

Symposium on OpCon Transfer and its Implications for the U.S.-ROK Alliance

Date: Thursday, March 25, 2010 (9am – 2pm)

Venue: Willard Room (Lobby Level), Willard Intercontinental

1401 Pennsylvania Ave, Washington DC 20004

[Scott SNYDER:]

... For the U.S.-ROK alliance. Anyone who's in the back, if you could come up and fill in, that would be great because I do think that there are going to be more people who are going to be arriving later.

My name is Scott Snyder. I'm the director of The Asia Foundation's Center for U.S.-Korea Policy. I just wanted to... Our center was established at the foundation, Asia Foundation with the mission of trying to realize the full potential for expanded cooperation in the U.S.-ROK relationship on many newly emerging issues on the agenda of the bilateral relationship. And our mission is based on the idea that the U.S. and South Korea have more in common today as a result of South Korea's industrialization and democratization than ever before. So with our activities we are trying to promote understanding on critical issues that are part of U.S.-Korea policy agenda, including the issue that we're discussing today.

I also just want to highlight that we have a few reports outside. One, our most recent report is on Korea's Green Growth Agenda and opportunities for U.S.-Korea collaborations in that area. And we have also, recently published a report on the U.S.-South Korean nuclear relationship. Today,

of course, our focus is on the OpCon transfer issue and its implications for the U.S.-ROK alliance. I want to thank Gordon Flake, our co-organizer for this event. Gordon is the executive director of The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation. I want to thank all of our speakers, including those from South Korea who have come such a long way. I also need to acknowledge our appreciation to three Korean private sector sponsors. The Samsung group is our major donor for this program and we're very grateful for their support. Also, the Poongsan Corporation who will be represented here today by Chairman Roy Ryu at our lunch. And to the Federation of Korean Industries who have provided financial sponsorship for today's event. And also JoongAng Ilbo is the media sponsor for the event.

And I also, just want to acknowledge our Asia Foundation board member and former prime-minister, Yi Hong Gu, for his assistance. He is not here today. I also, just want to thank my staff and that of the Mansfield Foundation.

As you all know last June at the White House, Presidents Lee and Obama released a joint vision statement that's designed to upgrade the U.S.-Korean alliance into a comprehensive strategic alliance, to enhance bilateral regional and global cooperation. Today's discussion, I hope, will help us understand how the agreement between our two governments through supervised command and controlled arrangements by April 17th, 2012 fits within the context of the joint division statement and the reconfiguration of the U.S. forces on the Korean peninsula.

We're going to hear, I think, knowledgeable specialists from a variety of perspectives. So I am looking forward to today's discussions. With that background, I'm pleased to introduce General John Tilelli, a distinguished former Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. forces Korea in the late nineteen nineties. That's the position from which he retired, but he didn't stop working, he went

on to other leadership positions, including Chairman of USO International and he's currently CEO of Cyprus International.

Most importantly, from my perspective, he's the co-Chairman along with Jack Richard of an independent task force on Korea. He's being sponsored right now by the Counselor on Foreign Relations and we're going to be sure to report within the next month or so, which will be the main product of deliberation. So, thank you General Tilelli for being here and for introducing our distinguished key-note speaker.

[Gen. John H. TILELLI:]

Thanks, thanks a lot, thank you all for coming today! We're very lucky today to have a distinguished speaker. I might change the title at the chart to read: implications on not the U.S.-ROK alliance but also to Northeast Asia and the U.S. and ROK influence in Northeast Asia. We're lucky to have Assemblyman Hwang Jin Ha with us today and I am going to, not read his biography, but I'm going to say a few things about him that you may already know.

The first thing I'll say is: he's a friend! That's important! Because friendship is more important than most everything else you have in life other than family. Secondly, he is a distinguished member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea. A graduate of the Korean Military Academy, 1969, which makes him probably forty years younger than I am.

Master's Degree from Central Michigan University, he went to the Army Commandment General Staff College, The U.S. Army Commandment General Staff College. Commanded UN forces in Cyprus, defense at in shade of the United States of America from the Republic of Korea. A host of medals which I will not read and tell you about, but the most important one to

me, to show his relevance to the ROK – U.S. Alliance, and that's the United States Distinguished Service Medal, a high achievement at war for the United States of America.

He now is an assemblyman, serviced the country, he understands service to the country, service to the alliance, service to nation. That's the life of someone who has grown up in a place where a country is more important than personal wealth, personal ideals. He is on the National Assembly in the majority or the ruling party. He serves as a member of the Foreign Affairs Trade and Unification Committee. He retired from the Army as Lieutenant General.

All of us in the military know how hard it is to get to that grade, and he immediately went into the National Assembly to continue to serve. He does other things; he is the President of the National Assembly Northeast Asia Peace and Security Forum and President of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties and Parliamentarians' Union.

The most important thing as we think about this topic, ever since I have known him, since is many years, he has been a tremendous supporter of the ROK-U.S. alliance. He is a tremendous supporter of what I would call, not only the bilateral, not only the military, but the personal aspects of the ROK-U.S. alliance and the ROK-U.S. friendship which breeds this alliance and breeds these feelings of love between two countries. So I am honored, I am honored that I was asked and Scott, I thank you very much for hosting this. I was honored that I was asked to introduce my friend, a retired Lieutenant General in the Iraq Army and now a National Assemblyman and a great supporter of the ROK-U.S. alliance. Assemblyman Hon. Jin Ha Hwang.

[Applause]

[Hon. Jin Ha HWANG:]

Good morning, distinguished guests and ladies and gentlemen. I am sincerely appreciative of The Asia Foundation and the Mansfield Foundation for inviting me at such meaningful and timely symposium and especially Mr. Scott Snyder and Mr. Gordon Flake for their outstanding efforts. It is my honor to take this opportunity to express my opinions about the planned OpCon transfer and its implications. In addition, I must be obliged to thank the former Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Forces Command in Seoul and thank you for sharing U.S. Security Council General Tilelli's general introduction about me.

During his interlocution, he said that I made a wonderful rank up to Lieutenant General, but he made a four-star General. And so it is more importantly, I would like to admire him and take the opportunity to appreciate his great contribution as a Sync of UNC and the CFC during his tenure very much. I am representing the city of *[unintelligible]* aware of the symbolic side of the Korean War (where) *[unintelligible]* is located.

At the National Assembly I am currently serving as member of Foreign Affairs Trade and Unification Committee. I am also chairing a policy coordination committee of the Grand National Party. At this position I am responsible for coordinating national policies on the areas of national defense, foreign relations, unification and trade between the ruling party and ROK Parliament.

Distinguished guests, and ladies and gentlemen, the year 2010 is meaningful to both nations as it marks the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. Without U.S.-led UN member states' assistance and the sacrifice, the Republic of Korea would not be what it is today. The

United States played a key role in rescuing the newly born Republic of Korea on the brink of fading away in history due to the sudden invasion of the communist North Korea.

The Korean people have never forgotten such a selfless commitment and sacrifice of the United States and thus, the Korean War will remain an unforgotten war in the minds and hearts of Korean people. Ever since the armistice of the Korean War in which we fought together, we have been working shoulder-to-shoulder as a blood alliance and so developed the successful and unprecedented bilateral alliance which continues to stand firm and strong over the past half century.

The ROK-U.S. alliance is consequently transforming into a comprehensive alliance beyond this traditional military partnership, encompassing political, economic, social and cultural relationships. This successful development of the alliance is a monumental bilateral achievement built on rubble and the deep-rooted political trust.

Now the alliance is indispensable pillar in achieving the common national interests of the two nations and furthermore making an even greater contribution to international peace and prosperity. In this respect, the ROK-U.S. alliance is our pride and proud legacy, and what we have to sustain and develop for the future.

Based on the mutual understanding of this strategic requirement, leaders of the Republic of Korea and the United States announced Joint Vision in the summit meeting in June 2009. Now we are closely working in implementing this Joint Vision.

Recently, there are several challenging issues required for strategic and better solutions between two nations. Issues such as KORUS FTA, wartime operational control transfer are likely to have a significant impact on the strengths and the future shape of ROK-U.S. alliance. Among these

issues, I believe that OpCon transfer, which was agreed in 2007, is the most critical issue and needs immediate attention from the two nations.

I understand that the main purpose of holding today's symposium is to discuss this important issue. I must stress that we need to thoroughly examine the issues concerning the ROK-U.S. OpCon transfer today and hope that our discussion will contribute in gathering momentum for promoting a strategic understanding about OpCon transfer and to exploring solutions through consultations between the two governments.

Today, before coming to the main point of the speech, I would like to make it clear to the audience that what I speak today is my own view and does not represent at the present the views of ROK government and the Grand National Party, unless otherwise indicated.

The security situation on the Korean Peninsula is very flexible due to a continued increase of unpredictability and uncertainty. While North Korea continues to heighten its military threat, its domestic, political, economic, and social situation have become so unstable that a sudden crisis could happen (at) anytime in the North. However, the ROK and the United States have agreed to dismantle the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces team, one of the most efficient combined command structures in the world, by April 17th, 2012.

While the two administrations respect the bilateral agreement and are not bringing up any issues about the dismantlement, there is an increasing concern among the public and these concerns are likely to grow. Under these circumstances, is it appropriate and intelligent to continue the transfer of ROK and U.S. OpCon and dismantle the ROK-U.S. CFC? Regrettably I would like to say "No" to this. If so, what are the existing problems?

Ladies and gentlemen, there are three critical issues to consider. Continuing the implementation of the planned OpCon transfer has such issues as the first, is going against the change of security conditions on the Korean Peninsula. The second, it would be likely to weaken the ROK-U.S. combined deterrence capabilities and signaling a wrong message to the North. Third, the ongoing effort for OpCon transfer is excessively focused on meeting a target day of completing the transfer which is considering military side only.

Let me think – first, why are we going against the way in which the security condition on the Korean Peninsula evolves? It is required to take into consideration all dimensions of North Korea such as politics, military, economy and society in assessing its current threats which have direct impact on the security conditions on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea has endlessly escalated its military threats now including unconventional threats beyond its traditional conventional threats.

Despite continued sanctions and frustration by the international community, North Korea does not seem to be willing to stop its nuclear and missile development programs. These menacing behaviors pose a grave threat to north-east Asia and beyond. North Korea is no longer a regional threat only but now an international one.

Recently, North Korea continues artillery firing into the west sea after unilateral of firing adjourn. According to the 2010 quadrennial defense review and the ballistic missile review registered by the United States Department of Defense in early February, if there are no major changes in North Korea's national security strategy in the next decade, it will be able to make a nuclear war-head to a proven delivery system.

In addition to this escalation of military threats, domestic political instability in the North increases potential for a new kind of crises such as a sudden collapse of the North Korean regime which might be triggered by unexpected domestic changes. Ever since the rumor of Kim Jong Il's poor health condition began to spread in late 2008, North Korea has made enormous efforts to promote its military force policy, which particularly aims to strengthen international political cohesiveness and mobilize the people for building a great and strong nation.

By the centennial anniversary of the birth Kim Il Sung in 2012, A U.S. intelligence agency predicted that the chairman Kim Jong Il would not be able to survive more than 5 years. While assistant Secretary of State Kent Kimble said recently, he revealed on off the record based on the collecting of various medical diagnosis, Kim Jong Il has a life expectancy of about 3 years. These two predictions imply that Kim's life expectancy is at least 3 years at most 5 years.

Needless to say, his death will bring about a messy particular disorder in the power system and also a power struggle among political factions. This political chaos would be likely to a dismal, particularly when the process of fire and the power cessation does not go well. In other words, the occurrence of a sudden change in North Korea would bring an overall crisis to North Korea and its neighboring States as well.

In North Korea an entire political system would face unprecedented disorder and challenges. And, in the region, neighboring States would have strategic difficulties with managing their vulnerability to North Korea's sudden change and thus, they are stimulated to take attention deficit actions. These phenomena would be likely to endanger peace and security in Northeast Asia.

It is almost impossible that North Korea would be able to overcome its ailing economy. Although, North Korea implemented currency devaluation in an attempt to cure staggering inflation rates and root out the black market on November 30th 2009 for the first time in seventeen years, the result turned out to be an absolute failure. In North Korea a number of populations have died by starvation a reprint across the nation over more than ten years and the daily necessities including food could not be provided without outside assistance.

Under these serious economy conditions international sanctions imposed to by UN resolution 1718 and 1874 adopted by the stopping, adopted for stopping North Korea's Nuclear Development Program for the deteriorated economy situation. Despite this present and massive Korea's threats, the ROK and the United States moving towards disbanding combined forces command, which places people's role in case of crisis on the Korean peninsula and transferring OpCon, which is a core of commanding structure, practicing combined defense capabilities.

Secondly, there is a strong concern that the planned OpCon transfer would be likely to weaken ROK-U.S. combined transfer capability and signing a wrong, signaling a wrong message to North Korea.

The top strategy priority of the ROK-U.S. alliance is to prevent a crisis and so maintaining peace and prosperity and increase the mutual initial interest. But it is widely understood that OpCon transfer significantly weakens the ROK-U.S. combined deterrence capability.

Needless to say, repelling an invasion North Korea has a critical mission, but deterrence should be a more important strategy core. The ROK military is capable of countering North Korea's conventional invasion. But it is still questionable how well it could respond to North Korea's diverse and unconventional military capability including weapons of mass destruction.

I'd like to stress that it is imperative to unify ROK and U.S. command structure for maintaining the strategy's effectiveness of combined deterrence and war fighting capability under the condition that the ROK military alone is not able to secure deterrence capability against North Korea. It's a common understanding that this solving military combined commanded structure would be likely to weaken the readiness portion of the U.S. forces in Korea.

One signal there is the planned OpCon transfer delivery in North Korea. North Korea continues to impose to its stationing of the U.S. forces in Korea to descend North Korea has taken a wretched strategy between ROK and the United States for instigating anti-Americanism in Korea by claiming that the ROK government's military sovereignty is lowest to the United States.

You know that to sovereigns tending disposition, North Korea has a stating expedition that is not willing to have military talks with Iraq which doesn't have military sovereignty. For these reasons North Korea greatly welcomed the decision of dispensing of CFC and OpCon tradition and advertising this trend with Eastern North Korean people as a success of efforts for restoring ROK's military sovereignty.

At the same time, it is such in depth that North Korea perceives that ROK and U.S. alliance become weak as the result of OpCon transfer. And North Korea would be likely to rushly push its demand on, demand of changing ambitious conditions into peace trade. These conditions provided federal ground for North Korea to reach the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea, beyond the dismantlement of combined forces command and OpCon transfer.

Now, why do we push the planned OpCon transfer while sending a wrong signal to North Korea and regional States? Should we disband these combined forces command when responding to the

escalation of the North Korean's threats? Are we now closing our fire station despite increasing possibility that North Korea may put fire?

Third, there are no major changes in the two nations policy of completing OpCon transfer until April 17th 2012. Under this condition, I found serious problem in assessing secure conditions on the Korean peninsula, changing OpCon transfer agreement in 2007 and accordingly developing strategy measures sideline by meeting the deadline. Because OpCon transfer is related to military and politics as well, this problem is more serious than we recognize. Particularly, because the effect of OpCon transfer in the ROK North Korea and the region is bigger than that in the United States. We had a better political approach of OpCon transfer which could not be held by military measures.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, other reasons for reviewing the prior OpCon transfer by holding a common understanding about four major problems concerning OpCon transfer. The first, it is important for the public to examine how ROK and the United States agreed to OpCon Transfer in 2007. At the same, at the time, the two nations pursued their respective nation's interest based on their strategic mission understandings, not on common objectives for the future and thus, moving toward an inappropriate agreement.

Ignoring the views fact that the Republic of Korea is a sovereign nation which international recognized, former President Roh, Moo-Hyun, during his presidential campaign proposed that he would restore their sovereignty by retaking wartime OpCon from the United States if he was elected.

He took his office in 2003. He immediately undertook negotiation on OpCon transfer between the two nations. At that time no administration believed that the ROK could not possess OpCon

because the U.S. general holds a position of commander of combined forces command dictated by presidents from both nations. President Bong appeared to the Korean people by practicing the retaking of the OpCon in a way that OpCon transfer is required for restoring national pride and normalization of the bilateral alliance.

If so, how did the Nation Assembly and the Korean public feel OpCon transfer? Those who were seriously concerned about the security of the Korean peninsula understood that it was wrong to begin negotiations for OpCon transfer and thus, launch a 10 billion signing campaign for opposing combined forces command disbandment and OpCon transfer before complete resolution of North Korea's nuclear program.

Now, approximately 9.8 people have signed the petition and it is expected that the number will reach 10 billion by June 25th marking the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. The Korean National Assembly actually joined this campaign, the resolution of opposing OpCon transfer before resolving the North Korea's nuclear program was adopted at defense committee at the National Assembly on December 22nd 2006.

In addition, 142 out of 299 congressmen National Assembly Men Members convened a parliamentarian's group and co-signed a letter opposing OpCon transfer. This letter was sent to both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense of the United States.

The United States government was forced, surprised by the ROK government's request for negotiations for OpCon transfer. Also, the U.S. administration was concerned that linking national pride and OpCon transfer by the ROK government might cause anti-American movements in Korea like that the United States experienced after two little school girls death by a U.S. military vehicle.

For this reason, the Bush administration began negotiations with the ROK government by relating the transfer to East Global partial review, so called GPR developed since 2002 and a new concept that was strategy flexibility of US forces abroad.

In other words, the United States government concluded that the strategic flexibility of the U.S. forces in Korea is seriously constrained by, because the Korean people strongly opposed the movement of U.S. troops in Korea outside the Korean peninsula in the situation that combined forces command exists and American forces command the whole, entire operational control.

Thus, the U.S. government accepted Koreans' demand for transferring OpCon in a bid to increase strategic flexibility of U.S. forces in Korea. Mainly, as the ROK government requested the transfer to pursue its on national interest. The United States took this opportunity to pursue its own strategy interest.

In the process of making a decision about disbanding combined forces command and OpCon transition the U.S. government was virtually free of domestic practical burden because Americans believe that the station of U.S. forces in Korea would begin after conduct its commitment to defend the Republic of Korea.

I must stress that the U.S. government have the two critical misunderstanding: what deciding OpCon transfer, when deciding OpCon transfer. The first perception is that the ROK government unconditionally, unconditionally opposes a dispatch of U.S. forces into other parts of the world.

The ROK and the U.S. reached a mutual agreement about the location of the U.S. forces in Korea and to other reason why require by U.S. global command with preparing strategy alternative in advance. In some cases, the ROK government sent its military troops in USFK. And this perception is that maintaining these troops in Korea is enough to fulfill the U.S.

commitment to defend the Republic of Korea and emphasizing strategic flexibility of U.S. forces.

It seems that this approach stimulates the Korean perception that the United State is, might change its strategic view of Korea as a forward base for its military operations, no longer a complete commitment for a dependent in Korea.

Despite the petition from the National Assembly and the Korean people, the former ROK administration kept its campaign promise and as the U.S. government agreed to Koreans' ROK's request. The two governments finalized a negotiation about OpCon transfer.

In summary, I'd like to point out that two nations agreed to pro OpCon transfer without basing a decision on a common alliance objective, but instead, to pursue their own national interest based on their strategic misunderstandings.

It was as if two trains bound for different final destinations met instantly at an unscheduled station and then continued onto their own destinations.

Second, what impacted planned OpCon transfer may be or may have a Korean public position? According to the most recent civil pole, public pole, about sixty per cent and seventy per cent of respondents are opposing OpCon transfer now.

The main reason for opposition is that the Korean public is more concerned than ever before, about the escalation of the North Korean military threats including uncertain prospects for resolving those Korea's nuclear program. In addition, increasing potential for occurrence of sudden changes in the North Korean regime attracts a wide attention from the public.

Furthermore, the Korean people have doubted, doubt the planned OpCon transfer on the minds through the concerns raised by the Korean public while North Korea continues to escalate its military and non-military strengths without hesitation

Also, Koreans worry that the ROK does not reflect their concerns in ongoing consultations with the United States government in the process of implementing the planned OpCon transfer because of U.S.'s strong intense on continuing the OpCon transfer without revision.

In addition, Korean people saw that OpCon transfer is not a matter of the U.S. Department of Defense only, but between the two governments.

Third, what do we consider regarding the future development of ROK and U.S. alliance? As already stated above, disbanding combined forces command and OpCon transfer might downplay the deployments of the US forces in Korea.

I believe that OpCon transfer would impede a successful evolution of the ROK – U.S. alliance into a global partnership. The reason is that the two nations would face of strategy difficulties with advancing on a common strategy goal of alliance transformation, without security securing and peace on the Korean peninsula.

In other words, implementing OpCon transfer seems too wide a strategy gap between the two nations that would end without strengthening our solidarity.

But the ROK and the United States are walking together to July's joint division of the Summit hosted in June 2006. We must review the plan of OpCon transfer.

Some pounded assert that devising the plan of OpCon transfer is not appropriate because it sends the wrong signal to North Korea that ROK – U.S. alliance is in a drift. However, I believe that

we can handle this issue as we maintain a successfully mature alliance. Also, I can assure you that reviewing the planned OpCon transfer will gradually continue to the development of the alliance because OpCon transfer is a matter of sustaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

A message delivered through North Korea finally turns out to be positive to us because we are walking for strengthening combined deterrence capability. Ladies and gentlemen, the completion of OpCon transfer is approximately two years ahead of the target deadline. Under this condition, either the ROK or the United States does not request a review of the planned OpCon transfer despite the escalation of threats to the North Korean peninsula, to the Korean peninsula.

The main reason is that in principle both nations respect the agreement made by previous administrations. In addition, it seems that the Korean government feels reluctant and abundant to make any dispend for changing when the U.S. maintains a former intent to implement OpCon transfer as planned. But this portion I found some, a little different kind of ideas, how to pursue this matter during my visit to Washington D.C. this time.

At the level of combined military exercise we evaluated ROK initial operational capabilities in 2009, planning to evaluate the U.S. initial operational capabilities in 2010 and both sides full operational capabilities in 2011.

This evaluation is concentrated in assessing readiness, posture and overall military capabilities against traditional threats posted by North Korea. Unfortunately, the evaluation lacked in examination of combined capability to respond to new threats posted by North Korea, such as nuclear weapons and the Palestinian missiles.

What is, that was is that two militaries are significantly unprepared for responding a sudden change in North Korea. Accordingly, they overlooked the importance of seamless coordination and cooperation between the military and the political efforts because a sudden change in North Korea would be erupted by military threats and other political, economic and social causes as well.

We must review the planned OpCon transfer when phrasing this diverse and expensive threat posted by North Korea. However, in principle, we must respect the agreement. However, increasing concerns about the planned OpCon transfer strengthens the necessity of the reviewing OpCon transfer.

When dealing with this issue, taking political initiative rather than military consultations, is required for finding a better solution to resolve this matter. Then, how do we approach to resolve the current issues concerning the planned OpCon transfer?

It's urgent for both sides to hold a common understanding about the issue I raised of all. Without addressing this strategic task, it would not be possible to review either military or political problems concerning the planned OpCon transfer. Resolving the issues requires leaders of the ROK and the U.S. to craft a political resolution and continue our strategy efforts in developing future oriented global ROK – U.S. alliance. To this end, I recommend that all which possible time that ROK and The U.S. should begin establishing, ROK and U.S. joint statute to review OpCon transfer issue in the context of joined division issued by the leaders of the two nations in June 2009 for a future oriented global ROK – U.S. alliance and also seeking a better solution.

What alternative to the planned OpCon transfer can we consider? We first need to stop the progress of implementing the planned OpCon transfer, then it is necessary to explore what

condition should we met to resuming the planned transferred OpCon? I would like to suggest such conditions as complete resolution of North Korea's nuclear program. Second, removing uncertainties about potential for a sudden change in North Korea solely establishing a peach treaty based on confidence building between the two Koreas.

In addition, it is notable that North Korea general takes the position of commander of combined forces command. U.S. troops assuming a supporting role, from a leading role, rather than suspending combined forces command and transferring OpCon. The other alternative is to transform the United Nations command into playing a wartime pressure command in addition to its current disconnect to the strategy goal of supervising and amnesty condition and international force provided for the crisis.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, peace and stability of the Korean peninsula is the first priority of the ROK and U.S. alliance. We are at the crucial history stage of accomplishing this objective and preparing our alliance for the constantly change in the international security environment of the 21st Century.

We must throw out all our worries, posed by the planned OpCon transfer and let's go together for the future of peace and prosperity. Thank you very much for your listening.

[Applause]

OK, I'd be happy to take some questions if you should have any.

[Scott SNYDER:]

We just have maybe time for two or three questions. We have mics on the side if someone wants to ask a question. We'll find you...

[Jeff SCHOGUL:]

Hi! Excuse me! I'm Jeff Schogul with Stars and Stripes. You laid out the criteria under which you believe the OpCon transfer should eventually happen. Is, the peace trading, I'm thinking of in particular, are you saying that it should be delayed indefinitely?

[Hon. Jin Ha HWANG]

Yeah, as I over and over again, repeated it, you know, the time is not appropriate, I think and as I said, you know there is a very possible kind of congruence in the North like the in flight a broadcasting has been going on: fasten your seatbelt, fasten your seatbelt and then, is it wise to unfasten our seatbelt?

[Larry NIKSCH:]

Hi representative I'm Larry Nicksch senior associate with CSIS. You seem to indicate that one of the reasons you do not want to see the OpCon plan implemented is your skepticism or opposition to the U.S. Army or the U.S. Military's doctrine of strategic flexibility. Now, if the OpCon plan is not carried out in 2012 as you are advocating, do you also favor the U.S. military dropping or ending its doctrine of strategic flexibility with regard to U.S. troops in Korea, the possibility of committing U.S. troops, especially U.S. ground forces to other theaters of more active combat? Do you want to see the U.S. military drop the strategic flexibility doctrine with regard to being able to move U.S. forces in Korea to perhaps other more active theaters of combat?

[Hon. Jin Ha HWANG]

Thank you Larry, as I mentioned already, even though the U.S. started thinking a kind of constraint ratio of U.S. scheduled strategy flexibility, Koreans are, you know, opposing to that.

But Korea always agreed and understood, should Korea and the U.S., you know the, consultations made and making a kind of alternatives and compensating measures there. And we agreed that we were fully supporting of these kinds of decisions. And so, for the coming future, I think it might be appropriate and wise to explore additional idea how to make that kind of mechanism. Should U.S. side have that kind of necessity or demands to relocate U.S. troops in Korea to the other theater?

[Robert WARNE:]

Me. Assembly member, thank you for your remark, Robert Warne from the Foreign Service Institute. We hear a lot in the U.S. press comments by experts on the situation on North Korea. Would you like to discuss? You indicated these increased tensions and instability. Would you care to go into that in more depth?

[Hon. Jin Ha HWANG]

I thought I explained a little bit about it. The North, the particular dilemma in the North seems to be escalating as we understand North Korea's Chairman Kim Jong-Il has is suffering from health difficulties, as I said, his life expectancy at least of three years and the most of five years. What we understand from the information is that he's treating his disease by projecting blood. And he says that, from the medical doctors I've heard, he should have a change of his blood every two times a week and life expectancy is about 90% within a year and 50% in five years.

And so, we are not knowing when that could happen in the political side and the cessation is a very interesting kind of question, it seems that, you know when the Koreans suffer that kind of political reform it turn out to be, you know, a kind of failure and the economy situation is divisive that deteriorates. In that condition, can we expect a successful cessation of North Korean

power as possible? And the continuously developing weapons, continuously developing their missiles capabilities together with conventional military strengths. I'm saying that kind of, you know, the complexity of threats might make additional threats we should be prepared for.

[Scott SNYDER:]

Thank you Assemblyman Hwang for getting us off to a very good start.

[Applause]

I'd like to ask our round table panel to please come and take their seats, as we move to the second part of this morning's session. Also, for those in the back we do have some room in the front – two rows – if you'd like to move up at this time.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Good morning my name is Gordon Flake, I'm the Executive Director of The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation and we're honored to co-sponsor this symposium today with the Center for U.S.-Korea policy at The Asia Foundation. I think most of you who have been observing this field for the last year recognize that there's been a tremendous amount of activity coming out of this Center for U.S.-Korea Policy in The Asia Foundation. I'm reminded of the words of former general chancellor Conan Adnir who said the surest means of accuracy to a tiger is to allow oneself to be devoured and so we just figured out that instead of trying to do our own programs, we just do whatever Scott told us to do, because it works that well.

Within excellent context set by the speech from Assemblyman Hwang, we've got a wonderful panel of really deep expertise on this issue from the operational level, all the way up to the broad kind of strategic level. So, in the order of the panel today, we're going to be hearing first from

Doctor Bruce Bechtol at the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College; followed by Doctor Patrick Cronin the Vice President of the Center for New American Security, but also someone with long experience both in and out of governments, most recently at the National Defense University.

And, then following Dr. Cronin, we'll hear from Sung-han Kim, Doctor Sung-han Kim from Korea University, known to many of you to his long time at the Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security in South Korea, but also he's kind of the most common representative and I think any U.S. – Korea alliance related conference representing a perspective from South Korea.

And then finally, we'll hear from Doctor Michael O'Hanlon, a military affairs specialist at the Brookings Institution whose scope is really global and we're delighted to have drawn his attention very specifically on this issue that he has written on very recently as well.

Ah, but before turning to the panel, I thought those of you who might be coming here from relief, from the extreme polemic partnership of the health care debate might find some sense of relief. We, to be honest, had intended this to be more of a debate format between orders of the strong supporters of the OpCon agreement as it's currently written to be implemented and those who are strong opponents of the agreement on a very fundamental level.

And in the end, I think many of you know Michael Finnegan who is now the National Bureau of Research who's actively involved in Benenzheim variety agreement. We had anticipated he would be here in the panel as a supporter, but unfortunately he is traveling and I'll confess we spent an awful lot of time trying to find another Michael Finnegan and did so without success.

And so, I think that what we'll see today and I don't want to speak for the panel, they have their own very voices, is there will be nuances between those questioning the timing of the agreement

and the specifics in the implementation and there will be some more existential criticism of the agreement, some that we've heard from Assemblyman Hwang. But what we found quite interesting in the process of putting together this conference itself is the lack of, you know, that far polemic kind of review, strong supporters of it as it stands right now in the opposite point of view.

So, I think what we're forced to have today is four different perspectives coming from different personal and professional backgrounds, looking at the agreement as it stands right now and then, hopefully putting it into context of U.S. – Korea alliance relationships as we go forward.

I'm going to ask our panelists to speak, if you would, for about ten minutes each and I'll start with a couple of round questions that I have prepared just to kick off a discussion among the panelists and looking out at the audience, we've got a tremendous amount of expertise here as well, so we want to reserve as much time as possible for interactions with comments from the members of the audience and some questions as well.

So, without further ado, let me turn first to Doctor Bruce Bechtol for his opening comments.
Bruce.

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

Thanks Gordon, does everybody hear me? Well, I'd like to thank Gordon Flake and Scott Snyder for putting this together and as most of you in the room know, they have done a great deal to increase the depth and breadth of Korean peninsula studies in the past ten years that I've known and I'm most grateful and honored to be invited by them.

I'm also honored to be here with General Hwang and folks like Doctor Colonel Hugo Cam and many of my other friends who are here in the audience and I'd like to thank you for coming. And finally, I need to pass on that the views I express here today are my own and do not necessarily reflect the politic position of the Marine Corps University with the United States government. Well, the approach I've decided to take to wartime OpCon is... I'd like to talk about seven fallacies, seven falsehoods that are commonly thought of when it comes to war time OpCon. I think there is not a more misrepresented issue in East Asia than wartime OpCon. In fact, I read some misrepresentations this morning right before I sat down. But allow me to speak of the seven fallacies, seven falsehoods about war time OpCon. So, let's talk about fallacy one.

Fallacy one. The North Korean conventional military threat has so declined that all we need to really worry about are the nukes and that's wartime OpCon, it is not that big of a deal. Wrong! In fact the North Korean military has also focused on non-nuclear forces since the late 1990's, even as it was building its nuclear program.

In fact, more resources have been devoted to non-nuclear military forces than any other part of the North Korean government. North Korea has significantly enhanced its missile capabilities in numbers, disposition and command and control. In addition, North Korea has added more accurate, quickly deployable missiles to its inventory in recent years such as the KN2 which is their indigenously produced version of the SS21.

North Korean special operation forces remain the best trained, best fed, and best equipped forces in its military. These forces have increased by 50% in the past four years, and now number up to 180,000 men. Perhaps, just as importantly, they have also adjusted their training in the past three years to match potential allied capabilities.

North Koreans' long range artillery has the capability to shell Seoul in no warning on a moment's notice. The 240 mm multiple rocket launchers and the 197 mm guns, that North Koreans have, can literally target all of Seoul's capital and most of Kyung Ki province. And since its systems are equipped with chemical ammunitions the threat is exacerbated even more.

The United States DOD and ROK MND studies, both assess these systems will create up to 200,000 casualties on the first day, most of them in Seoul and the majority of them civilians. North Korea has adjusted the disposition organization of the maneuver forces that would take advantage of the cracks created in the ROK-U.S. defenses from attacks by the three pillared asymmetric threat I've just mentioned.

The organization of the maneuver forces in the Ford area and when I speak of maneuver forces, I'm talking about mechanized, armored infantry forces should not be underestimated. To quote the latest ROK amended white paper from 2008, "Recently, the army reorganized unit structures by reinforcing the fire power, the first echelon on the front line area, thereby, attaining a surprise effect with overwhelming combat power in initial engagement." Of course, the initial engagement is the most important force of any force on conflict we have in the Korean peninsula and the one where we are likely, both sides, to suffer casualties.

Why do I bring all this out? Why is this so important? The reason this asymmetric aspect, non-nuclear asymmetric aspect to the North Korean threat is so important is because of the lacking of capability that the ROK military has to counter in.

And please, allow me to address this point by point. When it comes to SRBMs and MRBMs that North Korea has, Scud, Noran; when it comes to the Scuds, just in the past year, the ROK military started deploying the patriot missile system which sounds good on paper, but the system

they're deploying has a system that's used. Germans bought it used from Americans, so they're essentially the third holders of these PAC2 systems that shoot out a shotgun blast to try and take out an incoming Scud and often missed their target.

There is a more effective system called the PAC3 system, a patriot missile system that ROK do not have it, they need to order it. There are PAC3s in the peninsula, but they are amended U.S. Army personnel and they are protecting U.S. spaces only. Right now on any ROK military base in any ROK population center, there is no effective ballistic missile defense against Scud attacks.

Now, when it comes to those neurons that erupt up near the Chinese border, a lot of those will be shot at Japan, but they have about 200 of them. They probably are going to shoot a lot of those at places like Pusan and Jejudo as well, with a different trajectory, obviously.

They system that they need to combat, that is called the SM3, which goes on Asia's equipped ships. The ROK does not have it, the Japanese do. In fact, the Japanese have the SM3s on their ships already and also the PAC3s protecting their missile, excuse me, their population centers and military basis.

And, what makes this so ironic is that missile threat to South Korea is significantly larger than it is to Japan. Very important stuff! If you are going to talk about counter softs, the Jejudo military has a lot of helicopters that they can counter soft with within the ROK land mass. But when it comes to taking this fight to North Korea, to cut off the head of that soft monster and it is a big monster, hurting 8,000 men. What they need is transport aircraft. The ROK Air Force has ten, ten C130s for their entire Air Force. That is severely lacking, not only for soft transport, let's not even begin to talk about all the other transport issues you are going to have on a war that big.

Right now, the number one transportation method for South Korean special operation forces taking a flight to North Korea is called the United States Air Force. If we are going to talk about counter battery, for that long range artillery, those 240s multiple rocket launchers and the 170mm guns, that mission was transferred from second division to the ROK military in early 2006.

As of right now, the ROK military is still trying to work out the kinks in being able to run the same counter battery capabilities that American have. There are many issues with that but the two key ones are C4I which anyone who's been watching this issue knows that ROK military is very weak on and tied into that is the fact that when the Americans had that mission they could tie their artillery into air. The ROK is still having a great deal of difficulty with that. So, that exacerbates the one range artillery threat.

And finally, this adjustment in the maneuver forces that they need to make because of the changes that the North Koreans have made and in this position of forced and ordered battle in the four areas is still in a state of flux, that's still happening. So, it's just something to think about if you think about the North Korean threat, the non-nuclear North Korean threat.

The non-nuclear forces that Pyongyang has taken such care and spent so many resources on and ordered to continue to threaten the south remain an ominous and compelling threat for a variety of reasons. Those who have carefully analyzed the correlation of forces, opposing fire power ratios or terrain dominated strategy on the Korean Peninsula and the ordered battle and disposition of forces of the North and South Korean militaries realize that the North Korean non-nuclear threat continues to be a real challenge for the ROK militaries. So, that is pertinent with fallacy one.

Fallacy two: OpCon transfer and the disestablishment of the CFC will be the in-result of a maturing of the alliance and as a result of a confluence of interests for both governments.

Wrong!

Anyone who has followed security affairs on the Korean Peninsula understands that this is simply NOT TRUE! This was about anything but a maturing of the alliance. In fact, it was a confluence. It was a confluence of bad judgment on the part of a leftist ROK president who wanted to protect North Korea and shake the U.S. influence and a testy sec def focused on strategic flexibility. The original 2009 deadline doesn't look like a testament to rationality either, does it folks? Does anyone really think that this date, originally set by Secretary Rumsfeld is realistic in anyway?

Fallacy three: The new structure will work just as well as the present structure. I don't think so! The current structure is a seamless, transparent combined war fighting mechanism that is under the joint command of the National Command Authorities of both Seoul and Washington. The commander of CFC follows the strategic guidance of the military committee comprised of equal members of both ROK and U.S. senior officers.

He carries out their guidance at the operational level of war. This structure that has proven so effectively, to be so effective, since its inception will be replaced by two separate structures that will work together in a much different matter. Much of what a simply combined operation is implanting today is projected to become coordination via boards, bureaus, coordination centers and cells. Unity of command will vanish and the battlefield environment will become significantly more complicated.

Fallacy four: Failure to implement war time OpCon by 2012 will send the wrong message to the North Koreans. Wrong! In fact, just the opposite is true. The North Koreans can interpret and in fact, are likely to interpret that a divided command signals a lessening of the U.S. defense commitment to South Korea. In addition, the vulnerabilities created by a change in wartime OpCon before ROK forces have needed capabilities, presents less, not more of a deterrent to North Korea.

Fallacy five: The disestablishment of CFC in 2012 will mean that USFK will be turning over command to ROK forces. Not true! In fact, the ROK has command of its own forces now, in both peace time and war time. The reason for this fallacy is because the majority of people do not understand the command structure of CFC. Please, allow me to explain briefly.

In wartime and when the national command authority in Seoul agrees to it, the president in South Korea has the final authority, based on the advice by the Minister of National Defense and the Joint Chiefs, designated ROK forces shot to the commandment of CFC, who then answers to both the U.S. and South Korea National Command Authorities and carries out their strategic decisions in command of ROK and the U.S. forces as they carry out war fighting operations under a unified, combined force. So, that is it with fallacy five.

Fallacy six: The ROK military will have the capabilities to deal with the disestablishment of CFC by 2012. This is completely untrue! Let me give some examples. South Korea will not have the C4R capabilities. They count better on the artillery capabilities, the counter soft capabilities, the air inner diction, closer support, or air transport capabilities. The ROK Marine Corps and ROK Navy do not have the capability, nor are they likely to in a foreseeable future for large scaled amphibious operations in terms of logistics efforts, air support, C4I, naval gunnery

support and amphibious lift. In short, they are incapable in taking the lead in amphibious operations, one of the key efforts in any counter attacks against North Korea. I have ticked off just a few of the key areas that would affect war fight but there are many more. Excuse me.

Fallacy seven (and last fallacy): bridging capabilities provided by the U.S. will fill all of the gaps that a lack of capabilities the ROK military will have in 2012, and thus, there will be no vulnerabilities in defense and deterrence. Wrong!

Again, this is untrue and essentially replaces a system that works very well with a system that continues to be adjusted on the fly and that is much more ad hoc. Just in the past year, announced changes to the structure of the new command including combined air operations after 2012 with all ROK forces under U.S. command; combining amphibious operations in 2012 with all ROK forces under U.S. command and combining taking control of North Korean WMD under U.S. command.

In short, the changes have been made by a necessity and create a bunch of mini CFCs and a command structure that is inferior to the capability of the current structure. It wants us to discuss bridging capabilities. The best bridging capability would be simply to push war time OpCon change back until the ROK military group has the capabilities necessary to fulfill the roles and missions called for.

In conclusion, I have two very simple questions. In any kind of crisis, would the alliances be better off with one command post or two? Question two. Will OpCon change lead some very influential but not very well informed U.S. senators to begin to push for the next step in removing USFK? Thanks.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Well, after that subtle and ambiguous presentation *[laughter]*, we'll turn to the last of our panelists to be a little more specific. *[laughter]* Patrick!

[Patrick CRONIN:]

Gordon, thank you, let me also underscore what Bruce said about the work that you've done Gordon Flake and Scott Snyder in helping us all understand these issues in the past. I don't disagree with anything that Dr. Bechtol said, but I certainly have different points that I want to make here this morning.

Certainly, I agree that the Combined Forces Command works, I also agree with a larger point that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in an uncertainty. Let me start though, by making the point that all alliances are really a matter of sovereignty sharing. And it's very important to remember that, we're talking here about a relationship between two governments that have to make compromises against their fundamental interest sometimes, in order to cooperate with another partner; and it's an unnatural act. But it is done because there's a higher objective, in this case securing peace prosperity in the Korean Peninsula.

But I mentioned this obvious point, just simply to say that there have been, throughout the history, certainly since World War II, for the United States both unified and dual or multi... multiple chains of command. And both have worked at times and both have been challenged at times. In the Cold War transatlantic debate over dual-key approach to nuclear weapons for instance, the Europeans were very distraught with the idea that the United States alone would have the nuclear trigger over a potential nuclear war on their homeland.

This was a major driver in transatlantic frictions throughout NATO's history. After the Cold War there was the dual-key approach between the United Nations and NATO used in Bosnia

operation did not fly after trying to enforce the date and peace accords. This actually was a political sort of bandage, but it did undermine the operational support on the ground. It did lead to a reduced effectiveness to control. My point here is not to be overly swep, but something to illustrate that these different types of commands can work differently in different settings. Nor political trade-offs that have to be made by the partners. I think about the Korean War itself. In the heavy re-registrations that Max Hastings defined in the history of that war. Well, he talks about the most unconscionable act of the war from his point of view was the delay, the 16-month delay, in the armistice from the time that the last substantial territorial obstacle had been removed by negotiation.

In the number of Korean civilians and also Korean and American men in uniform who were hurt men and killed and put in distress during that time. It's a sovereignty issue when you're delaying, when you finally get to 1953 and Lieutenant General Harrison, a man of few words, didn't utter a single word in the signing of the armistice with General O'Neil. Not a single word was exchanged and General O'Neil represented the Koreans that volunteers, so-called volunteers of the Chinese and Lieutenant General Harrison represented the United Nations command, meaning the Koreans, as well as the United States.

We've come a long way since 1953. Korea has come a long way since 1953 and, I think, Koreans and Americans are extremely proud of that, they should be proud. When the Combined Forces Command was actually established in 1978, it was almost immediately challenged. General Wilkmans wrote a great book on this "On the Brink" where with the assassination of President Park in 1979, there was a moral hazard exposed here. It doesn't matter what the reality is on the commandment, what matters is the perception here of the people, it matters a great deal! And the moral hazard for the United States to be perceived as a complacent in Akoo because of

its relationship with the CFC and this is a hazard that should be recognized as well. In every sense then, there's obviously been a political perception in Korea, in the part of many Koreans, including yes, the last government of Korea. That there should be greater Korean sovereignty expressed in war time operational control.

Now, I think this is just a political recognition, I'm just talking. I'm not talking about very accurate operational military needs requirements and realities like Doctor Bechtol was. So, there are two reasons to think about delaying OpCon transfer and the disestablishment of the CFC in my view. One of them is based on military calculations. We've just heard Doctor Bechtol provide a very good list of those. He's been echoed by some Korean generals like General Hwang and other senior military thinkers in the ROK who have talked, also on the nuclear side, the need for greater strike, the need for greater lift. On a sense, new targeting requirements they are incapable, in addition to the conventional in soft that have been mentioned here.

But basically it's the unmet requirements for this new mission by 2012 which is the major military argument for delaying OpCon transfer in the disestablishment of the CFC. Because the effect of those unmet requirements could, could be to weaken deterrence and why take a chance at a time when things are so fluid and uncertain with this?

We go back to the fact that it is a political agreement, so it can be changed. So maybe the idea of choosing 2012 to take a risk with the military calculus seems improvement.

I think there is another point here that has been missed so far. And that is that there is another delay that's been going on about the Korean Army and Armed Forces. It is one of the implicit questions, with the eventual transfer of OpCon, because they will be eventually transferred, is, what is the future of the Korean Armed Forces? Is it more about security on the Korean

Peninsula or is it more about expeditionary and global presence? And maybe the Koreans can't or nobody can afford to do both. Certainly, not both, well, and even the United States is starting to have a growing discussion about whether we need after the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to think about offshore balancing. It's a simplification of a more complex argument, but the point is that there are tradeoffs between sort of thinking about greater air naval expeditionary forces and obviously focusing on soft, irregular warfare and also unconventional forces.

There is a second argument for delaying it and it has to do with psychology and really the manner in which the transfer occurs. And here the question is whether we are ready to have this handoff in 2012 in a manner that reinforces rather than undermines the strength of the psychology of the alliance in the engagement of the Korean and American people. Obviously, in any alliance, there is a fear, especially on those near the battlefield, the potential battlefield about either being abandoned by the distant power or trapped into a conflict not of one's own making.

And so, there is this high anxiety that tends to be a bit higher than I would have expected given my perception of the outstanding quality of the Korean command in military. But, nonetheless, part of the anxiety has to do with the future U.S. commitment; and there is, maybe, a reason for anxiety. Not because it's a policy choice, not because of the mainstream of either the Democratic or Republican parties want to start to withdraw, but there will be growing pressures over the next decade.

They will, again, look at the affordability of the 400,000 U.S. forces overseas and that pressure will inevitably raise questions yet again on the debate we've had since the end of the Cold War about the glide path, the floor on the U.S. troop commitment on the Korean Peninsula.

Obviously, adding to that troop commitment level right now, 25,000 which could be reduced presumably in the new administration in the future, new congressional pressures, new wars, elsewhere out of region, is also the location in which we're moving and the amount the sort of range of North Korean artillery. It also, certainly adds, maybe some more distance. But that issue probably could be dealt with in terms of psychologically reinforcing them. And there could be statements here, as you think about the manner this transfer to reinforce our long term commitment to this alliance.

But there are other ways that we're going to have to do this. When I look at a course in pre-trade, I mean trading business are a bigger part of the history of American engagement in Asia Pacific than just military action. And so eventually, it's issues like Corps in business investments and exchanges of people that will ultimately, I think, strengthen and prepare for an eventual transition. So, I would not separate the economics from the security, I would link these and look at them as a growing part of this. There is a human dimension here, in other words.

And so, finally, I would just say that on the future of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it was George Elliot who wrote that among all forms of mistake prophecy is the most prosperous. So when I hear and even good friends like Kurt Campbell talk about three years and ... Forget it! We don't know! We don't know what we don't know! We have to be prepared, but the Combined Forces Command and the U.S.-ROK alliance provided by the best guarantee of not being prepared to protect our common interest against uncertainty and change, so change it. Thank you!

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Thank you very much and now Doctor Sung-han Kim.

[Doctor Sung-han KIM:]

Thank you Gordon, thank you Scott for giving me this wonderful opportunity to speak to distinguished experts. Before I start my presentation, I'd like to emphasize what I'm trying to say is not representing the ROK government.

From a Korean perspective, the question of wartime operational control transfer consists of two elements: one of them is capability and the other one is environment. Capability means whether ROK will be capable of exercising its own wartime OpCon by April 2012. And environment indicates whether the North Korean nuclear problem will be resolved or hit a breakthrough by 2012.

Since February 2007, after the agreement on OpCon transfer, the ROK government has been investing a lot of resources into capability building. But in my assessment, it was not quite enough due to the global financial crisis for the past two and a half years.

In September 2008 and 2009 ROK and USFK conducted an ROK led UFT freedom garden military exercise in preparation for the situation after OpCon transfer for now, it is generally agreed that ROK joint chief of staff is kept with IOC official operational capability. However, it remains to be seen whether ROK JCS will be able to acquire FOC (full operational capability) before OpCon transfer.

If I talk to my friends at MND (Ministry of National Defense) some of them even mention specific statistics. For now, we are 6.2% sure, but again I asked them how that figure came out, they are not quite transparent, which means it is yet to verify. The other issue is the North Korean nuclear program. My point is that North Korea could be "embolden by the wartime OpCon transfer if it is done before the resolution of the North Korean nuclear problem".

For example, if it happens Ki Jung Yoo, say to his own generals: Look, this is what has happened, but this is perfect timing for us to keep them out, USFK, by linking the North Korean nuclear issue with the USFK from the Korean Peninsula. Actually, Ambassador Steven Bosworth made a visit to North Korea before he was appointed as a special representative for North Korean affairs.

It was last January, together with Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, Morton Heparin and others. But he surprisingly heard from one of the high ranking officials in North Korea that North Korea's nuclear problem consists of four stages, not six stages, OK? It consists of a shut down, disablement and dismantlement of the nuclear facilities and lastly the elimination of nuclear weapons, OK? Shut down and disablement, OK? In South Korea and other international communities, particularly the participating member states six-party talks should provide North Korea with one million tons of economic aid. For dismantlement, the United States should construct, you know, nuclear reactors like water reactors.

Lastly, this is the critical part, for the elimination of nuclear weapons the United States should dissolve its alliance relationship with ROK, OK? This is a four-stage approach. So, if OpCon transfer takes place before North Korea's nuclear problem is resolved, I think it is very likely that North Korea is going to link this issue with USFK status.

So against this backdrop our true allies that can consider three options or a path that we can take. The first option is to revisit the OpCon issue and stick to the CFC system. I think this option is being supported by Korean retired generals and admirals who are very patriotic to their own country.

This sounds great! But in my assessment this is not a politically viable option. We all know that CFC is the best system in deterring and defeating North Korea. But our two previous administrations already agreed upon OpCon transfer and it's going to be very hard to expect the Lee Myung-bak government to reverse the decision, reverse the agreement and persuade the progressive people.

He has already exhausted most of his energy on happy city of Sejeong, so that Sejeong city problem may not be the problem of the capital city movement. It is trying to make it technologically kind of a concentrated city rather than another capital city of ROK, so he has no energy and his priority is rather different from ours.

From the U.S. point of view, it is going to be very hard as long as the United States believes CFC system Combined Forces Command system and strategic flexibility of the USFK are not compatible. As Doctor Larry Niksch already pointed out, it seems to me the United States, you know, believes they need to go beyond the CFC to come up with strategic flexibility of the USFK.

If you want, to make U.S. forces more mobile and more flexible to deal with other regional or global contingencies, you need to make ROK more responsible for, you know, deterrence as well as defense in North Korea. United States is just providing a supporting role, you know, while ROK is responsible for its own defense.

So, these two concepts are not usually compatible if you talk to responsible U.S. authorities. Second option is to get wartime OpCon transfer as scheduled, regardless of capability and the environment. This second option is being supported by Korean progressives and some centrists. But the sound of the second pass is problematic because it could give a wrong signal to North

Korea as already mentioned. Some people say North Korea will be treating South Korea as a legitimate and responsible negotiating partner after, you know, OpCon transfer, but I don't think so. What is more important is that whether South Korea is genially capable of doing a war and whether U.S. and ROK remain as the closest allies.

Another problem that might rise when OpCon transfer takes place before capability and strategic environment are ripe, a voice that South Korea should be armed with nuclear weapons will become stronger and louder; at least enough to be reckoned by the United States, obviously.

And the third pass is that both of us, the U.S. as well as ROK, do our best until probably six months before OpCon transfer and agree to delay it when we agree that capability and strategic environment are not resolved.

This view is being supported by moderate conservatives in Korea, some pragmatics. This could be called, I would say, a 2012 project, which means ROK is making its utmost efforts to come up with a necessary capability to get OpCon transfer. At the same time, ROK and the United States should concentrate their energy on the North Korean nuclear problem so that it may be resolved by 2012.

Nevertheless, if we agree upon that capability and strategy environment are not sufficient enough, then we can delay the OpCon transfer until ROK is, you know, the FOC (full operational capability) is quite importantly, verified and North Korea nuclear program makes a big progress.

I think you have already noticed my preference. My preference is the third option, the third pass. So, we guys concentrate our effort, you know, concentrate our effort, OK, to deal with the North

Korean nuclear program. As long as North Korea remains as a nuclear power, recognized as a virtually feared State, I think OpCon transfer is going to be very dangerous.

But that doesn't necessarily mean South Korea could be lazy not to try to come up with necessary capability to receive, you know, OpCon transfer. So ROK should make a diligent effort to come up with a necessary capability.

Again, I emphasize this, what I am emphasizing is my personal view, does not reflect the ROK government. By the way, I hope they will, you know, successfully talk to U.S. government, so that we can come up with the passed and feasible solution probably before six or seven months before the actual target day of arms transfer. Thank you!

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Very good! Doctor O'Hanlon.

[Doctor Michael O'HANLON:]

Thank you Gordon, thank you everyone, it's a pleasure to be up here with good friends from Korea and the United States and other countries as well. In the presence of great committed individuals to the alliance who have done so much, like my good friend Jim Delaney and others. I'm afraid as Gordon warned that I'm going to be piling on to some extent arguments that you have already heard because I too have significant concerns about OpCon transfers as well. In fact, I'm against the idea of OpCon division altogether and with less sophistication and less knowledge than my other panelists.

So, let me be brief and really just make five or six specific points. In fact, I will make seven, I am so much in agreement with Bruce that I want to use his framework of making seven points.

[laughter] But mine are sort of disconnected and almost in a spirit of a segue to the discussion period. Because, again, I think that the more formal and comprehensive arguments have already been put on the table.

Let me begin by simply reminding those who may have forgotten and there probably aren't too many in a group like this, but much of the genesis in the modern America debate, at least, about why we believe in unity of command and there are a number of case studies and a number of important military argument, but for me, it comes down to something that happened thirty years ago this spring, which was the fail of the Iran hostage rescue effort.

Now, in one sense, perhaps this is not a perfect analogy because much of the problem with the Iran hostage rescue attempt was the lack of proper planning and training. So we ultimately, if I remember correctly, had a combination of multiple services, but to some extent the metaphor, the image is army Special Forces flying Air Force helicopters out of operating off navy ships and all done without a regional command structure because this predated the 86 Goldwater Nichols reforms and it helped motivate those reforms in fact.

And that was part of what was ultimately seen as the problem, that we didn't have people that were really in the business of routinely operating together and there was not a clarity about accountability or command.

Now, again, the analogy is not perfect you can already see a number of reasons why but I do think that's an important motivating example and historical episode to bear in mind. Lives are at risk when command structures are not coherent and I think that's just a fundamental reality that we have to remember. It is obvious, but it is worth saying.

Another point worth saying, from recent history from 1991 in Operation Desert Storm, but also other modern wars. I think that Desert Storm may be the best example of the problem of friendly fire in the modern high speed, high precision battle field environment and what Desert Storm reminds us. And that was a war, in which I believe roughly a quarter of all American fatalities were from friendly fire. Was that if you are not very good about understanding where each other is on the battle field and there is not a simplicity in the structures of communication and control, you are putting your own forces at risk. Now, again, let me be careful not to over state the point. Even in Desert Storm we did have unity of command and we still had friendly fire problems. And the issues were largely technical; they were not always command issues. We didn't have convincing and compelling and reliable ways of having one force signal its presence to another. That was a big part of the issue and we've made some progress within the U.S. military, and I am sure the Korean military as well, since that time. But again, it just goes to underscore that if there is ambiguity about, for whatever reason, about who is in charge, where Air Forces are, what they are doing, what they are supposed to be doing, we could be in some trouble, militarily. And the notion that you can somehow cleanly delineate one sub-theater from another, so that Koreans could be in charge primarily of land operations and Americans of air and naval for example; it is a bit misleading given the range of mentality and speed of modern weapons. It is not as if we are going to only use naval weapons at sea and only use air weapons in the air and use only ground weapons on the ground. It's not the way modern combat occurs.

A third point, and here with apologies to an unnamed friend in Korea a colonel who wrote me after my recent LA times op, in which I said the same thing that I'm saying today, and pushed back a bit and defended what they were trying to do with the combined command. One of the points he made is that we do in fact under this new plan have some simplicity of command. We

do have certain regions of the battle field that the U.S. is supposed to be in charge of. Certain parts of the battle field the ROK would be in charge of and we have certain levels of American command, where we could still say that American forces are responding to American officers.

Well, I've already begun to address this in my earlier comment, but it's, I admire the efforts of the colonel and others trying to make lemonade out of lemons. And I have no doubt that we are better served by American and Korean military professionals who are trying to make this work. But it doesn't make it a good idea. The fact that a lot of these problems are being addressed and partially solved does not make the overall genesis of the notion a good one. So, we can admire the commitment of individual military personnel in particular who are trying to make the best of this situation. It doesn't mean, however, that just because a number of provinces have been patched up that we should remain committed to it and in the end, I think that at its core is probably not a prudent idea.

A third point, or excuse me, a fourth, and I believe this was made by a senior American commander recently in Korea is the notion that because we have worked so hard on an integrated operational plan that there would not be great difficulty in implementing a more complex command structure in actual operational terms because we thought through in advance a lot of the issues and scenarios and responsibilities and tasks would arise and figured out how to build those into the plan. Making this different, frankly from the 1980 hostage incident where we were essentially inventing an operational plan as we went. And because of that, even if there are some imperfections in the concept and logic of this, that will be Ok in the end.

Well my response to that is very simple and is the old military adage, that no plans survive contact with the enemy, and I don't care how many people have thought about it 50/27 and how

many people have thought about 50/29 and there have been a lot of great people working on both over the years, the plan is going to have to be modified in real time if and when we ever employ forces with the nature scenario. I think that is such an obvious point that I'm not even going to burden you with further details of the argument. We can come back to it in discussion if you doubt me, but by way of motivation I will make one observation, which is, and I don't think that we'd ever do it this badly in the U.S.-ROK alliance, but look how much trouble we have with the Iraq war plan. And to some extent, this was because of a pretty good plan that had been developed by General Zinni and others over the years was discarded by General Franks and Secretary Rumsfeld and phase four was essentially ignored.

So, in a sense, the plan over time got worse, almost as a deliberate act of political strategy here in the United States and I don't mean to revisit the entire Iraq war plan, but in terms of the specifics, let's not ever pretend that we could know what war is going to look like in advance. Because that's too, some points made earlier by my colleagues up here. So, no plan is going to survive contact with the enemy, we need adaptability. We are going to have to make decisions in the real time.

Fifth point, some people may say, "Well all these concerns may be theoretically appropriate or valid but come on, it's Korea in 2010." Even though Bruce is right, North Korea will spend a lot of money on defense or offense. They are not going to be so silly as to fight and this is, therefore, not really a great concern and the only scenario that really is a concern is a collapsed, a North Korean collapse. So, let's not get too hung up on these kinds of, you know, somewhat outdated military arguments. And if it's a collapse scenario, there should be a peacekeeping mission and therefore a lot of this detailed connected high speed, rapid reaction operational responses so important.

Well, my response to that hypothetical argument is: don't forget, even if that's true, even if a collapse scenario becomes our number one concern, this would be collapse in a country with 8 or 10 nuclear weapons. And any such scenario is going to have to make the securing of those 8 or 10 nuclear weapons its top priority, along with the protection of Seoul from any kind of renegade or partial or occasional firing of North Korean artillery and missiles from any individual North Korean commanders who may decide to use this period of chaos to settle scores or to carry out actions that they have planned for in a different kind of scenario.

And so those would be the main military concern, which means that trying to deploy special forces very quickly around North Korea, trying to target and eliminate artillery and ballistic missile launchers through a complex air and ground operation. Trying to secure North Korea's border, not just in some general, generic sense, but with specific tactical intelligence obtained within North Korea to give us a sense of where the nuclear weapons may be headed if they are on the move.

These things are all going to be top priorities, even in a collapsed scenario. And in fact they are not just top priorities, in some generic sterile sense, I'm understating the significance here. We are talking about nuclear weapons potentially on the loose. With who knows, what buyers, what destination in mind. There would not have been a more serious threat to American or Korean national security in a long time. In fact, arguably this would be a greater direct threat to the United States than the Korean War itself had been in 1950 to '53. Because the possibility of nuclear weapons getting out there on the black market is a great threat to American cities, and obviously the Korean cities as well.

So, this is going to be a lot more than a balk peacekeeping mission that at large or even in Afghanistan's stabilization effort at large. It's going to be a fight for national survival for the ROK and the United States with the potential for these 8 or 10 nuclear weapons to be the most dire direct threat to our security since even World War II. And, I don't think I'm being melodramatic, I think this is factual and an accurate assessment of the kind of risks that we would be facing if indeed North Korea began to collapse.

And therefore, integrated operations that involve special forces, air power, tactical intelligence and many other assets would be of crucial significance. This is not going to be just a bigger version of a peacekeeping mission, if it happens. 50/29 scenarios may seem more benign to some people than 50/27 scenarios. They don't seem more benign to me, in terms of what is at stake. And I think for those missions, we still have to integrate a lot of different kinds of capabilities and there is not a clear distinction between ground and air, between conventional and special forces, etc.

Two more points and I'll be done. I think the way to... the right plan is not just a delay, but an abolishment of the plan of OpCon transfer because it's not really OpCon transfer, we can use that term, it's OpCon division, it's OpCon complexity or confusion. And with a lot of good people trying to minimize that, we're still going from unity of command to duality of command. That's what OpCon transfer is.

So, in some sense, the term itself is oxymoronic for the reasons I've been trying to argue. And therefore, I think it's a bad idea. And while I'm not going to lose sleep over whether this happens or not, I think that the alliance is robust and will probably do a pretty good job patching up the holes and the North Koreans will still be deterred frankly, although I share some of the concerns

of my panelists, I don't want to weaken that deterrence unnecessarily; but I'm not going to lose sleep over this. I don't want to say this is necessarily going to be a, you know, the end of Western Civilization, but it does cause some problems in carrying out these plans. Correctly, if we ever need to, heaven forbid, and therefore, I think the right way to think about this is to preserve unity of command and think about the date when we can start potentially taking turns in charge.

I think that Bruce made this important point. Some others did as well, but we still have political sharing in responsibility which is the most important way for the alliance to make sure it's equitable to the sovereign prerogative to both sides. But, I would rather wait whatever number of years is deemed appropriate before we are in the position where American forces could be under the theater wide control of an ROK commander.

And until that point, with apologies and with respect to Korean colleagues, until we're at that point, I think the commandment should remain exclusively in American hands. And the reasons, I could just take off quickly are that despite the fact that I would consider the ROK military to be definitely one of the ten best on the planet and may be even one of the top five. Nonetheless, the United States is still spending half a trillion of dollars a year on its core defense establishment, which means that the amount we're spending each year, preparing that part of the force structure, which would deploy the Korean in a war, is at least 100 billion dollars a year. Because we would deploy 300,000 to 600,000 American forces depending on how you think about it, on how you measure what scenario you envision and the equivalent peace time cost of that much American force structure is between 100 and 200 billion dollars a year in raw numbers.

I don't need to say this is all about money, but I'm giving you one crude metric to underscore the point that as much as the ROK military has come a long way is a very impressive organization, we still spend so much more and have invested so much more over the years that I think frankly, American power would be still the somewhat stronger part of the overall alliance.

Now, I say that with acknowledgment that if we get into a 50/29 scenario, that could evolve and that could change pretty fast. And if we solve the nuclear, the lose nuclear materials issue, we could be in a position where perhaps we could see a 50/29 plan after the first 3 to 6 months, transferring primary command to a Korean once the mission does become primarily a stabilization operation. So if you want to split up the command, rather than do it by ground versus air sea, or ROK versus U.S., may be the better way to think of it is as a 50/29 scenario evolves, the United States should look for an opportunity, once the initial nuclear materials have been secured and the missile threat and the artillery threat have been dealt with; to then pass on primary overall command to Korea. In which the American forces would be under that Korean command in their entirety.

So I could envision that, but until that day I believe that the current command arrangement is smarter. And a very last point, just to – this is my seventh – just to remind you that the United States can and will and has done such things. Historically we've had a number of examples of Americans serving under foreign military command. But including in Afghanistan in the ISEP operation, not today, when General McChrystal is obviously in charge but from previous periods, we've had American troops under European command and yes, we can always make these fine distinctions between about how they were under a tactical American command, but the overall command in the theater for much of the mission was European and there were Americans under that command.

I think Americans could do that again in Korea and the question is simply when, when and under what overall concept. I believe it should be a unity of command. The only real issue is can we get to the point where the ROK and the U.S. start taking turns from one person to another? Or in a 50/29 scenario, can the American commander hand off to a Korean commander as it becomes more of a stabilization mission? To me, those are better ways to think about this than the so called OpCon transfer in 2012. Thank you.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Doctor O'Hanlon mentioned that no war plan survives contact with the enemy. I would observe that no conference plan survives contact with the experts. *[laughter]*

As I mentioned we kind of anticipated months and months ago, planning that this would be kind of a debate with a strong vision for the current plan, with its current limitations versus some question of delay and even yesterday and the day before I kind of anticipated this panel would turn out to be much more a discussion of miniscule delays of the process. But, instead, from our keynote this morning to the panel we have up here all people, who I respect greatly, the questions have been much more existential, much more focused at the fundamental nature of the agreement itself.

So, with that, it's kind of context what I would like to do, would be to take just a moment to ask a couple of questions myself of the panel, to start some discussion on the panel. Then, we'll have about 45 minutes to open up to a broader discussion with the audience itself. And the first one is for the panel based on the fact that as of today the official position of both of our governments is that everything is good and great, it's working, it has been implemented at full speed ahead.

We had General Sharp in recent months here in Washington DC testifying to that extent. We invited him and some other administration officials to come and speak here today and they declined for various reasons. But given that context, plus given the context that we now have in South Korea, you know, this 10 million signature campaign opposing. And at the same time as Doctor Sung-han Kim mentioned, we've also got a progressive base which strongly supports all this. My question for the panel is – what's next? We've kind of outlined on a very kind of substance level our concerns about the agreement as it stands. What you would recommend in terms of next steps on what needs to happen in this process as we go forward? So, there is no particular order, but Bruce, why don't we start with you and then others can try in as they feel and would like to.

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

Well, I think it's a (can you all hear me?) I think it's only just a matter of time before the ROK government officially brings this up to our government. They haven't already, I think everybody is anticipating that and I think one of the events that may strengthen the ROK governments domestically is going to be the local elections and after the local elections in Korea if the GNP does well, I think that may very well do with another fallacy which is that this can't work because the left is going to get so violently active against, as they did during the beef thing that it will hurt U.S.-Korea relations.

I don't think that's going to happen. I think the left is in a significantly weakened position right now in South Korea compared to what it was, which was a weak position at the first place which in my view is why they started this beef thing. But I think we can look to something this fall if, that's CAVIE if things go well politically for the GNP I think some time this fall at the very

latest, I think the ROK government will officially ask the United States government for a delay in war time OpCon transfer.

Yeah.

[Patrick CRONIN:]

That timing sounds suspicious. I believe that the agreement already calls for a review to occur in 2011 and there is a convection on both sides I believe that's too late, if it is to be delayed or altered in some serious way. So that only leaves this year really to make some kind of announcement. I stress that the U.S. government officials tell me, tell you I am sure that they would really like to see this go ahead but obviously they are sensitive to Korean concerns and I know Ambassador Stephens, who was here recently in having private discussions, which I can't divulge but clearly she feels that, she hears from all quarters, all political quarters in Korea a desirability for delay, which sort of re-enforces the point that Bruce was making about the left is weakened and those even those in the opposition party are not necessarily against the transfer now which is interesting. And I think finally that if senior officials put them together with the two plus two meeting or some other meeting level bi-lateral meeting. That would obviously be the time to announce some adjustment to the plan. The question would become "Do they set a date" and fall into the trap again?" Or do they keep it open ended in which case they do become susceptible to charges over time especially if there are changes to the political dimensions in Korea that are how open ended is this? So that will be a question that they will have to face and formulate it.

[Sung-han KIM:]

According to our agreements, we are supposed to access Air Force C for operation and capability for our ROK joint chief of staff and the USSFK and the combined Air Forces in 2011, next year. So I think as I already implied during my presentation that we need to come up with some verification measures, measures for verification. Not just quantitatively, but also qualitatively, which means we need to take a look at what C4I system has been completed. Whether strategic as well as the other level duty corporation system has been worked out. So this kind of very systematic and verifiable kind of assessment measures should be put forward, otherwise we will have to rely on somewhat arbitrary quantitative approach. Thank you.

[Michael O'HANLON:]

I think that delay is desirable and elimination of the plan is better. And the way to handle elimination of the plan is not to say that we have permanently closed off the option of greater Korean responsibility in command, but first to do what Bruce did and remind people of how much responsibility Korean and Koreans already have. Secondly, to say that the United States is very open to what I was talking about earlier, alternating command sequential for periods of time during which first an American commander would have a three-year stint as the head of combined forces and then a Korean commander. We are not there yet I don't believe but we could envision that day, perhaps within a decade. And then we could also envision a 50/29 plan if we had not already. Because I can't read the plan from where I sit without active clearances, that would allow for a Korean to take charge at a not predetermined moment but at a moment that was mutually recognized that was appropriate in the course of an operation. Once we got to a certain stage in the stabilization mission.

And let me throw out one crazy idea, it may seem crazy, although it is really not, when you think about it a little more, if the two sides are interested in proving to the world that their willingness to admit a mistake does not reflect a weakening of the alliance, I am sure that there are many things that the United States can do to send home and drive home the point that we are not weakening our commitment. And perhaps one thing for us to do is to make sure we are not going to reduce forces further in Korea for a while and make that plain.

I will with humility I hope, or with respect at least, offer a thought to our Korean friends. If you want to prove your commitment to the alliance and to the shared view of global values and security principles, send forces to Afghanistan. I know that there is a training mission that South Korea is thinking about. 43 Nations are part of ICEF including countries that have had a much longer tradition of reluctance to engage in dangerous military missions than they ROK. Our Canadian friends have lost 135 soldiers in captive brigade forces in Kandihart fighting in the heartland of the Taliban.

(Our) Korean friends are capable of contributing to this mission much more than they have and I cannot think of a better way to prove to the world that our alliance is meaningful even beyond the peninsula, but certainly in a general way, then for Korea to send combat forces to Afghanistan, and we can certainly use the help. So forgive the shift of geographical orientation but I actually think that it is more relevant than most people sometimes give it credit for.

[Moderator:] Bruce you had another comment.

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

I got a couple of things that I just wanted to bring up. I hope folks don't have the misperception that they are not already evaluating how things will be after war-time OpCon change. Because

they simulate that and this is the third summer that they are doing that and exercise they do in the summer olty-folk is guardian they actually simulate that command and there have been some issues, a lot of them are classified, but the ones that have been released in the open press, they have had a lot of issues, for example working through this combined Air Force command that is not going to be the CFC anymore they answer to a Iraq General or a U.S. General, many issues, so that is going on.

Although I think of pushing this off until 2011 could be dangerous, I would like you to remember that I said this, if that happens today that I said, a lot of the proponents of the plan, I will say "Well I was too late". I mean we pushed it back, it's too late, let's go ahead and push it through. I would worry about that kind of thing. The other thing is a combined C4I system. If you go online and read the testimony that General Sharp made in response to a question from Senator Lieberman last year. Lieberman, Senator Lieberman asked him for a written response regarding C4I and how that was going to be by 2012 and essentially you can see this online.

General Sharp's written response to this was they don't have joint C4I system, the one that hopefully they will have in the future can't talk to our system, but we are on track. That just doesn't make sense to me. But that's a major issue. C4I has a big problem. And finally, something that Mike talked about a lot that really good stuff regarding war plans that some of the rest of us did not have time to talk about and really added to the conversation. I am grateful to him for that.

Something else that kind of piles on to his thing is military guys and I was a military guy, well sort of, I was in that criminal interrogation U.S. Marine Corps. Military guys who work on war plans, tend to personalize them, no matter what rank they are. We all know this, there are some

of you sitting out in the crowd. So there is some of that too in this. There is some of that emotional tie-in on the part of those who feel they have invested a lot in that. That's all I got.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Let me just ask a one more question to the panel before we open up to the audience as a whole. General Tilleli commented that this seminar was maybe misnamed, it is really not just about the U.S.-ROK alliance, but it is about the region at large. And yet on our discussion, we focused pretty much exclusively on the peninsula. I would like you to kind of think about the implications for both the current plan and what you are proposing for the region, for north-east Asia region U.S.-post region. Any of you have comments on its view the regional context and not just the peninsula itself?

Yeah, Mike?

[O'HANLON:]

I'll say a word, maybe go in opposite order this time. I have already made my comment about Afghanistan do you allow that to be part as defined as the region? But let me be more specific in regard to north-east Asia and I have made a pretty big request of Korean friends a few minutes ago. So let me make hopefully a parallel request of our own country here in the United States. I think we have to be very careful to avoid trying to drag you into a future competition we may have with China. And I think we have to be very sensitive and I think that we have gotten a little better at this, but we have a ways to go.

To the notion that the United States does heaven forbid wind up in a difficult geo-strategic relationship over the long term with China. Korean interests and stakes in that competition are

different from ours because of geography alone and the size of the respective countries. And while we obviously hope that the U.S.-ROK alliance will be strong and that Korea will be a strong American friend, it only makes sense for the United States to acknowledge Korea's interest in building a very positive relationship with China and not being dragged into a Taiwan scenario by any kind of pressure from Washington.

And so I believe that this is actually almost a negative response Gordon to your question, something we should not be trying to do, we should not be trying to regionalize the U.S.-ROK alliance. But presume that we have a dependence on you or your bases or your forces in a Taiwan contingency. It's going to be a choice, that again if heaven forbid this kind of thing ever happens Korea is going to have a perfect sovereign right to a fully independent decision on whether or not to get involved in that scenario and we should never dilute ourselves otherwise.

[Sung-han KIM:]

From a Korean perspective, I think a strong and robust alliance between us and Washington can contribute to peace and stability of the whole northeast Asian region. Even if the threat from North Korea disappears all of a sudden maybe tomorrow or two years after this, that doesn't necessarily mean the disappearance of South Korea's security concern. Because South Korea is surrounded by big powers, particularly we are a bit concerned about China-Japanese strategic rivalry. From that perspective, I guess the continued U.S. military presence on this part of the world will be contributing to making a strategic balance between Japan and China.

That doesn't necessarily mean that China and Japan will be fighting each other, but strategic rivalry still is a strategic kind of concern to the ROK side. One more point I would like to point from Mike and Patrick's presentation it seems to me that the U.S. side is expecting ROK forces

to become more like expeditionary forces, because we are capable of doing that. Thank you for saying that because you are treating our capability better than any other forces. But the truth is a little bit different, actually if you look at so called 21st century strategic alliance between Seoul and Washington has two elements in there. One of them is to go beyond the Korean peninsula, and the other is to go beyond the military characteristics of the alliance. We have to expand our cooperation into political, economical and cultural areas.

So it takes time for ROK forces to become kind of a full scale mobile expeditionary forces that can be capable of doing kind of a joint operation over seas. But you know peace keeping kind of missions or over seas peace keeping missions can be expected from the ROK armed forces, but going beyond that level of contribution is likely to take time. Thank you.

[Patrick CRONIN:]

Just a couple of words to add to that. I think that the neighboring countries would find it reassuring actually to see this plan put aside or delayed, I don't see why they wouldn't. Either the Japanese or the Chinese wouldn't like to see the status-quo continue because of its inherent stability. I think there are these still longer term questions about the long term direction of the Korean Armed Forces and I was really talking longer term on these choices about expeditionary, but I think Michael O'Hanlon's point is right on, which is the status-quo does make it easier for the Korean Armed Forces to make a contribution in current conflicts such as Afghanistan.

That's not a trivial concern, given the importance that even a small number of troops can play in that critical country. And then finally, I would just to add, the future evolution of a northeast Asian architecture, whatever that means. We ponder that in this town and in the region for many years. It does hinge so much on the future of North Korea and because we can't really fathom yet

a North Korea that is willing to step up and have the security to join in a serious production of a threat that would bring it into a comity of nations in that region, we don't yet know what this portends for the future architecture. But for the time being the CFC and the current OP-CON arrangement certainly doesn't inhibit the five powers from cooperating.

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

I think that the Republic of Korea and its military in international defense is faced with a very big quandary because we talk about a lot of things that the U.S. - ROK alliance will do etcetera. You know blue water NAVY and peace keep operating, but the bottom line is the number one goal of the ROK military, the reason that there is five hundred sixty-five thousand men in just in the army in a country that has fifty million men is because of North Korea. The ROK military is faced with this quandary of all long range planning 2090 you know they can't worry about that as long as there is a North Korea, that is what their weapons acquisitions have to focus on, that's what their military vision has to focus on, that is what their planning has to focus on.

I think anyone who looks at militaries for other countries that aren't facing an enemy you know forty kilometers from their capital, like Australia or Indonesia for example and use them as a template, South Korea a unified Korea DPRK goes away will have a significantly smaller military. For example the army will probably shrink to less than a third of the size it is, if not smaller. Why do they need a big army like that if they are not worried about a threat to the north? The navy will get significantly more sophisticated but smaller and much and much more blue water.

And the air force will also become much more smaller yet have things such as refueling capability and look-down shoot-down radar etcetera. I mean you are talking about a ROK Air

Force that today has 485 air-craft, 170 of them are F-5's. The F-5's is one of the air-craft that the Marine Corps was using when my father was on active duty, he got out a long time ago, a long time ago and I'm retired.

So these are things that they need now, I mean they do a great job of flying the F-5's for the most part and maintaining them, but point is, their military is going to shrink significantly, we know that, that is the long term. They really can't focus on that as long as there is a TBRK and that is the quandary of the Korean foreign policy right now. Thanks.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Okay we have about half an hour left, I am going to turn it open to the audience, I know that we have an awful lot of expertise out there. I see Dr. Poxin on the blue houstran at the time of the negotiations. Larry Nicksch who did a presentation on this yesterday. But let me open and ask that we have microphones on the side, if you would identify yourself before making your comment or asking your question. Allan Robert first then...

Microphone is coming to you.

[Audience member: Alan ROMBERG:]

Thank you first let me thank the panel really terrific presentations and even though it was sort of one sided, it exposed issues all across the spectrum of concerns. I want to raise a question that Assemblyman Hwang raised in his speech and I mainly want to focus it on Patrick and Sung-han, Mikey addressed it a little bit but in a longer term context. That was the idea that while delaying OP-CON transfer in the shorter term a Korean should take over CFC commander. From a question of psychology and the sense of commitment both on the American side but also as

perceived on the Korean side, American commitment how would you evaluate that? And anybody on the panel can take it, but you two both are particularly focused on it.

[Panel member:]

Alan, I am not sure I heard the recommendation this morning but it was literally that in the short term *[background comment inaudible]* before 2012 even. Okay I see that would be, okay so instead of moving ahead with the current transfer, (we'll) move ahead with the transfer to place the Korean's on top, so you keep unity of command, you put the United States under Korean command. Well we know the psychological effects, I think that it would be a boost to the Koreans to be placed in that position and I think the many Americans would have some concern about that because they are predisposed to being in command, based on most commands, but that doesn't mean that is it universal. But it is difficult for the U.S. Armed forces to imagine a plan that in which they are not in charge. There is in this case of the CFC as Bruce talked about an extraordinary close... and as you know Allan so well... close set of consultations politically and militarily that are threaded throughout the history in this particular arrangement so that the differences outside are really perception maybe more than the reality. But, I imagine that it could be a very positive perception in Korea and therefore could strengthen the relationship if the United States could abide by that. I think that is still a question here in the United States and I don't know how much willingness there would be on the part of the Pentagon, in particular, to move quickly in that direction. I think as Mike said and I will turn it over to him now, you know, one can imagine that definitely taking place with the evolution of 50-29 collapse scenario.

[Sung-han KIM:]

Let me answer to Alan's question in direct manner how about we consider this scenario in which, this option in which we can divide the scenario into two or three. The first one is a kind of full scale warfare and the other category is North Korea contingency and some regional contingency. In dealing with full scale warfare, we can think of one representative of AMCC, Alliance Military Coordination Center which will be working under military commission. This is feeding into Mike's presentation. There can be two commanders in the warfare. So in light of sticking to that principle, we can think of one representative of AMCC for the case of full scale warfare and think of two representatives for the cases of North Korean contingency and other regional contingency. But I think this requires further coordination and consultation between our two allies. Thank you.

[Michael O'HANLON]

Thank you Alan for the question, I will just make on additional point which is that I think that it would be premature because of a lot of modern warfare specifically some of the problems we would see in Korea and especially in these higher in scenarios but even in collapsed scenarios would involve the seams between command and control, use of modern high-tech reconnaissance, integrating air and ground and Korean friends are very good at these things but we just have more experience in driving the state of the art on J-stars, on A-WAX, on drones. We've also got a lot of recent fighting experience employing some of these assets. And I just think that the scenario is just so tough and you know better than I, this is not a place to put the politics and the symbolism in charge or you know a head of military requirements. And while Koreans are very good fighters, I already stated my view this is one of the top ten militaries in the world if not in the top five. I still think that given just the sheer amount of investment we have done in modern reconnaissance command and control, how much our military has driven

the evolution of this kind of war fighting over the last twenty years and how much practical experience we have right now because even of these different kinds of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. If there really were a major combat scenario, both countries would want, frankly, an American commander in charge for the foreseeable future, I believe.

Now that doesn't prejudge the 50/29 three months, four months, five months in to the operation and it doesn't prejudge 2015 or 2018 but that's how I feel about the near future.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

I have what I interpret as a two finger comment from Admiral McDevitt and then I will come back to talk to someone next.

[Mike McDEVITT:]

Hi Mike McDevitt, I just wanted to comment on this command situation we need to be careful about fast and loose talking about new concepts because the command structure on Korea is not a free-floating entity. Even since Douglas McArthur got fired, they really do have people that they have to report to. There are three halves that U.S. four stars in Korea wears, has three different titles. In one of those titles he reports to commander of Pacific command, that's U.S. forces Korea. When he is using his title commander combined forces command he is reports directly to Washington. When he uses his title commander United Nations command he also reports directly to Washington. So those linkages that exist within the CFC context right now will all have to be rethought if we are talking about just preserving CFC, but we will put a Korean General in charge unless he wants to report to Bob Gates. And so, all of those other pieces have to be sorted out if talking about leaving everything else in place but just rotating

bodies. I am not saying that it is impossible, but remember, that Korea is not a free-floating entity there.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Thank you, Dr. Park, one here. Raise your hand up so that a microphone will come to you.

[Audience Member:]

Good morning, I am Sun-won Park and I worked for former President in regional strategy and personally involved in the OpCon transfers. So Scott Snyder asked me to raise some questions and my own comments of the provenance view on delaying OpCon transfer. Well, I don't want to be a side-kick and groomsman on the campaign that is symposium. But as a friend of Scott and Gordon Flake I would like to introduce the reality and taste of real discussion within in our case side and U.S. Department of Defense side.

So number one case is on these North Korean contingency. We believe that Bush administration and Yung administration believe that contingency should be dealt with by the upgrading of 50/29 so which could be OpCon plan but anyhow that is the amnesties or peace time OpCon matter right? So when North Korea collapse tomorrow so we will apply the OpCon 50/29 based upon peacetime amnesties time OpCon system. Therefore, contingency issue is separated from war time Op conditions so I would like to make it clear.

Secondly, nuke relations, we discuss a very long time on this matter and then there are two things. Number one let's leave the negotiation on the de-nuclearization of North Korea on the diplomats hands. However, we need to prepare something on the possibility of North Korea nuclear attack. But it is out of the OpCon conditions. North Korea will attack on South Korea

then the U.S. side explained to our side that U.S. President will consult with South Korean President as the two Supreme Commanders whether or where and how to use nuclear weapons against North Korea's nuclear attack on South Korea side.

So which is the different issues open but better how to activate nuclear umbrella therefore, we have a deepest concerns about North Korea contingencies and North Korea nuclear weapons but as separate aspects and elements basically and Dr. Bechtol and Dr. Cronin said that South Korean government would raise to defer what delay this OpCon transfer around this forum. I agree with that. They will do that because actually even the White House planned to raise this issue formally to the U.S. side last year, last fall.

But they postponed it and postponed it and they are looking for the right timing to formally raise the issue of OpCon transfer delay so they would do in this forum and they have already sent these signatures to the U.S. government. However, we need to think about that, is this the result of a policy or just the natural development of economic difficulties. As soon as Lee Myung-bak came to power last year in early 2008 they decided to cut off more than fifteen percent of the Defense budget.

So since then our capability may not meet the requirements that we have already planned for 2012. Then we have lost some capabilities by postponing. I think that it is nonsense. It is not a natural result but a policy outcome.

I would like to ask Dr. Bechtol and Dr. Cronin that then the U.S. government is still thinking of taking the leading role and South Korean should the supporting role in the future war. I don't think so. U.S. government wants South Korea to take the leading role but you want to take the OpCon authority right? which is contradictory to each other. And then lots of people emphasized

that this is your OpCon system separation but it isn't. This is a joint defense system and Korea is different from 1950 and 1978 when the first CFC was introduced, which happened 30 years ago. The CFC is not also perfect, so we need to upgrade and build-up.

And then we find the much balanced system which is a joint-defense system, in which U.S. command and control the entire South Korean air forces, therefore even if we agreed (to) this strategic OpCon transfer to the South Korean side, of our own forces and not U.S. forces, but considering the future of the air forces, then the U.S. military general (will) take the leadership in using South Korean air forces. And so in the air forces side, U.S. is still initiate the outcome. And also the U.S. will initiate OpCon incase of strategic and previous operation.

Therefore, Dr. Cronin emphasized the psychological side that South Korean Army has grown and our capability has also grown. And at the same time, the first few days of *[unintelligible]* North Korea contains very much important, therefore anyhow until U.S. forces are met on the South Korean side should lead the war in the initial phase and then will be continue to go on. I'm Sorry Gordon, but I'd like to add more things. When you go to the Pyongyang bunker when we had the inter-focus land exercise or other type of military exercises that we sit together, right?

Physically we stay together and then control all of the war. That's the number 1 thing. And the number 2 is that we have two major joint military exercises in March and in August. And we have a joint military war simulation in fall every year and we up-grade and build up our own Op plan 50/27 every year upgrading and so we have the same war plan and we work up together almost at the same place. But first we have a combination of C4I, which is actually planned to be installed in 2012. I am not sure how long it has been postponed due to the decision of the

government. However, I would like to ask you to please understand the real possibility of agreement between the U.S. and South Korean side.

So I will ask Michael O'Hanlon that you mentioned about Iraq war, but (the) U.S. Department of Defense prepared the Iraq war for less than two years, right? But U.S. forces in South Korea has developed our Op plan for more than 30 years and upgrade every year and we have a joint exercise every year. So which is much better Op plan 50/27 is much, much better than the Iraq war plan.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

I hope we never have to find out, but thank you Sun-won for those wonderful comments. One thing interesting for Washington is that in our morning, we didn't even discuss money, at any point. But Dr. Park raises some interesting specific questions that you may want to address to the panel, but he also raises the question of this being cost-driven on the South Korean side. So I welcome any comments from the panel on this issue.

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

If I may, there are a couple of things that I would like to address about what Dr. Park said. First of all, 50/29 was in fact changed to an OpCon plan during a new administration as everyone knows who can pick up an ROK paper. That was reportedly came from the national security council, as sort of a surprise to us, when it first happened. It is being changed back to an Oakland and therefore, if it hasn't done so already, they haven't officially released if it is or not. But if it isn't now, it probably will be in a few minutes.

So Oakland 50/29 is an Oakland it is a contingency issue and it is a command and control issue because of the fact it is in not an Oakland or will be very soon. As for, we need to think about OpCon transfer delay. I think that anyone who knows me will tell you I thought a lot about that. I have written articles from the Korean observer, the international journal of Korean studies a whole chapter in my last book, I welcome you to read those.

I think that... oh good, I think that this is a mistake, not to push it back and that leads to the next comment which is, as I said at the beginning, these are my views and not views of the Marine corps University of the U.S. government. And let's make it very clear, I am advocating against the current policy of my own government. The current policy of my own government is "let's go ahead and leave 2012 in" (and) I think that is a big mistake.

And until they announce it officially, it is also the current policy of the ROK government. So I mean that's everyone thinks that will change soon, but that's the current policy, as least for now. Regarding combined Air Force and amphibious operations, that's true, I mean I think I talked about it in my earlier remarks. There is a lot of problems with this, they just went to this in about a year ago. They practiced it once and it did not go that well.

They are still working out a lot of kinks. And that is exactly what I am talking about when I say, instead of having CFC with a unified command, now you got these mini CFC's. Well with the ROK Air Force and the U.S. Airforce, the commander of that 3 star of that 7th Air Force, who does he answer to? Does he answer to the ROK JCS or does he answer to CORE COM? Well right now, people seem to think that it is going to be the ROK JCS and that is still being worked out; and the same with amphibious operations.

So, there are many issues with this and the reason for that, in my view, is because they are making these ad hoc changes as we move toward 2012 instead of having a combined transparent unity of command.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Any other comments from the panel?

[Sung-han KIM]

Actually Dr. Park question was directed to these other gentlemen, but I just make a couple of comments. First one, Dr. Park pointed out the ROK government was trying to demand delay in war time open transfer. which I believe was not actually true because I am not representing Lee Myung-bak government, at least as far as I know, last year we were supposed to complete IOC (Initial Operational Capability), if Lee Myung-bak had proposed a delay, that means Lee Myung-bak government would not have been interested in making effort to you know to upgrading their own capability which is not meeting their own obligations on the basis of our mutual agreement.

So that's why South Korea, South Korea's government is very cautious, not to send a wrong message to the U.S. government, I am not talking about North Korea. South Korean government is not supposed to the U.S. government, because, you know, if you look at the demands from retired Generals and Admirals, you are somewhat likely to identify their views with the view of Lee Myung-bak government, which is not actually true. So, as I already pointed out during my presentation, Lee Myung-bak government is required to make it utmost effort to improve and increase their own capability and then they need to pick up the right timing for the delay if necessary. Probably, that is going to take place after we have made, kind of a genuine assessment on IOC.

[Michael O'HANLON:]

Just a very quick point if I could with my good friend Sun-won. You used the 50/27 50/29 distinction so did I. Conceptually, it is useful to have these two notions, but reality may actually be a blur in between the two. What I mean by that is there is obviously there is a distinction between a delivered attack by the North Korean government and collapse. Collapse is not a benign scenario in which all state organizations just melt away and the only problem is to police the streets, as you well know.

Collapse could involve some rogue North Korean commanders decide to seize and think is a good time to do something with the Nuclear Weapons, deciding it is a good moment to try and settle some scores with South Korea and launch some artillery. There are a number of 50/29 scenarios that involve combat, my simple point. And therefore I believe that the notion that we could view that immediately and as straight-forwardly as a peace keeping operation, not that you said so, but that some people might be in danger of coming up with that impression of what 50/29 implies, I think could be misleading. And therefore, I think that even in a collapse scenario there are going to be some very serious combat related issues that will continue to raise the question of how do we unify our command? Especially to deal with North Korea Nuclear weapons, artillery and missiles.

[Gordon FLAKEL:]

Patrick, something to add?

[Patrick CRONIN:]

First of all thank you very much for your comments and insights. For me, ever since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been on a consistent policy of moving to a leading to a supporting role. That was stated officially under the George Herbert Walker Bush administration, it led to the peace time OpCon transfer and it led to the agreement that we are debating today about OpCon transfer war time and this establishment the CFC. For me that is still the trend, even if there is a body of evidence here that would suggest that we should be more prudent rather than be rushing into a transition that we haven't really... it is not ideally prepared for, especially because it is a political decision.

Just as with costs, these are policy decisions of course. Costs are involved in these issues. For the United States government as much as it might not want to admit it, I can say this now because I am out of government. When the Democratic party of Japan came to power and they said "listen we didn't agree to the base re-alignment agreement, we want to talk about the costs." That had to be recognized in Washington and it created some havoc politically, rhetorically. I think that it is in a better place now than it was last fall. But the point is that it is entirely legitimate in my mind for democratically elected governments to re-asses agreements.

And my only concern is that we have a particularly sweet spot right now for the U.S.-ROK alliance, it has almost never been better. When the OpCon agreement was struck it was coming after a pretty extended long patch of a rough time in U.S.-ROK relations given the importance of alliance. So you do worry about a future democratic change and continuity in this alliance. And that is still very important to nail down.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

I realize that, if I am correct Patrick has another meeting to answer to, but we have 3 final questions, lunch is ready in the back. What I am going to do is ask Hugo, the gentlemen right behind Alan Romberg and Philip Yun to very briefly raise your questions. We will let the panel respond to them as a group and then I will turn the time back over to Scott to kindly move us toward our lunch-in time. Microphone up here first to Dr. Kim.

[Gordon FLAKE:] I will ask all of you to keep it relatively short since we are actually overtime this week.

[Hugo KIM:]

Yes. One comment. Sovereignty issue is not critical actually because it was used for the political purpose. In the year 2008, purchasing power *[unintelligible]* indicated that Korean per capita income 26,000 dollars, while the United States 45,000. Winter Olympics in Korea, 5th ranked in medals, now the sovereignty is not critical to the Korean people when South Korea enter is moving to the center stage from the center, so this is not psychological issue and it is not the matter of a big issue, thank you.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Thank you. The gentlemen right here behind Alan Romberg.

[Scott HAROLD:]

Scott Harold at the Duran Corporation. For any of the panelists that would like to address it. It seems to me in thinking about this issue, the best way to think about it is striking a balance between metrics that tell us that we are at where we need in order to transition without inducing instability and also balancing the need to politically set some type of potential timetable. I would

say that for both sides, looking at Iraq and Afghanistan. We want to assure the Iraqi's and Afghans that we are not going to stay forever, similarly we want to reassure the Korean people that they have a right to exert whatever level of control they feel is necessary. We may also wish to use those timelines, I would think to induce some of the forward movement on meeting metrics, that I think Bruce and Sung-han identified in terms of spending and building operational capabilities that are necessary in order for a transition to occur. I just wonder if you could help us think about how do we strike the balance between metrics and timetables? And I think I have heard some people say, I think that if I understood you correctly, maybe never use a timetable. But that is an argument that is out there and I wonder if you could address it any of the panelists, thank you.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Last question to comment Philip. If you could address it, right in front of you there.

[Philip YUN:]

Phillip Yun from The Asia Foundation. I wanted to ask quickly since we are here in Washington and since this is probably going to be discussed this issue within Washington to ask about in more detail, particularly professor Kim about Korean politics, specifically the calculation of Myung-bak and how he's thinking and his administration is thinking about this. How are they navigating this in the context of FTA and some of the larger issues related with respect to the United States and South Korea? And for us to get a better sense of what that calculation is, you eluded to it a little bit before, Dr. Bechtol did as well, but I think that it would be, I would be more interested about that to hear in a little more detail about that and sort of what they are thinking, and what the concern (is) about and what are some of the sharp edges are.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Sure. So final comments, why don't we go in reverse order and start with Michael and move on down?

[Michael O'HANLON:]

And I will just respond to Scott. It is an interesting way to frame the question, I welcome that you did and I certainly believe that we cannot stay in Korea in command or any other way longer than the ROK people want us there. Having said that, I would like to challenge a little the analogy that you used and I don't think that you meant to use too much of it. But at the end of the day, we as a sovereign country also have the right to decide whether a military flawed plan is one that we want to be part of, and frankly we have a sovereign right to reconsider the alliance.

I am not to overly dramatize the point because I think that we can probably find some way to handle most of the problems with OpCon transfer, I think that it is an unnecessary risk and prudent plan and I'm against it, as you know, but I am not suggesting that it should lead to the dissolution of the alliance. But we do have that sovereign right, and so it is not as if the Korean people just get to decide the future of the alliance. Not that you were saying so, but I just want to make that point explicit.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, our very presence helped an insurgency grow. It was a military problem. In Korea, our military presence is part of a deterrent. And the size, structure and nature of the enemy is not really a function to first approximation of whether or not we are disliked because of our military presence in being there. Now there are times in which the North Koreans would have liked to disagree, and say that whole fight was about the U.S. presence, but I think that most of us would acknowledge that's not really the reality. So yes, we have to listen, but if

we are dealing in a security conference with this issue, I think we owe it to the American and Korean peoples' to give our best military advice as to whether the plan is viable. And I think both Korean and American democracies are capable of handling that information.

And if we think that this plan is flawed, then let's tell the Korean people and let's tell the American people and hopefully convince them, rather than consider the Korean sovereign preference for control of their own territory to be a pre-condition or a constraint on the whole debate. I think that we have an alliance already that's in most ways pretty equitable and pretty respectful. So I don't think that to begin from a premise that we have to apologize for it in any way.

[Sung-han KIM]

How to strike a balance in timing for example. I personally, I am thinking of 2014 or 2015 if we have to delay OpCon transfer. I am not trying to link this issue to the relocation of YuSeung headquarters or second infantry division, but in light of current schedule, I think moving would be completed around that year.

So if we have to delay OpCon transfer, I think 2014 or 15 is appropriate, which is most likely to be the next target year. And Phillip raised a question about politics of OpCon transfer. In Korean politics, this is another U.S. issue if it is mishandled. So in my judgment, President Myung-bak appears to be concerned about side effects about revisiting or review of this issue. Because even though Dr. Kim Hi Book said this is not a sovereignty related issue, but many of Korean progressives tend to believe this is a sovereignty related issue.

President Myung-bak wants to be remembered as a person who has bridged the gap between conservatives and progressives in history. So, in that context, I don't think that he is trying to

polarizing the whole Korean society by revisiting this issue. I think he will be trying to show a kind of sincere effort to upgrade the Korean capability, if not top leadership of our two allies will talk to each other and make a wise decision. Thank you.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Bruce any final comments?

[Bruce BECHTOL:]

Yeah, I would like to comment on Dr. Kim's comment regarding sovereignty. I think the poll numbers that General Wong brought up this morning were interesting. 60-70 percent of the South Korean people are for pushing back war-time OpCon, that's significant. That's significant because the polls in South Korea are much like they are in the United States. They're split just like we are split on just about everything. 60-70 percent is pretty strong. The sovereignty issue is being pushed by what several people have called here as progressives, let's call them what they are "the Far-Left in South Korea" it's unlikely that they will support President Myung-bak on anything.

There are probably some among that small minority in the Far-Left who are hoping they can turn this into a beef issue. I don't think they have the "oomph" to do it frankly right now. And I think Koreans have seen this evolve and they understand that to really to bring this up as a sovereignty issue, Korea would be like the United Kingdom or Belgium saying "Well the NATO commander's a U.S. General, so where's our sovereignty?". No body, it's not true. It's just not true, it has nothing to do with it. And something else that we, hasn't been mentioned a whole lot today but it's sort of a "duh" factor here is CFC is one mission, North Korea. If Korean troops go to Afghanistan or Iraq or to a peace keeping mission, that has nothing to do with CFC. CFC is

for one thing. That commander only in war time is using those troops against, for a North Korean operation and does not have operational control over them when that operation is over. So this is really, in no way shape or form a sovereignty issue. And those who have gained support of calling it that have gone down significantly in number, from what I am seeing in the polls. Thank you.

[Gordon FLAKE:]

Well we have had a wonderful discussion; we also have a wonderful luncheon speech and the lunch itself coming forth. I am going to turn the time over back to Scott Snyder, but before I do I would like you to join me in thanking our panel for their great time commitment.

[Applause]

[Scott SNYDER:]

The way that we have arranged the lunch today is for it to be a buffet lunch, the buffet is set up in the back. And we are going to be moving and everyone should be around the tables. We are going to move this podium over close to that side. Everyone who is here is invited to have lunch. But I do ask, that there are some people who are designated to be at the head table and so if you would allow those people to kind of break in line. And we do know who is not at that table so we will see, we will try and police the unauthorized line breakers. But with this, we will just move to that side and please just line up and get your lunch. Thanks.

[Scott SNYDER:]

... Government policy. So we are very pleased to welcome Mike McDevitt, vice president of CNA Strategic Studies, to join us and give us his views on this issue. He is a career military

officer, and, held four at sea commands, including an aircraft carrier battle group. He also has held multiple positions in policy areas in the U.S. government including, at Sinkpack, and also at OSD. I know that some people are probably going to be asking or scratching their heads, “Why are we asking a navy guy to speak on OpCon?” But I happen to know that, Admiral McDevitt is a big Civil War buff and student of the Civil War and I think that that means that he is deeply knowledgeable about issues related to strategy, and war fighting and, and unity of command. And so we proudly introduce Mike McDevitt.

[Michael McDEVITT:]

Thanks Scott. I just want to emphasize that, I do, I am not representing the U.S. government. In fact they would probably be horrified if they thought I was representing the U.S. government. And further I really do really need to make a disclaimer that the Center for Naval Analyses. We are a private federally funded research and development center because we do an awful lot of our work for the Department of Defense. I need to make it perfectly clear I am speaking for myself, I am not representing CNA views or anybody in the Department of Defense and certainly not the Department of the Navy.

But everybody knows that naval officers of course have much more balance and strategic vision. So that’s why I am the logical person to talk to you about, about OpCon. *[background voice: and hallucinate]* And hallucinate, that’s... well we have a lot of time alone looking out at the sea. That’s right. I really do want to thank Gordon and Scott for allowing me to be here this afternoon. And I certainly understand, having heard the morning presentations, that the focus of the event is on OpCon. But I want to... and I am going to speak to that, but I want to try to cast it in a broader context. And so, I am going to talk about two other contextual points that I think

will help frame where I want to come out then on the OpCon issue. The first contextual point is last June's joint vision for the Alliance Statement that both President Lee and President Obama signed.

I think this is a really important document. It's not very long and I've seen some of the press reports. I remember reading them at the time where they dismissed it so much boiler plate, etc, etc. But when you take a closer look at some of the key things in there, I think there are some important features that are worth it to know.

First, it's focused on the future and it's focused on the challenges that the United States and the Republic of Korea together will face. And so, once again it is truly an alliance vision. It's also a clear statement that Washington is really happy and pleased that the Republic of Korea sees themselves, not as just an alliance partner on the peninsula, but as a regional partner and even a global partner. And that theme comes out in the statement.

The very first line, in fact, makes clear that by, by saying "*building an alliance to ensure peaceful security and prosperous future for the Korean peninsula the Asian pacific region*" notice that they didn't say Northeast Asia, they said "*The Asia Pacific Region and the world*". That is pretty sweeping! Then, while I'm no expert, it strikes me that this global vision is actually broader than NATO's current strategic vision quite frankly. And, in fact NATO is – as we speak – wrestling with the notion of what their future strategic vision is going to be.

Further along in the document it says, quote: "*We will build a comprehensive strategic alliance of bilateral, regional and global scope.*" Again, this is a very ambitious and – in my mind – a reflex that South Korean ambitions should be taken seriously as a global player. To this point, let me digress for a moment. As many of you know, for the past few years, I've been watching the

transformation of the Republic of Korea Navy. From a coastal defense force to a blue water or in Korea say call it a five-ocean navy.

Now, we are talking about a navy that is building a substantial submarine force, that's building very large amphibious ships, as I point out to my Japanese friends, the first of them is named Dakto. That was a not very subtle message. It can carry 800 Korean marines and it's building EGs cruisers. They are destroyers, some of them are in the water right now. They have the missile defense capability in them. So the Republic of Korea – and has been, this has been going on for a number of years – is fielding a navy that has global reach and I don't want to over... draw too many broad conclusions from this, but – and I am not trying to argue that the Navy is a stalking horse for Korea's broader strategic vision – but the fact is, this has been going on in an Army dominated military culture. And it has been going on when you still have a credible threat from North Korea that South Korea has to deal with. So, it reflects in my view, among other things, a Korean desire for greater strategic independence. Because you might argue, "Why in the world does a Korean, does the Republic of Korea need a Blue-armed Navy?" It already has one, it's called the Seven Fleet.

In theory, if all you are worried about is defending Korean interests around the peninsula. But, if you... If what I've just been talking about in terms of this issue of Five Ocean Navies, global reach, and what you have... This is a theme that has transcended the last three Korean presidential administrations and I think it reflect the desires I suggest for strategic independence. In fact, the Republic of Korea wants to be taken seriously and the fact that the Republic of Korea wants to be considered a responsible stakeholder – to use the Bob Zelleck term – in terms of lifting its share, doing its share of dealing with issues around the world that go beyond the Korean Peninsula.

Returning to the vision statement, it's also notable for two other points. Probably notable for more than that, but two that I want to talk about. First, it explicitly addresses the notion of extensive deterrence and talks specifically about the nuclear umbrella. And of course, this fact dominated the press reporting in South Korea right after last June's Summit meeting. And, actually, as I think, provided a good reminder at Pyongyang that making this statement, reminding the world as it were that U.S. extended deterrence had been reaffirmed by a new United States administration was a very important signal. It was a renewal, if you will, from the Obama administration to the, to Seoul really. The U.S. policy toward North Korea also is still focused on complete and verifiable, quote: "*complete and verifiable elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons, their existing nuclear programs, as well as its ballistic missile programs*".

Again, very comprehensive. We're talking about weapons, the program and the delivery system. And I'll come back to that again when we talk about OpCon.

The final point I want to make is one that jumped out at me when I first read the statement. It has to do with the vision for the future of the Korean Peninsula. Quote: "*We aim to build a better future for all people on the Korean Peninsula, establish a durable peace on the peninsula, leading to a reunification on the principles of free democracy and a market economy.*"

When you read that statement, there is no doubt in anybody's mind who's going to win the Korean civil war, is there? That North Korea has just been consigned again to the trash man of history, in terms of a policy statement. And this is, in my mind, a return to where we were in the mid-nineties in terms of U.S. policy and remember that everything changed with sunshine and then we're talking about coexistence, peaceful... and then we weren't talking about necessarily,

about a reunified peninsula that essentially puts Seoul in charge. We kind of finesse that. Well, this is a return to that. This vision statement is, I think, pretty important. It's, as I say, it seems to me in many ways it repudiates some of the, some of the policy positions that both Seoul and Washington have had over the last, since late may be ninety-seven, ninety-eight.

So that, that's why I think the vision statement provides important context that hopefully can become clearer when I go through the OpCon issue. The other contextual point came up only briefly today in the discussion and that's the China factor.

In the China factor and this notion of strategic flexibility are interrelated. One more digression. About... in the late nineties I wrote a paper talking about the future of the Korean Peninsula and came up – who knows where I picked... – but I said the objective of the drill is to have strategic flexibility for U.S. forces. Some... Larry Nicksch, earlier today, said it was U.S. doctor. I don't think it's U.S. doctor, it is just a catch phrase. But the notion is taken whole, but what it really means is the U.S. as a strategic objective would like to be able to use the forces on the Korean Peninsula, the way it uses its forces in Japan.

In other words, in Japan we can kind of come and go as we please. Do what we want to do. We know we have an obligation to defend Japan but if we want to get the ships on the way, or the airplanes go somewhere fly away, we do it. There are no “Mother, may Is” involved. And that's the context for strategic flexibility at least as people have thought about in the past.

Well, not only does South Korea worry about the notion of strategic flexibility in U.S. forces, somehow getting them involved in a Taiwan confrontation, but China worries about it a lot! And while the U.S. thought we had worked this out with Seoul, when you read some of the commentaries that come from the summit meeting in the Chinese and South Korean Summit

meeting, it's clear that China continues to beat up on their South Korean colleagues at these meetings. About this strategic flexibility, what does it really mean? Does it mean that the U.S. is going to eventually contain China using forces under the Korean peninsula? Is the U.S. really going to get involved in Taiwan?

And that puts South Korea in a box, as we talked about a little bit today because China sees strategic flexibility as a euphemism, that cloaks direct involvement of U.S. forces in Korea in ways that are antithetical to the interests of China.

And because of China – because of geography, excuse me – Korea needs to balance its relations between China. In fact, at a conference I attended last year one of the South Korean presentations made the point. That South Korea tries really hard, it has to achieve harmony between its alliance with the United States and the ROK-Chinese strategic partnership.

So this is a strategic dilemma that policy makers in Seoul have to address. Balancing the U.S. alliance, the relationship and making sure that China doesn't paint South Korea into the corner as an enemy. And, so that's one of these things I think that you have to keep in the back of your mind in terms of context.

And perhaps the differing view is of what strategic flexibility means in Seoul versus what strategic flexibility may mean in either Hawaii or the Pacific Commander in Washington D.C.

What I'm going to do now is talk about up gun shift. And I'm going to do it listing by what I consider the advantages from a U.S. point of view. And then what are the disadvantages from a U.S. point of view. And then, I'll conclude and I'll be able to take some of your questions.

The advantages for the United States: first, these are not necessarily in any priority order, but somebody here... Bruce would like to have seven, as it turns out that I have seven advantages and I'll try to balance out with seven disadvantages to make sure that I am giving a balanced perspective here.

First, enhanced strategic flexibility and the use of U.S. forces in the regional less tatter to the defense of South Korea and closer, more closely, approximate the Japanese U.S. model. By having separate commands that make it easier, at least this is the goal, in a conceptual goal level.

Second advantage from the United States point of view clearly places the ground force of defense of Korea a responsibility for the Republic of Korea's army. There is no question who has the leading role in the defense of Korea in the case of an invasion.

Thirdly, over the long term, it will make it easier if eventually somebody decides – I want to pull out all U.S. ground forces out of Korea at some point. It would be easier to do that, with the way of CFC of having a separate command.

Forth advantage. It removes a sovereignty based irritant from having a negative impact on the U.S.-ROK alliance over the long term. Bruce earlier, at the earlier panel suggested that if only the people of South Korea understood, they wouldn't have a worry about sovereignty. So, all we have to do is educate the people. Well, again, that's a nice rhetorical point but, you know, talking about educating people so they understand military command relationships and commanding control, strikes me as a bridge too far. But perhaps, it's a worth it objective to remove that problem.

The fifth advantage, if things go badly for the U.S. and the Marine Corp presence in Okinawa, I would suggest to you that the outcome shift and the strategic flexibility issue makes it easier for the U.S. to be interested in putting marines in South Korea.

As I understand it, one of the reasons to that, the Marine Corps as of now says, "I'm not interested" is because they are worried about getting marines marooned in South Korea and never be able to get them out. Because of the strategic flexibility issue.

So, but, once again that's one of those things that people have talked about off and on. Maybe there are some marines that could go there and whatever. It's not necessarily a bad conceptual thing, as long as the United States was convinced that you would have the same flexibility in the use of those marine forces as they do today in Okinawa. And would think, pick up and go where they chose, when they chose, without having to ask anybody for permission.

The sixth advantage and potentially by this establishing CFC, it potentially facilitates trilateral U.S., Japan and South Korean cooperation by putting Pacific command firmly in charge of both places. Because, the way... if CFC goes away (U.S. forces) Korea will report as they do now to Pacific command. And there won't be any direct shot into Washington. And so Pacific command could actually be the common superior between the U.S. force in Japan and U.S. force in Korea and actually, could actually perhaps facilitate closer trilateral cooperation.

And seven, and we should not dismiss this, is the officers in both the United States and the Korean military that you talked to today, actually think going forward with the OpCon transfer will improve things. We ought not to dismiss this, these opinions that are strictly saying that they are parting in line and they have to say that because that's their job.

I don't believe that U.S. four-star generals are being this ingenious about this. When they testify to Congress and what have here. So, we have to at least take into account that the view is that this will actually make things better in both capability and readiness. So those are the seven advantages, if you will, that I see for the OpCon transfer.

Now, the disadvantages. I think the number one disadvantage is that the U.S. is not all in. As long as you have U.S. commander and CFC, who is the stuckee, he is the man responsible for the defense of Korea if North Korea comes south, he is the guy! And he is a direct chain, his chain to command also brings with it all of the force of the United States of America that President and Secretary of Defense are willing to commit to the defense of Korea, that he has a direct relationship with to do that. And so, if you break that, you're not all in, in my view. And so that's, I think, an important issue and it relates directly to the second disadvantage is that it undercuts the turns. And it also suggests, because you don't have that direct connection, it also brings, raises doubts about the viability of the nuclear umbrella. Do we? Is it still as credible, you don't have a U.S. commander there anymore? You only have the guy in charge of the U.S. forces, which will mainly be Air force and Navy forces. And so, at least if I was in Seoul I would say, "Gee, if I do this, is this going to screw up the umbrella?" That would be something that would worry me, so that's a disadvantage potential.

Third, the timing is terrible. 2012 we have elections here, we have elections scheduled in South Korea.

Fourth, we beat this one to death earlier today and does the unity of command in the face of an undiminished threat combined staffs are hard to put together establish and making sure they work together build up personal relation? Remember that combined staff among other things, it

develops habits of cooperation, because you are dealing with these people on a day in and day out basis.

Having two separate staffs is something called coordination and in the any time you see something that we're going to coordinate, an alarm bell should be going off.

Fifth, the Republic of Korea commanding control, the C4I SR and all that we've heard today is not going to be ready.

Sixth disadvantage, new untested work plans are going to take lots of time to sort out and it's not going to be one exercise or two exercises that are going to do it. It takes a long time to get these things right. We were talking at the table at lunch today and U.S. ground forces and U.S. Air forces are still fighting over close air support and issues like that, at 50 years on... well, since 1944. And so, can you imagine what the air pieces of this would be like if you'd have U.S. Air Forces providing close air support and the Korean ground commander expecting that to work.

And remember, air power is one of the key advantages that the alliance brings to the table. That's our key leverage point. And we've got to have the air power part, it has to be done right.

Now, my seventh disadvantage is more speculant and I will prepare, will be prepared to take a number of spears on this one. But, it seems to me that we need to be careful of what's the next shoe in the nuclear issue that the North Koreans are going to drop.

They may test again, but it seems to me the next significant potentially strategically ground changing event will be when they weaponize that weapon and they can put it in the end of a ballistic missile and credibly say, "*We can shoot this into Japan or into South Korea*", what have

you. That's going to change the strategic atmosphere in all of Northeast Asia and perhaps more broadly.

Well, presumably they are beavering away on that right now. And so it's going to be only a matter of time, and that matter of time could be in 2012. That all of a sudden, and now we are facing a North Korean weaponized deliverable, a deliverable weapon that we have to spend a lot of time thinking about. So, do we want to be weakened in deterrence in the time when this issue might drop?

And, I guess this is my way for it, this is even more speculative. If we do this, is it going to make the denuclearization objective that both of our countries have more difficult? Now, I realize this is, this may be counter-factual, but... by... this is, this is establishing that CFC, we are sending a message to North Korean observers that we have a public display of indifference about your conventional threat.

Why should we worry about it? We can, we can disestablish this combined command. And is that going to reinforce the arguments for those in North Korea who say, "We need North... we need nuclear weapons because that's our own real leverage that they won't worry about our conventional forces." This is speculation, but I mean, we need to be careful when we think about what we're doing here and how it could affect thinking in North Korea in ways we may not have anticipated.

So, where do I come out? First, as I said, I don't think that U.S. leadership has been deliberately this ingenuous on our assessment of ROK capability. Although, now as probably as time grows closer, perhaps people are becoming a little more... a little less optimistic.

I think OpCon Transfer is a good idea, for the future, when the North Koreans rep really has diminished. Until then, I think it's simply illogical to disassemble a unified command, create two parallel commands with no common superior in the face of a credible threat.

However, since this plan was put in motion, at the behest of the South Korean government, it will probably take a request from present leader President Obama to show, to slow this train down.

But, happily, given the good relationship between the two presidents (and it is a good relationship, a very good relationship), I see no reason why (if that request was made) the U.S. would not go along with this. I cannot imagine that President Obama would push back hard against that. So, if the request was made, I suspect that the U.S. would be willing to kick the can down the road, in the sense of maybe not unscrewing, but just deciding to put it off for a few years until something better turned up.

So that's kind of where I come out and I thank you very much for the chance to talk to you about this and I will be ready to take your questions.

[Applause]

Jim Delaney. I don't know if they are going to bring mics here, I think you are going to have to shout. But you have a good voice Jim, go ahead.

[Jim DELANEY]

... to be the subject to a national intelligence assessment. In other words, would the intelligence community be barging into policy, politics and military affairs by doing a national estimate on the consequences of going ahead with OpCon transfer?

[Michael McDEVITT:]

You know the answer to that better than I. But I think you could credibly argue that you could, it would be a useful event to have an estimate of some sort and say here is the plan and the policy, what are the implications for how this will affect North Korean perceptions, thinking in what it might meet. I think that would be a useful drill, absolutely. Certainly KDO would be involved in helping them shape that. *[indistinct voice]*...

[Michael McDEVITT:]

See, I got your key.

[Katy OH-HASSIG:]

I think that my idea is a footnote idea because Jim is working also for IDA. But you know that a couple of years ago with the brilliant scholars including Scott Snyder and Michael Green and everybody. I did the, I led the dissertation study in the U.S.-ROK alliance. Our group was divided, but we said, we feel like parents who have a beautiful daughter and sons are going to prom night. Particularly if you are the father of a daughter, you worry about, will this girl come back on time, drink too much and all these questions, but you grew them to be a mature, bright, responsible adult and let it go. So I told the Korean government exactly for the last three years, but they already kicked in the soccer field and if you this time back down, saying that, "We're not ready yet, you may never be ready" because... *[interruption in the recording]*... very angry and frustrated Japan and all the economies chasing up Korea. I think we should do it and, but I was shocked when I was in Korea to hear this voice, that voice, third voice, first voice. I actually asked the Korean government very discreetly that you should have intelligence estimate, what has been done, what has been achieved. Honestly, among you, if you are not evaluating your

operational capability, feasibility, your ability, you may lose the big picture here. So I think, I'm just equaling what Jim said to be a very valid point. Thanks!

[Michael McDEVITT:]

Thanks, Katy, that was a good statement, and I think, a good counter-availing point of view. If you don't get ready now, when are you going to be ready? So, that's my vision... I can see a hand waving ...

[Audience Member:]

Admiral, thank you for your remarks. I would like to ask you an issue that hasn't come up this morning and that is the U.S.-Japanese alliance. Obviously, it will be impacted by whatever society might outcome. The Japanese, of course, rely on the alliance in Korea to sure up their situation on the Korean Peninsula. Would you care to comment on that?

[Michael McDEVITT:]

Sure I can. The interesting thing... I almost fell out of my chair last fall when I was there. Scott Snyder and I were having dinner after a conference with a group of well respected South Korean former officials and wise men and when they opined that they were really worried about how badly the U.S.-Japanese relationship was going and that the U.S. had to do something to make sure that the Japanese get it right so that they don't mess up that alliance and therefore, have an indirect impact on us. So, clearly the people in South Korea who think strategically – and it seems to me that there is a lot of them that do, most of them, they do – recognize the relationship between the two alliances and how in combination they contribute to stability in East Asia and I

would be very worried if for some unforeseen reason and I don't think this is going to happen, but if U.S.-Japan alliance would go south.

I think that we're managing the alliance issue with the marines in Okinawa, but it's important that when you think about U.S. military capability in the region and what the value added of all of the forces, we are only talking about the marine piece of that. We are not talking the Naval and Air Forces. That's not as if the Japanese were saying, "We want all U.S. forces to go" which would be a disaster for both, for regional stability as well as for us. So, I don't know if that addresses your question, but there is still work to do. Work on what's going to happen, what have you. That we're only half way through that book.

OK? A couple of more and then... Yes sir. We've got the mic right there

[Peter KANG:]

I have two questions. This is a general question, not particularly for you about ... maybe relevant to this morning's discussion. So, I have two questions. One is what are the possibilities of China getting into North Korea to help out either in case of war or when North Korea collapses, the North Korean's regime might request China to come in to help them out. That's one question, the China question. If that happens, then, what's scene, the possibility, what we do, that kind of thing.

The second question is, I had this question a long time about nuclear umbrella. If North Korea attacks the South nuclearly or otherwise we say that we'd have a nuclear umbrella, we can hit you. Ok, does the United States really have the guts to do that after Hiroshima and all this? If North Korea attacks South Korea, I mean, they are an evil regime, it's OK, but is the United States ready to, hit Pyongyang? Kinjo is not going to be in Pyongyang. So, how many cities will

it bomb in North Korea for example? Is the nuclear umbrella make sense? It doesn't make sense to me really. So, is there any comment or if you don't have an answer, you can ...

[Michael McDEVITT:]

I'm sure I'd be happy to comment. As I said, I'm not representing the U.S. Government so... First in terms of China and North Korea, I know for a fact that there are many people in South Korea who worry quite a lot about a North Korea collapse situation and that China is going to move north to at least seal the border. Keep lots of refugees from flowing there and also perhaps worry about North Korean boat people and that sort of thing. So, there are people in South Korea who are, who worry quite a lot about this.

Let me just say that that's about the best you can do. There's very little likelihood that anybody is going to try to militarily push them back out. But by the same token, I have, I don't believe that China has any desire to annex part of North Korea permanently. They are perfectly happy keeping the North Koreans in the river as the frontier there. And, I don't think that China harbors any long term ambitions about annexing part of the Korean peninsula. But I still, it is a possibility that PLA could move north, excuse me, south for a period of time. And as I say, once that happens, they will be very little anybody could do about it.

In terms of the nuclear umbrella, you know, there is, the U.S. has had these arguments for fifty years. First NATO is credible with the trade Washington for Berlin, all of those arguments about how do you guarantee that the United States will in fact retaliate with nuclear weapons if that allied country is attacked with a nuclear weapon. And we've gone through many numbers and different variations on how to persuade people that we would live up to our obligation and you have to take a verbal promise from the United States that we really would. I would suggest to

you that of all the countries in the world that most Americans wouldn't mind bombing, it would be North Korea.

You know, let's face it. North Korea, North Korea holds the dubious distinction of being the United States longest running enemy, official enemy. People we can't talk about it enemy. People that we go to the hill and talk about them as a foe and a threat. We've been talking about it that way since 1950, here we are sixty years later, that's a new record for enemy. And so, I'm being a little bit flip here, but the point is, I think that if all of the countries were, if there was an issue of credibility with the use of retaliating, the use of nuclear weapons, there would be fewer inhibitions in Washington D.C. over doing that to North Korea than to any other county. That's probably arguable, there's lots of people around here that's ...

[Applause]

[Scott SNYDER:]

Thank you very much Mike. I think you definitely proved that this was more entertaining than what we have gotten from U.S. Government officials and definitely more frank. And I want to thank everyone here for coming, we very much appreciate your participation in this and I think we'll all be watching this issue very carefully as things move forward. So, we're going to close here and thanks again for coming and maybe one more round of applause for Mike.

[Applause]

[Unintelligible voices]