KDVA’s mission is to enhance the ROK-U.S. Alliance by advocating for the Alliance and supporting the people who built and serve the Alliance.

"Together for the ROK - U.S. Alliance"

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On April 17, 2017, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence visited the De-militarized Zone (DMZ) in the Republic of Korea. Pictured behind him are General Leem, Ho-young, ROK Army, Retired, (Deputy Commander, U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command) and General Vincent Brooks, USA, Retired (Commander, U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command, United Nations Command, U.S. Forces Korea). Both generals are on the Korea Defense Veterans Association's (KDVA) Board of Directors. Also pictured is Colonel Seung Joon “Steve” Lee, USA, Retired, (in front right). KDVA's Senior Vice President of Operations. (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)
INTRODUCTION

June and July are very important months for Korean War and Korean Defense Veterans. June 25, 1950 marks the start of the Korean War when North Korea attacked South Korea. July 27, 1953 marks the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement that ended the horrific 37 months of warfare on the Korean Peninsula. But, this Armistice Agreement is a military agreement that was meant as a ceasefire until a peace treaty could be signed. This “temporary ceasefire” was signed 67 years ago this month.

Over the past several months, the Korea Defense Veterans Association has held several events and made daily social media postings to raise awareness of the sacrifices of the 1,789,000 American Service Members and about 900,000 South Korean troops who fought against North Korean aggression.* The United States suffered 36,574 deaths, and South Korea suffered 137,899 military deaths and 2-3 million civilian deaths.

And it was suffering for the families of these brave warriors, because they had to bear the separation and constant worrying about the safety and health of their loved ones in harm’s way. Following in the footsteps of these Korean War Veterans have been 3.3 million U.S. Defense Veterans who have served in Korea since the signing of the Armistice Agreement. So, we must never forget our Veterans and their families – both gave so much of themselves because "Freedom is Not Free."

One of the men who answered his call to duty was my father, Earl “Bill” Sharp, and I am very proud of his part in defending South Korea. As I was growing up and even during much of my 37-year Army career, he did not talk much about Korea or his experiences in the War. I didn’t think much about this until I started meeting Korean War Veterans and found that they also were reluctant to talk about their time in the War. I started to understand how these Veterans are truly unsung heroes, who spent most of their lives humbly with little thought of how important their selfless service has been to two countries.

In this Journal, I am very honored to share the stories of these Veterans and their families. There is nothing like them!

Finally, people have often asked me over the years, “why should Americans care about Korea?” There are so many good answers to this question. My answer is that Americans helped defend South Koreans in their time of need from a brutal and unjust attack, and our ROK-U.S. Alliance has been an astonishing success for both countries. The ROK-U.S. Alliance came together on battlefields and in every facet of our societies to help South Korea develop into one of the great countries of the world, and America has been able to shine its beacon of hope and support to that part of the world, so far from home.

On a more personal note, I care about Korea and the Alliance because when my father returned to Korea for the first time, he was amazed by South Korea’s development and he said, ‘The sacrifices of the Korean War were worth it’. The contributions that I am able to make are well worth it for me. So, I would like to encourage you to take the time to think about our Veterans, their families, and the fact that the people of South Korea hold them in the highest regard and truly believe that our Veterans saved their country. This is the greatest thank you and statement of worth that any of us could ever hear.

‘Together for the ROK-U.S. Alliance’

Walter L. Sharp
General, U.S. Army (Retired)
President & Chairman
KOREA DEFENSE VETERANS ASSOCIATION

*The reason why more American Service Members in total served in the Korean War than South Korean Service Members is that the U.S. military rotated its personnel while ROK troops fought for the duration of the Korean War. At their respective peak combat strengths, South Korea had about 550,000 troops and the United States had about 300,000 troops in the Korean War.
REGULAR MEMBERS
- Former and current U.S. military & DOD personnel of U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) or Combined Forces Command (CFC).
- Retired ROK military personnel who served in CFC, MND, JCS, and/or Service HQs for at least three continuous months.
- Korean Augmentation To United States Army (KATUSA) Veterans.
- U.S. military & DOD personnel who meet the requirements for the Korea Defense Service Medal (KDSM).
- Former and current ROK government civilians of CFC and USFK, if ROK law or regulations do not prohibit.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:
- Adult supporters of the ROK-U.S. Alliance.
- College students who are interested in the U.S.-ROK Alliance.

HONORARY MEMBERS:
- ROK & U.S. distinguished personnel who are dedicated to enhancing ROK-U.S. Alliance.
- Former and current U.S. and ROK government interagency personnel who directly worked or work on ROK-U.S. Alliance topics.

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BENEFITS FOR OUR MEMBERS
- Part of a premier professional organization.
- Help strengthen the important ROK-U.S. Alliance that you helped build and continue to serve.
- Honor and remember those who have served in Korea.
- Networking and access to experts and experiences found nowhere else.
- Mentor and mentee opportunities.
- Staying in touch with those who served with you in Korea.
- Opportunities to participate in forums and events.
- Opportunities to volunteer in leadership positions.
- Opportunities for internships.
- Opportunities to be published.
- Opportunities for community service.
At 06:10 on September 27, 1950, Republic of Korea (ROK) Marines raised the flag in front of the Seoul Capitol. Three months earlier, the ROK Marine Corps faced skepticism from the other services and doubt within its own ranks. Created without American advisors or equipment, the nascent ROK Marine Corps was a product of the determined efforts of its founder and first Commandant, Colonel Shin, Hyun-joon. The Marines’ superb performance in the early battles of the Korean War is a testament to his leadership.

In the wake of the failed amphibious assault at Yosu, Rear Admiral Son, Won-il tasked Shin with forming a ground combat unit within the ROK Navy. Shin had participated in the October 1948 military in which four navy cutters attempted to land ROK Army Soldiers to suppress the rebels who occupied the port city. After the operation, Shin submitted a combat report arguing for the creation of a specialized unit within the Navy responsible for amphibious operations. Admiral Son assigned Shin to lead the new unit on February 1, 1949.

Shin found few takers as he sought officers and noncommissioned officers for the new unit. Those with knowledge of the Imperial Japanese Navy knew ground combat units as backwater assignments relegated to garrison defense duties by war’s end. Kim, Seung-un rebuffed Shin’s first two requests to transfer to the unit before accepting an offer to serve as chief of staff. Navy commanders withheld sending their model sailors in response to a call for noncommissioned officers, instead sending “those who were brave with a strong sense of justice, but occasionally caused some trouble in their units.” Despite these challenges, Shin assembled 80 officers and noncommissioned officers to lead the new unit. Three hundred sailors from the Navy’s 13th Recruit Class began training as the 1st Marine Corps Class.

On April 15, 1949, the ROK Marine Corps was activated in a simple ceremony at the Deoksan Air Base in Chinhae. The Marines assembled before the dignitaries were a humble lot, wearing an assortment of discarded uniforms and helmets; Japanese leggings were worn over oversized American boots. Those issued weapons carried Arisaka Type-99 rifles; others carried wooden drill rifles.

A veteran of fighting in Manchuria, Colonel Shin was accustomed to material deficiencies. He demanded tough, physical training. Noncommissioned officers drilled the new Marines on Deoksan’s cement landing strip and marched them up the 1,800-foot Chonja Peak so often that the mountain quickly became a symbol of the new Corps.

In late August, the ROK Army Chief of Staff requested that Colonel Shin send Marines to Jinju to protect the town from guerrillas who had operated in the nearby mountains since the Yosu rebellion. In exchange for dispatching a battalion-sized unit to Jinju, the Army agreed to leave its equipment to the Marines. Over the next four months, Marine patrols restored security to the region.

On December 28, Colonel Shin and 1,200 Marines landed at Jeju City where a protracted insurgency had shattered the peace of the tranquil island. The Marines were as aggressive in earning the trust of the people as they were ferreting out remaining guerrillas, assisting farmers with spring planting, and arranging free medical care. Colonel Shin worked to establish the Corps’ ethos, establishing an NCO Training Unit to instill a fighting spirit in the new Marines. He pressed Navy Headquarters for more Marines and equipment.

Despite success in early operations, Navy Headquarters refused to expand the Corps. This led to a sense of despair among the Marines. On June 23, the Corps’ senior officers resigned en masse. Two days later, North Korean Army units attacked south to start the Korean War.

The Korean War transformed the Marine Corps. Resignations were withdrawn as the Marines prepared for war. Colonel Shin’s efforts to restore trust among the people of Jeju were reflected in over 3,000 islanders joining the Marine Corps; the 126 women who served would be the only women to earn the title “Marine” for nearly half a century. A battalion-sized unit landed at Kunsan on July 16. They fought the North Korean People’s Army’s 13th Regiment for four days, delaying the attack south. Marines under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Kim, Seung-un earned the war’s first unit-wide promotion for their actions at Chindong-ni, and received international acclaim as the “Ghost-Catching Marines” following their amphibious landing at Tongyoung.

On September 3, the U.S. Far East Command approved the attachment of the ROK Marine Corps -- organized into three infantry battalions, a reconnaissance company, and a headquarters element -- to the 1st Marine Division. Initially assigned as the landing force reserve, the ROK Marines were tasked with clearing Incheon and the Kimpo Peninsula following the Incheon landing. ROKMC battalions were attached to the 1st and 5th Marine Regiments as they began their final assault on Seoul.

Colonel Shin invited Major General O.P. Smith, Commanding General...
Major General Shin meets with General Lemuel Shepherd, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, in his December 1952 visit to U.S. Marine Corps bases.

Among the scenes reviewed by the U.S. 1st Marine Division, to review the Korean Marines following the liberation of the capital. The battle-tested Marines who paraded before the division commander were a sharp contrast to those assembled 18 months earlier. All wore complete uniforms, packs, and web equipment, their rifles, machine guns, and mortars were ‘spotless.’ Writing in his log, the veteran of fierce fighting on Cape Gloucester, Peleliu, and Okinawa noted, “These Korean Marines were quite remarkable.”

After leading the ROK Marines in the defense of Wonsan, Colonel Shin turned over command of the newly established 1st ROK Marine Regiment and focused on training and equipping the rapidly expanding Corps. As Commandant, General Shin forged a relationship with the United States Marine Corps and instituted training and education practices modeled on the American system. The relationship between the two Corps would continue throughout the Korean War and Armistice, including deployments to Vietnam and Iraq. General Shin served as commandant throughout the war, remained in uniform until 1961, and served two assignments as an ambassador. He holds the distinction of being South Korea’s longest serving general officer and longest serving ambassador.

About The Author:
Lieutenant Colonel Durand is a graduate of the 31st Marine Corps Course at the ROK Naval War College.


See this and other stories of our Veterans in KDVA’s “I Know a Korean War Veteran Campaign” webpage at https://kdva.vet/i-know-a-korean-war-veteran-campaign/.

President Syngman Rhee awards Major General Shin the Order of Military Merit, Taeguk, on October 15, 1953 in a change-of-command ceremony for the commandant.
"When I became a citizen, it was one of the happiest days in my life . . . [the U.S.] is the best country in the world, and I'm part of it." – Tibor Rubin

He survived more than a year in a Nazi concentration camp, was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions in Korea, endured thirty 30 months as a Chinese POW, and upon his release, became a U.S. citizen.

The Korean War
Arriving in America in 1948 after surviving the horrors of 14 months at Mauthausen concentration camp, Tibor “Ted” Rubin worked odd jobs, made friends, and repeatedly tried to enlist in the U.S. Army. But his English wasn’t good enough.

In 1950, however, he got his lucky break. With a little “unofficial” help from a few American buddies, he passed the English language test, was admitted into the Army, and was soon on his way to Korea.

As a member of I Company, 8th Cavalry Regiment, First Cavalry Division, PFC Rubin fell under the wrath of his company First Sergeant, a man described by fellow Soldiers as an “extreme anti-Semite.” The ruthless Staff NCO, who made no qualms about verbally assaulting the 21-year-old PFC and giving him the company’s worst jobs, frequently “volunteered” him for dangerous and seemingly impossible missions.

“He would send me to the most difficult positions so that I would be killed,” Rubin recalled. “It scared the hell out of me. I couldn’t even hold my rifle, but I still went.”

They Looked Like Ants
On July 23, 1950, Rubin’s sadistic First Sergeant sent him on what many would later say was a suicide mission. With his company in retreat, Rubin, now a corporal, was ordered to stay behind and defend a vital hilltop. Alone and without support from other units, Rubin was hit by an overwhelming North Korean force.

By: Mr. Ned Forney
U.S. Marine Corps veteran, career educator, and grandson of a Korean War veteran
"There were so many, they looked like ants," Rubin recalled in an MOH (Medal of Honor) video. "I didn’t have too much time to get scared, so I went crazy. I was like a machine, a robot. I ran around to every foxhole on the hill and started throwing hand grenades and shooting my rifle to make as much noise as possible so the North Koreans would think they were fighting more than one person."

According to his Medal of Honor citation, "He inflicted a staggering number of casualties on the attacking force during his personal 24-hour battle, single-handedly slowing the enemy advance and allowing the 8th Cavalry Regiment to complete its withdrawal."

But his First Sgt. was not impressed. Despite the fact that Rubin had been recommended for the Medal of Honor, the enraged Staff NCO refused to submit the paperwork and would repeatedly "misplace" every recommendation (Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, and Silver Star) that Rubin was nominated for.

Nightmare at Death Valley

By October 1950, with the North Koreans retreating and the Americans advancing deep into enemy territory, the war appeared to be all but over. The Chinese, however, had other ideas.

Sneaking across the North Korean border during October and November, tens of thousands of Chinese unleashed a massive offensive against U.S. forces in North Korea. In what became known as the Battle of Unsan, two Chinese divisions attacked the 8th Cavalry Regiment.

Outnumbered and outgunned, Rubin and hundreds of American soldiers were surrounded, taken prisoner, and marched for weeks to the camp they would forever call "Death Valley."

A POW

Over the next 30 months, Rubin and his fellow prisoners endured the barbaric conditions of the remote camp located in the remote mountains of North Korea. Suffering from extreme cold, deprivation, and physical and mental torture, men starved to death, succumbed to disease and exposure, and simply lost the will to live.

Rubin, however, never lost hope. He became a beacon of optimism and strength for all the men in the camp. Frequently risking his life to steal food and medicine, the seemingly fearless corporal raised the morale of the prisoners and saved the lives of 40 men.

"He'd go out of his way . . . to help us survive," fellow inmate Leo Cormier said. "He saved a lot of GIs' lives. He gave [us] courage to go on living when a lot of guys didn't make it. He saved my life when I could have laid in a ditch and died -- I was nothing but flesh and bones."

James Bourgeois remembers Rubin boiling snow and using the steaming water to clean his wounds and bandages. "At one time my wounds got so infected he put maggots in them to prevent gangrene from setting in. [He] not only saved my left arm -- which I have full use of today -- but also my life."

Rubin's nightmare of Chinese captivity came to an end in 1953 when the 23-year-old corporal and countless other emaciated, sick, and wounded Americans were repatriated during "Operation Little Switch," an exchange of prisoners from April 20 to May 3, 1953.

His release and reunion with his family back home, however, was bittersweet. Recalling his buddies that perished, he told Soldiers Magazine, "Some of them gave up, and some of them prayed to be taken."

When asked years later about his feelings toward those who had imprisoned him during the Holocaust and Korean War, he replied, "I don’t hate nobody because life is so short. If you feel hate for your fellow man, you’ll only hurt yourself."

To read the full story of Tibor Rubin’s life and how he became the only Holocaust survivor to be awarded the Medal of Honor, visit: http://nedforney.com/index.php/2020/06/22/tibor-rubin-holocaust-korean-war-pow-medal-of-honor/

About The Author:
Ned Forney is a Marine veteran, career educator, and grandson of the late Colonel Edward H. Forney, USMC, the evacuation control officer at Hungnam in December 1950. He is currently working on a non-fiction book about the Battle of Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir and Hungnam Evacuation, the largest U.S. military amphibious evacuation of civilians, under combat conditions, in American history.

See this and other stories of our Veterans in KDVA’s "I Know a Korean War Veteran Campaign" webpage at https://kdva.vet/i-know-a-korean-war-veteran-campaign/
In June of 1950, Sergeant George V. Lampman, USMC was a member of the Marine Security Guard (MSG) Detachment at the newly established U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea. The detachment numbered 20 Marines in all. George was at the U.S. Embassy when, on June 25, 1950, North Korean forces crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded South Korea.

Backtracking a bit, these 20 Marines who would eventually serve in the first MSG detachment at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea were selected from approximately 70 Marines, mostly veterans of World War II.

They reported to Henderson Hall in Arlington, Virginia on November 10, 1948 and were trained for several weeks by State Department security officers in Washington, DC, then taken to a local clothing store to be fitted for civilian clothes (suits, overcoats, hats, shirts, etc.). George should know—he is the only living member of that 20-Marine MSG detachment. The reason they had to be outfitted with civilian attire is that they would not be able to wear Marine Corps uniforms where they would be going. They were also ordered not to tell anyone where they were to be assigned.

The 20 Marines arrived at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul on January 9, 1949. It is interesting to note that they arrived in Korea without uniforms, military identification cards, or dog tags. On November 10th of that same year, the detachment held its first Marine Corps Birthday Ball in Seoul, with more than 300 guests.

Next came routine security duties and time passed rather quickly—until Sunday, June 25, 1950, when at 8:45 a.m., the MSG learned that North Korean forces had crossed the 38th Parallel at approximately 4:00 a.m.

The following is an account by CWO George V. Lampman, USMC (Retired) of the actions and events that occurred on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of June 1950.

On Sunday, June 25th, I was the Embassy Security Officer and had the midnight to 8:00 a.m. watch. About 4:30 a.m., I started getting telephone calls from various people asking me what was going on in the north and what had I heard. Even newspaper reporters were asking the same questions and I just told them that I did not know anything. I and other two Marines who were on watch with me went back to our
On Duty with the Marine Security Detachment

...we got everyone back to safety. After that, I was given the task of getting the two code machines to destroy. With the use of lots of gasoline, we were able to get everything of various documents that the furnaces became overloaded, and we found out later that the Yak has the same silhouette as American P-51s. The Yak started strafing us, and we had to do a lot of dodging and stopping quite often to get protection behind the stone pillars of government buildings.

Finally, we made it to the Embassy and our NCOIC (noncommissioned officer in charge) told us there were pre-prepared evacuation orders that we had never heard about. At that point, we learned that we were among the lead people in these evacuation orders. However, the orders were up-to-date and extremely precise, telling us exactly where to go, what to do, and when to do it.

After we received our instructions and knew what we had to do, we drove to all the quarters in the city occupied by embassy staff personnel, advising them of the evacuation plans. The evacuation went quite smoothly, considering the circumstances. The personnel were all driven in busses to the port of Incheon, southwest of Seoul where there was a fertilizer ship on which everyone boarded. The Seventh Fleet escorted this ship to Japan.

After they were all evacuated, we still had work to do. The Ambassador directed us to destroy all the communications equipment in the embassy. All we did was to go from floor to floor, grabbing all the telephones and throwing them out of windows. Now, it was Monday and we began wondering just how remaining personnel would be evacuated.

The embassy had inherited all the 24th Corps’ vehicles, and they were in our embassy motor pool. We took a couple of M-1 rifles, a couple cases of armor piercing ammunition, and destroyed perhaps two hundred jeeps and other vehicles. We devised a system to make this operation go more smoothly. One guy would open the hood and another guy would then fire two or three rounds into the flywheel. That way, the North Koreans would not be able to cannibalize them. We did all of that in about three to four hours.

We then continued to destroy classified and sensitive material. The Army Attaché’s office had tons of training manuals marked “Restricted,” and all that fell into the category of burning. There was so much burning of various documents that the furnaces became overloaded, and we needed to erect a burning bin in the parking area made from chain link fencing. With the use of lots of gasoline, we were able to get everything destroyed.

After that, I was given the task of getting the two code machines to the sidewalk in front of the embassy. We got everyone back to safety, hooked up the code machines to Jeep batteries, and then put an electrical charge into them. Within about 10 to 15 minutes, we had two football-size lumps of molten metal.

After finishing with the code machines, we drove to the airfield at Kimpo. There were very few transport aircraft available for the evacuation since General MacArthur was using them to bring in the 24th Division. Task Force Smith was at Osan, with a reinforced company of the 24th.

The last planes for evacuating embassy personnel and U.S. citizens had supposedly landed while we were still shaking the bushes to locate ambassadors of other countries who we could evacuate. We found most of them; however, there were so many people they overloaded the planes.

After what we were led to believe was the last plane had departed, four or five of us got ready to drive our Jeeps to anywhere south of Seoul. Just as we were departing Kimpo, someone let us know that there was to be one more plane coming in. It was a C-54 that was being flown to Suwon from Inosuke in Japan. When the pilot reached Suwon, he was informed that there were more people at Kimpo to evacuate, including several Marines, so he headed there. Meanwhile, while we waited for this plane to land, more people arrived and wanted to board the plane. The crew chief said the plane was grossly overloaded; however, everyone got aboard. I never knew how many people a C-54 was supposed to carry, but there were approximately 110 aboard.

As we were taxiing down the runway, I heard the pilot tell the crew chief, “I don’t know if I’ll be able to get this SOB off the ground, so we better open the doors and throw anything out that’s not nailed down.” The Marines assisted in tossing lots of stuff out the doors—life rafts, weapons, cargo boxes—and we were just barely able to lift off.

I was responsible for the Great Seal of the United States that was used at the embassy for passports. Because of International Law, the Great Seal of the U.S. was not to go into another country. My instructions from the embassy security officer were to throw the seal out the window of the aircraft after we were over the Straits of Tsushima. I got the crew chief to open the navigator’s window, and I threw it out of the plane.

We landed at Inosuke, Japan, where the Air Force wives had set up a nice reception for us with refreshments. A few days later, 19 of us (MSG detachment) were assigned to different posts at embassies throughout the Pacific area. Later, after we retook Seoul in September, six of us would be recalled to the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. We would be together again until the Chinese Communists invaded South Korea later that same year—but that’s a different story.

About The Author:
Fred Lash works with Military Historical Tours Inc. They are the finest, custom-designed tour program for Veterans, Family Members, Historians, Educators or Students. For 30 years they have followed the vision of providing opportunities to visit battlefields of past conflicts.

See this and other stories of our Veterans in KDVA’s “I Know a Korean War Veteran Campaign” webpage at  https://kdva.vet/i-know-a-korean-war-veteran-campaign/.
To commemorate the 70th year of the Korean War, KDVA hosted a two-part webinar series. We were privileged to have two Korean War Veterans and the daughter of a Korean War Veteran for Part 1 of our series, “Honoring Those Who Served: 70 Years of the ‘Irreplaceable ROK-U.S. Alliance.”

KDVA was very honored to host this webinar, because we believe the stories of our Korean War Veterans and their families should not be lost to time. We believe that their stories remind us all, why fighting the Korean War matters even today... 70 years later.

During Our Discussion, We Covered These Three Topics:

- Looking back on those who served and sacrificed during the war; including perspectives of families through the decades
- Discussing why they think their service was worth fighting the war
- Looking now at recognizing and honoring Veterans, Service Members, and their families

These Are Their Extraordinary and Touching Stories

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Bernard Champoux, Moderator

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Champoux was the Eighth Army Commander from 2013-2016. He is the son of a World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veteran as well. Although he grew up with the mementos that his father brought back from Korea, his father did not share a lot about his experience in Korea until Lt. Gen. Champoux became a Soldier himself. He feels closer to his father’s legacy each time he meets a Korean War Veteran. We are very thankful for Lt. Gen. Champoux’s many significant contributions to KDVA and the ROK-U.S. Alliance. He is the Senior Executive Vice President of Hanwha Defense International, the biggest South Korean defense contractor, which is located in the Washington, D.C. area. We are especially thankful to Hanwha for its long-term sponsorship and contributions to KDVA. Lt. Gen. Champoux also volunteers as a KDVA Board member.

Ms. Sharon Extrom, the daughter of Robert (Bob) Extrom, Korean War Veteran

Mr. Extrom enlisted in the Marine Corps in June 1948 and was part of the amphibious force with the 1st Marine Division as a radio operator who landed at the strategic port of Inchon. He became one of the courageous “Frozen Chosin” or “The Chosin Few” who made it out of the Chosin Reservoir. Bob received two combat “V” awards for his actions in Korea and was later promoted to Staff Sergeant. Sharon, the youngest of...
During his time in Korea, receiving letters was the highlight of his days. Mr. Scarlato wrote letters every day to his family back home as well. He would have to number the letters because mail was always batched, and you had to read them in order because the problems of Monday might be gone by Wednesday. Knowing that he was going to get letters every day is what kept him going. Other than his home and his family, the thing he missed most was having a nice steak.

After returning home from Korea, Lt. Gen. Shutler continued his career with the Marines and was lucky to be sent to flight training after his time in Korea. Since retiring, he has shared his stories and educated the public on life in the military and war.

Lt. Gen. Shutler grew up during the depression and going into the times of the Barnstormers, and he knew he had to fly. During his career, he served as a reconnaissance company commander in Korea. He received many honors for his bravery, commitments, and sacrifices. As a civilian, he worked as a consultant for various companies, such as Grumman Aircraft Company and IBM. In 1991, he dedicated his services to help all Korean War Veterans who are in need, as well as, created strong relationships with the Korean Government and Korean Communities in the United States. He is currently the President of the Korea War Veterans Association Department of New York and the President of the Central Long Island Chapter 64.

Mr. Scarlato remembers wanting to be a cowboy or a pilot while growing up in Brooklyn, NY. Mr. Scarlato could not become a pilot, but he joined the Marines with pride. Arriving in Korea was nothing like the movies -- it was an actual war.

Several distinct memories have stayed with Mr. Scarlato, but one in particular made him change his views on why he was fighting for. He came across two ladies who had died on the front lines above Panmunjeom (the Jamestown Line). He received numerous medals for his bravery, commitments, and sacrifices. As a civilian, he worked as a consultant for various companies, such as Grumman Aircraft Company and IBM. In 1991, he dedicated his services to help all Korean War Veterans who are in need, as well as, created strong relationships with the Korean Government and Korean Communities in the United States. He is currently the President of the Korea War Veterans Association Department of New York and the President of the Central Long Island Chapter 64.

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After returning home from Korea, Lt. Gen. Shutler continued his career with the Marines and was lucky to be sent to flight training after his time in Korea. Since retiring, he has shared his stories and educated the public on life in the military and war.

While he was serving in the military, his mother put three flags in the window, one for each of the three of her five sons that went to war. She wrote to each of them every day, and Mr. Extrom loved receiving letters from home and reading the prayers for everyone’s safety. In the letters he wrote back home, he told his family he had lost 25 pounds by the time they entered Seoul and that all he wanted was some sleep and warm food.

After moving back home to be the caretaker of her parents, Ms. Extrom happened to come across a box of medals and memorabilia from her dad’s time in the military. She brought them out and put them out for display. When her father was getting older and one day needed help from paramedics, she was surprised by the look of awe on their faces as they saw all the awards and war medals. They thanked him for his service as they were taking care of him. She was so proud and realized for the first time how special her father and his service were. This was something that she had not thought much about. Her newfound realization led her to seek out other ways to have him understand something that he kept mostly to himself. So, she started to have him participate in veterans parades and other community activities.

Mr. Sal Scarlato, Korean War Veteran

Mr. Scarlato served in the Naval Reserve (1949-1951) before joining the U.S. Marine Corps. In 1952, he was sent to Korea and stationed on the front lines above Panmunjeom (the Jamestown Line). He received many honors for his bravery, commitments, and sacrifices. As a civilian, he worked as a consultant for various companies, such as Grumman Aircraft Company and IBM. In 1991, he dedicated his services to help all Korean War Veterans who are in need, as well as, created strong relationships with the Korean Government and Korean Communities in the United States. He is currently the President of the Korea War Veterans Association Department of New York and the President of the Central Long Island Chapter 64.

Mr. Scarlato remembers wanting to be a cowboy or a pilot while growing up in Brooklyn, NY. Mr. Scarlato could not become a pilot, but he joined the Marines with pride. Arriving in Korea was nothing like he had imagined. Mr. Scarlato landed in Incheon, and when the officer said, "lock and load," he started to shiver. He realized that this was nothing like the movies -- it was an actual war.

Several distinct memories have stayed with Mr. Scarlato, but one in particular made him change his views on why he was there and what he was fighting for. He came across two ladies who had died on the side of the road, along with two six-year old girls and a boy who were orphans. The boy had lost his hand, and he was screaming and held onto Scarlato so tightly that it felt like the boy was trying to strangle him. The orphan boy died while getting treatment, but this incident is when Mr. Scarlato knew that he was meant to be in Korea. He dedicated himself to the war and to help the Korean people from suffering. He was not fighting for his own survival anymore but for the survival of this country from communism.

Mr. Scarlato missed home like all his fellow Marines. He particularly missed hanging out with his buddies on the corner to "watch the girls go by and act stupid." He missed his family, his girlfriend, and going to the beach at Coney Island.

When Mr. Scarlato was told he was going home, he got up out of his bunker, left everything, and just ran. He had no idea where he was going, but he ran for joy.

Once home, Mr. Scarlato said that it was hard to integrate back into
regular life, something that becomes difficult after going through war. Having PTSD, which was not talked about as much back then, his parents did not and could not understand his condition, especially his dad. His uncle who was a POW from WWII came and talked with him and was able to relate. This helped him and his family greatly. The first three years of his marriage was very hard, but his wife persisted and helped him recover. Without his family, he could not have gotten through it and gotten back to normal life.

Now, Mr. Scarlato continues to do a lot of work with the Korean War Veterans Association. He goes to high schools, libraries, churches, youth centers, etc. to educate them on the reality of war, reason of war, and the outcome of war. He shares his stories and dedicates himself, so others remember the Korean War, not as the "Forgotten War," but as a war that people must remember for all the sacrifices of those who fought.

Their Stories Will Continue to Resonant in Korea and the United States

Going back to Korea was an experience that both Mr. Scarlato and Lt. Gen. Shutler will never forget. They both have been back several times, some of those times with family. For Lt. Gen. Shutler, he was still on active duty the first time he returned to Korea. When the Korean people found out he served in the war, they had tears in their eyes and showed so much appreciation for fighting with them. They both were always treated honorably and with regard for all they sacrificed.

Lt. Gen. Champoux also reminisced about his last assignment in Korea and how excited he was to walk the same trail and work in the same location where his dad had served.

Hearing the stories of the panelists emphasized how important the ROK-U.S. Alliance is and how it continues to strengthen as the years go by. Our Korean War Veterans and their families sharing their stories and people listening to them are vital to ensuring that people understand that our Veterans and their families sacrificed for us because "Freedom is Not Free."

Please see this webinar in the KDVA Digital Library https://kdva.vet/digital-library/.
Empowering Korea:

For the first time since the Korean War, reduced tensions on the Korean Peninsula have presented a real opportunity to resolve North Korean issues by focusing on converging security concerns increasingly shared by the Republic of Korea (ROK), Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the United States (U.S.) about the rise of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). That new reality portends a security realignment far different from that of today and invites a game-changing reassessment of U.S. security roles and responsibilities in the region.

The United States should seek to rebalance the changing power equation in Northeast Asia by:

1) Offering to empower both North and South Korea to counterbalance the rising PRC’s superpower and;
2) Serving as a multi-dimensional security guarantor for regional allies and partners, potentially including the DPRK.

Our conclusions rest on two assumptions. First, U.S. leadership is crucial to counterbalancing the PRC’s growing power projection capabilities. Second, the U.S. should not limit itself to a defensive posture along the ‘First Island Chain’ but should seek to counter-balance growing PRC power from the Korean Peninsula. To achieve that objective, Washington should propose a new security and economic arrangement that empowers both North and South Korea to assist in balancing China. To prevent PRC hegemony over the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. strategy must build a constructive relationship with the DPRK, similar to the one Washington has with the ROK. Normalized U.S.-DPRK relations offer the best path for Washington to positively shape the future Northeast Asian security environment, and the only realistic way to convince Kim Jong Un to agree to denuclearize.

A Crucial Decision For The Korean People
What security alignment will strengthen, rather than weaken, the Korean future? That choice lies not in whether the Koreas partner with a larger power for their security (because going it alone is not a viable option for them) but rather in which country to choose.

All Koreans should be deeply concerned by the apparent re-emergence of Beijing’s historical suzerainty over the Korean Peninsula. They increasingly understand that the PRC seeks to integrate with both Koreas until it can make them subservient to its interests. Already, the PRC is stripping the DPRK of its natural resources, and exports far more to North Korea than it imports from it. The PRC has displaced the United States as the ROK’s largest trading partner, increasing Beijing’s influence over both halves of the Korean Peninsula.

For both Koreas, partnership with the U.S. is the better counterbalancing choice by far. The ROK has done so for seven decades and, by most any measure, it chose well. In contrast, the DPRK’s relationship with the PRC has made it neither secure nor prosperous.

U.S. Power Balancing Role
Convincing Kim Jong Un to accept Washington’s offer to do for the North what it has done for the South, will be difficult, but not impossible. Throughout history, former adversaries have chosen to become partners in response to changing balance of power dynamics. As Lord Palmerston pointed out: ‘Nations have no permanent friends or allies; they only have permanent interests.’

Balance of power theory dictates that destabilizing security threats must be contained, counterbalanced, or removed. The United States does not intend to remove China, and cannot contain it. It must therefore balance it. U.S. strategy toward...
the DPRK aims to disempower the North through military deterrence, diplomatic isolation, and economic sanctions. That has not worked. Moreover, disempowerment of the northern half of the Korean Peninsula is not in the long-term interests of Washington or Seoul, and would open the door to still greater involvement by Beijing on the Peninsula.

A better approach would be to protect U.S. vital interests in the region by counterbalancing PRC hegemony. In part, by empowering the Korean people. The U.S. would work with its ROK ally to pull the North Koreans closer toward their orbit. To convince the DPRK its guarantee of security is real, the U.S. would need to offer its extended nuclear deterrence capabilities over the entire Korean Peninsula, and to work with both the North and South to empower the Korean nation as-a-whole, whether it remains divided under two governments or not. Offering KJU a better security alternative is the only viable way to end the nuclear standoff with the DPRK.

U.S. assistance in the economic development of the DPRK would not preclude ties between the PRC and the two Koreas, but would open new opportunities for U.S., European, and Asian investors. As U.S.-DPRK relations normalize, we can conceive of the Korean People’s Army re-purposing itself to defend Korean autonomy from Chinese encroachment. That progression could even come to include the provision of U.S. and ROK military assistance to the DPRK. Renewed progress toward the shared Korean goal of reunification would become more likely as North-South relations improve.

A Proven Successful Strategy

Normalizing the Korean Peninsula demands comprehensive engagement with the DPRK. Given the extreme differences between the two sides, however, it will be important to establish achievable steps toward longer-term goals. A cap (or freeze) on DPRK nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs is an acceptable interim end-state, allowing the United States and the ROK to work with the DPRK to address security and economic concerns.

By contrast, punitive actions, such as targeted financial sanctions, have failed to change the nature of the regime. Economic and financial incentives would work better, but are not currently part of Washington’s strategy because they are seen as “rewarding” the DPRK. Economic development does not reward; rather, it would evolve North Korea. Engaging the present DPRK government is a distasteful proposition to many; yet, the naysayers are wrong to oppose it. It is a proven strategy for improving relations with America’s adversaries. Examples include Nixon’s outreach to Communist China (1970s), Reagan-Gorbachev détente (1980s), Clinton’s normalization of relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (1990s); and Obama’s efforts to do the same with Myanmar and Cuba (2010s). In each case, the U.S. administration dramatically improved contentious relations after switching to engagement strategies. The results have been far from perfect but they have been substantial. Engagement with the DPRK is now U.S. policy and could lead to similar breakthroughs. To succeed, however, the U.S., ROK, and DPRK must embrace geostrategic realignment.

Conclusion

Abraham Lincoln might have provided the solution to the North Korea problem when he asked: Do I not destroy my enemies when I make friends of them? The security challenge on the Korean Peninsula is one of the most complex and difficult foreign policy issues the United States has faced, but we need look no further than Honest Abe to find a solution that makes the most sense.

About The Authors:

David Jonathan Wolff (wolff_david@bah.com), a former U.S. diplomat, is a senior security strategist working for an international consulting firm. William R. McKinney (bmcki66@gmail.com), a retired U.S. Army colonel, is a former director of the DPRK Strategic Focus Group at US Pacific Command.

Editor’s Note:

Pacific Forum realizes that the limited length of this article prevents a full explanation of the grand strategy it advocates. The article is part of a larger Empowering Korea project that explores, in depth, a comprehensive reassessment of US strategy. This article introduces and outlines the crucial elements of that strategy; i.e., its ends, ways & means. The authors welcome both comments and challenging point-counterpoint exchanges.”
On June 4, 2020, Kim Yo-jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, issued a diatribe against North Korean defectors sending leaflets and other items into North Korea. The leaflets often disparage the North Korean leader, which the North perceives as extremely offensive because Kim Jong-un insists on being treated as the “god” of North Korea. Kim’s sister’s comments were incredibly belligerent toward South Korea and especially toward the North Korean defectors, calling the defectors “human scum” and “mongrel dogs.”

The North Korean regime has a long history of complaining about the leaflets coming from South Korea (even though it has sent its own leaflets into South Korea). Because of the prevailing wind conditions, many of these leaflets are scattered in the foreword area of North Korea near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The population in that area is heavily North Korean military personnel, many from the elite North Korean political class (because the North wants to avoid less reliable soldiers being near the DMZ where they might try to defect). The leaflets going to members of elite families may induce them to question the behavior of the North Korean regime and to share those questions, sooner or later, with their families back in Pyongyang.

The North Korean regime has always been extraordinarily sensitive about outside information. The information on these leaflets is potentially quite toxic to the North Korean regime. In addition, the materials that go with the leaflets (e.g., food, dollar bills, socks, and USB drives with South Korean videos) likely stimulate some misbehavior by the military troops in the forward area (e.g., black market sales) that undermines military discipline, provoking the North Korean military leaders. Those North Korean military leaders likely want to see a hardline approach, allowing Kim Jong-un to make his sister’s extreme responses look tough and acceptable to the military.

But anti-North Korean regime leaflets have been going into North Korea for decades. Why has the North chosen now to make such an extreme declaration from Kim Yo-jong and subsequent aggressive actions against South Korea?

The leaflets are not the only issue and don’t seem to be the key...
issue. The North Korean regime appears to be in much more serious trouble. North Korean nuclear weapons have not conferred on North Korea the power or economic prosperity promised by the Kim Family—quite the opposite, due to the UN-U.S. economic sanctions. Kim has been unable to significantly improve the economy as he promised. He has failed to gain major sanctions relief despite reportedly committing to his elites that he would do so in every summit meeting he has held since 2018. In many ways his worst failure was the Hanoi Summit with President Trump, where he apparently expected a major success. If Kim really was a "god" as North Korean propaganda claims, shouldn’t he have known what Trump was thinking and been able to force Trump to do what Kim wanted? A "god" is not supposed to fail. If he is not a "god," the rationale for his leadership role in the North is severely jeopardized.

And now the UN-U.S. economic sanctions finally seem to be putting real pressure on North Korea. On June 7, Kim Jong-un held a Politburo meeting to discuss several issues including his problems trying to feed and otherwise take care of the needs of the (elite) people in Pyongyang, the area prioritized for such services. The urgency and aggressiveness of the messages from the North Korean regime since then suggest that on top of all of the other regime failures over the last two years, not taking care of the elites in Pyongyang seems to be jeopardizing the regime’s survival. Indeed, the regime has apparently been so concerned that it has distributed food from military reserves twice this year, but has hit the limits of those reserves. This is not to argue that the North Korean regime will collapse any time soon (though it could), but rather that the regime feels jeopardized, and that jeopardy led it to act in a desperate manner toward South Korea. The North likely perceived that South Korea was the weak link on sanctions, based on indications that ROK President Moon was already preparing to begin inter-Korean projects to assist North Korea even though that cooperation would likely violate UN-U.S. sanctions.

We then have to ask what objectives the North Korean regime appears to have with its recent actions. From the regime’s statements, it has several clear goals: (1) inducing South Korea to break the UN-U.S. sanctions and provide economic assistance for North Korea, (2) strengthen internal North Korean support for the regime and divert internal attention away from the many regime’s failures (in part by making South Korea the scapegoat), and (3) undermining the U.S.-ROK alliance. In terms of strategy, the North is directly attacking President Moon’s hallmark peaceful coexistence policy—a key part of President Moon’s planned legacy as ROK President, and thus something that he views as being critically important.

But Kim has rejected peaceful coexistence for years. Kim has not been dismantling his nuclear weapon program, as called for in the 1992 Joint Denuclearization Declaration and the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration where Kim agreed to fully implement all previous inter-Korean declarations. Instead, Kim appears to be expanding his production of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. He apparently seeks to build enough to accomplish one of his ultimate objectives: Korean unification under North Korean control.
His grandfather sought the same objective in 1950 when he started the Korean War. Kim's legitimacy depends on accepting Kim Family objectives. And Kim's recent New Year's addresses have declared unification to be essential. While sanctions relief was available to Kim at the Hanoi Summit at the cost of serious North Korean nuclear arms control, Kim was unwilling to go as far as freezing even half of his nuclear weapon production.

As the North Korean economic situation worsened in 2019, North Korea returned to provocations as a way to extort concessions. Last year and earlier this year, Kim used several dozen missile launches to pressure President Moon to provide trade with and aid to North Korea in violation of the UN-U.S. sanctions, but those efforts failed.

So now Kim has tried a new approach with Kim Yo-jong's diatribes and blowing up the joint liaison office in Kaesong. By directly attacking President Moon personally and one of his key policies, the Kims apparently hoped that President Moon would favor peace by compromise with North Korea. The North Korean regime's actions suggest that the regime is not looking for negotiations with South Korea, but rather looking for South Korean concessions. The North likely hopes that South Korea will stop the leaflets, open trade with North Korea (e.g., reopen the Kaesong Industrial Complex), and provide substantial aid to the North, at which point the North implies that peaceful coexistence would be restored. But that of course is not true. Kim needs dozens of nuclear weapons for coercion and war, not peace. The North has launched dozens of ballistic missiles and done six nuclear weapon tests for coercion, not peace. And if the North can get the ROK to economically aid North Korea and violate the U.S.-UN anti-nuclear weapon sanctions, Kim can solve his economic problems and could cause his desired decoupling of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

The North Korean gambit has been partially successful, leading the ROK to deny South Korean groups the civil rights of assembly and sending leaflets into the North. But otherwise the North’s gambit has thus far failed, leading North Korea to draw back somewhat. What strategy will North Korea now use for getting its desired compromises from South Korea? We shall see.

We should also ask why Kim Jong-un would use his sister, Kim Yo-jong, to take the initiative in jeopardizing Korean peaceful coexistence? We clearly do not know the answer to this question. But there are two foremost possibilities. First, Kim Jong-un may have decided that his escalatory strategy was risky: South Korea could resist this new North Korean pressure and look for external assistance, strengthening the U-S--ROK alliance. Because Kim Jong-un has failed so many times in recent memory (e.g., the Hanoi Summit and Kim’s inability thus far to achieve major sanctions relief), he may have preferred to let his sister take the initiative in this new strategy so that if it fails, he could blame her and appear to be innocent himself (not unlike his apparent temporary demotion of Kim Yo-jong after the failed Hanoi Summit).

Alternatively, Kim Jong-un could be incapacitated in some way and unable to initiate major regime actions. The regime has perhaps used a body double for him in his few public appearances the last 11 weeks to maintain at least some appearance of his presence. If the regime feels truly desperate about its ongoing economic difficulties, the regime may have decided to act as best it could to try to achieve a prompt resolution -- Kim Yo-jong's aggressiveness and time urgency would thus be reflective of the North Korean desperation. This possibility is supported by the degree to which Kim Jong-un appears to have delegated political and military power to his sister, a real surprise to many experts on North Korea, especially for Kim Jong-un who appears to be a very paranoid North Korean leader.

If the North Korean regime really is in trouble, this is the time for the U.S.-ROK to apply real pressure on the North to denuclearize. But many experts believe that the North will not fully eliminate its nuclear weapons -- they are too important for internal propaganda purposes. Moreover, the U.S.-ROK would likely be more successful in taking a carrot and stick approach. It may be time for the U.S.-ROK to require North Korea to make an initial step on denuclearization: a complete freeze of North Korean nuclear weapon production coupled with verification and monitoring. After Hanoi, President Trump spoke of five sites that would need to be part of a real production freeze. Such a deal would be well short of complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of the North’s nuclear weapon program, but it would be a first step for testing North Korean sincerity. In exchange, the U-S.-UN could offer partial and specific sanctions relief (such as reopening the Kaesong Industrial Complex). Is North Korea finally ready for a meaningful trade? Perhaps, the Trump Administration is already asking.
The necessity for trilateral security cooperation among the United States (U.S.), the Republic of Korea (ROK), and Japan has arguably never been greater as authoritarian nuclear weapon states, North Korea, China, and Russia, have become increasingly belligerent in threatening the stability of the region. As democratic states that imbibe the liberal rules-based world order, it is within the interests of the U.S., ROK, and Japan to maintain strong security cooperation to deter North Korea, China, and Russia from furthering their strategic objectives that move to destabilize the region. However, chief among barriers to trilateral cooperation is the deteriorating ROK-Japan relationship that plays to the interests of the regional authoritarian nuclear states. While tensions remain high in 2020, Japan and the ROK both have incentives to cooperate with the U.S. and one another to prepare for contingencies on the Korean Peninsula. Security analysts warn policymakers that Japan and the ROK must remain mindful of the enduring need for a common defense, because any weakening of cooperation could have severe ramifications if a sudden crisis or outright war were to test the limits of their relationship.

Through its actions, it is evident that North Korea, China, and Russia seek to exploit fissures in the U.S. North East alliance system to further their strategic interests. This article seeks to make the case for trilateral security cooperation by displaying how in varying degrees the singular and collaborative destabilizing actions of North Korea, China, and Russia are a threat to the interests of the U.S. and of that of its allies, the ROK and Japan.

The Evolving North Korean Threat
North Korea’s unpredictability as a result of its evolving nuclear and missile programs, Kim Jong Un’s questionable health, and the possibility that North Korea is grappling with COVID-19, mandates U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral cooperation as the unpredictability is a direct threat to all three states and the region. Despite the optimism surrounding the diplomatic thaw of ROK-DPRK and U.S.-DPRK relations in 2018, the United Nations (UN) panel of experts that monitor the implementation of the UN sanctions against North Korea, noted that throughout 2018 and 2019, the DPRK continued to advance its nuclear and missile programs.11 Meanwhile, some regional security experts speculate that Kim Jong Un is growing increasingly impatient with the lack of sanctions relief two years since the Singapore Summit. The argument includes speculation that leading up to the U.S. presidential election, Kim will move to heighten provocations aimed at yielding concessions. Furthermore, Kim has increased his ability to attack both the ROK and Japan by rolling out new ballistic missiles designed for quick strikes.12 The concern over the DPRK’s evolving nuclear and missile programs also comes as observers continue to question the status of Kim Jong Un’s health and the extent of COVID-19 in the DPRK.

Some surmise Kim Jong Un is becoming increasingly unpredictable, even by North Korean standards as he shifts between charm offensives and provocations. The unpredictably of Kim’s actions have included debates surrounding the status of his health as he has spent prolonged periods out of public view. As of 29 June, Kim has been absent for yet another three-week period. It’s the third time Kim has been absent for 21 days or more since rumors about his health emerged in April.13 Japan’s Defense Minister Taro Kono believes Kim to be in poor health and further thinks that he avoids public appearances to avoid being infected with the COVID-19 outbreak that is thought to be wide spread in North Korea.14 The expectation that North Korea is grappling with COVID-19 also begs the question of the overall stability of country. In this environment, the U.S., ROK, and Japan need to be prepared for a host of scenarios involving North Korea to include Kim seeking to manufacture a security crisis to maintain his regime’s survivability to the country imploding from the effects of COVID-19.

China and Russia’s Enabling of North Korea’s Brinksmanship
Arguably North Korea is able to further its nuclear and missile programs due to Chinese and Russian support. The 2020 UN North Korea Panel of Experts report notes China and Russia’s continued efforts to assist North Korea’s ability to evade UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions through ship-to-ship transfers that enable the financing of the DPRK’s nuclear and missile programs.15 In addition, arguably the effectiveness of the U.S.-led maximum pressure campaign to incentivize North Korea to seek denuclearization is weakened by the lack of participation by China and Russia. Since the 2018 diplomatic thaw, China and Russia have significantly abstained from criticizing DPRK provocations and have instead called for a revisit of the UNSC sanctions regime.14 Arguably, China and Russia’s actions enable North Korea’s continued brinksmanship, enabling a threat to the interests of the U.S., the ROK, and Japan and necessitating trilateral cooperation to ensure they are collectively prepared for a host of DPRK hostile actions.

The Evolving China and Russia Threats
Absent the North Korea threat, China and Russia’s actions in the region singularly and collaboratively pose a threat to the stability of the region. While Russia displays some threat to the region in its continued territory disputes with Japan, it is arguably China that poses the most significant threat to regional stability. China’s rise has been accompanied by moves to expand its influence through militarized territorial expansion in the South China Sea, its hostile actions in the East China Sea, and its moves to end...
The one country, two systems policy for Taiwan and Hong Kong. China's actions have threatened the sovereignty of South East Asian nations and have threatened to impede the flow of goods and energy through international sea lanes of communication.

In an effort to safeguard its strategic interests, China has also moved to modernize its military and further its opaque nuclear weapon program. Meanwhile, as the Center for Strategic Studies Missile Defense Project points out, China’s missile programs already pose a threat to the ROK, Japan, and U.S. bases in the region, further indicating the necessity of a trilateral security cooperation.

The China threat is further complicated by the growing China–Russia strategic partnership. The Chinese state media outlet, Xinhua, notes Chinese and Russian senior military officials have agreed to strengthen military cooperation between their two countries.

Several China–Russia military exercises have been conducted in recent years. While both sides avoid naming their strategic partnership a military alliance, observers see the growing military cooperation as similar to a military alliance. Their growing military collaboration in the vicinity of the ROK, Japan, and U.S. military bases was alarmingly displayed during their first combined air patrol that incurred on the aerial identification zone of the disputed ROK/JPN Dokdo/Takeshima Islets. The incursion led to inflaming ROK-JPN tensions over the territory which was arguably among China and Russia’s intent. Regional observers surmise that the Chinese and Russian incursion was meant to send a powerful signal of the developing military leadership between Beijing and Moscow as their joint exercises are becoming larger and more sophisticated in support of their efforts to reshape the region and eventually the world to be more in line with their authoritarian models.

Closing Comments – The Indirect Benefits to Security Cooperation

While the chief benefit to security cooperation entails ensuring the U.S., the ROK, and Japan are prepared to confront threats to their interests from the regional authoritarian nuclear regimes, increased trilateral cooperation could also benefit the U.S., the ROK, and Japan in other areas. Japan and South Korea are arguably experiencing the largest nadir in relations in recent memory. While they have battled overcoming historical animosity, their differences have ventured into the security and economic realms with both citing at one point or another mistrust of the other. The impass between the governments is also displayed in public opinion as the ROK public views Japan as a more significant threat than the DPRK. Likewise, Japan public opinion of South Korea has recently sunk to a 41 year low. An increase in ROK-JPN security cooperation through a trilateral framework could hopefully serve as a foundation for the ROK and Japan to find common ground. The back and forth between the ROK and Japan is not only detrimental to further trilateral U.S.-ROK-Japan security cooperation but also arguably plays to the interests of the regional authoritarian nuclear states.


WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A DEFEATED NATION SURRENDERS: COULD NORTH KOREA BE NEXT?

By James Lint
Senior Editor for InCyberDefense and Contributor,
In Homeland Security

After an enemy nation is defeated, the victor typically seeks to benefit under the adage ‘to the victor belong the spoils.’ For example, Hitler committed suicide in April 1945 just as the European theater in World War II was ending in an Allied victory. The U.S. and the Soviet Union then began a furious attempt to grab as many German scientists who worked on nerve gas and V-1 and V-2 rockets for the Nazi regime.

The U.S. government brought many of those scientists to the United States through a government program called ‘Operation Paperclip.’ Some of those scientists worked on the ‘Manhattan Project’ that led to the development of the atomic bomb.

The U.S. also recruited members of the defunct Nazi intelligence organizations because of their experience conducting espionage operations against the Soviets. The American military, the CIA, the FBI, and other agencies used at least 1,000 former Nazis and collaborators as spies and informants after the war.

John Fox, the FBI’s chief historian, said, “In hindsight, it is clear that [FBI Director J. Edgar] Hoover, and by extension the F.B.I., was shortsighted in dismissing evidence of ties between recent German and East European immigrants and Nazi war crimes. It should be remembered, though, that this was at the peak of Cold War tensions.”

However, Honecker and his wife, Margot, escaped to Moscow and later flew to Chile. On May 29, 1994, Honecker died in Santiago. Other autocratic and undemocratic regimes also collapsed in the following years after German reunification. They included the former Warsaw Pact nations of Eastern Europe, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

What Would Happen If North Korea’s Government Collapsed? North Korea could be changed in many ways if the Kim dynasty were to collapse as a result of war, popular revolt, or a coup. What would be the potential effects of such a sea change?

Would China grab some of North Korea’s territory for its own ends? North Korea has more natural resources than heavily industrialized South Korea. Also, China claims it has historical reasons to take control of the resource-rich northern area of the Korean Peninsula.

Could the West Harvest a Wealth of Intelligence from North Korean Defectors? If change were to occur as a result of a coup or a war, much of the North Korean leadership could be lost. Western intelligence services could entice some of them to defect to learn about intelligence indicators and the deceptive operations that North Korea conducted successfully.

Also, American military intelligence could learn about North Korean combat activities from some of their leaders who became prisoners of war.

While North Korea’s military leaders have many medals and badges on their uniforms, they have not been in combat since 1953. Most of those medals are not combat-related, but they may have been awarded for loyalty to the Communist Party.

In a war, the Korean People’s Army might inflict great damage on South Korea. However, there is little chance of successfully winning that war.
Mackay said, “We can assume that the [North Korean] regime’s dalliances into bitcoin and financial software manipulation has provided them a conduit to build a post-DPRK nest egg, which will buy them protection in Russia, China, or some sympathetic, cash-strapped place. Physical cash is too hard to bring with you and your emergency entourage. Bitcoin is portable. It is an insurance policy for dictators.”

American cyber defenders could learn a great deal about cyber defense, intelligence collection, and attacks from North Korea’s cyber personnel who come to the U.S. In fact, we might see former North Korean cyber personnel working at the National Security Agency within the next five to 10 years.

About The Author:
James R. Lint is Senior Editor for InCyberDefense and Contributor, In Homeland Security. He has 38 years of experience in military intelligence with the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army, government contracting, and civil service. Additionally, James started the Lint Center for National Security Studies, a nonprofit charity that recently awarded its 49th scholarship for national security students and professionals.
CFC is an open, collaborative, and trusting environment that combines the ROK and U.S. military commands. It is bi-national where both commands work for and take orders from both the ROK and U.S. governments.

Ready to “Fight Tonight” is not just a saying, it is the top priority of CFC – their mission, to deter and be ready to defend against attacks from North Korea. CFC’s main objective is to de-escalate a situation, get back to pre-crisis conditions, and prevent reoccurrence of the crisis. With past provocations from North Korea, the principles and guidelines to respond have been the same from CFC. The military threat from North Korea has always been serious since General Jung entered the military academy in 1971.

The initial response to any crisis is particularly important. It needs to be rapid, in order to prevent North Korea’s miscalculation of the situation; precise, to de-escalate the crisis; sufficient, to deter further provocations; and moderate, to avoid escalation. Responding timely to the crisis will ensure North Korea has no misunderstandings of the strength of the ROK-U.S. Alliance. A combined response and management of the crisis is more effective than just a response from South Korea alone. Information sharing, deliberate planning, SOPs, and training and exercises are all crucial.

How did training and readiness, including major training exercises, relate to crisis management?
Training is essential to maintain readiness – this cannot be emphasized enough. Not only does the ROK and the U.S. learn a lot from these exercises, but they deter provocations from North Korea. According to a source, it was shared with General Jung that Kim Jong Un confessed that he could not sleep during the joint military exercises, “Team Spirit.” Training for squad-level to brigade-level is done in the field, combined
with land, sea, air, and cyber domain. Being coordinated and synchronized is key, as this is a difficult battle space due to the size, proximity, and the North Korean military itself.

Not only are the field training important, but tactical discussions and training are equally as critical. For division-level and above, training on command post level and computer-based war plans give the rotating officers from both the ROK and U.S. the confidence for readiness. Continual command post training gives troops more confidence and helps build trust with each other. They train for various scenarios such as armistice crisis management, all-out North Korea attack, North Korea provocations, North Korea instability, and the wartime OPCON transition. There are always lessons learned with continuous updating to the bi-lateral and bi-national plans to improve preparedness and deterrence.

During crisis, could you help us understand what CFC’s relationship was with other organizations like the ROK JCS, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. JCS, MND and OSD, State Department and MOFA, and the U.S. and ROK National Command Authorities?

Coordination is key in deterring and defending the ROK from North Korea. Responsibilities and authorities change with each potential situation, but with frequent training and exercise, SOPs, and coordination of all parties, the goal of always being prepared is the same. The number one priority for CFC is to prepare for combat and defend the ROK.

The command is handled differently during a crisis vs. a non-crisis. When a crisis does arise, CFC has operational control over all forces and leads the war fight. This is done while trying to de-escalate the situation and defending the ROK. U.S. INDOPACOM, the U.S. Chairman, and USFK work together to deploy additional forces and capabilities. Even before CFC has wartime operational control, it is important to have close coordination between CFC and the ROK military.

After the Yeonpyeong Island shelling in 2010, General Sharp and General Jung visited the site together to deliver a strong message to North Korea that the ROK-U.S. Alliance is strong and to deter them from further provocations. This combined with the defensive training afterwards showed the strength of the Alliance. The ROK hopes to extend this coordination to other organizations like the ROK JCS, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. JCS, MND and OSD, State Department and MOFA, and the U.S. and ROK National Command Authorities.

Coordination is key in deterring and defending the ROK from North Korea. Responsibilities and authorities change with each potential situation, but with frequent training and exercise, SOPs, and coordination of all parties, the goal of always being prepared is the same. The number one priority for CFC is to prepare for combat and defend the ROK.

Questions and Answers Session with Webinar Audience Members

The Q&A portion of the webinar started with how the transfer of wartime OPCON would change CFC. Both General Sharp and General Jung emphasized that all mission capabilities, structure, planning, exercise, crisis management, rules, concepts, etc. will remain the same. The only change is that the ROK 4-star general will be the commander and the U.S. 4-star general will be the deputy commander. UNC will remain unchanged to maintain the armistice. The goal is not to have any damage to capabilities of the Alliance. It is important to maintain the current CFC command system after the transition.

A counter-provocation plan was put in place after the Yeonpyeong Island shelling. If a provocation from North Korea happened now, how would CFC respond? Even though a combined counter-provocation plan was not in place then, the ROK and the U.S. handled it together. Having a combined mindset is priority. What really changed since the shelling is that the people of South Korea are absolutely united that any sort of attack will be answered rapidly and strongly. The plans put in place demonstrate that and provide a strong deterrent to North Korea.

In deciding which method is more effective in approaching North Korea, escalate or de-escalate, both General Sharp and General Jung concurred that CFC is prepared to take any necessary measures. Only when we have a very strong option to deal with the enemy can we deter the provocation and de-escalate the situation. The Alliance must have a strong will to fight against North Korea. North Korea has the basic tactics of communists - when they have the advantage, they fight; if they are at a disadvantage, they want dialogue. General Sharp believes that North Korea will soon have a submarine with ballistic missile capability. With that, we must have strong options prepared and be ready to respond. But it is necessary to have a balance and work towards talks with North Korea to guide them on what they should be doing – to denuclearize and work towards a more open and free society that builds on human rights and economy. General Sharp has always thought there must be improvements on the informational side to better communicate with North Korea to make changes. We must take a fluid approach by being diplomatic and help them understand that the world is willing and able to help.

In addition, working with other countries, like China, to diplomatically help de-escalate North Korea is crucial. CFC’s role in working with China is to improve situational awareness and make sure there are no misunderstandings or miscalculations. This is diplomatic work that needs to be done by all parties – INDOPACOM, MOFA, ROK Chairman, etc. All must work with China to help North Korea denuclearize and have them assist in applying pressure on North Korea to make changes.

In closing, General Sharp emphasized that the ROK-U.S. Alliance is the strongest in the world and is confident it will stay strong in the future. General Jung believes CFC is the best system for the ROK and U.S. to maintain stability in this region as it has been for the past four decades, even after a peace treaty regime and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Both KDVA and KUSAF are working hard to enhance the ROK-U.S. Alliance.

Please see this webinar in the KDVA Digital Library https://kdva.vet/digital-library/.
**A POST HOC: END OF INTER-KOREAN DÉTENTE FOLLOWS THE EFFORTS OF ROK-U.S. WORKING GROUP – AND HENCE A CAUSALITY?**

By Mr. Hong, Sukgi, KDVA Research Intern

One event follows another, and a man concludes that the first event in sequence must have caused the second. This reasoning may be true at times, but it often turns out to be logically erroneous. One cannot immediately draw causality from a mere sequence of events: correlation does not equal causality. It is nonsensical, for example, to believe that the disappearance of pirates has sparked global warming because global temperatures have risen after the number of pirates declined. This reasoning is known as *post hoc, ergo, propter hoc*, or simply a *post hoc* fallacy, which means after this, therefore, because of this in Latin. This logic fallacy points to the fact that one should not confuse causality with a mere sequence of events.

One realm where this fallacy found its way lately is the Korean Peninsula where a criticism against the ROK-U.S. Working Group is being launched. In June, Kim Yo-jong, (Kim Jong-un’s younger sister) laid out a flamboyantly belligerent rhetoric against the Working Group, citing it as a source of deterioration of inter-Korean relations. This message was relayed by several critics of the South, among which include Rep. Hong Ik-pyo of the ROK ruling party, who lambasted the Working Group for “being responsible for blocking every effort to make headway in inter-Korean railway cooperation and joint economic projects.” Some other critics even went as far as to call for dismantling the Working Group altogether.

Before verifying rationality of this argument, I will touch on a few relevant facts about the Working Group. This organization was established in November 2018 in order for the Alliance to coordinate policies on North Korea. As of June 2020, over 20 meetings have been held since its establishment, among which include meetings about determining whether it is possible to conduct inter-Korean economic projects or provide economic assistance to the North without violating existing sanctions.

Given these facts, it is not entirely incomprehensible that critics point fingers at the Working Group. After all, in their minds, the Working Group has been behind blocking what they deem a way out of a diplomatic impasse with North Korea in denuclearization talks. Indeed, the Working Group has, numerous times, judged it inappropriate to economically engage with the North.

This reasoning, however, is nothing but an *a post hoc* fallacy. First, it is not the Working Group but a long list of sanctions against the North that is responsible for blocking inter-Korean projects. These sanctions have been imposed by both the international community and each individual member state, and have thus constrained the U.S. and the ROK from economically engaging with the North.

Furthermore, after the North’s sixth nuclear testing in 2017, nearly all UN member states have individually introduced sanctions, and these states include not only its rivals like the U.S. and Japan, but also its allies such as China and Russia. All these states have been explicit in conditions for easing their sanctions: complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization (CVID). In other words, no denuclearization, no easing of sanctions.

This principle has been upheld numerous times. The Chinese leadership, for instance, reaffirmed its commitment to CVID when then-U.S. Defense Secretary Mattis visited Beijing in June 2018. The EU, ASEAN, Russia, Japan, India, and others have all done the same, reiterating the principle; CVID should come first.

South Korea was no exception. In a 2018 New Year address, ROK President Moon emphasized that his administration would not ease any sanctions unless the North first takes meaningful actions towards denuclearization. This was reaffirmed by ROK Foreign Minister Kang in her BBC interview later that year.

The Trump administration, for its part, has also operated its North Korean policies within this framework. The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, which was passed in 2016 by a vast bipartisan majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, stipulates that North Korea must “take steps toward verification of its compliance with … Security Council resolutions” before its sanctions may be lifted. Under the checks and balances of democracy, the Trump administration cannot override this congressional bill and ease sanctions unless North Korea first takes steps toward CVID.

It all comes down to denuclearization. What really has hampered the progress in inter-Korean relations is Pyongyang's persistent refusal to lose its grip on nuclear weapons. The North knows this better than anybody; nothing changes without denuclearization.

Therefore, if critics of the Working Group are sincere in their search for a culprit accountable for the end of inter-Korean détente, they should look beyond the DMZ into stockpiles of nuclear weapons that North Korea refuses to abolish. Pointing fingers at the Working Group is nothing more than bad reasoning — a *post hoc*.
HERE TO HELP?
THE CHALLENGES OF PROVIDING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO NORTH KOREANS

By Jessup Jong, Policy Research Assistant, Harvard Medical School, Program in Global Surgery and Social Change

Abstract
Why is there a growing divide between experts working on humanitarian aid delivery and human rights advocacy in North Korea when the two areas are defined as complementary to each other? How does this divide affect the objectives of both expert communities? What should be done about the divide? This paper strives to answer these questions by arguing that different goals and supporters led to the divide. The hypothesis will test whether the divide has harmed both objectives in the form of slashed funding and neglect of issues. In response to this effect, this paper will recommend that collaborating and focusing on preventing problems will be crucial in achieving sustainable gains for both sides.

Introduction
This paper stems from a puzzle. Why would two communities working on North Korea conflict with each other when they appear to be working towards the same goal of improving people’s lives? One group of humanitarian aid workers focuses on alleviating suffering by providing food, medicine, disaster relief, etc. Another group of human rights advocates aims to protect civil and political rights such as the freedom from torture and slavery, freedom of expression, etc. Both groups include large organizations that work on other regions such as Mercy Corps for aid and Amnesty International for rights, in addition to organizations with mandates specific to North Korea such as Christian Friends of Korea for aid and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) for rights. At first glance, it is easy to think that they must be working towards the same goals, or even think of them as the same kind of groups. Even the Bush administration used the term “humanitarian assistance” interchangeably to fund human rights organizations for a bill called the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (U.S. Congress 2004). The definitions of humanitarian aid and human rights indeed overlap due to a broad interpretation of both terms, but professionals working on these two areas describe an increasing divide, as seen in North Korea.

As the two communities pursue their agendas, conflicts intensify through criticisms against each other. For example, human rights advocates criticized humanitarian aid in a report that claims as much as “30 percent of food aid [to North Korea] is diverted” to its political elite (Haggard and Noland 2005). Humanitarian aid is ineffective, according to this line of argument, because cash “handouts” have been diverted mainly to North Korea’s nuclear development program and luxury goods (Habib 2011; Lee 2007). Meanwhile, other scholars have countered this criticism by arguing that human rights advocates “shame North Korea into making tactical concessions” (Goedde 2018; Feffer 2010; Weingartner 2013). Although human rights advocates try to liberalize and improve living conditions, critics argue that “naming and shaming” campaigns actually worsen situations (Yeo 2014; Schouten 2010; Jannuzi 2014).

In the face of harsh criticisms against each other, both communities have experienced setbacks as seen in slashed funding and neglect of their agendas during bilateral negotiations. Although these setbacks are not caused solely by this divide, international aid funding to North Korea has consistently decreased from $103.9 million in 2012 to $22.9 million in 2018 (UN 2018). Human rights funding has also dwindled because of the 43% cut by the U.S. State Department in 2018 and 92.6% cut by the South Korean government in 2016 (O’Carroll 2018, Ryall 2018, Human Rights Watch 2019). In addition, during bilateral summits with Kim, Jong Un, both the United States and South Korea have ignored human rights at
the negotiation table. While the two communities on human rights and humanitarian aid may need each other’s help to overcome these setbacks, they remain in a stalemate.

Regarding this curious divide, three questions arise. Why is there a divide between humanitarian aid and human rights? How does this divide affect the objectives of both expert communities? What should be done about the divide? This paper strives to answer these questions by first arguing that actors’ different goals and supporters lead to the divide. Then, it will contend that this divide has harmed both objectives in the form of slashed funding and neglect of issues during bilateral summits. In response, this paper will suggest that collaborating and focusing on preventing humanitarian and human rights crises will be crucial in achieving sustainable gains for both sides.

To recognize a divide, the definitions section of Chapter 1 will first define the two terms: humanitarian aid and human rights. The literature review section will then better contextualize the divide within the scholarly debate and identify the literature gap to which this research can contribute. After the literature review, this chapter will explore why North Korea is a worthwhile case study. Next, the methods section will summarize two factors that may cause the divide: different goals and supporters. After evaluating causes for the divide, it will introduce the hypothesis of whether the divide ultimately hinders the objectives of the two communities. The methods section will illustrate who the actors are in the aid and rights community. The unit of analysis will be “actors,” which is defined as ‘aid workers,’ and ‘rights advocates’ working on North Korean issues. In addition to the above terms, the encompassing concepts ‘organizations,’ ‘communities,’ and ‘expert communities’ will be used interchangeably for this paper. Lastly, the methods section will outline the rest of the paper.

About The Author:
Jessup Jong is a Policy Research Assistant, Harvard Medical School, Program in Global Surgery and Social Change. He is also an Aitchison Public Service Fellow in Government, Johns Hopkins University.

For the complete paper, please contact the author at jjong2@jhu.edu.
KDVA Webinar
Honoring Those Who Served: 70 Years of the “Irreplaceable ROK-U.S. Alliance”

By Ms. Earlene Hollerith, KDVA Journal Assistant Editor

Continuing our 2-part series about the 70th Commemoration of the Korean War, KDVA was honored to host a webinar on “Fulfilling Our Veterans’ Legacy: the Enduring Nature of the ‘Alliance for the Ages.’”

Our moderator was General (Ret.) Walter Sharp, former Commander of UNC / CFC / USFK from 2008 – 2011. Gen. Sharp described this position as his dream assignment mainly because of his deep love and commitment to South Korea and the ROK-U.S. Alliance. His connection began with his father who fought in the Korean War. Gen. Sharp is the President & Chairman of KDVA and is highly regarded in South Korea and the United States.

Our distinguished panelists were:
General (Ret.) John Tilelli, a former Commander of UNC / CFC / USFK. After retiring from the Army, General Tilelli became the President and CEO of USO Worldwide Operations and the Chairman of the Military Officers Association of America. He is one of the most respected former Commanders of UNC/CFC/USFK, and was awarded one of MND’s highest awards last year, “The Paik Sun-yup Alliance Award.” He is on the KDVA’s Board of Directors as a Vice Chairman.

Dr. Bruce Bennett is an adjunct international/defense researcher at the RAND Corporation. Few Korea and Alliance experts have the breadth and depth of knowledge that Dr. Bennett has. He has traveled over 120 times to the Asia region and has influenced research and thinking on future ROK military force requirements, understanding and shaping the ongoing Korean nuclear weapon crisis, Korean unification, potential Chinese intervention in Korean contingencies, and deterrence of nuclear threats.

Major General (Ret.) Shin, Kyoung Soo is a former ROK Defense Attaché to the United States. He is a respected senior leader of the ROK-U.S. Alliance. As the Secretary General of the Korea-U.S. Alliance Foundation or KUSAF. General Shin has brought together the ROK and U.S. governments, veterans organizations, and corporate sponsors to raise awareness and keep paramount, the work of the ROK-U.S. Alliance. He is one of the founders of KDVA.

The webinar covered these topics:
- Korean War’s place in shaping the ROK-U.S. relations
- The need for a strong Alliance – what we are doing to ensure Korean War veterans’ service and sacrifice live on today and into the future
- Highlight the “Wall of Remembrance” as an enduring example of the “Alliance for the Ages”

In the opening remarks, Gen. Sharp emphasized that the Alliance was and is very important and will be for many years to come. We need to carry on the legacy of Korean War Veterans to ensure the ROK-U.S. Alliance remains strong and continues to defend and protect ROK and U.S. national interests. Defense veterans and
government civilians who served and who are serving continue to ensure that we preserve and build on this living legacy. This "Irreplaceable Alliance" is one of the best examples of what two countries can accomplish together by sharing values and working for mutual benefits.

What are the key lessons that the Alliance has learned over the last 70 years and what are the major strengths of the current ROK-U.S. Alliance?

Gen. Tilelli stressed that this is a "Miracle Alliance" and a "Model Alliance" for the rest of the world. The strength of the Alliance consists of four main parts:
1. People to people – the relationships that the Korean and American people have built through the years.
2. Political alliance – between the administration, national assemblies, congresses, and those who represent the population.
3. Military – CFC and USFK.
4. Diplomatic alliance.

It is vital that these relationships and the Alliance continue to be strong. The Alliance is great because of the men and women who fought from the U.S., ROK, and the United Nations. The Korean people suffered the devastation of an attack by North Korea, but out of the ashes of a very devastating war, they became one of the best democracies, economies, and militaries in the world.

With this Alliance, when either party needs help, the other party jumps right in. The Alliance has supported each other with things such as providing face masks due to COVID-19, North Korea provocations, or issues in Iraq. The threat from North Korea has not altered; it has become stronger and is a threat against global peace and unity. It is for the good of the whole region in Northeast Asia that we keep the Alliance strong.

The tactics of bullying and provocations of North Korea have not changed. We must not fall for those provocations and not give in. North Korea understands the strength of the Alliance, and we must not let anything put a wedge between ROK and U.S. The security of South Korea as a nation, government, and their people is of the utmost importance. That is a key reason the Alliance has held so strong and will continue to do so.

Dr. Bennett stated that the key to any alliance is recognizing there is a threat. The threat from North Korea has not changed, and they want to unify both Koreas under their control. The best way for North Korea to accomplish this is to break the ROK-U.S. Alliance and gain military leverage to conquer and control. The key to deter this is to work together and utilize our defensive capabilities and brotherhood in arms. If deterrence fails and war erupts, we want to win in a way that will provide peace and security in the aftermath. This requires the strength that the ROK-U.S. Alliance has demonstrated for the past seven decades.

Maj. Gen. Shin stated the Alliance has been the cornerstone and linchpin of Korean defense, security, and prosperity. Maintaining the strong Alliance is not free; it takes a lot of effort and sacrifice. CFC’s motto has become the motto for the ROK-U.S. Alliance … "Katchi Kapshida" which means "We go together." The strength comes from the very beginning of the Alliance, where friendships and bonds were created between the Korean and American people. This is the power of the Alliance.

With the many challenges that face the Alliance such as North Korea refusing to denuclearize, a strong North Korean military force, the wartime OPCON transition, the future role of the UNC, and differences in opinions between ROK and U.S. on how best to move forward with peace in the Korean Peninsula, what are your thoughts and recommendations on the way ahead for the Alliance?

Dr. Bennett acknowledged that ROK President Moon has done an excellent job negotiating with North Korea. Article 11 of the Panmunjeom Agreement in April 2018 states that North and South Korea will fully implement all previous agreements and declarations. With hostility towards the U.S. and South Korea indoctrinated into the lives of North Koreans, peace cannot exist. Peace is two sided and if we really want peace, we need to make North Korea stop making those indoctrinations. There are fundamental changes that need to happen for peace.

Maj. Gen. Shin's concern was that the ROK and U.S. need to come to a consensus on the perception of the threat. Once there is an agreement, then the Alliance can upgrade to Alliance 2.0 where it is even stronger, and we can move together addressing future issues.

Thinking broadly, Gen. Tilelli thought we must use all the elements of national power from both countries. We need to understand that North Korea has violated everything they have ever signed. This Alliance is a strategic way to hold peace and security for Northeast Asia. However, we must agree that we do not want peace at any price. We want peace that is truly peace. As we look at the growth and maturity of the Alliance, this is an equal partnership with the same goals in mind. When issues are brought up and worked on together, it becomes less volatile. Together, we move forward – it is not a matter of who leads but moving forward together.

Peace and stability in the Peninsula and in the region are the most important objectives. The linchpin of the Alliance is CFC which is a combined effort of ROK and U.S. brothers working and deterring North Korea together.

What do you see as the importance and benefit of organizations like Korean Veteran and Defense Associations, as well as memorials honoring those who have and are serving?

Maj. Gen. Shin felt that the Korean War Memorial is the holy place of the Alliance. The messages the Korean Veterans share with us and what we see in their sacrifices make the Alliance endure. Without Korean War Veterans and Korean Defense Veterans who have been there for the past 70 years, Korea cannot exist. They have carried out the shared mission of keeping the ROK safe. Together, they have contributed to today’s Korea.

Gen. Tilelli, who is leading the efforts of the Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Memorial, said the plan is to start building in April 2021 and complete by July 2022. This will be the first monument in the United States that will have both U.S. and KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to the United States Army) Service Members’ names on the wall who died in the Korean
War. There will be more than 8,000 KATUSA names on this wall. This is a joint and coordinated effort with the ROK government.

The purpose of this wall is to:
1. Show that this is an “Alliance for the Ages.”
2. Honor those who fell and gave the ultimate sacrifice for democracy and freedom for the ROK people.
3. Educate Americans on the cost of war and about the young men and women who fought and died for this cause.
4. Protect the Alliance for the long term. The ROK-U.S. Alliance is not a fleeting alliance. It will go on forever and we must continue to make this happen.

Questions and Answers Session with Webinar Audience Members

What are the most important elements in working together to move forward in handling North Korea?

Dr. Bennett stated that North Korea will not surrender to the ROK and U.S. We must use a “carrot and stick” offering. We need to get the nuclear situation under control and then give them things they need. We know that Kim Jong Un cannot feed the elites of North Korea right now. We need to offer what they need but tell them to shut down their nuclear production and control the threats they pose. We can work together to do this. ROK President Moon wants a peaceful relationship and coexistence with North Korea, and it should meet that, but it must also meet the U.S. interests.

Maj. Gen. Shin did not believe that North Korea will give up its nuclear weapons. He thought that if we keep our Alliance strong and maintained, it will send a message to North Korea that ROK and U.S. will not back down. Even if denuclearization is impossible, ROK and U.S. must stand together.

Gen. Tilelli thought that ROK and U.S. tactics are complementary. The goals are the same: peace and stability, denuclearization, and cutting down on ICBM programs. Denuclearization will eventually happen, and as we continue down this road to denuclearization, we need to keep the Alliance even stronger in the future. With the same goals in mind, we will be able to achieve this.

ROK is strong and rich country with an outstanding military which has assisted other countries around the world. Why does the U.S. need to be there? As we move towards the future, what value does it bring to the U.S.?

Gen. Tilelli reiterated that it has less to do with the wealth or the strength of the military of the country. ROK and the U.S. decided over time that it was an important relationship to build. Alliance, by definition, is a grouping of like-minded countries to achieve a common goal. ROK has contributed to the U.S. in many ways such as Vietnam, Bosnia, Iraq, etc. It is not about cost or money, but rather for the security of the ROK and its people.

Dr. Bennett shared that roughly a third of U.S. trade is with Northeast Asia. It is an incredible percentage of our economy, and how we do business in the world. If any war breaks out in Korea, it will fundamentally affect U.S. interest in trade and economy. The security and deterrence of war in the ROK is essential to not negatively affect trade. The ROK is interested in global peace and the U.S. needs a presence in Asia to help maintain this. If we are not prepared to pay the price to sustain the peace, we will lose a lot.

Maj. Gen. Shin stated that an alliance is mutually beneficial for both countries. The presence of USFK and CFC is to deter provocations from North Korea. If the deterrence fails, then they are ready to fight and win. This is true not just for the Peninsula but for all of Northeast Asia. Peace and prosperity in the Peninsula impact the Indo-Pacific region.

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Security and Strategic Topics

UNITED NATIONS COMMAND AND A KOREAN PEACE PROCESS

By: Colonel (Retired) Seung Joon “Steve” Lee
Former U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer

Introduction.
The United Nations Command (UNC) and its Member States have a role in both the present stability and future peace of the Korean Peninsula. Since the first Panmunjom Summit in April 2018, there has been much speculation about a peaceful settlement to the Korean War. UNC and its 18 Member States, which includes South Korea, has a vital role in maintaining the stability that the Armistice Agreement affords and has the established experience and credibility for supporting the development and implementation of a peace settlement. Instead of hindering a peace settlement, the United Nations Command would provide the stability to allow room for a peace process to develop. A key factor for our side of the military demarcation line (MDL) will be our own trust and ability to work together. Without trust and working together, North Korea will have the upper hand in controlling the pace and topics for discussions on military matters leading to a possible peace settlement.

In exploring the UNC and its role in a peace process, this article will address the following questions:

- What is the relationship between the United Nations Command, the Armistice Agreement, and a possible end-of-war declaration or peace treaty?
- What might be the implications of dissolving the United Nations Command, including the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC) and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC)?
- What should be the relationship between South Korea and the UN Command going forward?

A Note About “Peace” on the Korean Peninsula.
Over the years, the use of the term “peace” to describe the situation on the Korean Peninsula has been a misnomer. And even though we can want peace and seek peace, by the very nature of the armistice in Korea, we do not have peace in Korea. A more accurate way to describe the situation in Korea is in terms of stability and security. There are arguments about how stable or secure the situation in Korea really is, but compared to war, the situation in Korea is stable, but not in peace.

Making this distinction is an important step in more clearly understanding the security environment of the Korean Peninsula. Not making this distinction can cause confusion. For example, policy makers among the 17 Sending States (which includes the United States) may wonder why their nation still needs to be committed to an area that has “peace.”

UNC’s Past: Formed to Defend South Korea Against North Korea’s Attack and to “Restore International Peace and Security in the Area.”
In response to North Korea’s attack against South Korea on June 25, 1950, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 83 on June 27, 1950 and recommended “that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area.” After a bitter and difficult war that resulted in the Korean Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953, the first reason for gathering Member nations for UNCSR 83 was met – repelling North Korea’s armed attack. However, even after 67 years, the second reason for Member nations to provide assistance to South Korea has not been met – restoring international peace and security in the area.

UNC’s Present: Charged to Maintain Stability Through the Armistice Agreement.
The United Nations Command, its 18 Member States, and the three-nation Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission already exist as a structure and international group of nations who are committed to “restoring international peace and security in the area.” Formed by UNCSR 84, the United Nations Command’s mission has changed from originally defending South Korea against North Korea’s attack to maintaining the Armistice Agreement that keeps stability between the two sides. The daily work of supervising the Armistice Agreement is the Military Armistice Commission which was formed by the Armistice Agreement and includes both parties of the Agreement. The United Nations Command’s component is called the UNC Military Armistice Commission or UNCMAC and is represented by all 18 Member States. The NNSC continues to provide neutral observations and reports of activities pertaining to the Armistice Agreement. Combined, the UNC Member States and NNSC provide an international presence of 21 nations who are committed to maintaining Armistice stability.

They all support UNC and its mission. Over the years, UNC has recognized a need to revitalize the UN Command, and over the past five to six years, efforts have been underway to make UNC a more capable and structured organization. For most of its history, UNC positions were filled by U.S. personnel. Then ROK personnel who were assigned to the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC) were dual-hatted as UNC personnel. And in recent years, UNC created and opened up positions to include the Deputy Commander of UNC for other Sending State personnel. This
growth in UNC's structure has caused some concern in the ROK Government and military. But the issues are more about how the growth will be managed than the need for UNC.

**UNC's Future: A Role in a Korean Peace Settlement.**

Until a "final peace settlement is achieved," UNC will remain to ensure the stability that the Armistice affords. As the current road to a peace settlement continues to build, there are several ways that UNC, its 17 Sending States, and the NNSC can transform to support a peace process.

A peace settlement that will end the Armistice Agreement does not have to mean the end of the United Nations Command. There are several reasons why the United Nations Command would remain relevant during a peace process that could lead to the signing of a peace agreement.

1. There is still international legitimacy for the United Nations Command. As described earlier, UNSCR 83's "to restore international peace and security in the area" remains in effect. This is often overlooked but would be an important and relevant reason for a UNC role in a peace process. The United Nations Command exists as an international group of nations committed to the peaceful resolution of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

In a peace process, UNC could remain an international body to maintain stability that would give the peace process room to develop.

2. UNC is uniquely experienced to negotiate with the North Korean People's Army (KPA). No matter how the Korean Armistice ends, there will be a need to negotiate the dissolution of the DMZ. UNC has the unique experience and personnel who have worked issues along the DMZ for several decades. The key leaders and experts have been trained to negotiate with the KPA. They understand the KPA negotiation style and modus operandi. UNCMAC has the linguist, operational expertise, and knowledge to negotiate with the KPA.

These experiences and skills took UNC years to develop. Because the KPA keep their key personnel for years and even decades, they already have more experience. So, to dismantle the UNC team would give North Korea an advantage and the initiative at a crucial time in negotiating with the KPA.

3. A Role for the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. NNSC could adjust its original mission of observing force build up on the Korean Peninsula to being an international neutral body for disarmament. The NNSC has shown decades of commitment in being neutral bodies for maintaining stability under the Armistice Agreement. Even though North Korea no longer officially recognizes this group, they have a familiarity with this organization and may be more accepting of the NNSC as a group that is already in place to provide neutral observations of disarmament. The mission also could lead to NNSC's neutral observation of dismantling North Korean nuclear and missile sites.

The UNC is maintaining Armistice stability so that North-South dialogue can continue toward a peace settlement. And along the way, UNC has a role even in North-South agreements like their 2018 Comprehensive Military Agreement.

**South Korea and the United Nations Command Going Forward.**

There are several roads to get to a peace destination, and along the way there will be several variables, obstacles, enablers, and conditions. Many of these will be outside of UNC's control and authorities. However, there are several ways that UNC can help its 18 Member States, including South Korea and the United States, get there. The main factor will be the trust between South Korea and the United Nations Command.

For its part, the United Nations Command has opportunities to continue showing its strong desire to support South Korea in its engagements and initiatives with North Korea that could lead to a peace settlement. The UNC also has the opportunity to clearly communicate that it views this support of South Korea and its role in maintaining the stability that the Armistice Agreement provides as mutually supportive. One of the main risks that UNC will need to manage is all the voices from its 18 Member States and the three voices from the NNSC. And the U.S., as the designated leader of UNC, has to balance its UNC obligations and its bilateral relationship with South Korea.

South Korea should seize two opportunities. First, South Korea should take advantage of UNC's mission and authorities that frees up South Korea to focus on other military issues with North Korea. Second, Seoul should pursue an active campaign of garnering support from the 17 Sending States and the NNSC. This would allow Seoul to show a desire to welcome this international support and goodwill. Seoul would also be taking the initiative in shaping support to better meet its needs.

The one thing that would lead to a fractured front against North Korea would be a simmering of distrust on our side of the MDL that could lead to conflicting actions or words. Ultimately, such actions or words would give North Korea an advantage in negotiations toward a peace settlement to end the Korean Armistice Agreement.

**About The Author:**

Colonel (Ret.) Steve Lee served 22 years as an Army Foreign Area Officer in numerous assignments in Korea and The Pentagon. He is a Korea expert who has been interviewed on The Today Show and FOX News. He has moderated and participated in several panels about Korea and the ROK-U.S. Alliance. He is currently the Senior Vice President of KDVA.
Across the nation, there are more than 40 memorials, highways, museums, monuments, and gardens dedicated to general war and Korean War veterans. Before I began researching, I assumed there were going to be more than 40, but a few of these sites are quite large, covering a lot of information.

For example, the ones in and near Washington, D.C. are some of the most visited ones for their reliable and qualitative information: the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Air Force Memorial, the Marine Corps Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Others such as the Wisconsin Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Oregon Korean War Memorial, the Prison Ship Martyrs Monument, the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum, and the Gross Pointe Garden Center might not be as well-known but hold just as much significance and importance.

In the United States, there are approximately 17 memorials dedicated solely to Korean War Veterans. When I drive home to Virginia from my school in Pennsylvania, I always pass the ‘Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway’ and am always thankful to those who served. I can only hope that everyone else who drives on that highway notices the sign and acknowledges it.

In terms of memorials dedicated to all war veterans located in the United States, there are approximately 26. Before doing research for this article, I had not thought about the gardens that counted as memorials and discovered that there are six gardens spread throughout California, Missouri, Nebraska, Florida, and Texas where war veterans are honored and remembered.

I hope to be able to visit one of the memorial gardens since I have never been to one and have only been to museums and other monuments. I encourage everyone who is able (especially once quarantine is lifted) to visit these extremely important and interesting places in order to become more educated on the wars and the valiant veterans who fought for our country.

Learn more about memorials and other important information by going to the KDVA resources tab (https://kdva.vet/korean-war-memorials/) and important dates about North Korea and the ROK-U.S. Alliance in the KDVA Chronologies tab (https://kdva.vet/chronologies/).
In October 2016, legislation was passed and tasked the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation with raising funds to build and establish a Wall of Remembrance to be incorporated with the existing Korean War Veterans Memorial. The Wall of Remembrance will become the permanent home for the names of the 36,574 American Service Members and over 8,000 Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) who gave their lives defending the people of South Korea from aggression and ensuring their freedom.

The projected construction costs for the Wall of Remembrance is $31 million and financial support is dependent upon private donations from individual donors and major corporations from around the world. The overall success of this project will focus on creating a detailed and highly disciplined approach to the management of significant donor prospects. This momentous endeavor to build the Wall of Remembrance will ensure the brave U.S. military personnel and members of the South Korean military, who served in South Korean and American units during the war, will be remembered for generations. It will also serve to educate about the cost of freedom to the Memorial’s four million visitors each year.

We cannot do this without your help! Please help us to raise the necessary funding to build the Wall of Remembrance for our fallen soldiers and support the Foundation’s goals. Your financial support is greatly appreciated. You may visit www.koreanwarvetsmemorial.org to submit your secure online donation or if you prefer, checks can be mailed to:

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation
950 North Washington Street, Suite 311
Alexandria, VA 22314

Our nation has a responsibility to make sure we do not forget our men and women in the military who sacrificed to defend the freedoms we enjoy.
PROPOSED VIEW FROM UNITED NATIONS WALL

PROPOSED DESIGN – BIRD’S EYE VIEW LOOKING WEST

Korean War Veterans Memorial
Wall of Remembrance

Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation
June 2020

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Korean War Veterans Memorial
Wall of Remembrance

NIGHT RENDERING OF WALL OF REMEMBRANCE - DETAIL VIEW

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KOREA DEFENSE VETERANS ASSOCIATION
14689, Lee Highway #266, Gainesville VA 20156, USA
contact@kdva.vet
www.kdva.vet