WHERE DOES NORTHEAST ASIA FIT IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN POLICY?

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I. Introduction

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks shocked the world twice: first, their unimaginable method of attack and, second, the U.S. response in their wake. Doctrines, policies, and actions that emerged were quite different from the past for the United States. Many countries were unsettled, and world opinion became adversarial toward the United States. Changes that occurred during the first term of the Bush administration and their repercussions are puzzling and harmful to the twenty-first-century world.

This paper reconstructs, first, the new grand strategy that was boldly suggested by the Bush administration and characterized as a "neoimperialist" general platform for U.S. foreign policy; it then considers the application of the strategy to Northeast Asia.[1] Last, the paper seeks a new paradigm for collaboration that is essentially a way "back to the future." The United States needs to step up to the challenge of being the sole superpower, which bestows a certain responsibility for the global public good. It does not mean simply exercising hard military power against rogue states; it also means shaping the international environment for a desirable future. The rest of the world also needs to know how to respond: cooperate, voice, or counterbalance.[2]

II. The Eagle Emboldened

The end of the Cold War suddenly left the United States with a power that surpasses that of the United Kingdom a century ago. The world is awed by U.S. "hyperpower" and bored by British "minipower" (Ferguson 2003, 4). The hyperpower status of the United States is in stark contrast with the situation in the 1970s and 1980s when the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system and economic advances of Japan and West Germany provoked a debate on U.S. decline and hegemonic stability. Although the world is multipolar in other areas, the current U.S. primacy certainly constitutes a military unipolarity. The sources of U.S. strength are so varied and so durable that the United States now enjoys more freedom in its foreign policy choices than has any other power in modern history.

The United States has been trying to adapt to the new reality by revising its foreign policy and national strategies. The administrations of both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton attempted to articulate a vision of world order within traditional bounds.

1. A discussion of international politics such as this might not include the smaller members of the Northeast Asia region, although that was not the author's intention.

2. Albert Hirschman (1970) suggested the terms "exit, voice, and loyalty"; these terms can be adapted to international politics as "cooperate, voice, or counterbalance."

The first President Bush talked about the importance of the transatlantic community and articulated ideas about a more fully integrated Asia-Pacific region. In a classic realism organized around sovereignty and global balance of power, he successfully integrated Russia into the Western security order after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Subsequent Russian dependence on the West for economic reconstruction has forced it to acquiesce in global politics.

The Clinton administration attempted to describe the post–Cold War order in terms of expansion of democracy and market economy. In the liberal tradition, the Clinton administration formalized its new moderate goals and methodology in a policy of enlargement and engagement, and it began to clean up the legacies of the Cold War. With the disappearance of the grand threat, the old grand strategy of containment passed into history quickly. U.S. defense was reduced to a record low, pushing vested interests in defense industries to the opposition political party, the Republican Party. The Clinton administration did see the increasingly threatening nature of terrorism, but in the absence of a clear and present danger, an asymmetrical potential threat would not justify a big defense budget. Both administrations remained within the boundaries of the traditional precepts of U.S. foreign policy, such as respect for sovereignty, international consensus building, balance of power, and promotion of democracy and free markets.

The administration of George W. Bush has been different. The second Bush administration's war on terrorism, invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, enormously expanded military budget, and controversial 2002 National Security Strategy have thrust U.S. power into the light of day under the doctrine of preemption and prevention. The debate on empire has returned. Such policies have deeply unsettled much of the world as U.S. unipolarity seems to have turned into an imperialism that goes beyond traditional prescriptions of international harmony or balance of power. The most fundamental questions about the nature of global politics, including who commands and who benefits, are now the subjects of global conversations.

George W. Bush ran for president emphasizing some themes of the traditional realist orientation; he described his approach to foreign policy as "new realism," including a shift away from Clinton-era preoccupations with nation building and toward cultivating great-power relations and rebuilding the nation's military.[3] As disciples of President Ronald Reagan, the Bush officials wanted to stand tall, with a big stick, for the cause of what they thought were laudable U.S. values. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 provided a grand opportunity for neoconservatives and Bush to preside over

3. George W. Bush's policy of ABC (anything but Clinton) might have indicated a policy of unilateralism, in contrast with Clinton's internationalism.

"the most sweeping redesign of U.S. grand strategy since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt" (Gaddis 2005, 2). It changed the fundamental basis of traditional U.S. foreign policy and its relations with other states.

Although the threat came from terrorists and rogue states that sponsor terrorism, the responses that evolved in the form of the Bush Doctrine were expressed in universal terms characteristic of a grand strategy. Foreign policy goals in the new paradigm include material interests, monopoly of hegemony, counterterrorism, counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and a moralistic spread of democracy and free markets. Preemption, prevention, increased reliance on force, conditional sovereignty, anticipatory actions, and depreciation of international institutions and allies all constitute methods of achieving these goals.

The new paradigm begins with a fundamental commitment to maintain the hegemonic monopoly and unipolarity. Bush made this point the centerpiece of U.S. security policy in his West Point commencement address in June 2002: "America has, and intends to keep, military strengths beyond challenges—thereby making the destabilizing arms races of other eras pointless, and limiting rivalries to trade and other pursuits of peace."[4] It amounted to rejecting a global system of power balancing. One way to achieve this is a so-called breakout, where the United States moves so quickly to develop technological advantages in robotics, lasers, satellites, and precision munitions that "no state or coalition could ever challenge it as global leader, protector, and enforcer" (Ikenberry 2004, 149). If the breakout occurs in missile defense, the United States will obtain a first-strike capability and hegemonic monopoly. The old balance-of-power politics will disappear if missile defense nullifies other states' second-strike capability. This goal of hegemonic monopoly was already in the minds of neoconservatives far earlier than 9/11. At the end of the George H. W. Bush administration, Paul Wolfowitz, who was then under secretary of defense for policy, wrote in a Pentagon memorandum that was later leaked: "[W]ith the collapse of the Soviet Union the United States must act to prevent the rise of peer competitors in Europe and Asia."

The goal of counterterrorism is self-evident. Because intelligence reports point to an evil connection in which terrorist networks are aided by failed or failing states that might soon acquire highly destructive WMD, counterterrorism and counterproliferation go "hand in glove" (Hagel 2004, 64). Goals of spreading democracy and open markets had been liberal projects but were accepted by the Bush administration in a different context. Because failed states are hotbeds of terrorism, it was thought that fundamental remedies would be democracy and free markets, leading failed states to democratic

4. Formulated as the Bush doctrine, this amounted to the "declaration of American hegemony"(Hirsh 2002, 18).

peace and prosperity. Because the threat to the United States was imminent, the administration radicalized these liberal themes into self-righteous tasks of regime change and regime transformation. Going beyond realism, President Bush added a moralistic tone of a crusade in his war against what he called the "axis of evil." Pursuit of material interests is a foreign policy goal of every country, all the time. The traditional struggle for power or hegemony is, finally, mostly intended to maximize these material gains.

In terms of methodology, preemption and prevention by force come first. Preemption used to mean taking military action against an aggressive action. Prevention meant starting a war against a state that might launch an aggressive attack sooner or later. This "old distinction between preemption and prevention, is one of the many casualties of September 11" (Gaddis 2005, 5). Because terrorist groups cannot be appeased or deterred, they need to be preemptively eliminated. If these actions are taken to forestall clear and immediate present dangers, it is acceptable according to international law and practice. The Bush administration conflated these terms, however, and spoke of preemption to justify a supposedly preventive war against Saddam Hussein. Rumsfeld went further, with a justification that the "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence of weapons of mass destruction." The new way of war was facilitated by the ongoing Revolution in Military Affairs in the U.S. military."[5]

Because terrorist groups cannot be deterred, the Bush administration believed it must be prepared to intervene anywhere, anytime, to preemptively destroy the threat. Moreover, countries that harbor terrorists, either by consent or lack of state capacity, effectively forfeit their rights of sovereignty. Thus Washington reserves the right to pick the targets of U.S. force. The Bush administration is inclined to apply the concept of conditional sovereignty or contingent sovereignty on a global basis, leaving to itself the authority to determine when sovereign rights have been forfeited. Further, it will do so on an anticipatory basis. The turning of the Westphalian order on its head has been facilitated by the U.S. hegemonic monopoly. As a further corollary, the United States will need to play a "direct and unconstrained role" in responding to threats because only the United States has the force-projection capabilities to respond to terrorist and rogue states around the world, and multilateral rules and institutions are corrupting and constraining (Ikenberry 2002, 53). Evidently, the administration regarded the United Nations in "an entirely instrumental light" (Tucker and Hendrickson 2004, 26). Commitment to multilateralism has been superseded. Freedom from security partnerships has also been achieved as old concepts of deterrence and balance of

5. Less impressive than "shock and awe" is the reality of the Iraq War; it was a war of giants against a pygmy (Waltz 2003). The war came to Iraq after its debilitating war with Iran in the 1980s, its decisive loss in the Gulf War of 1991, international sanctions and occasional U.S. and British bombardments for more than a decade, and as its GDP amounted to only to 0.15 percent of the U.S. GDP.

power became outdated. What matters now is whether countries are either "with us or against us."

The grand strategy was expressed in the repudiation of a remarkable array of international treaties and institutions from the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, to the International Criminal Court, to the Biological Weapons Convention, and to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and it culminated in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Exigencies of 11 September 2001 are embedded in the universalistic grand strategy.

The new grand strategy, characterized by maximalist goals and unilateralist methodology, forms a neoimperial vision in which the United States arrogates to itself the global role of setting goals and deciding on relevant methodology. It is a vision in which the United States enjoys more absolute sovereignty while other sovereignties become relative. The world is reverting to the imperialist era when the Westphalian norms and sovereignty were withheld from "barbaric" parts of the world where the white man's burden and the Hobbesian war of empires against barbarians were the norm. Some radicals have argued that U.S. imperialism began as early as the end of the World War II (Johnson 2004). However, such an argument can easily be refuted by the benign characteristics of U.S. hegemony, including public goods provided by the hegemon, respect for rules and institutions, and voice opportunities given to weaker countries (Ikenberry 2004, 148). Despite these criteria, the grand strategy represents neoimperialism and a dramatic departure from the international order the United States has built with its partners since the 1940s. In fact, however, the United States has a long tradition of pursuing imperialistic policies, most notably in Latin America and the Middle East; but no preceding U.S. administration has brought all the elements together in such an alarming, imperialistic a way.

The massive U.S. response was facilitated by neoconservatives who are a cohesive and distinctive group and "managed to exert so decisive an influence" (which is quite rare in U.S. history) on such a crucial issue as the Iraq War emanating from the collapse of the World Trade Center through the early stages of the occupation of Baghdad almost two years later (Marshall 2003, 146). They started out in the context of U.S. domestic politics as a coalition of anticommunists and fundamentalist Christians and, after the Soviet collapse, found new evils in terrorism, failed states, and disorder in poor countries. Since nonimperialist options—notably, foreign aid and various nation-building efforts—were not altogether reliable, the "logic of neoimperialism was too compelling for the Bush administration to resist" (Mallaby 2002). The new grand strategy was not a response to the hegemon's dilemma, in which the hegemon's question is whether to continue to sacrifice for the public good or to concentrate on private goods as an ordinary state does. The new grand strategy came not out of despair but out of overconfidence and arrogance. Whether the United States now views itself as an empire, "for many foreigners it increasingly looks, walks, and talks

like one, and they respond to Washington accordingly" (Simes 2003, 93). The Bush administration followed up with the maximum that 9/11 allowed. Ironically the new U.S. paradigm mirrors the image of a rogue state or an Osama bin Laden, but with the maximalist goal of ultimate good and unilateral methodology.

III. Fitting Northeast Asia

Since the end of the Cold War, Northeast Asia has become a region of attention. It is unique in that the world's three principal nuclear powers (the United States, Russia, and China) and the two largest economic powers (the United States and Japan) are geopolitically and geoeconomically engaged. Their interests are entwined in a volatile circle surrounding the Korean peninsula. It was in this region that three years of bitter Korean conflict a half century ago shaped the Cold War. Although other global hot spots have made prompt moves toward peace, Korea remains locked in conflict. At the same time, the region is one of the most dynamically developing regions in the world. Because its geoeconomic growth is dramatic, the region is in rapid flux and faces geopolitical challenges.

Northeast Asia is rapidly becoming one of the epicenters of the world economy. Together with Southeast Asia, the region features some of the world's fastest-growing and most powerful economies. It is now China's turn to be an economic miracle, with an annual average growth rate of 9 percent, and to increase its trade, investment and energy demand, which has led to political implications in Northeast Asia, especially for Korea and Japan. The rapidly growing economic interdependence in Northeast Asia is changing regional parameters. During the Cold War, Northeast Asia remained a geographic name without much of a sense of regional identity. The word "neighborhood" carried with it negative implications of invasion and conquest. The Cold War was fought between the northern triangle of the Soviet Union–North Korea–China and the southern triangle of South Korea–the United States–Japan. Since the Chinese launched their modernization project in 1978, China has become integrated into the Japan-Korea geoeconomic nexus, which has brought about changes.

Although Northeast Asian countries have been the engines of East Asian economic growth and interdependence, it was the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that ignited East Asian regionalism. East Asia lacks objective prerequisites for regional cohesion because it is characterized by great cultural and religious diversity, both among the countries and within them. With the rise of developmentalism in the 1980s, however, Southeast Asian states were drawn into regional economic interdependence, which created the necessity for heightening and institutionalizing economic interdependence. ASEAN took the initiative in creating Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in 1989. However, it was not until the financial crisis in 1997

that East Asian regionalism took shape. More countries began to agree with the Malaysian call for an East Asian regionalism that excluded the United States, which was pressing for austerity and drastic liberalization during the crisis. ASEAN countries effectively rejected U.S.-led "Asia-Pacificism" by creating regional institutions such as ASEAN + 3, the Chiang Mai Initiative, and the East Asian Community summit, which will be inaugurated in late 2005. A feasibility study on East Asian free trade areas has been commissioned by ASEAN + 3.

Against this new trend of regionalism, old and new obstacles stand in the way, including competing territorial claims, the legacy of history, nationalist tendencies, and rivalry for hegemony. Japan has territorial conflicts with all of its neighbors in the region: over the Dokdo Islands with South Korea, the Senkaku Islands with China, and four Kurile islands with Russia. Other conflicts, including East China Sea energy exploration and South Korea's and China's opposition to Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, are chilling their relationship. These unresolved tensions are legacies of Japanese imperialism that conservative Japanese politicians have tended to beautify, in sharp contrast to the West Germans, who literally liquidated Nazi legacies.

For example, the Yasukuni Jinja has emerged as a symbol of resurgent nationalism. The war memorial colocated with the shrine propagates the ultranationalist view that Japan was forced into the war in the Pacific to maintain the independence and peace of the nation and the prosperity of Asia. Yasukuni is "not just a memorial to ordinary soldiers but a venue for propagating a warped and politically motivated view of Japan's modern history" (Brown 2005, A35). The Japanese government has also approved new history textbooks that contain views similar to the expressions at the war memorial. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and others "pay their respects" at Yasukuni, which not only raises questions about the sincerity of Japan's official apologies for past aggression but also makes Japanese imperialism a current issue. Coupled with rearmament and an increasing international military role, Japan appears as a future threat to its neighbors.

Regardless of legacies of the past, a fundamental change in the balance of power is occurring in Northeast Asia. It is caused by successive economic development.[6] In the modern era, capitalist transition combined with a developmental state was the key to modernization and rapid growth. After 1867, Japan recorded a rapid rate of growth and became an indigenous imperialist, colonizing Korea and invading China. South

6. In successive development, countries develop in turns instead of simultaneously. The first country enjoys the most benefit as its growth is rapid at an early stage, with spillovers from developed countries. As a countries move up the ladder of development, growth becomes sluggish because growth is based on qualitative growth dependent on technological and managerial innovations.

Korea embarked on a developmentalist path in the 1960s and became a successful model by the early 1980s. China embarked on the developmental journey after 1978. Economic growth was recorded in a successive manner so that the countries coming late to development might still challenge the international status quo. It is not only South Korea and China that challenge the status quo but also Japan, which hopes to become a "normal" state commensurate with its economic power. All three Northeast Asian countries are benefiting from the end of the Cold War and the Russian retreat, which makes the situation more fluid and destabilizing. In addition, nationalism is on the rise in all three countries.

In this regional topography, the United States is a predominant actor. The United States has maintained a presence in Northeast Asia since the end of the World War II, and the reason for its forward deployment has been gradually expanded from security to economics. Northeast Asian countries are today among the top seven trading partners of the United States: China is number three; Japan, number four; and South Korea, number seven. Northeast Asia today is "vital to the interests of the United States not only in the Asia-Pacific context, but globally," and the United States needs to be actively involved with the region (DOS 2005a). U.S. economic well-being and welfare have depended more on Asia since U.S. transpacific trade surpassed its transatlantic trade in the mid-1980s. Ironically, however, the rise of Northeast Asian economies politically downgrades U.S. power in the region because power is basically relative. The question is how U.S. global primacy will be translated into regional influences.

Fitting Northeast Asia in the new U.S. grand strategy creates "two areas of great potential dangers to U.S. interests and its allies—including North Korea and the Taiwan Strait . . . includes China, one of the world's rising powers" (DOS 2005a). In other words, the goals of managing China's challenge to U.S. hegemony and the related issue of Taiwan and resolving the North Korean nuclear question dominate all the other concerns in the Bush administration's Asia policy. Confronted with the rise of China, the United States is a defensive, status quo power, but on the issue of North Korea the Bush administration is a revisionist that wants to change or transform the regime.

Few nations have "changed as fast—or as dramatically—as China" since the 1970s (Hale and Hale 2003, 36). China has already surpassed South Korea in terms of gross domestic product (GDP); will have an economy double that of Germany by 2010; and will overtake Japan, currently the world's second largest economy, by 2020.[7] In 30–

7. In terms of GDP, currently the ratio of Japan, China, South Korea, and ASEAN is roughly 6:2:1:1. However, China's purchasing power parity GDP is estimated to be up to twice that of Japan's.

40 years, China may catch up with the United States. There is no question, therefore, that China's emergence as a great economic power is leading to "a global power shift" with enormous impacts on the current international order (Hoge 2004). China is certain to become the center of new power arrangements in Asia. In the past, such a transition and accompanying hegemonic instability usually ended in great wars (Organski 1958; Gilpin 1981).[8] A more practical question in today's world of interdependent market economies and WMD is not whether the "titans will clash" but how the conflicts will be minimized (Brzezinski and Mearsheimer 2005). As China rises, it will certainly demand heightened international status and resolution of it grievances, such as over Taiwan.

China was initially a strategic competitor in President George W. Bush's new realism. The U.S. administration's preoccupation with the war on terrorism, however, has transformed China into a major partner for counterterrorism as well as for trade and investment. The U.S. reversal in China policy was reflected in the administration's National Security Strategy, released a year after the 11 September 2001 attacks; this document identified terrorism, not a rising China, as the primary strategic threat of the United States. China suddenly found common vital interests with the United States, and the partnership has been extended to the North Korean nuclear issue. The partnership, however, is limited. The counterterrorist cooperation is conjunctural while the power shift is structural. Supporters of containment have concealed their structural view behind cooperation on counterterrorism.

Rising China, in its turn, has shown a "new diplomacy" since the mid-1990s, trying to assuage its neighbors' concerns and project a generally benign external image (Medeiros and Fravel 2003). China has begun to make broad regional trade initiatives, spearheading a project to create a regional free trade zone, expanding the number and depth of its bilateral relationships, joining various trade and security accords, deepening its participation in key multilateral organizations, and helping address global security issues. Foreign policy decision making has become less personalized and more institutionalized.

Since the Richard Nixon administration in the early 1970s, the China policy of the United States has been to form a strategic triangle, driving the country away from the Soviet Union and back into the world community. With the rise of China and the new grand strategy of the United States, how to deal with China takes a subtle turn. Now the strategic goal is how to maintain U.S. hegemony against prospective Chinese challenges, and the Bush administration is divided over methodology: engagement or containment. On the one hand, the United States is engaging China and trying to help

8. For empirical research that tested the thesis in East Asia, see Kim (2001).

China assimilate into the international community and become a responsible member. However, other members of the U.S. administration support a grand strategy that destroys the "international community" into which China can assimilate; thus, containment is their logical choice. They are convinced that the United States and China will end up as rivals because the strategic reality is one of incompatible vital interests. They interpret China's larger military budgets as signs of China's intention to roll back the U.S. presence in East Asia. In their view, China is not a good candidate for democratic peace.

Whether intended or not, the U.S. war on terrorism has resulted in "soft containment of China" (Hoge 2004, 5). Militarily, the United States has undergone its most extensive realignment of power in a half century. Suddenly, Southeast Asia is experiencing significant U.S. involvement. The United States suddenly "discovers central Asia," which is important in terms of strategy and energy and has created jumping-off bases (Maynes 2003). The Bush administration has strongly supported Japan's rearmament, with a goal of making it a Britain in Asia and to counterbalance China. Further, Washington's newly intensified military cooperation and implicit recognition of India as a nuclear power appears to be a finishing touch to the encirclement of China. India and China have not resolved their 42-year border dispute and still distrust each other. India also appears set to grow in economic and military strength, as a counterbalance to China as well as a strong proponent of democracy in its own right. U.S. policy vis-à-vis India coupled with elements of a new grand strategy such as hegemonic monopoly, MD, abolition of balance-of-power concepts, and strategic flexibility cause Chinese analysts to suspect that the unannounced U.S. intention is containment of China.[9] With many Chinese leaders strongly suspicious of U.S. power, many U.S. neoconservatives similarly distrustful of China, and Taiwanese leaders popularly pressed to "declare independence" although China has failed to make clear what that involves (Lieberthal 2005, 53), the "Sino-U.S. train could thus easily run off the rails once again" (Abramowitz and Bosworth 2003, 128).[10]

The U.S. pursuit of hegemonic monopoly and nationalist resurgence in the region has been increasingly reviving balance-of-power politics. With the U.S. grand strategy increasingly juxtaposed against China, seven East European countries entering NATO,

9. A Pentagon report (OSD 2005) observes that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is "modernizing its forces" without external threats. The report concludes: "Over the long term, if current trends persist, PLA capabilities could pose a credible threat to other modern militaries operating in the region," which could be used to justify a new containment policy. China stated that the report is much exaggerated.

10. On the other hand, Taiwan's increasing economic interdependence with the mainland may significantly improve Beijing's bargaining position (Abramowitz and Bosworth 2003, 128). Approximately 700,000 Taiwanese now live in China, and Taiwanese investment in China is estimated to exceed $100 billion.

and a windfall from rapidly rising oil prices, Russia is becoming reassertive. Its defense budget rose from $10.1 billion in 2004 to $18.8 billion in 2005. Russia held a joint military exercise with China in August 2005, with Uzbekistan in September, and with India in October. The large China-Russia maneuver, codenamed "Peace Mission 2005," appeared to be a clear challenge to U.S. predominance. Some reported the topography of the exercises was similar to the coasts of Taiwan, and others compared it with North Korea's west coast. In response, the United States and Japan scheduled a joint military exercise for January 2006; the incident was set up as a Chinese invasion of the Diaotao Islands. Also, China's foreign strategy is changing its emphasis away from Deng Xiaoping's maxim that China's people should "hide our capacities and bide our time" to the new slogan, "rising up peacefully." The Shanghai Cooperation Organization comprising China, Russia, and Central Asian states demanded a U.S. withdrawal from Central Asia in 2005.

Another important application of the new grand strategy in Northeast Asia is toward North Korea and the nuclear issue there. The administration brought into office anticommunists who deeply distrusted and scoffed at Clinton's "appeasement" of North Korea. Although the Clinton administration attempted to engage North Korea diplomatically, respecting South Korea's initiatives, the Bush administration believed it might appear it was recognizing the Kim Jong-il regime if it came to the negotiating table. The Bush administration announced a North Korea policy review four and a half months after inauguration, and the review raised the standards the North Koreans needed to meet. Events of 11 September 2001further stiffened the hard-line U.S. stance, and the United States included Pyongyang in the "axis of evil." Soon the Bush administration found evidence to link the North Koreans to WMD.

In October 2002, the United States announced that North Korea was secretly developing a program to enrich uranium to weapons grade, in violation of the 1994 Agreed Framework. Because North Korea had cheated, the Bush administration declared, the United States was no longer bound by the Agreed Framework. Because North Korea was thus also freed from the Agreed Framework, North Korea expelled International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors and resumed its nuclear activities. The United States mobilized China, which by then had become its counterterrorism partner, to press Pyongyang on negotiation. The Bush administration wanted a multilateral framework, which is harder for North Korea to violate. Three-party talks began in early 2003 and were followed by six-party talks, the fourth round of which recently concluded.

The policy orientations of the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun governments are different from the Bush administration, and they share much with the Kim Young-sam government. Although President Kim Young-sam could not make the Clinton administration believe the North Koreans were reliable enough to make an agreement,

President Kim Dae-jung was fortunate that the Clinton administration decided to follow South Korean advice to find a negotiated solution to the North Korean missile problem. Both South Korea and the United States agreed on the process developed by former secretary of defense William Perry and were close to an agreement on missiles and normalization of relations with North Koreans when George W. Bush was elected president.

To South Korea's high government officials, North Korea appears to be a tragic case of the Bush paradigm. It is true that North Koreans potentially threatened to develop nuclear weapons, but there is little hard evidence to prove they have made nuclear weapons or have reprocessed plutonium or enriched uranium to weapons grade. The Bush administration offered only circumstantial evidence and speculated that North Korean "may" already have "several" nuclear weapons and that Pyongyang had a program to produce "enriched" uranium for weapons without evidence additional to what the previous administration had. Since the 2002 visit to Pyongyang of James A. Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Bush administration, relying on sketchy data, "presented a worst-case scenario as an incontrovertible truth and distorted its intelligence on North Korea (much as it did on Iraq), seriously exaggerating the danger that Pyongyang is secretly making uranium-based nuclear weapons" (Harrison 2005). Even during the six-party talks, the U.S. stance was that of unilateral pressure: Pyongyang should confess to the existence of the alleged uranium enrichment facilities and specify where they are located and should accept nuclear dismantlement first without any preconditions. Washington, for its part, would not compensate a villain and would not exclude any options from the menu. Saying North Korean plutonium could get into the wrong hands, Washington linked Pyongyang to terrorism although there has been no evidence since 1987 of North Korean participation in terrorism.

Also puzzling to South Korea was the U.S. decision to accept the "very real and immediate" threat posed by the stockpile of plutonium that Pyongyang might reprocess after the breakdown of the Agreed Framework. Kelly's confrontation with the North Koreans "seems to have been inspired by the growing alarm felt in Washington in the preceding five months over the ever more conciliatory approach that Seoul and Tokyo had been taking toward Pyongyang"; by raising the uranium issue, the Bush administration "hoped to scare Japan and South Korea" into reversing their policies (Harrison 2005, 100).

Most alarming to South Korea and China was the possibility, among "other options," that military forces would be compelled to resolve the nuclear issue. Some Americans were ready to accept the "necessary price" of destabilization in order to dislodge a dangerous and evil regime in Pyongyang (Ikenberry 2002, 52). For both South Korea and China, the cure would be worse than the disease. On the nuclear development,

North Korea maintains a strategic ambiguity and often bluffs.[11] When the United States presses North Korea to act as Libya did, North Korea thinks of the Iraq model: the United States would confidently invade North Korea if North Korea is proved to be without nuclear weapons. It is no wonder that North Korea has learned a lesson from the U.S. invasion of another member of the axis of evil. North Korea believes that nuclear ambiguity augments its deterrent posture.

While Washington thinks that Seoul lacks "sticks" and bargains only with "carrots," South Korea views Washington as a military commander rather than as a negotiator. President Bush vilified Chairman Kim Jong-il by calling him a "tyrant" and a "pygmy," names that do not suit a negotiating counterpart. Within the United States, the first criticism of Bush's tough line against North Korea's nuclear programs came not from liberal Democrats but from Richard Lugar, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who pointed out that North Korea needed to see "some light at the end of the tunnel" before it abandons its nuclear bargaining chip (Hiebert 2003, 17). Critics of the grand strategy in Northeast Asia argue that the threat of North Korean nuclear enrichment programs was exaggerated to abort the regional peace process activated after the inter-Korean summit and to block Japan and South Korean rapprochement with North Korea and China. All the changes occurred, without much additional evidence, as the U.S. administration changed.

After more than a year of recess, the fourth round of six-party talks resumed in August 2005, a consequence of joint efforts by three countries. The United States modified its stance and responded to North Korean demands for bilateral talks within the six-party process and cajoled Kim Jong-il and his sovereign state to come to the talks. China continued to persuade North Korea, and South Korea played an active role with its own important proposals to provide 2 million kilowatts of electricity. By this time, the United States and North Korea had converged upon rational solutions, such as a trade-off of North Korea's nuclear option for security and economic assistance—solutions that have been around for a long time.

The United States had to decide to retreat from "regime change" to a rational compromise, and North Korea had to decide to accept more flexibility. The talks were long stalled by Pyongyang's demand for its right to peaceful use of nuclear energy and light-water reactors, which was not acceptable to the United States. Even before the breakdown of the Agreed Framework, Bush supporters insisted on replacing light-water reactors with thermal power generators because they were suspicious of potential North Korean cheating. Such demands were codified as complete, verifiable,

11. Although bluffs must be taken seriously until disproved, North Korea's 10 February 2005 declaration of its nuclear arsenal still arouses suspicion rather than confirmation.

and irreversible dismantlement. The solution lay in how to bridge the lack of confidence between Washington and Pyongyang.

Not only on North Korean nuclear issues but also on other issues, the Roh government and the Bush administration increasingly show differences. South Korea believes that, despite Pyongyang's propaganda to the contrary, North Korea is interested in reform and opening, as evidenced by the 1 July 2002 economic management improvement measures and the opening of the Sinuiju, Kaesong, and Mt. Kumgang areas. The "*Juche* twilight" will not be reversed (Calder 2001, 112). Seoul believes North Korea will trade off its nuclear option for external peace, economic assistance, and domestic reform, and, thus, the relevant policy for the Roh government is to accede to the Kim Dae-jung government's Sunshine Policy.

For the Bush administration, however, North Korea represents another evil that is tyrannical and may threaten the United States with nuclear abilities and missile development. Therefore, they believe the relevant policy for Washington is to press for regime change or transformation of the regime through the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 and the appointment of a special envoy for North Korea's human rights. Despite the differences between Seoul and Washington, the inter-Korean rapprochement has created a slow but creeping reconciliation. South Korea has been using its economic strength to move the South-North relationship from a Cold War standoff to a cautious but peaceful coexistence of growing contacts and basic confidence-building measures. Now even Korea's opposition Grand National Party in principle supports the reconciliation, and South Korea is gaining breathing space from its absolute dependence on the U.S. alliance.

The views of the United States and South Korea also diverge on the goal of the ROK-U.S. alliance and the regional role of Japan. The erosion of North Korea's conventional military capabilities, the strengthened South Korean military, and inter-Korean reconciliation all constitute changes in the parameters of the alliance. According to the new U.S. global strategy, South Korea agreed with the United States on the reduction and relocation of U.S. troops in Korea through the two-year Future of the Alliance process; and they will discuss"strategic flexibility," under which the United States will be able to mobilize its forces from Korea to wherever they are needed. This is a change from the initial goal of deterring North Korean aggression. South Koreans are afraid they may be forcefully drawn into a U.S.-China confrontation if U.S. troops based in Korea become involved in a cross-strait conflict.

The mandate for South Korea to avoid conflicts among powers in the region is well expressed in its traditional comparison of a "shrimp between whales." This stance is also reflected in South Korea's opposition to Japan's increased military role in the region. As long as Japan honors imperialist legacies and nationalism, it will face

resistance from South Korea. Divergent views and interests between South Korea and the United States will become more serious if the Bush administration pursues counterhegemony rather than regional cooperation in Northeast Asia. On important issues, such as sanctions against a nuclear North Korea, Japanese rearmament, and missile defense, South Korea already has been pushed to China's side, and the United States and Japan are on the opposite side. Although there are various reasons and explanations for anti-U.S. sentiments in South Korea,[12] opinion polls show they surged with the Bush administration's new grand strategy and its Iraq invasion. However, it is too early to describe ROK-U.S. relations as "schizophrenia."[13]

IV. Back to the Future

One of the important repercussions of the Bush paradigm and Iraq invasion is an anti-Americanism that has visibly increased throughout the world in recent years.[14] The United States has lost its policy legitimacy, is isolated, and has lost its "soft power."[15] The United States is faced with an unprecedented collapse of support and respect abroad and is even regarded by some as an international pariah. The Bush administration assumed it would be welcomed when it deposed a tyrant in Iraq, but the United States is feared instead. The United States, with its grand strategy, is fortifying itself with counterterrorist measures and is chased by terrorism. The United States has fallen from its position as a country of confidence and hope to a country of despair. Fewer countries now favor and respect the United States.

Supporters of the grand strategy believe the United States is strong enough to do as it wishes with or without the world's approval and should simply accept the possibility that others will envy and resent it. Anti-Americanism may be derived from some envy; however, it comes mostly from U.S. policies. Polls continue to show that many admire certain U.S. values and cultural aspects despite their negative attitudes toward U.S. policies. Above all, the question for any neoimperial strategy is its sustainability and cost.

12. For various views of South Korean anti-Americanism, from radical to cultural perspectives, see Steinberg (2004).

13. "Schizophrenia would not be an impolite term" to describe U.S. relations with South Korea, Ralph Cossa has stated (Hiebert 2002, 16).

14. Poll results are provided in Nye (2004, 16).

15. U.S. "soft power" is defined as "its ability to attract others by the legitimacy of U.S. policies and the values that underlie them" (Nye 2004, 16). It is the ability to achieve goals efficiently without resorting to coercion or payments.

Whether the grand strategy is sustainable should be judged against the possibility of achieving intended goals or U.S. interests. In the past, the United States relied on both hard power and soft power to win the Cold War. By the end of the 1990s, the result was a global coalition of democratic states tied together through markets, institutions, and security partnerships. This order was built on two historic bargains (Ikenberry 2002, 47): One was the U.S. commitment to provide its partners with security protection and access to U.S. markets and technology within an open world economy. The other was the liberal bargain in which partner states agreed to accept U.S. leadership, and the United States agreed to play by the rules and carry out joint decision making. This was a policy bargain that provided for voluntary consent from U.S. partners and stability for U.S. hegemony because it was based on not only force but also voluntary consent of the partners.

Neoimperial strategy, however, increases the cost and will be unsustainable if pursued continuously. First, the neoimperial strategy undermines U.S. legitimacy. The old recognition that U.S. power is both necessary and rightful is now gone. Second, by destroying the international community of multilateral agreements, institutional infrastructure, political partnerships, and cooperative spirit—all of which are needed for counterproliferation and counterterrorism—the strategy will make U.S. projects far more costly. Going into the Iraq War without a legal basis or the backing of traditional U.S. allies has left the country's hard-earned respect and credibility in tatters. The question now is whether the United States has special goals to achieve and at a higher cost that it is ready to pay. Third, the strategy will trigger antagonism and resistance that will leave the United States in a hostile and divided world aiming to hurt U.S. interests when possible. Preemption defined as prevention will make the United States itself seem to be the "clear and present danger" (Gaddis 2005, 7). Resistance to the United States will not only increase U.S. costs but will also defeat the U.S. strategy over time. The U.S. sphere of influence based on consent survived the Cold War while the Soviet sphere died because of resistance from within. Fourth, the U.S. strategy will corrode democracy because imperialism and democracy cannot coexist. Either democratic Americans will abrogate neoimperialism, or neoimperialism will suffocate democracy.

The Iraq War—a pilot implementation of the U.S. grand strategy—lays bare various important problems. The Bush administration went to war not only without legal basis but also with poor justification. It is now widely recognized that the Bush administration misrepresented, exaggerated, and distorted the intelligence data to justify the invasion. The administration failed to find a credible connection between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda as well as incontrovertible evidence that the Iraqi dictator had WMD. If the invasion was to increase the security of the U.S. homeland, the administration executed the wrong regime because it was proved posthumously to be not guilty of these charges. Either the administration's credibility or its intelligence is in question. If the goal was

democratization in Iraq, it is a self-righteous imperialism based on a theory that is too simple. Continuous U.S. bungling in Iraq points to the fact that Iraqis are given the freedom to kill each other but democracy is not in sight.

In most cases, democracy needs the preconditions of a middle class and a civic culture; thus, the imposition of democracy from outside does not work well. Also Iraqis have conflicting interests: democratic interests show Americans as liberators, but national interests show Americans as conquerors. Similar logic applies to human rights and market opening, which will face resistance if they are demanded. If the real intent behind the invasion of Iraq is oil, it is a hypocritical imperialism.[16] Ultimately an empire will face the problem of imperial overstretch and self-encirclement, so that the empire becomes inefficient, weakens, and dies.

An empire will be encircled by other powers that seek a balance of power, which "prevails wherever two, and only two, requirements are met: that the order be anarchical and that it be populated by units wishing to survive" (Waltz 1979, 121). It is no surprise that since the end of the Cold War, the dynamics of power balancing had been all but absent: the great powers had not formed counterbalancing coalitions to guard against U.S. predominance. With its new grand strategy, however, the United States has contributed to destroying the international community that had given order to a world of anarchy. The neoimperial strategy returns the interstate system to its past state of nature. Under such circumstances, revolt—by China combined with Russia, or even by the European Union (EU)[17]—against the limited international hegemony the United States now exercises is inevitable (Pfaff 2001).

In today's liberal global economic system of complex interdependence, it will be difficult for the United States to punish the balance-of-power policies of other nuclear powers. In the presence of nuclear deterrence, power to defeat or dominate is not always power to control. The hyperpower may not enter into a nuclear war to countercheck challengers. Even if the hyperpower succeeds in a breakout, which is questionable at this point in terms of both technology and budgets, it still might not choose a nuclear war. In this liberal world, there will not be enough at stake to run the risk of a nuclear

16. The 1917 British occupation of Baghdad and the 2003 U.S. invasion show similarities: imposing law and order proved harder than achieving military victory (the British had to use air power to quell a major insurrection in the summer of 1920). In both cases, the presence of substantial oil reserves—confirmed by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1927—was "not a wholly irrelevant factor," despite protestations to the contrary (Ferguson 2003, 155).

17. If the EU can successfully integrate the 10 members added in 2005 and the United States fails to find new ways to increase productivity, the economic gap between Europe and the United States will narrow for the first time since 1970 (Pozen 2005). Further isolated by the U.S. grand strategy, the EU may emerge to balance the United States.

war. It is more likely that balance of power appears in defensive patterns and in nonforce areas where U.S. military power will not always be translated into power to control the outcome.

Major states may not have much leverage in directly constraining U.S. military policy, but they can make the United States pay a nonmilitary price. Force is just one element of power, usable in particular cases. It is also difficult for the United States to prevent other countries from making rapid economic growth. The United States may be a unipolar military power, but economic and political power is more evenly distributed across the globe. Successive development favors latecomers to development that are also giants in population, such as China and India, that will become great powers in due course unless they are politically divided. In addition, resistance to U.S. neoimperialism will come not just from outside but also from the U.S. public.[18]

A second term for the Bush administration provides a fortuitous opportunity for second thoughts and for reconceiving the long-term U.S. political strategy. The neoimperial U.S. response accelerated after 11 September 2001. In addition to the fact that the Iraq War did not win the approval of the UN or of most advanced democracies, nation building in Iraq has been bungled. To recover a sustainable and efficient foreign policy, the United States needs to go back to the future of the paradigm for collaboration and legitimate exercise of power.[19]

First in the journey back to the future is the reestablishment of legitimacy. Legitimacy arises from the "conviction that state action proceeds within the ambit of law" (Tucker and Hendrickson 2004, 18). Either the action should arise from rightful authority or should not violate a legal or moral norm so that it may be deemed legitimate. Law is derived from consensual decision making consisting of voice opportunities and consent and is formulated into multilateral agreements and international organizations. Even in policies for the moral goals of democracy and human rights, respect for certain procedural safeguards is necessary if interventions are to be legitimized. Therefore, abandoning the doctrines and practices that brought down U.S. legitimacy will be the first step to regaining legitimacy. Legitimacy is necessary not just because it is moral but because soft power is more sustainable and efficient in the twenty-first century.

Second, the United States needs to rehabilitate or expand the international community, to which the United States is, in former secretary of state Colin Powell's words,

18. It is "simply not in America's national DNA to impose a new Pax Romana" (Hirsh 2002, 43).

19. During the presidential campaign of 2004, even a Republican senator (Hagel 2004) called for a foreign policy that is "sustainable" and "based on domestic consensus." Hagel emphasized: "A Republican foreign policy must view alliances and international institutions as extensions of our influence, not as constraints on our power."

"attached by a thousand cords." Terrorism is not a cause for unilateralism but for cooperative security. Now the United States needs to replace friction with lubrication to form a global network of multilateral security arrangements. Bush misdirected the overwhelming support he received from Americans and global citizens; he overemphasized homeland security and the unsustainable and expensive imperial war in Iraq. World support was derived not just from compassion but from empathy, which is more sincere and stronger. With the savings garnered from international cooperation, the United States may invest to improve the environment and diminish poverty, domestic issues that have been relatively neglected in the United States, especially in the southern part of the United States. Support for the grand strategy that formally began with 11 September 2001 is different from one that reflects real repercussions of the policy after it is implemented. Some have observed that the Bush era that began in the aftermath of the 11 September terrorist attacks "ended definitively on September 2, the day Bush first toured the Gulf Coast states after Hurricane Katrina" (Dionne 2005, A27).

Third, traditionally prudence is the virtue needed in foreign policy. "Magnanimity and restraint," especially in the face of emotional temptation, are tenets of successful statecraft that have proved their worth from classical Greece onward (Brooks and Wohlforth 2002, 33). In an emotional game, one may bully others when that is possible. In foreign policy, however, the hegemon needs to be loved as well as feared. As a consequence of the chronic use of force in U.S. foreign policy, the United States is not only feared but also fearsome, and its security has been weakened rather than bolstered.

Members of the Bush administration will have to secularize and curtail their goals of spreading democracy, human rights, and free markets. In principle, these values are universal. However, the world is full of states where one-size-fits-all democracy cannot be planted through military occupation.[20] Because authoritarianism accustoms people to a hierarchical order, they are less used to the democratic process, which develops through trial and error over a long period of time. Collapse of a tyranny often leads to an escalation of latent conflicts. If the country has preconditions for democracy, the elimination of an authoritarian regime will survive. If not, traditional and social conflicts will substitute instability and anarchy for the ancien régime. A free and democratic election will not cap the social explosion. Either the United States is ready to commit troops and budgets large enough to reconstruct the society or the United States must reduce the goal. Although democratization is within the moral mandate, democratization by shattering a status quo may not be. Also foreign imposition invokes potentially

20. This should not be taken to justify special exceptions such as Asian values. There is a long distance between factual statements and moral precepts.

strong nationalism. Democracy and human rights need to be spread by example and moderate demands supported by positive inducements, except in extreme cases. In these goals, the golden mean may be best.

Another important goal in U.S. foreign policy is spreading free markets. Since World War II, the United States has endeavored and succeeded in establishing a stable, liberal international order instead of an empire. The order has been sustainable because it is a public good for the participants. The United States is "not just sacrificing to maintain the order but has taken advantage" of its hegemonic position (Ferguson 2003, 160). A hegemony of the dollar gave the United States opportunities to collect a subsidy from trading partners in the form of seigniorage. Other states also benefit from and consent to the liberal order; however, demand for radical market opening of developing countries can be compared with playing baseball with pygmies who prefer boxing within their weight categories. Radical liberalization naturally invokes resistance from developing countries, including Southeast Asian economies. The free market system has produced mutually negating "double movement" within a country: "economic liberalism" and "social protection" (Polanyi 1944, 132), which is also true in the global village.

With the neoimperial strategy deconstructed, reenvisioning the U.S. approach to Northeast Asia should begin in the areas where elements of the grand strategy and regional considerations are clashing. With most players in the region becoming increasingly successful and independent, the region will sorely test U.S. diplomacy and economic policy.

Above all, both the United States and Northeast Asian countries need a multilateral peace mechanism, which is a precondition for sustainable development in the region. The success will depend on U.S. policy: whether it will pursue a policy of engagement or containment. Despite an appeal among U.S. conservatives, isolating Beijing is a "nonstarter" (Fukuyama 2005, 79). Even if China were a long-term strategic threat, no U.S. ally would enlist in an anti-Chinese coalition in the near future. Absent overt Chinese aggression, no country is willing to jeopardize ties with China. Incorporating China into existing global institutions, including China's accession to the World Trade Organization, has already proved effective. During the past decade, China has become an increasingly responsible member of the international community. Although engagement may not succeed, it is worth a try; and there will be plenty of time to reverse course if it fails (Brooks and Wohlforth 2002, 32). Currently the first task for the Bush administration is to rebuild the international community into which China is to be assimilated. The self-fulfilling prophecy of strategic rivalry with China will serve not only the U.S. national interest in general but also the interests of the military-industrial complex.

Unlike Europe, Asia lacks a common identity and strong multilateral political institutions. Driven by financial crisis and toward rapid economic development, East Asian countries feverishly pursue regional integration. Without a stable peace mechanism, however, their task runs the risk of division: between East Asia and the United States, and between China and Japan. Up until now, Northeast Asian security has been ensured not by multilateral treaties, but by a series of bilateral relationships centering on Washington, in particular the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and the U.S.-South Korean relationship. Security ties thus have taken on a hub-and-spoke structure in the region, with Washington playing a central balancing role (Abramowitz and Bosworth 2003, 120). Reasons for the difference are found in differing historical development. After 1945, both Germany and Japan needed to convince their neighbors that they were no longer threats. West Germany did so by ceding important elements of sovereignty to a series of multilateral organizations including the EU, and Japan did so by ceding sovereignty in security affairs to the United States (Fukuyama 2005, 76). A multilateral security framework would defuse not only the rivalry for hegemony but also nationalist ambitions and misperceptions by providing a forum for dialogue among regional members instead of bilateral and direct confrontation.

The U.S. stance on multilateralism in Asia has been "erratic and contradictory" (Fukuyama 2005, 82). China, which had been opposed to the U.S. stance because of possible foreign intervention in domestic affairs, has been supporting the idea since the late 1990s. With no major opponents in sight, Northeast Asia now has an opportunity to create a regional multilateral security organization. Through a twisted development from the U.S. grand strategy, the North Korean nuclear issue has created the first multilateral security forum in Northeast Asia. The reason the United States has created the six-party talks applies to Northeast Asia in general: widespread distrust and enmity have a higher probability of resolution through a multilateral framework than through bilateral arrangements.

Some (Fukuyama 2005, 82) have suggested a permanent five-power organization, excluding North Korea. The suggestion is neither consistent nor desirable. The assumption is that six-party talks can nicely be transformed into a permanent multilateral organization "beyond the North Korean nuclear threat." If the threat is over, however, there is little reason to leave out Pyongyang. Further, there exists the same need to assimilate North Korea into a multilateral framework even after the nuclear resolution. If the nuclear issue is not over, a five-power organization would be a premature transformation. Northeast Asian multilateralism will be critical for not only coordinating regional economies but also damping down the nationalist passions and preventing the division of East Asia between China and Japan.

Related to regional multilateralism, the United States needs to look at two important policy questions. One is Chinese containment, including support for Japanese and

Taiwanese rearmament. This is the place where the United States needs to fit its foreign policy into the regional circumstances rather than the other way around. U.S. support for Japan's rearmament and increased international role may be intended against possible uncertainties and terrorism; however, its implications for China are real. Also, geographical remoteness may have contributed to a lack of seriousness on the U.S. part about Japanese nationalism. A small pocket of ultranationalists in Japan might look like only electoral politics; however, not only China but also South Korea see the possibility of and fear an armed and dangerous Japan. Although the rebirth of Japanese nationalism is by no means a sure thing, one thing, at least, is clear: the "worst American response would be to ignore it" (Matthews 2003, 75). In the case of Taiwan, a peaceful resolution of the conflict is a must. However, Taiwanese leaders' appeals to populist wishes for "formal independence" may be compared with a tail wagging the dog in the region. It is certain Taiwan will be further marginalized in the face of China's rapid growth; and the independence rhetoric will necessitate increased U.S. support for Taiwanese armament, which will imply an increased threat to China. This chain of events will have grave consequences for Northeast Asia.

The other challenge for U.S. foreign policy is related to its overemphasis on neoliberal market opening, which has been placing strains on the developing countries in Southeast Asia and pushing them to pursue independent East Asianism without the United States. If Asia-Pacificism favoring the United States is to bear fruit, the United States needs to fit into the region more as an empathetic member rather than as an imperialist.[21] Depending on the rivalry between China and Japan, the prospective East Asian free trade area may be launched as a whole or divided into parts. In the meantime, South Korea and Japan will be a good bridge to the nascent regional integration. The United States will have spare time to consider whether the United States will accept another EU in East Asia and how to strike a balance between a structural status that requires the United States to maintain a vanguard spirit toward a liberal international economic system and requirements of developing economies for gradual liberalization. The United States may well seriously consider moving to gradualism from radicalism, which has identified it with neoimperialism, forcing a new open door to less-developed countries as old imperialists did more than a century ago.

All of North Korea's neighbors are interested in preventing a nuclear North Korea, but most of them find little evidence for "imminent" nuclear armament that could

21. The Bush administration's continuing emphasis on Asia-Pacificism is found in Acting Assistant Secretary of State Evans Revere's statement that "their [East Asian] success is via trans-Pacific partnerships and institutions" (DOS 2005c).

justify a "preemptive" strike[22] and will not accept U.S. exclusion of a grand bargain by compromise. Both South Korea and Japan are ready to provide economic assistance in return for North Korean denuclearization. South Koreans would like to continue engagement with North Korea, and the Japanese are ready to conclude their colonial and war crimes in the form of compensation or reparations. Distrust of U.S. neoconservatives toward Pyongyang is rooted more in the inherent characters of the Communist regime than in evidence of unreliable behaviors; this constituted a radical departure in U.S. policy toward North Korea after Bush's election.

The United States did show flexibility in September 2005, and the six-party talks in Beijing resulted in a statement of principles. The principles of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue are summarized in the trade-off of North Korea abandoning nuclear weapons and related programs in return for its existence not being threatened and for economic assistance. The agreement does have uncertainties and ambiguities, and details have not been ironed out (Kim 2005, B01). In the process, the lack of trust between the Bush administration and North Korea is the most serious obstacle. Washington will not trust Pyongyang's commitment to abandoning nuclear weapons, and Pyongyang will not trust that the United States will abandon hostile policies toward North Korea. The lack of trust is most visible in the issue of whether and when North Korea will be provided with nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes.

In principle, the gap in confidence can be overcome by transparency and verifiability. North Korea badly needs a sustainable and independent supply of energy sources. South Korea's provision of 2,000 megawatts of electricity entails dependency and will continue only for a limited time. Given the North's uranium, light-water reactors will be the most economical and clean energy alternative for Pyongyang. The United States has been strongly opposed to allowing any nuclear programs in North Korea. If the goal is to deny the North a nuclear weapons program, it appears rational to both China and South Korea to provide the right in principle but, before its implementation, make it conditional on transparency and trust building to the satisfaction of those parties concerned, including the United States. It is difficult to deny North Korea the internationally recognized right to peaceful nuclear programs after it has been verified that North Korea has dismantled all nuclear weapons and related programs. Light-water reactors can be provided under strict surveillance so that nuclear materials cannot be diverted for weapons. One way to reduce problems is to take spent fuel outside of North Korea so that Pyongyang does not have access to nuclear materials. If the U.S. goal is nuclear disarmament and if Pyongyang has decided to accept this,

22. To justify a preemptive strike, an intelligence assessment must be 100 percent accurate and confirm that the "danger is in fact imminent and that there are no other available means to stop it" (Haass 2005, 70).

both must agree. Other issues include the "denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," which includes inspections of U.S. forces in Korea. This should be accepted in principle because of the intrusive inspections mandated for North Korea.

If the United States continues to distrust North Korea, a feeling South Korea has not been persuaded to share, it would appear that the United States has no intention of resolving the crisis and is trying to use it for other purposes. Most important is a solution in which disarmament processes are verifiable. Even if the dismantlement is reversible and Pyongyang succeeds in, for example, testing a nuclear bomb, it would be far more threatening to South Korea than to the United States, and it would be very difficult for South Korea to oppose other options. Given that North Korea is experiencing a serious energy crisis and that under the same conditions South Korea opted for nuclear power, it is natural for Pyongyang to prefer an energy supply that is independent from, for example, direct electric transmission from the South, which would entail serious dependence on Seoul. Thermal generation also would subject North Korea, which has been invaded many times, to foreign fuel.

The new assertiveness in South Korean foreign policy is not just the consequence of changing domestic politics but also a reflection of U.S. neoimperialism, to which a traditional response is: self-reliance. South Koreans are worried that the new U.S. paradigm may push Northeast Asia into a confrontation between powers—a situation in which Korea historically became the first victim—and an exaggerated North Korean nuclear threat may be used to create a new power politics in the region.

So far as the North Korean threat is real, Seoul will be a subject of Washington in terms of security. This was one of reasons the Kim Dae-jung government did its best to change and remove the flashpoint with its policy of "give now and take later." Without a cooperative security approach, South Korea would always be locked into a security dilemma mandated by the high politics of powers. The Roh Moo-hyun government hopes to reduce elements that deprive it of self-reliance and also play the role of a facilitator or a mediator for peace. Obviously South Korea shares more important values with the United States than it does with China, including democracy and a market economy, which are structural parameters. U.S. neoimperial goals and strategies, however, have caused the interests of the two allies to diverge. To the United States, South Korea is important no less as a barometer than as a medium power. If South Korea is reluctant, the whole region will be reluctant. This is true even in East Asian integration. The ASEAN countries fear the excessive influence of China and Japan. To ASEAN, South Korea is a good go-between, without which the whole idea of East Asian regionalization would be in shambles. In this vein, South Korea became the third-largest coalition partner in Iraq despite domestic resistance to what some call the "imperial war."

For more than a half century, the United States has provided stability in the region. In the past, it checked Communist influences so that South Korea and Japan could prosper. In the post–Cold War era, U.S. interests do not lie in dividing the region but in regional and international assimilation of the major regional players. Ceteris paribus, it is China's manifest destiny to outgrow Japan and many other powers in the world in terms of GDP.[23] Under these circumstances, it is better to ride and direct the tiger than to confront it. Despite significant differences in terms of history, geography, and culture, the U.S.-Korea alliance has been remarkably enduring and beneficial for both nations. Despite important common values, however, when diverging views are pressed—views on Japanese nationalism, North Korean issues, and containment of China—South Korea is pushed more to the Chinese side.

V. Concluding Remarks

The world was behind the United States with sincere sympathy in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. However, what the world witnessed thereafter was a totally different and fearsome unipolar juggernaut pressing the world to side with it or with the terrorists. The unfolding doctrines and policies constituted a neoimperial grand strategy that was maximalist in its goals and unilateral in its methodology. It was a move to the imperialism of the past, which existed until the early twentieth century.

At the beginning of the second term of the George W. Bush administration, changes were made in foreign policy emphases. Despite predictions that the Bush administration would strengthen the foreign policy directions of his first term, changes are moving in different directions, possibly because Bush might be worrying about his historical legacy rather than winning a second term. They might also reflect the massive and negative repercussions of his initial policies. Neoimperial elements of his grand strategy are less emphasized. Although the hegemonic containment of China is still apparent, U.S. foreign policy began to espouse multilateralism.

The development of the six-party talks into a formal, multilateral security structure in Northeast Asia as well as European cooperation in East Asia emphasized strategic engagement with China and introduced some progressive moves facilitating the reconvening of the six-party talks (Bullock 2005; DOS 2005b; Kessler 2005, A22). These changes include what realist Republicans have called for (Hagel 2004). Another good sign is that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, an arch-skeptic of China, in

23. China's future growth depends basically on how China's politics evolve. Questions include whether China—with 55 ethnic minorities—will remain united and what impacts its increasing and unavoidable pluralism will have on its political system and developmentalist policies.

October 2005 visited China for the first time in since his appointment. Yet, some have observed: "We were led to believe that the neoconservatives were losing ground. But clearly the revolution is alive and well" (Richburg and Frankel 2005, A07). The world including Northeast Asia expects to see not neoimperialism but the old benevolent hegemon from the United States. Repercussions are being felt in terms of U.S. isolation and balance of power. It is time the United States should go back to the future and push a bit further forward. No more is needed than the old paradigm for collaboration.

The old paradigm in renewed reality will emphasize legitimacy, international cooperation, and consensual decision making. The United States should respect international laws, institutions, organizations, and partnerships without being too constrained by them. Respect is derived not just from idealism but also from a realistic judgment that it serves U.S. national interests more in terms of sustainability and efficiency. Applied to Northeast Asia, the new paradigm requires the United States not just fit the region into its global strategy but also fit its policy into the region, not out of compassion but out of self-interested empathy. The U.S. move will determine the direction in which Northeast Asia will be heading: anarchic power politics or orderly integrated community. First tasks will include a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue based on reciprocal compromise, with transparency and verifiability and without linking it to other goals. The multilateral framework that has proved to be effective can then be transformed into a permanent security structure in the region and can be used to resolve bilateral nationalist conflicts and confrontations. The framework will serve as a springboard for regional integration and further development.

History punishes not only those who come too late but also those who come too early. If the U.S. foreign policy goal is to impose democracy radically from the outside, that is too early for many societies. If the real intent is material gains wrapped up with human rights and democracy, that is coming too late because imperialism is the thing of the past. History will decide whom to punish, depending on who shares the paradigm: an individual president, the governing party, or the United States. Both President Bush and President Roh are facing evaluations because of the consequences of their initial policy initiatives, in contrast with their images when they were introduced. The cool reality is that both have approval ratings worse than most of their predecessors.[24] Both presidents have polarized their countries ideologically. Whether they can revise their initial plans so that they may be effective enough to overcome historical retribution remains to be seen.

24. As of this writing, the approval ratings for President Bush and President Roh are less than 40 percent and 30 percent, respectively.

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