washington’s defense of the ROK, a weak South Korea vulnerable to communist aggression orchestrated by Beijing and Moscow, has disappeared. That America’s presence undoubtedly still helps deter the DPRK from military adventurism does not mean that it is necessary to do so.” So they think that the current South Korean military capabilities are sufficient to defend itself against the possible North Korean invasion, and that the US–South Korea alliance should be dissolved with an “amicable divorce.”

Whether or not their statements have been rather exaggerated, it is still true that the United States loosened its emphasis on the Korean peninsula thus focusing more on the transformation of the US–South Korea alliance for regional and global purposes.

In contrast, the South Korean government still prefers the defense of its territorial integrity against North Korea as the major goal of the alliance, with the security of Northeast Asia as a secondary one. Even though South Korea does not consider the North Korean threat as seriously as before, and has begun to

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29 Ted Galen Carpenter & Doug Bandow, The Korean Conundrum,
prepare "their forces for a post-DPRK security environment in which operational capacities beyond the confines of the Korean peninsula will matter", the South Korean government still desires to enjoy the security protection provided by the United States against the remaining possible threats from North Korea and opposes the US troop withdrawal and military realignment plans aimed more at the regional security of Northeast Asia. Even though South Korea would like to have a more equal relationship with the United States and have more self-reliant military capabilities, it still needs the US security protection until it achieves its self-reliant level. In addition, South Korea thinks that the US presence is necessary for the maintenance of the balance of power in Northeast Asia, as Hong Hoo-hyun, a former ROK ambassador to America stated: "The South Korean president added it would be better for the US forces to be kept in South Korea to prevent Japan and China from engaging in efforts to gain hegemony in the region."

Thus, whereas the United States prefers transforming the alliance for more regional and global purposes over constraining it only to the affairs of the Korean peninsula, the South Korean government, despite its progressive tendency, still prefers the alliance more devoted to the Korean peninsula, thus unwillingly dislikes the idea of transforming it for other regional or global missions.

Threat Perception

The United States and South Korea shared a common threat to their national security: "a high probability of renewed North Korean attempts to reunify Korea under its rule with help from

China and/or the Soviet Union.” In South Korea, President Park Chung Hee declared the state’s major goal as pangong (anti-communism) in 1960. Ever since then, with the memories of the Korean War, North Korea was treated as the most threatening country to South Korea along with other communist countries. This can be easily shown when we look at how the South Korean Defense White Paper views the military balance between North and South Koreas in 1989. North Korea had about one million personnel in its armed forces compared to South Korea’s 650,000 soldiers. North Korea’s defense budget amounted to 20 to 25 percent of its GNP, compared to South Korea’s 5 percent. Many of the North Korean ground forces were forward deployed. North Korean military capabilities were numerically twice South Korea’s in tanks, long-range field artillery, armored personnel carriers, multiple rocket launchers, and antiaircraft systems.

In the 1980s, the United States “enlisted South Korea in Reagan’s global anti-Soviet crusade, openly linking the presence of US troops in Korea to an “external” Soviet threat.” President Reagan clarified that the United States, as a Pacific power, would seek to ensure the peace and security of the region and that the United States had no plans to withdraw US ground combat forces from the Korean peninsula. The Reagan administration quickly “reinstituted and expanded military aid, and modernized US forces in Korea with new artillery, antitank weapons, and advanced missiles, along with a squadron of A-10 counter-insurgency planes

and the most advanced jet fighter in the US arsenal, the F-16.”

After a civilian Korean airliner was shot down by the Soviet Union in September 1983, followed by the killings of the members of the South Korean cabinet by North Korean terrorists in Burma, Reagan visited South Korea and inspected forces at the DMZ, declaring that the US support for South Korea provided “vital protection against a system hostile to everything we believe in as Americans.” After the Korean Airlines incident, Secretary of State George Schultz placed North Korea in the list of terrorist countries on November 29, 1987. The US Senate Congressional Resolution 99 condemned North Korea’s support for terrorist activities on January 20, 1988, and the House Congressional Resolution reproached North Korean bombing of the Korean Airlines Flight 858.

The threat perceptions of the two countries became more identical with the emergence of the North Korean nuclear weapons program. The North Korean nuclear research reactor was built in the 1960s supported by Soviet technology, and in 1980 US reconnaissance satellites detected the construction of a nuclear reactor capable of producing plutonium for weapons in Yongbyon. In the late 1980s, US intelligence made three more disturbing discoveries: “North Korea was building a plutonium reprocessing plant at Yongbyon, conducting conventional high-explosive tests of the sort required to design and build an implosion-style nuclear warhead, and erecting a third nuclear reactor at Yongbyon with an output of up to 200 megawatts.” This facility had a capability to produce enough plutonium for several nuclear weapons a year.

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37 Victor Cha, Alignment Despite Antagonism, p.172.
By the late 1980s, officials in the United States and South Korea finally and fully perceived the real and growing danger posed by the North Korean nuclear program.41 In the June 1989 SCC communiqué, the United States reaffirmed its continuing engagement with South Korea insofar as the North Korean threat continued and the US troop presence was approved by the South Korean government and people.42 Thus, the United States and South Korea possessed almost identical threat perceptions of North Korea in the decade of the 1980s.

After the end of the Cold War, the US object of threat in Northeast Asia was North Korea, despite other uncertain various threat possibilities in this area. The North Korean weapons of mass destruction were considered as serious security problems in this area. When North Korea successfully test-fired its Rodong-1 missile over the East Sea in 1993, the Washington media reported the possibility that North Korea’s future missile could reach the United States by the year of 2000. In the Rumsfeld Report of July 1998, the United States emphasized the possibility of future missile threats in the near future: possibly from North Korea, Iran, Iraq, etc.43

Leon Sigal explains how this image of North Korea as a threat has been firmly embedded among the US policymakers:

Shared image is that North Korea was a “rogue” state, the last redoubt of Stalinist-style communism, motivated to build bombs by hostility to the outside world. Much of North Korea’s own behavior reinforced its image as an archetypal rogue: its 1950 aggression that led to a brutal war, its acts of terrorism including the 1983 bombing in Rangoon that barely missed South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan but

42 Victor Cha, Alignment Despite Antagonism, p.173.
killed seventeen members of his entourage, its internal regimentation, its dogmatism and harsh diatribes against the United States and South Korea, and its bizarre bargaining and brinkmanship. Although it had ceased acts of terrorism and muted its anti-American rhetoric by 1988, the image of a communist rogue state ruled by a latter-day Genghis Khan was difficult to shake. That image inspired officials to fill in the blanks about North Korea. They treated it as an outcast, implacable and inimical, with a master plan to deceive the world and acquire nuclear arms. That made it an easy target for demonization. Belief in this image also blinded observers, including much of the U.S. intelligence community, to contrary evidence of Pyongyang's efforts to accommodate Washington. It led many to conclude that the only way to stop North Korea's bomb program was to compel the collapse of the communist regime in Pyongyang.44

Charles Kartman, a Special Envoy for the Korean Peace Process and Deputy Undersecretary of State, emphasized the threatening intentions of North Korea: “Let me make clear that, in these as in part negotiations, the US approach was one of seriousness with respect to the security risks at stake, coupled with deep skepticism. Let me be clear, we do not trust North Korean intentions. It remains indispensable that North Korea represent a major threat to peace and stability not only in Northeast Asia, but also in other volatile areas in the region.”45 Thus, after the end of the Cold War, the US perception of North Korea was as threatening as the Cold War period.

South Korean threat perception towards North Korea did not reduce much after the end of the Cold War. Despite his Northern policy, President Roh Tae Woo still maintained the same Cold War

45 “Recent Developments in North Korea”, Testimony by Special Envoy for the Korean Peace Process Charles Kartman before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific (September 10, 1998), cited from Jae-Jung Suh, Bound To Last, p.324.
mentality towards North Korea. The Defense White Paper 1991~92 described that "in any case, the leadership of North Korea cannot take an open-door policy because it will cause the second Rumania... Due to North-South economic difference and dictator Kim's old age, North Korea is expected to make every effort to achieve early communization of South Korea. In fact, the year of 1995 was selected to accomplish this task."46 Also South Korean Minister of Defense argued:

"while North Korea has given an impression, in appearance, to the world by deciding to be a member of the United Nations simultaneously with South Korea and by continuing high-level talks with South Korea, but internally, they are continuously demanding complete withdrawal of US forces in Korea, do not discard the goal of communizing South Korea, do not stop an effort to trigger a revolution, have recently introduced and deployed in the front line Scud-B missiles and hovercraft for transportation of its special warfare forces, produce biological and chemical weapons and, above all, is pushing for production of nuclear weapons."47

Thus, despite the engagement policies of Roh Tae Woo towards North Korea after the end of the Cold War, South Korean perception of North Korea as a threat did not change much. Nordpolitik was an attempt to achieve a national identity with North Korea, but this was only a beginning of such an effort without fully overcoming the ongoing Cold War mentality towards North Korea.

From the late 1990s onward, the United States' perception of North Korea has been unchanged. Concerning the North Korean ballistic missiles, Secretary of State Albright stated that "we stress that another long-range missile launch, whether it is declared to

be a missile test or an attempt to place a satellite in orbit, would be highly destabilizing and would have very serious consequences for our efforts to build better relations." President George W. Bush, in his State of the Union Address on January 29, 2002, criticized North Korean pursuit of the weapons of mass destruction and sponsoring terrorism, thus naming it as a member of the "axis of evil." George Tenet, director of the CIA, testified before the US Senate Intelligence Committee in February 2001: "being the fifth strongest military power in the world with 1 million troops on active duty and 5 million reservists, North Korea consistently follows a policy of pursuing military superiority, making massive investments in military buildup at the expense of all other objectives." In December 2002, Donald Rumsfeld said that the nuclear capabilities of North Korea have developed more ever since he reported on the North Korean threat in the Ballistic Missile Threat Commission in 1998. All these statements clearly illustrate that the United States maintains the same hostile images of North Korea as before.

The South Korean government's threat perception towards North Korea has changed after Kim Dae Jung came to power. In March 1999, he predicted the "removal of the threat of war from the Korean Peninsula soon and the realization at an early date a period of reconciliation and cooperation with the North." When he returned to Seoul from Pyongyang after his Summit meeting with Kim Jong II, he delivered a speech that concluded that, "we should all regard the North as our compatriot...more than anything, it is important for our citizens to believe that there will no longer be war..." His speech implied that, due to the disappearance of hostility towards North Korea, South Korea began to have a shared national identity with North Korea, which was a significant

48 AFP (July 27, 1999).
49 Tong-A Ilbo (February 9, 2001).
50 Yonhapnews (December 18, 2002).
51 The Korea Times (March 10, 1999).
influence on the contents of the security culture in South Korea.

When there was General Thomas Schwartz testified before the US Senate Armed Service Committee in 2001, the South Korean Ministry of Defense publicly admitted the difference in the two countries' threat perceptions towards North Korea. “The controversial testimony of General Thomas Schwartz, commander of the US Forces in Korea (USFK), during US Senate armed service committee hearings Tuesday could have resulted from different standards for evaluating the North's military threat,”53 In the 2005 Defense White Paper, the South Korean Ministry of Defense erased the frequent references to North Korea as a “main enemy”, which was replaced by the “direct military threat”, a more indirect expression.54

BEHAVIORAL COMPONENTS

Strategic Compatibility

Due to South Korea’s lesser significance compared to Japan, the United States has attempted to withdraw its military several times from South Korea. There have been four withdrawal attempts during the Cold War period. The first one was made after the establishment of the South Korean government in 1948, as was shown in Dean Acheson’s statement that South Korea would be excluded from the defense perimeter of the United States. The second one was made after the end of the Korean War. The third one was made in 1970 with the withdrawal of the 7th Infantry Division when President Nixon announced that Asian states should defend themselves without dependence upon the United States. The fourth one was made in 1977 when President Carter planned an entire withdrawal of the US military, even though his proposal met with widespread opposition and was dropped.

These previous withdrawal attempts notwithstanding, the two

53 Yonhapnews (March 30, 2001).
countries' strategies coincided very closely during the 1980s, as President Ronald Reagan described the Soviet Union as an 'evil empire,' thus making the rivalry with the Soviet Union more intense. Especially compared to President Jimmy Carter who criticized the Korean human rights problem and attempted to cut down the US Forces in Korea, Reagan's policy coincided with the Korean government. In his meeting with the South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan, Reagan made it clear that the United States would provide modern weapons to South Korea and that there would be no more military withdrawal plans.\footnote{Korea Herald (February 3, 1981).} In the 1981 Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), the US Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger confirmed that South Korea would be under the nuclear umbrella of the United States.\footnote{Korea Herald (May, 1981).} The US Congress approved the sales of thirty-six F-16s to South Korea. The US Ambassador Richard Walker mentioned in 1981 that the US–sKorea relationship "was never better than now."\footnote{Sung–joo Han, "South Korea and the United States: Past, Present, and Future", in Gerald L. Curtis and Sung–joo Han, eds., The US–South Korean Alliance (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Co., 1983), p.219.} During the Reagan administration, 40,000 US forces were stationed in South Korea, and in the late 1980s several thousand soldiers were added and came up to 46,000 in 1988\footnote{Department of Defense, "US Military Personnel in Foreign Areas", Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1999 (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1990), p.227.} (Table 1). All these policies indicated the US's willingness to assist South Korea to cope with the threats from the Soviet Union and North Korea, which was strategically compatible with South Korea's security preferences as well.

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USFK & 39,000 & 38,000 & 39,000 & 39,000 & 41,000 & 42,000 & 43,000 & 45,000 & 46,000 & 44,000 \\
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\caption{Changes of the US Forces in South Korea}
\end{table}

In the 1980s, the South Korean military strategies did not change substantially, only adapting passively to changes in American military strategies. In 1984, President Chun Doo Hwan announced a new strategy adopted by the South Korean government, simply employing the US strategy: the follow-on-forces-attack (FOFA) and Air-Land Battle doctrine. These were direct translations of NATO’s doctrine for the defense of Western Europe at that time. The Air-Land Battle was “designed to avoid individual battles of attrition and instead to use offensive air/ground firepower against uncommitted second-echelon forces in the early stages of the war.” It first emerged from the concept of the ‘follow-on-forces-attack (FOFA)’ which attempts to “maintain a manageable force-to-force ratio at the frontline by attacking rear area forces-follow-on-forces before they can be deployed to the front.” Under this doctrine, which was offensive in nature and compatible with President Reagan’s overall policy towards the Soviet Union, the United States and Korean forces were able to undertake massive counterattacks against North Korea and fight deep into the enemy’s territory.

Another significant strategic cooperation came from the US experience in Iraq (the Desert Storm experience in 1990–91). The use of ‘force multipliers’—such as advanced command, control, communications and intelligence, to include airborne warning and control systems (AWACs) and joint surveillance and targeting radar systems (JSTARS)—was adopted to the US-ROK strategic requirements. Defense suppression weapons, such as precision-guided munitions and antimissile systems, were also deployed. All these imply that the two countries in the 1980s were strategically compatible with each other and shared major strategic goals

60 This comment was made by P. Terrence Hopmann.
61 Jae-Jung Suh, Bound To Last, pp. 182–183.
62 Jae-Jung Suh, Bound To Last, pp. 182–183.
and outlooks.

The post–Cold War period ushered in an uneasy relationship between the United States and South Korea in their strategic terms. This is most prominent in two spheres: their strategic approaches towards North Korea and the issue of the US Forces withdrawal from South Korea. The Clinton administration pursued a constructive engagement policy towards North Korea in its nuclear proliferation. In contrast, the Kim Young Sam government, even though it apparently inherited the engagement policy from the previous Roh Tae Woo administration, still maintained an ongoing Cold War mentality. Furthermore, due to a degree of independent and nationalistic mindset which led him to resist an established pattern of South Korean acquiescence in unilateral US decisions, Kim Young Sam has shown a fractious approach to the United States strategies. His inconsistent North Korean policies, thus, did not coalesce well with the United States.

For example, in the middle of the US–North Korea negotiations in 1993, Kim Young Sam criticized the US negotiators as naïve and overly flexible and expressed doubts that “the North Koreans would live up to the agreement, which would only bring even more danger and peril.”\(^{64}\) In the US–South Korea Summit in 1993, President Kim Young Sam responded negatively to the US policy attitudes toward North Korea. In the nuclear negotiations between the United States and North Korea, the North suggested a package deal to the United States (that is, the North promised its return to the NPT regime, acceptance of special investigation, and joint declaration of the nuclear–free Korean peninsula; the United States, in return, promised its no–use of nuclear weapons, the peace treaty between North Korea and the United States, provision of nuclear reactors, and the normalization of the US–North Korea relations). The Clinton administration reacted negatively to the package deal option, insisting on a more thorough and broad approach. In reaction to this US response, Kim Young Sam criticized that it would cause difficulties in policy coordination.

The strategic incompatibility between the two countries was also caused by Kim Young Sam’s inconsistent policy towards North Korea. Diverging from his earlier hard-line North Korean policy, he pursued an engagement policy in 1996 with the Peace and Cooperation Initiative. The Initiative stated that South Korea would attempt to decrease tensions with North Korea and seek a peaceful path to unification. It stated three negative assurances that Seoul would not pursue with the North: “the first was that Seoul sought stability in its northern counterpart, and had neither the interest nor desire to capitalize on the North’s internal difficulties; second, the ROK did not seek to isolate North Korea, rather to help in making it a sound member of the international community of nations; finally, the ROK did not seek unification through absorption, but by integration.”

Concerning the US troop withdrawal plans, Senators Bennett Johnston and Dale Bumpers said in 1989 that “America’s resolve to help repel a North Korean invasion needs no fixing, but the tripwire needs trimming. Our huge budget and trade deficit require that we periodically review and adjust our troop development around the world, South Korea is no exception.” In 1990, the US Department of Defense published a report titled, A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking Toward the 21st Century, also referred to as the East Asia Strategic Initiative (EASI), which adopted a three-stage plan to reduce the size of the US forces in Korea.

However, this plan was overturned with the revelation of the North Korean nuclear development. In the 23rd SCM in 1991, the two countries postponed the second phase of withdrawal plans for further 6,000 to 7,000 soldiers. In 1992, the US Department of Defense published the East Asia Strategic Initiative I (EASI I), which clarified the cancellation of the US military withdrawal.

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plans from South Korea. In the following Report of the Bottom-Up Review (BUR) in September 1993, the United States redefined new security threats like nuclear weapons, regional conflicts, the democratic transition in the former Soviet Union, and the decrease of the US economic capabilities.\textsuperscript{67} In September 1993, the Clinton administration announced the maintenance of US troops in Asia "in light of the continuing threat of aggression from North Korea."\textsuperscript{68} In his visit to South Korea in 1993, Clinton promised the continuing US military presence in South Korea with no further reduction. The US Department of Defense published \textit{US Security Strategy in the East Asia Pacific Region} (referred to as the East Asia Strategic Review (EASR)) in 1995 in which the size of the future US forces in Asia was determined as 100,000.

After the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001, there came a change in the US strategy both globally and in the Northeast Asian area. In the 2002 Annual Report to the President and the Congress, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that "a key objective of US transformation efforts over time is to increase the capability of its forward forces, thereby their deterrent effect and possibly allowing for relocation of forces now dedicated to reinforcement of other missions."\textsuperscript{69} At the 34\textsuperscript{th} Security Consultative Meeting in December 2002, Donald Rumsfeld expressed his intention to "consolidate and realign US troops in South Korea for the purpose of enhancing force protection, improving military readiness, and increasing efficient use of South Korean land",\textsuperscript{70} which was repeated again in Seoul in November 2003.

\textsuperscript{68} The Korea Herald (September 3, 1993), cited from Jung-Ik Kim, \textit{The Future of the US–Republic of Korea Military Relationship}, p.146.
\textsuperscript{70} Chae–Jin Lee, \textit{A Troubled Peace}, p.256.
In the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, also known as the Global Posture Review (GPR), the US Department of Defense elucidated the concept of the relocation of the US forces abroad:

To develop a basing system that provides greater flexibility for US forces in critical areas of the world, placing emphasis on additional bases and stations beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia;
To provide temporary access to facilities in foreign countries that enable US forces to conduct training and exercises in the absence of permanent ranges and bases;
To redistribute forces and equipment based on regional deterrence requirements;
To provide sufficient mobility, including airlift, sealift, pre-positioning, basing infrastructure, alternative points of debarkation, and new logistic concepts of operations, to conduct expeditionary operations in distant theaters against adversaries armed with weapons of mass destruction and other means to deny access to US forces.71

According to this new strategy, which became official with the President Bush’s announcement in November 2003, the US forces abroad are categorized into four missions and related types of force deployments: the first is the Power Projection Hub (PPH), a center for huge military forces and capabilities, like Hawaii, Guam, Japan and Australia; the second is the Main Operating bases (MOB), the modernized military forces capable of supporting neighboring security affairs; the third is Forward Operating Site (FOS), the small forces prepared for emergency matters; and the fourth is the Cooperative Security Locations (CSL), which is composed of small liaison officers or training facilities.72

72 Sang Hyun Lee, "JooHanMiGun IgaeYoDanUi Iraq ChaChul (Transfer of One US Military Brigade in Korea to Iraq)", JongSeWa JongChaek (Situations and Policies) (June 2004).
The two countries created the Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative (FOTA) to discuss matters involving the relocation of the US forces in Korea. At the second FOTA meeting in June 2003, the United States announced its plan to withdraw a third of its troops from South Korea which amounts to 12,500 soldiers. The first phase was moving the 2nd Infantry Division near the DMZ area to Camp Casey in Tongduchon and Camp Red Cloud in Uijongbu. The second phase is relocating the Yongsan military base in Seoul to the Osan and Pyongtaek areas. At the third FOTA meeting, the United States informed South Korea that the US would sustain a “military rotational training presence north of the Han River” even when the second phase of the relocation is completed.73 The 2nd Combat Brigade of the US 2nd Infantry Division was also transferred to Iraq in August 2004.

This relocation plans initially dissatisfied the South Korean officials because this meant that the US forces would not be focusing as much on the Korean peninsula affairs. Despite its desire to have more equal alliance partnership with the United States, South Korea did not want the alliance troops to be deployed for other purposes than the security of the Korean peninsula. Especially compared to the relocation of US military forces in Japan, where Japan was selected as a center for the US military operation in Northeast Asia with no major removal of the US forces, South Korea was degraded to a peripheral level in the US strategic plans. As a result, South Korea unwillingly began to accept the US strategic changes, and in response, the South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun emphasized the development of self-reliant military capabilities of South Korea: “we now have sufficient power to defend ourselves...Now the goal of our armed forces is to defend the peace and prosperity of not only the Korean peninsula but of Northeast Asia...We need to possess a self-reliant defense capability along with such cooperation. Within the next 10 years, we will develop, on our own, into a self-reliant armed

73 This paragraph is drawn heavily from Chae-Jin Lee, A Troubled Peace, pp.257~259.
force with independent operational command.\textsuperscript{74} Even though South Korea, which has been accustomed to the US presence aimed at deterring North Korea for South Korea’s security, was unwilling to accept the US military relocation plans, South Korean began to admit the US military relocation plans and decided to increase its self-reliant defense capabilities instead. Thus, from the late 1990s onward, the US military strategy has been moderately incompatible with South Korea.

**Command Structure\textsuperscript{75}**

On July 15, 1950, President Syngman Rhee placed the Operational Control (OPCON) of all ROK armed forces under the control of the United Nations Command (UNC), commanded by US General Douglas MacArthur, and this force remained under US command until 1978. In 1978, the United States and South Korea agreed to form the US–ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC) by way of the “Terms of Reference on the Establishment of the Military Committee (MC) and the ROK–US CFC” signed at the 10th Security Council Meeting (SCM), and the “Strategic Directive No.1” delivered at the Military Committee Meeting in 1978.\textsuperscript{76} With the formation


of the CFC, the operational control (OPCON) over the ROK Army was transferred from the UNC to the CFC, and the previous UNC, still under US military command, only took charge of the maintenance of peace and the armistice agreement in Korea.\footnote{Defense White Paper (Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1988), p.122.}

The CFC consists of three component commands: Ground, Naval and Air Component Commands, The Ground Component Command (GCC) has three Armies deployed along the DMZ: the Third ROK Army (TROKA) on the western sector, the First ROK Army (FROKA) on the eastern sector, and the US–ROK Combined Field Army (CFA) in the middle. The Commander–in–Chief of the Combined Forces Command (CINC CFC) is also the commander of the GCC, and his CFC staff serves as the GCC staff; this individual has always been an American. In addition, CINC CFC holds five more positions: CINC UNC; Commander, GCC, UNC; Commander, USFK; Commanding General, Eighth US Army (EUSA); and the Senior US Military Officer Assigned in Korea (Figure 1).

In war time, the Air Component Command (ACC), whose commander is also the commander of the US Seventh Air Force, consists of all the US Air Force (USAF) and the ROK Air Force (ROKAF) wings operating from Korean bases. The entire ROKA Combat Air Command is under the ACC commanded by the CINC CFC. The Naval Component Command (NCC) is composed of the ROK Navy’s three coastal fleets and the ROK Navy’s Marine Corps divisions, and is commanded by a ROK vice–admiral.

The organization of the CFC is bi–national: the ROK and the US officers are intermingled throughout the CFC. The headquarters are set up on the principle of an equal number of staff members from each country: that is, if the commander is American, the deputy commander is Korean, and vice versa. So the CINC CFC is a US Army four–star general and the deputy CINC CFC is a ROK Army four–star general.
<Figure 1> US–Korea Combined Defense Structure

Day-to-day cmd/opon) | Army Forces | NAVY Forces | Air Force Forces
---|---|---|---
of CINCUNC/Cdr USFK/ROK: front line troops | 3 fleets | combat air command
CINC CPC) | US: all (as CG, EUSA) | none | 2 F-15s (as CINC CPC)

A Military Committee (MC) Meeting has been held every year since 1978, presided over by chairmen of the chiefs of staffs of ROK and the United States. The Military Committee (MC) defines the missions and tasks of the CFC and provides strategic directives and operational instructions to the CINC CFC. When the CINC CFC reports to the senior National Command Military Authorities (NCMAs) of the two countries—each country's president and secretary/minister of defense—the Military Committee provides strategic guidance to the CINC CFC, responsive to the basic decisions of the NCMAs.

The Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), formed in 1971 in order to assess "the nature of the military threat directed against the Republic Of Korea" and to evaluate "overall capabilities to defend against the threat", was authorized by NCMA to give strategic directives to the Military Committee. The Military Committee, higher than CFC in hierarchy, gives strategic directives and operational guidance to the CFC. Since the 1980s, the SCM has held consultation and discussion of security concerns such as "USFK troop reduction and role adjustment, the North's nuclear issues, transfer of operational control, and defense burden-sharing."

After the end of the Cold War, there have been series of changes in the US–ROK military command structures. In 1991, the position of armistice chief representative was transferred from the Combined Forces Command (CFC) to a Korean general. In March 1992, a Korean general was appointed as the Senior Member of the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC). The Combined Field Army (CFA), composed of the 2nd US Infantry Division and the two ROK Army Corps deployed north of Seoul, was dissolved in June 1992. In December 1994, the position of the Commander of the Ground Component Command (GCC) was...
taken by a Korean general, formerly held by the CINC CFC. On October 6, 1994, based upon the Strategic Directive No.2, the armistice period operational control over the ROK units was transferred from the Commander of the CFC to the Chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff. On December 1, 1994, the peacetime operational control over the Korean units has been transferred from the CINC CFC to the Chairman of the ROK JCS (See Figure 2), and the CINC CFC was only in charge of the Combined Delegated Authority (CODA): "the combined crisis management, establishment of operational plans, supervision of combined operation, combined information management, combined doctrinal development, and interoperability of C4I." Also in October 1991, the guarding responsibility of the rear area of Panmunjom in DMZ (MACHA-B) was transferred to the ROK Army. The UNC Military Armistice Commission Headquarters Area (MACHA)-A, which is north of the MACHA-B, was still under the responsibility of the UNC.

81 Jeongwon Yoon, "Alliance Activities: Meetings, Exercises and CFC's Roles", in Donald W. Boose, Jr., Balbina Y. Hwang, Patrick Morgan and Andrew Scobell, eds., Recalibrating the US–Republic of Korea Alliance (The Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), p.104.
82 Jeongwon Yoon, "Alliance Activities", p.104.
<Figure 2> The Structure of the CFC

A striking change in the US–South Korea command structure during this period was made in the 38th Security Consultative Meeting held in Washington, D.C., on October 20, 2006. At this meeting, the two countries, represented by the US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the ROK Minister of National Defense Yoon Kwang Ung, agreed to "expeditiously complete the transition of [wartime] OPCON to the ROK after October 15, 2009, but no later than March 15, 2012." In a meeting on February 23, 2007, the South Korean Defense Minister Kim Jang-soo and the US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced the dissolution of the Combined Forces Command (CFC) by April 17, 2012, which will be replaced by a military cooperation center (MCC) in which "the Republic of Korea assumes the lead responsibility for its defense, and the United States, in a supporting role, becomes more agile and flexible" (See Figure 3) The new structure will take the form of a parallel command structure similar to the US–Japan military arrangement.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

To conclude, we have looked at four operational indicators of the US–South Korea alliance in order to explain the weakening of the alliance after the Cold War. As a result, all of the four indicators changed negatively over time. Even though two countries shared homogeneous goals in 1980s, they became divergent over time after the Cold War. The two countries also possessed identical threat perceptions in 1980s and the mid 1990s with the North Korean nuclear crisis, which ultimately resulted in the Agreed Framework of 1994. However, the threat perceptions between the two countries began to diverge in the late 1990s onward with the emergence of the Kim Dae Jung government in South Korea with its “Sunshine Policy” in dealing with the North. The US and South Korea were strategically compatible with each other in 1980s maintaining the anti–communist security paradigms of the Cold War, but they became strategically incompatible over time after the Cold War. Lastly, the United States and South Korea had an
integrated command structure (as shown in Combined Forces Command) during the Cold War period, but this changed to a more separated structure over time after the Cold War. These results, which are summarized in Table 2, prove that the alliance relationship between the United States and South Korea after the Cold War has become less cohesive.

<Table 2> Changes of the US–South Korea Alliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>1980s</th>
<th>Post–Cold War</th>
<th>From Late 1990s on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Homogeneous</td>
<td>Less Convergent</td>
<td>Moderately Divergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat Perceptions</td>
<td>Identical</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>Different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Compatibility</td>
<td>Compatible</td>
<td>Moderately Incompatible</td>
<td>Moderately Incompatible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command Structure</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>Becoming Separated</td>
<td>Becoming Separated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of these negative results, the new South Korean government’s alliance policy towards the United States is very positive compared to the previous governments. The Lee Myung-bak administration held several summit meetings with the former US president George W. Bush in 2008 in order to strengthen the US–South Korea alliance, and finally came up with the ‘Joint Vision for the Alliance of the Republic of Korea and the United States of America’ in the Summit meeting with the US President Barack Obama on June 16, 2009. In this summit meeting, both leaders agreed to upgrade the alliance into a more ‘comprehensive strategic alliance,’ which implies the expansion of the scope of the alliance into the Asia-Pacific region and the entire world. They also confirmed the US provision of the ‘extended deterrence’ to the Republic of Korea against the possible North Korean threat and promised a more comprehensive cooperation in the fields of non-security issues, like green technology, energy, climate change, etc. In addition, they assured a common strategic perspective
towards the North Korean issue and promised to work closely together for the finalization of the KORUS FTA.

However, both countries still have future homework in the working-level consultations. Even though the Joint Vision redefined the alliance's attitudinal components like the objectives of the alliance and threat perception, they still have to work on behavioral issues like strategic compatibility, command structure, etc. For example, strategic compatibility is still a difficult goal to achieve as it is relevant to the issues like dispatching troops to Afghanistan. Also, designing a military command structure to replace the Combined Forces Command (CFC) will be is a tricky. Thus, in order to achieve a more cohesive alliance relationship, the Lee Myung-bak government should continue to work in the working level on these behavioral issues.
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