1989

President Carter's Korean Withdrawal Policy

Tae Hwan Ok
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss

Part of the History Commons

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/2713

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.

Copyright © 1989 Tae Hwan Ok
PRESIDENT CARTER'S KOREAN
WITHDRAWAL POLICY

by
Tae Hwan Ok

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
November
1989
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was initiated and completed during my five years of study as a graduate student at the History Department of Loyola University of Chicago. The greatest debt I owe is to Professor Theodore J. Karamanski. As director, Dr. Karamanski has been intimately associated with my dissertation throughout the course of the study. He has generously given his time. His discussions, clarifications, and suggestions through the course of various drafts were especially fruitful.

I wish to thank other members of the committee, Dr. Sheldon S. Cohen and Dr. Mark A. Allee, for their helpful suggestions and comments.

I am especially indebted to my wife, Kyung Hee Ok (Mok), and my daughter, Justine Mina, for their encouragement and sacrifices.

I would like to extend my thanks to the following people for their invaluable assistance in this undertaking: Dr. Joseph A. Gagliano, Dr. Thomas L. Hogan, Dr. Bonnie Oh, Dr. James L. Penick, Dr. Barbara H. Rosenwein, Dr. Henry Cohen, Lorna R. Newman, and In Sik Imm.
VITA

The author, Tae Hwan Ok, is the son of Nam Oh Ok and So Soo (Yoon) Ok. He was born on December 27, 1947, in Jin Dong, Kyung Sang Nam Do, Korea.

His elementary education was obtained in the public schools of Jin Dong and Masan, Korea. His secondary education was completed in 1966 at the Masan High School.

After graduating from high school, he studied in the History Department of the University of Sung Kyun Kwan in Seoul for one year, and then transferred to the English Literature Department of Yon Sei University in Seoul. When he was a junior, he became the chairman of the student senate.

In that same year, he joined the Army. After three years service as an artilleryman, he continued his studies at the university. After graduating, he worked at the Oriental Fire & Marine Insurance company in Seoul for 5 years as an assistant manager of the Marine & Aviation Department.

In January 1985 he received a Master's degree in history from Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois. In September 1985, Mr. Ok was granted an assistantship in history at Loyola University, which enable him to complete Ph.D. in history in January 1990.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Origins of the Withdrawal Plan</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. The Military Balance Between North and South Korea</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. The Withdrawal Decision Process</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. The Singlaub Affair</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Congressional Conservatives vs. Liberal Democrats; The Singlaub Hearings</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Habib and Brown's Trip to Seoul</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. The Byrd Amendment</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. The Tenth Annual Security Consultative Conference</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Samuel S. Stratton and Congressional Opponents</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Military Opinion</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. Scholarly Opinion</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv
XIII. NEWSPAPERS VIEWS ............................. 151
XIV. PUBLIC OPINION ............................. 169
XV. KOREAGATE AND KOREAN MILITARY AID PACKAGE ............................. 180
XVI. PRESIDENTIAL RECONSIDERATION ............. 199
XVII. SOUTH KOREAN REACTIONS ..................... 209
XVIII. CARTER'S TRIP TO KOREA AND SUSPENSION OF THE PULLOUT ............................. 239
XIX. JAPANESE REACTIONS ............................. 250
XX. CONCLUSION ............................. 266
BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................. 275
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CP    Cleveland Press
CSM   Christian Science Monitor
CST   Chicago Sun Times
CT    Chicago Tribune
CQWR  Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report
DN    Detroit News
DSB   Department of State Bulletin
FEER  Far Eastern Economic Review
HP    Houston Post
LAT   Los Angeles Times
NYT   New York Times
PPP   Public Papers of the Presidents
SFC   San Francisco Chronicle
SLPD  St. Louis Post Dispatch
USNWR U.S. News & World Report
WCPD  Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents
WHCFSF White House Central File, Subject File
WP    Washington Post
WSJ   Wall Street Journal
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Korean peninsula has been geopolitically critical to the neighboring three great powers in the Far East - China, Russia, and Japan. The peninsula has been regarded by them as either a defensive barrier or a dangerous exposed flank. Therefore, each of these three great powers have over the centuries made strenuous efforts to keep the Korean peninsula under their control.¹

Unlike these three great Asian powers, the United States, located about 6,000 miles away from the peninsula, showed little interest in Korea except for missionary activity after opening official diplomatic relations in 1882.² In 1901 Admiral Frederick Rogers urged the United States Government to negotiate for a naval base in Korea in order to check the Russian and German fleets in that area. However, the proposal


was rejected by the General Board of the United States Navy because Korea was located far from the American Naval base in the Philippines and was too close to Russian and German naval bases. The following year, the United States government again considered building an American naval base at Masanpo in Korea, but the plan was canceled because of the General Board's opinion that "a Korean base would be superfluous if Japan were an ally. With Japan an enemy, it would be untenable."  

In 1905 the United States consented to Japan's control over Korea in accordance with the Taft-Katsura Agreement. The Japanese victory over Russia had aroused considerable uneasiness over the security of the Philippines. The United

3. William Reynolds Braisted, The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897 - 1909 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), 131. Immediately after the Spanish American War, the U.S. Navy urgently needed a body to study newly gained overseas possessions. So, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long established the General Board of the Navy in March 1900 under the presidency of Admiral George Dewey. The body had no executive function but played a purely advisory role. The Board generally made recommendation to the Secretary of the Navy on policies, war plans, naval bases, etc.

4. Ibid., 134.

States also believed a strong Japan could check Russian expansion in the Far East and would help to maintain the balance of power in that area. The agreement over Korea was a small price to pay for good relations with Asia's most powerful nation.

After 1905 Korea became a forgotten nation for the United States. America's ignorance of Korea continued throughout World War II. The United States's relations with the Korean people were reopened in September 1945, a month after World War II ended, when American forces landed in Korea in order to accept the surrender of Japanese forces south of the 38th parallel. The United States agreed to let the Soviet Union perform the same function in the rest of the peninsula. 6

In addition to disarming Japanese military personnel, the occupation forces under General John R. Hodge had another mission, to keep order in the nation until the Koreans could organize their own government. 7

In 1948, President Harry S. Truman decided to withdraw American troops from South Korea, partly because the occupation forces completed their mission when the South Koreans formed their own government through free elections in 1948 and partly because his National Security Council

---


7. Ibid., 7.
recommended the evacuation of American troops. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had decided that "Korea was of little strategic value to the United States and any commitment to U.S. use of military forces in Korea would be ill-advised and impracticable in view of the potentialities of the overall world situation."\(^8\)

In the middle of September 1948, a month after the birth of the South Korean Government, American units began to pull out. The withdrawal of about 45,000 soldiers from South Korea was completed by the end of June 1949, leaving only a token United States military presence.\(^9\)

The heavy military imbalance between South and North Korea and Secretary of State Dean Acheson's declaration of 5 January 1950 that South Korea would not be included in the United States new defense line encouraged Kim Il Sung and Soviet premier Joseph V. Stalin to communize the whole peninsula. The North, supported by Russia, invaded the South on Sunday morning, 25 June 1950.\(^10\)

Even though the United States still believed that Korea was militarily valueless, the Truman Administration, based on

---


its Cold War strategy, quickly decided to defend South Korea.\textsuperscript{11} The United States forces participated in the Korean war as leader of the United Nations forces. During the Korean War, American forces in Korea reached a peak of eight infantry divisions and supporting air and naval forces, total of 302,000 men, of whom 33,629 lost their lives and 103,000 were wounded.\textsuperscript{12}

After the armistice of 1953, the United States pulled back six divisions, leaving the Second and Seventh Divisions in South Korea to keep the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954.\textsuperscript{13} By 1971, the total United States force in Korea had dwindled to 61,000 men.\textsuperscript{14} Later a major reduction occurred when President Nixon removed the Seventh Division, about 20,000 troops, in accordance with so called "Nixon Doctrine."\textsuperscript{15}

At that time Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird recommended that the president withdraw an additional two-thirds of the Second Division by 1974, but President Nixon forestalled Secretary Laird's plan because he feared that the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Neustadt and May, \textit{Thinking}, 35.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Lee, \textit{Impact}, 57-60. The Mutual Defense Treaty signed in August 1953, and entered into force in November 1954. The treaty provided the basis for the further presence of United States forces in Korea after the Korean War.
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{NYT}, 17 May 1978.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 10 March 1977.
\end{itemize}
South Korean Government would pull back its 50,000 troops who were fighting in the Vietnam War as an ally of the United States.\textsuperscript{16}

According to information provided to the House Armed Services Committee by General Bernard W. Rogers, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, the Laird plan remained in effect until August 1972, only to be cancelled later after a general review of the security of Northeast Asia, especially of Japan and South Korea. As Rogers put it:

Based on a reassessment of the situation in Northeast Asia and the contribution these ground forces made to the total deterrent strategy... It was felt that the division took on a much greater significance than its combat role. In the political military dimension it manifested to friend and foe the strength of the U.S. commitment to the stability in Northeast Asia and the defense of Korea and Japan. Withdrawals from Korea, particularly when coupled with the Vietnam drawdowns, would have called into question U.S. intentions, reliability, the credibility of U.S. commitments, and the future role of the U.S. as a power in the Western Pacific.\textsuperscript{17}

Meanwhile, having been shocked by President Nixon's decision to withdraw the Seventh Division from South Korea, the South Korean Government began to prepare a self-defense strategy which included the rapid development of the defense industries. At the same time, it strengthened efforts to

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17} House Committee on Armed Services, Investigations Subcommittee, \textit{Hearings on Review of the Policy Decision to Withdraw United Ground Forces from Korea}, 95th Cong., 1st and 2d sess., 1977-8, HASC no. 95-71 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1978), 89. (Hereafter cited as \textit{Cong. HASC 95-71}.)
influence American policy makers to keep the Second Division in South Korea until a military balance could be achieved with North Korea. This led to an illegal lobbying scandal which involved the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), the businessman Park Tong Sun, and Congressional clerk Suzi Park Thompson.

By 1976, when James Earl Carter was campaigning for the presidency, no other country was receiving as much criticism from the American news-media as South Korea. Newspapers were filled with accounts of the illegal lobbying scandal in the United States as well as of human rights violations in Korea. Press stories, editorials, letters to editors, columns, TV documentaries, and even church letters competed in criticizing the immorality of the Seoul Government in its efforts to buy Congressional influence and restrict civil liberties. American opinion, at the time of the Watergate affair, was very critical; the scandal was called "Koreagate." As criticism of Koreagate mounted, more politicians joined the anti-Korea campaign. The restriction of economic and military aid was advocated. Therefore, Korea became an "Achilles' Heel" to the administration of President Gerald R. Ford, at a time when it was fighting for its own political future.18

Having believed that most Americans would favor the

Korean withdrawal policy because of their negative images of Korea and their Vietnam experiences, candidate Carter broached the withdrawals as one of his major campaign issues from the beginning of his Presidential campaign. During the primary election, however, few Americans seemed interested in Carter's troop pullout issue.19

The brutal murder of two United States army officers by North Korean guards at the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in August 197620 reminded the American public of the Vietnam trauma, and as the election day approached, more people listened to Carter's advocacy of a Korean pull-out. Carter's military non-involvement policy became more vivid when he stated in an interview with a reporter from the New York Times on 16 October 1976 that he would not deploy American troops even if an Eastern European country were to fight against Russian domination. Candidate Carter also made it clear that he would not try to protect Taiwan against a Chinese military or naval attack.21

Carter's new Korean policy became one of the major campaign issues when President Ford criticized Carter's Korean withdrawal program as "an invitation to disaster." Ford added,


20. CT, 20 August 1976, sec. 1.

Mr. Carter's approach has a strong flavor of isolationism. If it is applied to practice in the same way that it is described in campaign oratory, there is a significant risk it could lead to a major international crisis. Until the last day of the presidential campaign, the two candidates continued to debate the merits of the Korean withdrawal.

As soon as President Carter took the Oval Office in January 1977, he began to form a new framework for American foreign policy based on moral value and social justice rather than the old balance of power system. In building a new world order, he also advocated that the United States should cooperate with world powers rather than act with excessive "fear of communism." President Carter made one of the most radical changes in United States global strategy since the Korean War by attempting to remove all United States ground troops from South Korea. At the same time, he advocated increasing United States military strength in Europe.

In accordance with his new global strategy, President Carter's new Koreanization plan proceeded without getting significant public attention or Congressional objection until

22. Ibid., 27 October 1976.


General John K. Singlaub, Chief of Staff of the United States Forces in South Korea, publicly criticized it by alleging that the proposed withdrawal plan would lead to war.25

Immediately after he criticized the President, General Singlaub was removed from his Korean post by the President. This incident touched off the noisiest clash over civilian control of the military since during the Korean War when President Harry S. Truman summoned General Douglas MacArthur to Washington and forced his retirement. The Singlaub affair received heavy American news media coverage, and it was followed by Congressional debates and heated academic and public discussion on the issue. These controversial debates about the nature and extent of United States strategic interests in Korea continued among Americans as well as concerned foreigners until the President finally suspended his Korean pullout plan in July 1979.

This is a study of President Carter's Korean withdrawal policy from its conception to its adoption by the Carter Administration, the reactions to that policy, and its eventual rejection. The goal is to better understand the formation and meaning of President Carter's withdrawal policy, to analyze domestic reaction, and to understand how this policy influenced United States relations with its key allies in the Far East, South Korea and Japan.

25 Washington Post, 19 May 1977. (Hereafter cited as WP)
ORIGINS OF THE WITHDRAWAL PLAN

Jimmy Carter first pledged to withdraw United States ground forces from South Korea in 1975, during the earliest days of his campaign for President. However, the roots for Carter's idea can be found in his Annapolis Naval Academy school days and his career as a naval officer. As a naval academy student, Carter was tremendously influenced by traditional naval thinking that the United States should support foreign countries with air and sea power, and only if necessary with mobile landing forces, rather than stationing ground forces abroad.¹

In 1974 and early 1975, while Carter was still governor of Georgia, he consulted with several defense experts such as retired Admiral Gene R. LaRocque, director of the privately founded Center for Defense Information. Admiral LaRocque recalled what he told Carter in his telephone conversation:

North Korean President Kim Il Sung or South Korean President Park Chung Hee or their successors could

get us involved in a land war in Asia and it would tear this country apart. We have to think of the Middle East and Europe. On a scale of importance to us, I'd put Korea about 1 and the Middle East and Europe about 10.²

During this time, Carter realized the dangerous "tripwire" role of the Second Division in South Korea. An attack from the North would require automatic American involvement in another Asian land war.

When Carter announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination in Atlanta, Georgia on 12 December 1974, the American public knew little about him.³ At the beginning of December 1974, in the two Gallup polls on name awareness of possible Democrat candidates, Carter was even not listed as a possible candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination:

**Democratic Name Awareness**

George Wallace ............... 94%
Hubert Humphrey ............... 91%
George McGovern ............... 86%
Edmund Muskie .................. 83%
Henry Jackson .................. 58%
Morris Udall .................. 38%
Lloyd Bentsen .................. 13%

². Ibid. According to LaRocque, Carter carefully listened to what LaRocque told him but did not express his opinion on the issue.

³. Margaret C. Thompson, ed., President Carter (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1977), 82. When Carter announced his candidacy, only Congressman Morris K. Udall had officially declared his candidacy. They were followed by Senator Henry M. Jackson (6 February) and Lloyd M. Bentsen (17 February). Governor George C. Wallace announced his candidacy on 12 November 1975.
Even three months after Carter's official announcement of his candidacy, a Gallup poll showed that he received only one percent of national support.⁵ Therefore, at the beginning of the campaign, Carter urgently needed to obtain national recognition by establishing himself as a serious candidate. For that purpose, Carter first had to prove himself as a southern favorite son among a group of southern candidates who included Governor of Alabama George C. Wallace, a conservative who was an independent presidential candidate in 1968, Senator Lloyd Bentsen, a conservative Democrat of Texas, and Congressman Morris K. Udall, a liberal Democrat of Arizona.⁶ Carter had to overcome Wallace's strength among conservative blue-collar voters. At the same time, he had to compete with a favorite southern liberal, Congressman Udall to get liberal support in the South. Because Udall had a record of supporting

---


⁵ Ibid., 443.

American involvement in the Vietnam war during the Johnson Administration, Carter considered the Korean withdrawal policy as a main campaign issue to differentiate his position from Congressman Udall, and other possible liberal Democratic candidates, such as Senator Hubert Humphrey and Senator Edmund Muskie. The Korean issue would also differentiate him from more conservative Democratic candidates such as Senator Henry Jackson, Senator Lloyd Bentsen, and Governor George C. Wallace. In addition, Carter hoped that he could overcome his opponents' charges that Carter had no experience in foreign policy by advocating this revolutionary foreign policy. While Carter referred himself as "a good southern alternative to Wallace," he carefully began to advocate the Korean pullout policy.

On 16 January 1975, a month after declaring his candidacy for President, Carter stated at a meeting with editors of the Washington Post that he favored the pullout of United States ground troops from South Korea as a means of saving tax payer's money. He would begin the process by removing about 5,000 troops from South Korea as soon as he took the Oval


9. Thompson, Carter, 82.
Two weeks later, Carter had an important meeting with seven officials of the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C. At the four hour meeting, they discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the Korean withdrawal plan. Senior fellow Barry M. Blechman emphasized the tripwire role of American troops in Korea and advised Carter to remove them as well as nuclear weapons within four or five years. Dr. Blechman recalled what he told Carter as follows:

I told Carter we should take out the nukes (nuclear weapons) right off and phase out the ground troops over four or five years. I said the most important reason was to avoid getting the U.S. involved with ground forces almost automatically in a new war which is, of course, why the South Koreans want them there.

In May 1975, on his way to Tokyo meeting of the Trilateral Commission, a month after the fall of Saigon,


11. Oberdorfer, "Carter's Decision," WP, 12 June 1977. Stuart Eizenstat, who accompanied Carter, said that the Brookings meeting was "a significant development" in Carter's thinking.

12. Ibid. According to Dr. Blechman, Carter carefully listened but did not express his opinion on the issue.
Carter told his aide Peter Bourne that he wanted not only to withdraw the ground troops from South Korea but also to remove American air force units while significantly bolstering South Korean air defenses. Carter said, "What I think we should do is strengthen the air force of South Korea and withdraw U. S. troops on a rapid schedule, with adequate air cover, so they can defend themselves."

However, Trilateral Commission members warned him that a strong air force might tempt the Seoul Government to make a preemptive strike against Pyong Yang. Carter, therefore, changed his mind and advocated the maintenance of reinforced American air forces in South Korea rather than undertaking the drastic strengthening of the South Korean air force. In a news conference in Tokyo on 28 May 1975, Carter confirmed this Korean proposals and announced a five year troop pullout plan. In addition, Carter told Japanese correspondents that he would seek guarantees from the two Communist super powers that they would prevent North Korea from attacking the South.

---

13. Ibid. The Trilateral Commission was a private policy research group which provided Carter with many of his advisors later. According to Oberdorfer, Carter's campaign staff asked Harvard Law School professor Jerome Cohen, an Asian expert, to write Carter's campaign statement to be delivered at the Tokyo meeting. Dr. Cohen met Carter in Cambridge, Mass., on May 13 and suggested him a moderate pullout. At this meeting, Carter told Dr. Cohen that he wanted to remove American troops from South Korea immediately.

14. Ibid. Oberdorfer argued that some time later Carter dropped the idea of seeking an advance guarantee from China and Russia. Actually, Carter never gave up this idea until he suspended the Korea pullout plan in 1979. Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith, Memoirs of a President (New York: Bantam Book,
Carter continued to advocate the withdrawal of U.S. ground troops from South Korea throughout his campaign for president. On 6 May 1976, Carter declared in an interview on the Public Broadcasting System that "I would prefer to withdraw all of our troops and land forces from South Korea over a period of years - three or four years whatever."\textsuperscript{15}

On 23 June Carter delivered an address at the Foreign Policy Association. He stated that;

\begin{quote}
I believe it will be possible to withdraw our ground forces from South Korea on a phased basis over a time span to be determined after consultation with both South Korea and Japan. At the same time, it should be made clear to the South Korean government that its internal oppression is repugnant to our people and undermines the support for our commitment there.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Even after the brutal murder of two American officers by North Korean guards armed with the axes and pikes at the DMZ around Panmunjom in August 1976,\textsuperscript{17} Carter did not give up his hope that U.S. ground troops could be brought home within three or four years. At this point, however, he began to hedge his plan by emphasizing that he would consult with both the South Korean and Japanese governments in advance. He also proposed

\textsuperscript{15} Cong. HASC 95-61, 7.


\textsuperscript{17} \textit{CT}, 20 August 1976, sec. 1.
a prior agreement with the Soviet Union in order to secure peace on the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{18}

While campaigning in Kansas City in October 1976, Carter, by then the Democratic presidential nominee, reaffirmed that he would remove nuclear weapons as well as the troops from South Korea if he became President. But by this time his position was becoming more conservative. He called for a phased pullout spread out over a five year period.\textsuperscript{19}

After he was elected, President-elect Carter became even more cautious about the Korean withdrawal policy, stressing prior consultation with South Korea and Japan. He said,

I want to establish a feeling within South Korea and within Japan that we won't do anything abrupt that will disturb them or upset their belief that we are still going to play a legitimate role in the Western Pacific.\textsuperscript{20}

Carter introduced the Korean withdrawal policy in order to distinguish himself from other presidential candidates. However, it did not attract American public attention during the primary campaign period. When the withdrawal became a main election issue immediately after the Panmunjom incident, the American public, reflecting the Koreagate scandal as well as the Vietnam tragedy, favored Carter's withdrawal policy rather

\textsuperscript{18} NYT, 6 September 1976. The New York Times commented that it was a not a very fruitful proposition because China, not Russia, was North Korea's real sponsor.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 17 October 1976.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 28 December 1976.
than President Ford's Korean policy of maintaining the status quo.

It was a rather close election and there was no big difference between the two candidates' positions on major campaign subjects like energy, taxes, budgets, education, and nuclear proliferation. Carter's popularity rested on his promise of a fresh, outsiders, perspective on post-Watergate government. The Korean policy was an example of this and it contributed to Carter's successful campaign.

After Carter won the election, however, he began to soften his tone by emphasizing prior consultation with the concerned nations because by then he was no more a candidate and his outspoken claim for the pullout could harm the United States' relations with its key allies in Asia, South Korea and Japan, even before he took the Oval Office.

---

CHAPTER III

THE MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA

Assessments of the relative military balance between North and South Korea in 1977 differed, but generally agreed that South Korea possessed advantages in population and economy, while the North enjoyed a nearly two to one advantage in fire power.

According to various sources, the North Koreans, who preferred offensive deployment, had superior military strength in ground, naval, and air forces. The North had more ground divisions with larger numbers of tanks, artillery pieces, mortars, and rocket launchers than had the South. They also had twice the combat aircraft and a better air defense system. Moreover, many North Korean pilots had combat experience in the Vietnam War or in the Middle East where they aided North Vietnam and Egypt. The North also had a four to one advantage in naval combat ships and possessed 12 submarines while the South had none. Moreover, at the sacrifice of the civil economy, the North had greater military production. In 1977 North Korea produced most of its own military equipment.
supported by Soviet and Chinese technical assistance. It included artillery, rocket launchers, anti-aircraft weapons, armored personnel carriers, and submarines and tanks except for more sophisticated weapons such as aircraft and missiles. The South only could produce half of its military equipment. In addition, the North had a big advantage in proximity to its major allies, China and Russia.\(^1\)

In the meantime, the South Koreans, who favored defensive deployment, had advantages in natural barriers of terrain and well-prepared defensive positions. They also had more ground force manpower, particularly with Vietnam combat experience, and a better educated military leadership. The South had a better transportation system and more modern combat aircraft, including 45 F-4 aircraft, while half of the North's jet fighters were obsolete Mig-15s and Mig-17s, which were used in the Korean War period. Moreover, the presence of three squadrons of American aircraft accentuated the South's air power advantage. In addition, the presence of United States ground troops equipped with tactical nuclear weapons kept the

ground force balance in the Korean peninsula.\(^2\)

A comparison of military balance between North and South Korea in the calendar year of 1977 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>16,720,000</td>
<td>35,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Forces</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>635,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve Forces</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ground Forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat Divisions</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Divisions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1-2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>1,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored Personnel Carriers</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td>3,024</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocket Launchers</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortars</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface To Air Missiles</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Aircraft-guns</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat Aircraft</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airlift Aircraft</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helicopters</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat Vessels</td>
<td>425-450</td>
<td>80-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submarines</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In May 1977 Richard G. Stilwell, an American Enterprise Institute defense expert, described the DMZ as the "world's most dangerous frontier," due to North Korea's high military capability and Kim Il Sung's belligerent attitude.\(^4\) He emphasized that the leaders in North Korea who provoked

\(^2\) Cong. LC 78-602389, 33-5; Humphrey Report, 27-33; Cong. HASC 95-61, 14-8; LAT, 25 May 1977; WP, 10 June 1977; FEER 96 (10 June 1977): 10-1.

\(^3\) Cong. LC 78-602389, 35; Humphrey Report, 27; LAT, 29 May 1977.

the Korean War in 1950 remained in power. In addition, they never changed their goals to liberate the South from so-called, "American imperialism and exploitation" by force. Stilwell also stressed the North's substantial advantages in military capability. Moreover, most of their combat forces, heavily armed with Soviet model offensive weapons, were deployed close to the DMZ and ready to attack the South "with no more than a few hours warning." He also claimed that North Korea had enough stockpiles to maintain an offensive war without support from China or Russia. Thus, Stilwell claimed, the withdrawal of the Second Division would significantly heighten the risk of war in Korea. 5

A government report titled "Military Strategy and Force Posture," which was completed in late June 1977 and submitted to President Carter by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, expressed a pessimistic opinion about the military balance in Korea. It alleged that the North could seize Seoul in a surprise attack. The top secret report warned that a further pullout of ground troops from South Korea would be dangerous. 6

A report, prepared by Senators Hubert H. Humphrey and John Glenn and submitted to the Committee on Foreign

5. Ibid., 18-20.

6. NYT, 6 January 1978. This was a part of a Pentagon report in response to Presidential Review Memorandum 10 (PRM-10), a top secret interagency study on American military posture.
Relations of the United States Senate on 9 January 1978, said that North Korea had "significant advantages in the critical first days of fighting, if the North can achieve tactical and strategic surprise." It added, however, that "these North Korean advantages are at least partly offset by the presence of the United States Second Infantry Division and its supporting forces in South Korea."

Meanwhile, a Pentagon analysts' report in May 1977 further affirmed that North Korea, armed with twice as many tanks and combat aircraft, had a certain initial military advantage in the event of conflict. On the other hand, the South, with nearly twice the population and a much stronger economy, would enjoy important advantages over the North if war dragged on. The report also said that neither the North nor the South was likely to fight war without outside support. Thus, existing arms inventories were militarily not the crucial factor.

A report of the Congressional Budget Office of 18 May 1977 claimed that North Korean armed forces were not strong enough to break through the DMZ which was dominated by "hills and ridges." Therefore, it said that American ground troops in South Korea would be no longer needed for purely military


reasons.\footnote{CSM, 20 May 20 1977.}

Judging the military balance between North and South Korea from the above reports, North Korea significantly outgunned the South in every field of army, air and naval power. Even though South Korea had the advantage in population, economic strength, and border topography, the military balance was still in favor of the North. The South could keep a military balance with the North only with the presence of United States forces armed with tactical nuclear weapons.\footnote{For detailed consideration on this issue, please see p. 22 or Humphrey Report, 27-33.} Therefore, the pullout without leaving the tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea would heighten the risk because the transfer of traditional weapons held by the Second Division to the South Korean Army still could not equalize the military balance in the Korean peninsula.

There is no evidence that candidate Carter understood the military balance between North and South Korea. Immediately after he was elected, however, President-elect Carter met the Joint Chiefs of Staff twice to discuss military affairs, including the Korean issue. Therefore, Carter must have known the military balance in Korea by the time he took the Oval Office.
CHAPTER IV

THE WITHDRAWAL DECISION PROCESS

Shortly after his November election victory, President-elect Carter met the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On two occasions, in December 1976 and in January 1977, Carter informed them of his intention to withdraw United States ground forces from South Korea and asked them how to most effectively pull troops back home.¹

At the Blair House meeting of January 1977 the President-elect discussed the possible Korean pullout and other military affairs such as the SALT II treaty for about 9 hours with the Joint Chiefs of Staff - Chairman General George S. Brown, Admiral James I. Holloway III, Chief of Naval Operations, General David C. Jones, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, and General Bernard W. Rogers, Chief of Staff of the United States Army - as well as National Security advisors, Secretary of State-designate

¹ Cong. HASC 95-61, 7.
Cyrus Vance, and Secretary Defense-designate Harold Brown.\(^2\) At that meeting the Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested to Carter the following three points as pre-conditions of the pullout;

One, that we must assure the economic and military capability of the South Koreans to defend themselves.

Second, We must insure that the commitment this country has to Korea and to Japan under the mutual defense treaties of those two countries remains a firm commitment.

Third, that this country must continue to be a Pacific power and within the capabilities of this country insure the integrity of South Korea.\(^3\)

Carter reiterated his Korean withdrawal plan on 12 January 1977 at a meeting at the Smithsonian Institution which was attended by about 50 members of Congress and his national security advisors. The President-elect told them that he did not want to implement his campaign pledge hastily "but only after very carefully considering the problem of United States troops." He also added that "the United States air cover would be continued and the South Korean Army would be strengthened to defend themselves."\(^4\)

Secretary-designate Cyrus Vance also stated before the Senate Foreign Relation Committee that he favored a gradual phaseout after prior consultations with concerned countries. He added that the presence of the United States Air Forces in Korea would not be affected, stressing the mutual defense

---


\(^3\) \textit{Cong. HASC 95-71}, 78.

treaty with South Korea. At the same time, Vance criticized the South Korean Government's corrupt, illegal lobbying efforts. However, he repeatedly said that the Carter Administration would not withdraw its troops because of such actions.5

As soon as President Carter entered the White House, his campaign pledge of withdrawing the troops from South Korea immediately became American foreign policy. On 26 January 1977 the President sent PRM-13 (Presidential Review Memorandum) to executive agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Security Adviser (NSA), the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff asking them to study the possible courses of the pullout program.6 In order to avoid a controversy about the Korean pullout plan itself within his administration, the President asked them, in PRM-13, how to remove American troops from South Korea rather than whether the forces could be removed or not.7

Merely twelve days after his inauguration, even before his executive agencies completed their examinations of the

6. **Cong. HASC 95-71**, 78.
7. Oberdorfer, "Carter's Decision," **WP**, 12 June 1977; **Cong. HASC 95-71**, 78-9; Cyrus Vance, **Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy** (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 128. Vance said in this book that the State Department carefully studied the PRM-13, and found that they were not allowed to suggest any options except suspension of the plan.
possible pullout options, Carter's withdrawal policy was officially confirmed by Vice President Walter Mondale during a visit to Tokyo on the way to Washington from an European tour.\(^8\)

Vice President Mondale met Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda and other Japanese officials at the Prime Minister's official residence on 31 January in order to explain Carter's new Korean policy and have Japanese approval of it.\(^9\) The meeting marked the first face-to-face contact between the 11-day-old Carter Administration and the six-week-old Fukuda Government.\(^10\)

Mondale assured Fukuda that Carter's proposed withdrawal policy would be implemented very carefully in order not to disturb a stable situation in the Korean peninsula. He promised Japanese officials that the United States would not ignore the improvement of the Korean self-defense capability through modernizing South Korea's armed forces. Mondale added that United States Air Force units would remain in South Korea for a nearly unlimited period in order to keep military balance between South and North Korea. At the same time, the

\(^8\) WP, 2 February 1977.


\(^10\) NYT, 1 February 1977. Secretary Vance said in his book Hard Choices that Mondale was instructed to inform Japanese leaders of the American position, and do not discuss any possibility of changing the withdrawal policy.
vice president hinted to Japanese officials that the timing for withdrawal would be negotiable by indicating that the schedule for withdrawals had not been set and the pullout would occur "only in close cooperation with the governments of Japan and South Korea." Mondale also emphasized that the Carter Administration would firmly fulfill American treaty commitments to Japan and South Korea in order to maintain peace and stability in the Far East. However, he advised Japanese officials that President Carter wanted to remove the hundreds of American nuclear warheads from South Korea.

After having finished two days of talks with Japanese leaders, Mondale declared in his news conference at Tokyo on 1 February 1977 that U.S. ground troops would be removed regardless of Japanese and South Korean opposition to such a move. In order to show Asians that the Korean withdrawal was not a sign of America's departure from the continent, Mondale also stressed that the United States would stay in Asia as an Asian-Pacific power and would not turn its back on South Korea. He said,

Turning to regional and strategic issues, I emphasized the fact that the Administration does not intend to turn its back on Asia. We should and will remain an Asian-Pacific power. Our alliance with Japan remains central to our policy in this

---

vast and important part of the world. We will preserve a balanced and flexible military strength in the Pacific, and we will continue our interests in Southeast Asia. With respect to Korea, I emphasized our concern to maintain a stable situation on the Korean peninsula. I cited that we will phase down our ground forces only in close consultation and cooperation with the governments of Japan and South Korea. We will maintain our air capability in Korea and continue to assist in upgrading Korean self-defense capabilities.¹⁴

In his news conference in Washington next day, the vice president reaffirmed that the Carter Administration would not sacrifice the security of South Korea in pursuit of the withdrawal policy. He reiterated that the policy would proceed very carefully and gradually, accompanied by an improvement in Korean military capabilities, the maintenance of United States air units in South Korea, and constant consultation with the governments of South Korea and Japan.¹⁵

Having been informed by the vice president that the Japanese saw the withdrawal policy as "a serious mistake," President Carter called General W. Vessey jr., the United States commander in South Korea, to Washington on 18 February 1977 in order to discuss the problems of the Korean pullout.¹⁶

On 9 March 1977 in his third news conference, which was

¹⁴. Department of State Bulletin 76 (7 March 1977): 191. (Hereafter cited as DSB.)


¹⁶. WP, 10 March 1977.
broadcast live on radio and television, Carter made his first public affirmation of his long standing campaign promise of a Korean pullout. The President, however, did not give the public a rationale for the policy. Instead, he reaffirmed the gradual base reduction and stressed that it would not be reversible. Carter said:

My commitment to withdraw American ground troops from Korea has not changed ... I think that the time period as I described in the campaign months, a 4 or 5 year time period, is appropriate. The schedule for withdrawal of American ground troops would have to be worked out very carefully with the South Korean Government. I would also have to be done with the full understanding and, perhaps, participation of Japan. I would want to leave in place in South Korea adequate ground forces owned by and controlled by the South Korean Government to protect themselves against any intrusion from North Korea. I would envision a continuation of American air cover for South Korea over a long period of time. But these are the basic elements, and I'm very determined that over a period of time, as described just then, that our ground troops would be withdrawn.

Two hours after Carter's news conference, Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance officially notified South Korean Foreign Minister Park Tong Jin of Carter's decision to withdraw the troops from South Korea at a State Department meeting. Vance told Park that the detailed American plan would be ready for discussion with the Seoul Government in late spring. Foreign Minister Park did not seek to persuade the secretary to suspend the American plan. Instead, the minister expressed his

---

concern about the continuing United States security commitment to South Korea.\(^\text{18}\) On the afternoon of the same day, Foreign Minister Park met Carter at the White House to discuss security issues including the proposed withdrawal policy as well as human rights violations in South Korea.\(^\text{19}\) During the session of about 45 minutes, the President assured Park that the troop withdrawal would be carried out very carefully in order not to upset military balance or create instability on the Korean peninsula. He advised the minister that the United States Air Force in South Korea would be slightly augmented to show American determination to protect South Korea against Communist invasion. Meanwhile, Carter expressed his "deep concern" about human rights violations in South Korea, mentioning a number of leading Korean citizens who were imprisoned or under house arrest for their criticism of President Park Chung Hee's dictatorship.\(^\text{20}\)

On the next day, Richard C. Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary designate for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, for the first time, presented a rationale for the pullout policy in a statement before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Committee on International Relations. He

\(^{18}\) WP, 10 March 1977.


\(^{20}\) NYT, 10 March 1977; WP, 10 March 1977; LAT, 10 March 1977.
told Congressmen that the changing circumstances in East Asia required the United States to reconsider the longstanding American policy in that area. Most of all, the end of United states involvement in Indochina, the possible normalization of diplomatic relations with China, and economic progress in that area reduced tensions in the Far East. Holbrooke stressed that all of the major powers favored the continuous stable situation in that area "at least for the present." Therefore, he claimed, the proposed withdrawal plan was not a dangerous one.21

Carter's intention of removing all the ground troops from South Korea over a span of four to five years was reconfirmed at the Carter-Fukuda Washington meeting of 20-23 March. The joint communique issued on 22 March 1977 stated that;

In connection with the intended withdrawal of United States ground forces in the Republic of Korea, the President stated that the United States, after consultation with the Republic of Korea and also with Japan, would proceed in ways which would not endanger the peace on the peninsula. He affirmed that the United States remains committed to the defense of the Republic of Korea.22

In the meantime, on 4 March before the House Armed Services Committee in connection with the procurement bill,


22 PPP 1 (25 March 1977): 480; DSB 76 (April 1977): 376. The Chicago Tribune reported on 31 July 1977 that Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda expressed his great doubts about Carter's pullout plan, especially the 1982 deadline. He also was not seen satisfied with Carter's rationale for the withdrawal policy.
the Joint Chiefs of Staff declared its official opinion on Korean situation, emphasizing its geopolitical importance that "any precipitous change in the precariously balanced forces there, particularly with respect to the U. S. military presence, would have an unsettling and potentially destabilizing effect."\textsuperscript{23}

Three days later, with respect to the PRM-13, the Joint Chiefs of Staff forwarded a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense recommending the President withdraw about 7,000 troops from South Korea by the end of 1982 instead of pulling back all ground troops home so as not to erode the deterrence and disturb the military balance in Korea. The Joint Chiefs added that any further withdrawal should be delayed and the situation reevaluated in 1982. The Joint Chiefs' opinion became one of several options for the withdrawal. It was forwarded to the Interagency Working Group.\textsuperscript{24}

Within the executive branch there was little consensus on the proper rate of the troop withdrawal. However, most staff studies suggested pulling back a smaller number of troops from South Korea over a longer period of time than Carter wanted.\textsuperscript{25} The Interagency Working Group studied various recommendations suggested by the concerned executive

\textsuperscript{23} Cong. HASC 95-71, 99. General Kerwin testified before the Committee on behalf of Gen. Rogers at that time.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 79-80.

\textsuperscript{25} Vance, Choices, 128.
branches and made an interagency report on PRM-13. On 21 April the Policy Review Committee, chaired by Secretary Vance, reviewed the interagency report and decided to recommend slower and more cautious withdrawals to the National Security Council.26

On 27 April 1977 the National Security Council chaired by the President met on PRM-13 and discussed several of the withdrawal options recommended by the Policy Review Committee. The NSC members disagreed on the pullout schedule. CIA Director Stansfield Turner favored suspension of the plan, based on a CIA intelligence report.27 Secretary Vance, Secretary Brown, and other members of the NSC recommended a slower and more cautious withdrawal. Only National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski fully supported Carter's proposed pullout program.28

Finally on 5 May 1977 Carter made the official decision on the withdrawals and sent the Presidential Directive (PD/NSC-12) to the CIA, the NSA, the State Department, the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other concerned executive branches.29 The Presidential Directive announced Carter's decision on the withdrawals of the Second Division,

26 Cong. HASC 95-71, 80.
28 Vance, Choices, 128-9.
29 Cong. HASC 95-71, 80.
its supporting troops, and nuclear weapons from South Korea by the end of 1982, while it laid out a specific time-table. It stated the United States would withdraw about 6,000 troops, including one combat brigade of the Second Division, by the end of 1978.30

As soon as Carter made his official withdrawal decision, he instructed Philip C. Habib, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to visit Seoul and Tokyo in order to begin consultations with officials of South Korea and Japan on the timetable for the withdrawals. On May 11, State Department spokesman Frederick Z. Brown announced that the United States would begin formal talks with South Korean officials on 24 May 1977 about the withdrawal of 33,000 United States ground troops from South Korea over the next four to five years. Brown emphasized that the purpose of the trip was to hold "full and free consultations" with officials of Seoul and Tokyo governments.31

In the mean time, the Presidential Directive caused the Army to begin to prepare for the withdrawal of the Second Infantry Division. Proposals were made to change its organization to a mechanized infantry division so as to better

30. Ibid., 80, 149.

31. NYT, 12 May 1977; WP, 12 May 1977; LAT, 12 May 1977. The papers reported that the real purpose of the trip was not for consultations but to notify the prepared U. S. timetables for the pullout to Seoul.
meet NATO's requirements in Europe. At the same time, the Army also began to study where to build the new home in the United States for the Second Division when it would return home from South Korea. The Army officials favored Fort Bliss, Texas as a new base for the division followed by Fort Benning, Georgia. The Pentagon considered Hawaii as well as several bases in the mainland as a new home for the division. However, politicians quietly pressed the Pentagon to deploy the division to their hometown in order to buoy the local economy. New York's two senators, Jacob K. Javits and Daniel P. Moynihan, urged the Pentagon to deploy the troops at Fort Drum, New York. Robert C. McEwen, Congressman for that district, claimed that Fort Drum was the best place for a NATO support force because the climate and terrain was similar to that of Europe. Speaker of the House Thomas P. O'Neill, jr., Democrat of Massachusetts, urged the Pentagon to include Fort Devens, Massachusetts as one of the division's bases, while he also supported the idea of any Northeast base. Governor of New York Hugh L. Carey sent an eighty-seven page report to


34. NYT, 8 September 1977.

35. Ibid., 8 September 1977 and 5 January 1978.

36. Ibid., 5 January 1978.
the President explaining why Fort Drum was the best place for the Second Division and asked the President to relocate it to Fort Drum.\textsuperscript{37}

Meanwhile, a few days before Under Secretary Habib and General Brown began initial talks with Korean officials on the withdrawals, General John K. Singlaub, Chief of Staff of United States Forces in Korea, publicly criticized President Carter's withdrawal policy, alleging that the planned withdrawal policy was not only based on outdated intelligence on North Korea, but would probably lead to war in Korea. Partly because Carter was angered that his primary military policy was criticized by a subordinate at a particularly sensitive time and partly because he feared that Singlaub's remark itself might encourage North Korea to attack South after his completion of the pullout, President Carter recalled the general to Washington. The general left Korea with orders to personally report to Carter at the White House.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 10 January 1978.

CHAPTER V

THE SINGLAUB AFFAIR

General John K. Singlaub was born in Independence, California on 10 July 1921. He graduated from Van Nuys High school and then went to the University of California at Los Angeles, where he joined the ROTC. Singlaub did not graduate from the university, instead, he began an action-filled military career. He became a second lieutenant in January 1943. In October Singlaub was assigned to the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) - predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) - and served in combat and covert operations in Nazi-occupied Europe and later in Asia. In 1944 he led a three-man team that parachuted behind enemy lines in the central mountains of France to train a French resistance group to help with coming Allied invasion of Europe. In 1945 Captain Singlaub, leading an OSS team, helped a Chinese guerrilla group fight against the Japanese in Burma, China, and Indochina. Just before the end of the Second World War, in August, he led a rescue team that parachuted into a Japanese prisoner of war camp on Hainan Island, off the coast of China,
and freed about 400 POWs. During the Korean War Singlaub was a deputy chief of the CIA mission in Korea and then served as a battalion commander in the Third Infantry Division. During his service in Korea, he was awarded the Silver Star. During the Vietnam War he worked on covert operations from a secret command post known as the Eagle's Nest from 1966 to 1968.¹

In July 1976, just before the Panmunjom incident, when the two American soldiers were killed, Major General Singlaub became the chief of staff of United States forces in Korea. One of the general's functions in Korea was to serve as the senior member of the United Nations Command on the Military Armistice Commission. His duty was to conduct discussions with the chief North Korean representative at Panmunjom when sessions were called. He thus was one of the few American military officers dealing directly with Communist officers in a situation of military confrontation. During nearly 34 years of army service, Singlaub had been wounded twice and was honored with many decorations including the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Distinguished Service Medal, and Combat Infantryman Badge. Singlaub also graduated from several distinguished military schools such as the Infantry School, Advanced Course, United States Army Command and General Staff College, and the Air War College. He also received B.A. degree

in Political Science at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1958.2

General Singlaub was described as a "super patriot," a "Soldier's soldier" and a "thoroughly professional soldier." Singlaub's own commander, General John W. Vessey referred to him as a "professional soldier with a distinguished combat record."3 General William C. Westmoreland, Commander of American Forces in Vietnam, also praised Singlaub. In his book A Soldier Reports, he described the Eagle's Nest and its covert operations against the North Vietnamese:

The SOG Commanders were an ingenious group. One of the first had been my operations officer in the 101st Airborne Division, Colonel John K. Singlaub. Unknown to me at the time, Jack Singlaub personally reconnoitered the site for the Eagle's Nest to make sure it could be defended. He and his staff developed special clothing and equipment for Americans manning the Eagle's Nest and participating on patrols so that nothing could be traced to its U.S. origin.4

According to his military colleagues, Singlaub was neither a publicity seeker nor a troublemaker. He was an

---

2. NYT, 20 May 1977, 21 May 1977, 27 May 1977; WP, 20 May 1977; CT, 28 May 1977; Newsweek 89 (30 May 1977): 17; Cong. HASC 95-71, 3, 67. When Singlaub was in the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth as instructor, the Army gave him a semester off so that he could return to U.C.L.A. and completed his degree in Political Science in 1958.


honest, popular, and outspoken man who sometimes got frustrated when he was asked by Korean military friends about the withdrawal policy because he himself could not find reasonable answers for it.\(^5\) He always answered them "I don't know why the President did this."\(^6\) Worried South Korean military officers frequently raised the issue and urged Singlaub to influence policy makers in Washington.\(^7\) A few days before he gave the controversial interview to the Washington post, Singlaub was invited to a dinner party by a leading member of the South Korean National Assembly. The host also urged Singlaub to stand firmly against Carter's withdrawal policy if the general really thought Washington's decision was a mistake.\(^8\)

On 19 May 1977 John Saar, Chief of the Washington Post's Tokyo bureau, came to Singlaub's office. He was reporting the views of high ranking United States commanders in Korea about the withdrawal policy. Earlier that morning, Saar interviewed General John J. Burns, the Deputy Commander of United Forces

\(^5\) WP, 21 May 1977.

\(^6\) Cong. HASC 95-71, 54. Congressman Ronald V. Dellums of California, who was a leader of liberal Democrats, criticized General Singlaub's undiplomatic answer at the hearing. Dellums told Singlaub that he had to answer Korean generals that "the President of United States has established the policy. I am an officer in the U. S. military. My responsibility is to carry out policies, so I am not the appropriate person to answer that question."

\(^7\) WP, 21 May 1977.

\(^8\) FEER 96 (10 June 1977): 12.
in Korea. They discussed the subject of air power and how it would compensate for the withdrawal of ground troops. General Burns publicly told the reporter that he was "unhappy to see the troops go." Following that interview, Mr. Saar met a civilian adviser Jim Hausman to get background on the key issues that were going to be discussed between officials of South Korea and the United States that week.  

During that interview, Saar asked some purely military and technical questions about the Second Infantry Division. Since Hausman could not answer these questions, he asked Singlaub to answer them for Saar on a background basis. Singlaub accepted Hausman's proposal and gave a thirty-minute interview to the reporter. According to Saar, Singlaub bluntly criticized the Carter Administration by arguing that the withdrawal policy was made based on out-dated intelligence on North Korea and it would certainly lead to war in the Korean peninsula.  

As soon as Saar left his office, Singlaub called his public affairs officer and asked him the general rules on interviews and realized that he should have told the reporter

---

9. Cong. HASC 95-71, 6-7, 24. Jim Hausman was the special assistant to the CINC, UNC. He has been in South Korea since 1946. He was at that time the personal adviser to President Syngman Rhee, the first president of South Korea. He also knew President Park when he was a young officer. Gen. Singlaub said that Mr. Hausman was the most knowledgeable American on the subject of Korea and Korean officials.

that it was "off the record" or background if he did not want his name identified in the newspaper. So, Singlaub ordered his advisor to find out what was Saar's intention. The public affairs officer spent the rest of that day trying to find the reporter but could not. Late that afternoon, about 6 hours after the interview, Saar called Singlaub in order to confirm that interview was on the record. The general first said that it was off the record, but the reporter explained to Singlaub his understanding that the interview had been on the record. 11

Saar told Singlaub:

Well, you understand what the ground rules are in this regard. You didn't tell me it was off the record or a background ... Well, unless you are prepared to retract what you have said, or change what you have said, I intend to file a story. 12

At that point, the general figured that he could not stop the reporter and ordered his public affairs officer to persuade Saar to give him the story before it was published. But the officer failed to get in touch with the reporter and the story was published 13 in the Washington Post on 19 May 1977. On the front page Singlaub was quoted as saying, "If we


12 Cong. HASC 95-71, 8.

13 Ibid., 8. Saar said in his article "Background on the Singlaub Affair" that he was told by a well placed source that Gen. Singlaub did not give such instruction and he did not receive such message from the general's public affairs officer. Saar also said that the general agreed to make the story on the record during their phone conversation.
withdraw our ground forces on the schedule suggested it will lead to war."\(^{14}\)

President Carter, an early riser, read the *Washington Post* report with distress and anger and immediately discussed it with his top aides and several key senators including Senator John C. Stennis, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee and Senator Sam Nunn, the ranking Democrat from Georgia.\(^{15}\) The President called Defense Secretary Harold Brown about 10:00 a.m. and instructed him immediately to order General Singlaub back to Washington for a face-to-face meeting with him at the White House.\(^{16}\)

At the same time, Carter, fearing Singlaub's remark might encourage North Korea to consider another invasion, warned the North that "any potential aggressor should have no doubt about the steadfastness of our commitment to maintaining peace and stability in that region and our commitment to the Republic of Korea."\(^{17}\)

The general's sudden summons was splashed across the front pages of most major newspapers and received heavy TV and radio news coverage nationwide. Influential newspapers such as the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*.

\(^{14}\) *WP*, 19 May 1977.

\(^{15}\) *LAT*, 20 May 1977.

\(^{16}\) *NYT*, 20 May 1977; *WP*, 20 May 1977; *CT*, 20 May 1977.

\(^{17}\) *WP*, 21 May 1977.
Times, and the Washington Post likened General Singlaub's recall to the General MacArthur affair. The papers claimed that Carter's personal recall of Singlaub was the first such disciplining of an American general since Truman recalled and fired General MacArthur during the Korean War. 18

Military officials privately expressed anger at the treatment of the general and said Carter's action did not resemble Truman's recall of General MacArthur because Truman recalled MacArthur for refusing to obey his orders in the form of a Defense Department policy statement, but Singlaub did not disobey a direct order. Moreover, they emphasized the fact that Singlaub confirmed at the end of his interview that if the decision was made he would execute it "with enthusiasm and a high level of professional skill." 19

On 21 May 1977 Singlaub, wearing his uniform with two gold general's stars, met Defense Secretary Harold Brown at the Pentagon. After an hour-long interview they drove to the White House for a thirty-minute session with the President. In his meeting with the President, Singlaub did not try to deny his assertion that war would follow removal of the troops from Korea. In his defense, however, the general told Carter he thought that his interview was to be used by the reporter as background, and the quotation of his statement in the

newspaper was taken out of context and "exaggerated" by the reporter. The President did not give an explanation of his withdrawal policy, but simply said what Singlaub said was wrong. The general evoked some sympathy in the meeting with the President. After listening to Singlaub's explanation, Carter began to believe that Singlaub made a serious mistake but that he had not been intentionally disloyal or insubordinate. 20

Shortly after the meeting, the Pentagon announced Singlaub's dismissal from his Korean post. In the announcement, Secretary of Defense Brown said that he asked the President to relieve Singlaub from his post because he thought the general could not do his duty in Korea because of his open objection to Carter's withdrawal policy. Secretary Brown said:

Public statements by General Singlaub inconsistent with announced national security policy have made it very difficult for him to carry out the duties of his present assignment in Korea ... I have therefore recommended to the president that General Singlaub be reassigned, and with the president's concurrence I have directed the Secretary of the Army to take action to that effect. 21

On Sunday morning, 22 May 1977, the nation's major newspapers reported Singlaub's dismissal on their front pages.


with the following titles: "President Fires Gen. Singlaub as Korea Staff Chief" (Washington Post,) "Carter Removes General Who Opposed Korea Policy" (Los Angeles Times,) "Carter Disciplines Gen. Singlaub, Who Attacked His Policy on Korea" (New York Times,) and "Carter Removes Critical General from Korea Post (Chicago Tribune.)

The dismissal of Singlaub from his Korean post shocked not only the general but also many military officers who thought the recall itself was a severe measure for a professional and courageous general who had only voiced the opinion of numerous senior officers in Korea and at the Pentagon. Singlaub himself did not expect his dismissal and told a reporter two days earlier, while on the way to Washington, that he expected to return to his post in Korea after meeting with the President.

As soon as Singlaub left Korea for a meeting with the President, General John W. Vessey, Commander of United Nations and United States Forces in South Korea, confirmed the command's willingness to carry out the mission assigned by the President in a press conference. At the same time he sent a cable to Secretary Brown explaining the controversial interview and requested that Singlaub be kept in his current

23. LAT, 22 May 1977.
General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, in his speech to the local Chamber of Commerce in Columbus, Ohio, criticized Singlaub by stating that "the military have no right to make policy decisions and military men should express their opinions with tact." However, he also predicted that Singlaub would return to Korea.

Many officials, especially Singlaub's fellow officers in Seoul, criticized Carter's severe action. They told reporters privately that they agree with Singlaub's claim that President Carter's withdrawal policy would lead to war. One officer at the headquarters of United States forces in Korea said, "everyone here thinks what he said was right." But, they refused to publicize their feelings to avoid a fate similar to Singlaub. Many of them regarded Carter's reaction as a move to ram the policy down the military's throat.

On 22 May, on the CBS TV program "Face the Nation," Secretary Brown strongly defended President Carter's decision to relieve the general of his Korean command. He repeatedly stated that Singlaub's dismissal was necessary because his effectiveness was undermined in South Korea due to his outspoken opposition to Carter's Korean Policy. But, Brown

---

26 WP, 21 May 1977.
said, Singlaub's reprimand was not meant to curb freedom of speech in the military. He revealed that there had been plenty of opportunity for the expression of military views on the withdrawal policy. Brown emphasized that the new Korean policy had already been determined, therefore, officials had no choice but to follow government policy if they wanted to stay in the military. The secretary said:

The military are not only allowed, but they're encouraged to express their views during the determination of policy through the chain of command. However, once a military person has had a chance to express his views on a policy that's being determined - and the policy is determined - it therefore becomes his (an officer's) responsibility to support that policy publicly, if he plans to stay in the military. 27

Secretary Brown added that the withdrawal of American ground troops over four or five years would not endanger South Korea's security, and said that the withdrawal plan had been fully discussed with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and senior military officials in South Korea. He emphasized that the South Korean Army had improved its operational skills, especially in the use of artillery, tanks, and anti-tank weapons. Therefore, if the United States maintained logistical support as well as air and sea power, Brown claimed, the South Korean Army could defend the country against any attack from the North. At the same time he made it clear that any military officer who publicly challenged the determined policy would

Carter's swift action on Singlaub brought a controversy not only among military officers but also among politicians. Senator John Culver, an Iowa Democrat and a member of the Senate Armed Service Committee, praised Carter's action by saying that "I am very pleased to see this strong assertion of civilian control." Senator Frank Church, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, also criticized Singlaub's open opposition to the President urging Carter to dismiss the general. He said that:

When I was in the Army it was made clear to me that the unpardonable offense was insubordination. If this holds true for enlisted men and junior officers, even more must it bind the generals ... We maintain an army, not to make national policy, but to uphold and enforce it. When a general on active duty, in command abroad, publicly criticizes or contradicts presidential policy, then he should be disciplined or dismissed.

The senator added that if they asked the general to decide when the troops should leave Korea, he might decide to keep the United States Army in Korea forever.

Senate majority leader Robert C. Byrd, appearing on the NBC TV program "Meet the Press" on 22 May, also defended Carter's action on the Singlaub affair. Senator Byrd, argued that Carter did what he had to do in removing Singlaub from

---


his Korean post, said, "I think he had no choice but to do this." Senator Strom Thurmond, South Carolina Republican and a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, also supported Carter's measures on Singlaub even though he personally agreed with Singlaub's opinion on Korean policy. He said that:

I'm sure the General did it for the best of reasons. I personally agree with him. But I don't think it's appropriate for a man in uniform to make statements like this unless he plans to retire. As long as he's in uniform, he's not free to speak.

In his letter to the editor of the Washington Post on 1 July 1977 Congressman Bob Carr, Democrat of Michigan, argued that a military man should express his basic policy disagreements through channels. Otherwise he should be prepared to resign his post before taking his opposition to the public. Carr claimed that four generals, whom he discussed the Singlaub affairs with, described Singlaub's action as "unprofessional and irresponsible."

Former President Ford also supported Carter's action on Singlaub even though he did not agree to Carter's withdrawal policy. At a luncheon meeting with reporters in Washington on 20 May, Ford repeatedly expressed his objection to Carter's proposed withdrawal policy by emphasizing that the maintenance of troops in South Korea had kept the peace since 1953. Ford

32. NYT, 21 May 1977.
added that if he had been elected, he would not have considered the withdrawal of the ground troops from South Korea. However, Ford, a strong believer in civilian control of the military, stressed that a person in uniform should expect the consequence if he did not carry out the orders of the commander in chief.\(^{33}\)

Meanwhile, former California Governor Ronald Reagan criticized Carter's handling of the general in Buffalo, New York Republican fund raising dinner. He said, "frankly, the general is right when he says such reduction will lead to North Korean attacks on South Korea. The President is just plain wrong." Reagan also claimed that Carter's manner in disciplining the general was disgraceful. There was no need to humiliate General Singlaub who had an impeccable record. Instead of recalling Singlaub to Washington, Reagan argued, Carter should have instructed Defense Secretary Brown to give Singlaub the outline of the President's policy and reasons for it. He added that Carter should have left the general on the job in Korea.\(^{34}\)

Congressman Robert Michel of Illinois, a second ranking GOP leader in the House, also criticized President's action on Singlaub in a speech on the House floor on 24 May. He said,

Was the general right or wrong? President Carter's decision to withdraw those troops was first made public in the heat of a presidential campaign. There

\(^{33}\) WP, 21 May 1977; CT, 21 May 1977.

\(^{34}\) LAT, 23 May 1977; SFC, 23 May 1977.
is no evidence that he reached a decision on the basis of advise from military experts.\textsuperscript{35}

Senator Barry Goldwater, Arizona Republican, said that he was disturbed at the treatment of the general and was puzzled at the Carter Administration's policy in Korea. He said, "I can't find a policy declaration. It has not presented to the Senate Armed Services Committee, of which I am a member, and so far as I know it has not been presented to the Committee on Foreign Affairs."\textsuperscript{36}

The nation's influential editorial writers were also divided by the controversy. On 23 May 1977 the editor of the \textit{Cleveland Press} defended Carter's decision. The editor alleged that:

If Carter had tolerated the general's published remarks which verged on insubordination, he would have weakened his hand in dealing with the military almost at the start of his administration. And this, in turn, could have undermined the principle of civilian control over the military that the President is commander in chief and he and his advisers set defense and foreign policies, not the generals and admirals.\textsuperscript{37}

The editor continued to argue that the Korean and Vietnam Wars proved conclusively that the American public would not support involvement in a land war on the Asian mainland. The editor criticized Singlaub that he attempted to keep American ground

\textsuperscript{35} DN, 25 May 1977.

\textsuperscript{36} NYT, 27 May 1977.

troops in South Korea indefinitely because he did not learn any lesson from the Vietnam War.\textsuperscript{38}

On the following day, editors of the \textit{New York Times}, the \textit{Los Angeles Times}, and the \textit{Chicago Sun Times} expressed similar opinions. They defended Carter's removal of Singlaub from his post in Korea. An editorial of the \textit{Los Angeles Times} did not agree with Singlaub's view that the troop withdrawal would endanger South Korea's security by emphasizing the fact that the South Korean Army of 625,000 men and strong United States air and naval protection could defend against an attack. The editor pointed out that the American tradition of civilian authority over the military was deeply rooted in the Constitution. Once the President made a decision, the editor said, no military man could be allowed to challenge that position in public.\textsuperscript{39}

The editorial of the \textit{New York Times} also said that the "direct challenge of a President's announced military policy was simply unacceptable." It continued to argue that "the price of democracy, and of the nation's capacity to hold elected officials accountable, was obedience within bureaucracy, and above all in the military."\textsuperscript{40}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Editorial, \textit{LAT}, 25 May 1977, sec. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Editorial, \textit{NYT}, 24 May 1977.
\end{itemize}
An editorial in the *Chicago Sun Times* also criticized Singlaub's action and said American officers should not "attack United States policies publicly under the system of civilian control of the military." The editor claimed that the uniformed men who were against the President's policy should use other avenues such as Pentagon and Congress. Otherwise, they should resign in advance before going to public. The editor said, "it is a system that works."41

In the meantime, the editorials of the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Detroit News*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Washington Post* criticized Carter's overreaction on the Singlaub affair. The editors admitted that a President should have control over United States military policy and Singlaub's criticism came at highly inappropriate time because high ranking American officials were about to leave for Seoul to discuss the details of the proposed withdrawal policy with South Korean officials. However, they said that the dismissal of the general was a presidential overreaction. The editorial of the *Detroit News* on 24 May 1977 stated:

Even if Mr. Carter felt he had to act to establish his authority over the U. S. military, it was not necessary for him publicly to humiliate the general who had said the planned U.S. withdrawal from South Korea was a mistake that could lead to war. To show his displeasure, the President could have quietly ordered Singlaub transferred to another post ... the entire controversy is a needless and damaging one which, we must remember, is a product of another of

Mr. Carter's ill advised campaign promises.\textsuperscript{42}

The \textit{Wall Street Journal} on 24 May stated that Carter's decision on Singlaub affair was wrong because it not only humiliated the general but also would impose "a gag on the entire officer corps." The editor said,

We certainly do want civilian control and a chain of command. We do not want military men trying to sabotage a President's foreign policy or leading a political campaign against it. On the other hand, the ultimate sovereign is not the President but the public. And if generals on the scene really do believe a President's policy would lead to war. This is certainly something the public has a right to know.\textsuperscript{43}

The \textit{Washington Post} said in an editorial of 24 May that Carter's decision to defend civilian supremacy over the military was understandable. But the editor disagreed with Carter's claim that North Korea might miscalculate General Singlaub's remarks and attack the South. The editor said,

We suppose it's possible, but only in the sense that anything is possible. For it is hard to believe that the North Koreans would make decisions on anything as important as an attack on South Korea on the basis of the indiscretions of one middle-level American general. Our own view is that North Korean policy makers are quite capable of taking their own measure of South Korean capabilities ... High White House drama served only to give it far more significance and substance than it deserved.\textsuperscript{44}

The editorial in the \textit{Chicago Tribune} of 25 May 1977 basically supported the principle of civilian control over

\textsuperscript{44} Editorial, \textit{WP}, 24 May 1977.
military policy, but praised Singlaub's courage for speaking out his belief:

Under our system, government policy is made by civilians and the military must be subservient to civilian control ... Despite all this, we cannot condemn the general for speaking out. If an experienced military officer believes a presidential policy will cause war, the country certainly deserves to know about it ... If Gen. Singlaub's effective career is at an end because he has spoken out, he has done what he thought right [even if he did so more publicly than he expected to.] He will not be the first military man to be fired for speaking what he believed to be the truth. We hope he will not be the last who is dedicated enough to take that risk.45

The weekly magazines were also divided by the controversy. The editor of the Nation fully defended the President's decision on the Singlaub affair arguing that removing Singlaub from his post in Korea would improve national security. The editor said,

The serious side of this episode is that prominent American generals have told the North Koreans that they can win a new contest once our ground troops have left. There is no excuse for that indiscretion ... Carter was quite right to descend on the hapless General Singlaub, and, if "it ends his career," as the papers are saying, so much the better for the national security.46

Meanwhile, an editorial in the Economist stressed that a serving officer had right to speak out when he believed his government policy was wrong. The editor argued that the President did not always have better information than officers

45. Editorial, CT, 25 May 1977, sec. 3.
serving in the field. Therefore, the editor claimed, American people had right to hear the soldiers' opinions, especially when these military men were in a position to know something about matter.47

The nation's columnists overwhelmingly defended Singlaub and criticized Carter's decision on the Singlaub affair. Patrick J. Buchanan, an influential conservative columnist, said in his column "The General Deserves Respect", published in the Chicago Tribune on 26 May 1977, that Singlaub merited his countrymen's admiration. In risking his career to warn the nation of the consequences of what he believed as dangerous, Buchanan claimed, Singlaub exhibited "a moral courage to match the physical bravery that has marked a long military career."

He praised the general by saying that Singlaub was acting in the tradition of Billy Mitchell and Douglas MacArthur, risking his career, rather than leaving his countrymen ignorant of potential danger of present policy. Meanwhile, the columnist accused Carter of maintaining a double standard in his treatment Singlaub and outspoken U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, who openly disagreed with administration policy yet remained at his job.48


48. Patrick J. Buchanan, "The General Deserves Respect," CT, 26 May 1977, sec. 3. Andrew Young, U.S. Ambassador to U.N. (1977-9), generated controversy by his outspoken appraisals of such issues as Angola, the PLO, South African apartheid. On 25 January 1977 Young said that the presence of Cuban troops in Angola brought a certain "stability and order" to that country. The State Department immediately criticized
Columnist Jack Fuller argued in his article "Lashing A General Won't End Carter's Military Problem" that the president had a reason for his double standard. According to Fuller, Carter and Defense Secretary Brown had put together a civilian leadership in the Pentagon, and that of course did not please the military officers. Moreover, many of the new civilian appointees were liberal and did not favor some important project such as the B-1 bomber. Therefore, many conservative high ranking officers clashed with their civilian bosses on strategic issues such as the troop withdrawals from South Korea. Under the circumstances, General Singlaub appeared to the civilian leaders as more than an "aberrant indiscretion." His public position, therefore, urgently required Carter and Brown to go beyond the usual need to assert civilian control over the military and resulted in harsh response to Singlaub's remarks. The columnist predicted that the removal of Singlaub from his Korean post would not reduce tension between the brass and the civilian leadership in the Pentagon.49

J. F. terHorst, a national news columnist, pointed out in his article "Who Lost Most in Singlaub Firing" that the brass in the Pentagon were never asked for advice for the withdrawal policy by the President, but simply were asked for

Young's statement.

proper way to carry out the reduction of forces from South Korea. The columnist said that the President seemed to be betting that his political judgement was superior to the general's military expertise. If the things turned to be right, the columnist said, Carter would deserve all the credit, but if it ended in disaster, the brass would not be to blame because Singlaub had made the danger clear. 50

Public opinion concerning the Singlaub affair also showed disagreement. Letters published in the nation's major newspapers show that eighteen out of twenty-three persons defending General Singlaub while only five of them backed Carter's decision on the Singlaub affair. 51

In the meantime, Congressman Samuel S. Stratton of New York Democrat, Chairman of the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee, asked the Pentagon to make General Singlaub available for public hearings on 25 May in connection with the Subcommittee's "overall review of U. S. defense strategy." 52 The chairman reminded the press that Congress had not yet approved Carter's withdrawal plan, said that Congress had "the highest interest" in hearing opposing views on the pullout. At the same time, Stratton made it clear

52. SFC, 21 May 1977.
that the subcommittee would not pursue the issue of civilian right to control over military, but focus on the issue of why the general believed the pullout would lead to war in Korea.53

The Singlaub affair was initiated by the Washington post's correspondent John Saar who interviewed General Singlaub on the Korean withdrawal issue and quoted him on the front page of the paper. But, it was enlarged by the President himself by recalling the general to the White House. It is unclear whether Singlaub agreed with Saar to publish the story on the record because Singlaub and Saar contradicted each other. Considering his outspoken character and distinguished record of service, in my opinion, Singlaub consciously told the reporter his views simply to warn policy makers in Washington off the record. He did not intend to lead a crusade by criticizing the President publicly, nor did he want to put the President into a difficult situation.

Unexpectedly, the Singlaub affair brought the Korean withdrawal issue before the American public, who had shown little previous interest in it. By recalling and removing the general from his Korean Post, Carter gave the public the negative impression that he would not allow all Americans to participate in the debates on the United States foreign policy, something he promised during his campaign.

The Singlaub affair gave Congressional opponents the best opportunity to rebut Carter's new Korean policy. As a result, the President faced strong Congressional opposition as well as the public pressures. It not only braked the smooth progress of the policy but also damaged Carter's ability to carry out the pullout policy in the future. The Singlaub affair was a turning point in the whole policy process.
CHAPTER VI

CONGRESSIONAL CONSERVATIVES vs. LIBERAL DEMOCRATS:

THE SINGLAUB HEARINGS

The House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee began its hearing at 10:03 a.m., 25 May 1977, in the Rayburn House Office Building. Presiding was Subcommittee Chairman Samuel S. Stratton. Major General John K. Singlaub appeared before a largely sympathetic subcommittee and read his prepared brief opening statement. He firmly supported the concept of civilian control of the military. The general apologized that his naivety about the press had caused unnecessary trouble for the President. However, in his response to Chairman Stratton, the first questioner, General Singlaub reaffirmed that most top United States military and civilian officials in Korea did not agree with President Carter on the proposed withdrawal plan. He answered,

I have to say, Mr. Chairman, in all honesty. I know of no senior American or ROK official that agrees with this proposal to make the withdrawal of all

1. Cong. HASC 95-71, 1, 76.
2. Ibid., 3-4.
combat forces in the time schedule announced by the president.\(^3\)

The general continued to say that United States commanders in Korea had not been consulted on the pullout decision except on the timing of the pullout, nor did they receive any reply from the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their requests about the rationale of the withdrawal policy and the administration's long-term Korean policy.\(^4\)

Congressional conservatives, who opposed the withdrawal policy, lacked a legislative vehicle to challenge Carter's decision because the annual authorization bill and the annual Pentagon appropriations measure did not specify where troops should be deployed. Apparently they tried to make use of the hearings as the best chance to attract public attention to the issue and to press the President to back away.\(^5\) Therefore, from the beginning of the hearings, the Congressional conservative majority lauded the general's long history of service to the country and his courage in openly voicing his convictions at the risk of his job. First, the conservative members focused on the general's contention that Carter had

\(^3\) Ibid., 5.

\(^4\) Ibid., 8-10. General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Bernard W. Rogers later testified before House Armed Services Committee that the Joint Chiefs of Staff was never asked for a rationale for the policy by the Korean Command. (See Cong. HASC 95-71, 84, 122).

made the decision on the withdrawals without full consultations with professional military experts. Congressman David C Treen, a Republican from Louisiana, tried to discover if during his presidential campaign Carter had adequate professional military advice on the withdrawal issue. 6 Congressman Robert E. Badham, Republican of California, also emphasized that military experts had not been properly consulted prior the Carter's decision. 7

In his answers, Singlaub reaffirmed that commanders in Korea had never been asked by candidate Carter whether the withdrawal was desirable or not. Even after he took the Oval Office, Singlaub said, Carter did not ask the command in Korea to comment on the desirability of the withdrawal, but asked them to comment on various withdrawal options. According to the general, all of the different options that the President suggested were dangerous choices for the security of South Korea. He said,

Even though we were never asked the question, do you think this is desirable, every time we were asked to comment on a serious of possible withdrawal options, we made it quite clear that some would lead to disaster. And we ended up with the least undesirable of some very undesirable courses of action. 8

---

6. Cong. HASC 95-71, 16.
7. Ibid., 25.
8. Ibid., 16.
Congressman Treen and other Congressional conservatives paid keen attention to new intelligence about North Korea's military strength that was not available to candidate Carter at the time of his campaign. Singlaub stressed that North Korea achieved a much higher level of readiness than the United States had estimated earlier. The North increased the number of tanks from 500 to 2,000 over a four or five year period. They also had similarly increased artillery pieces, armed personal carriers, combat ships, and jet fighter aircraft during the same period.\(^9\) As a result, the North possessed over three times as much artillery and twice as many tanks and aircraft as the South. North Korea also had larger numbers of rocket launchers and submarines than did the South.\(^10\) Therefore, the general claimed, there was a clear military superiority in the North over the South even with United States troops in South Korea.\(^11\) The general added that the North was clearly showing its offensive intentions in its deployment of forces\(^12\) and by recent moves to shorten communication lines.\(^13\)

\(^9\) Ibid., 17.

\(^10\) Ibid., 34.

\(^11\) Ibid., 14.

\(^12\) Ibid., 17.

\(^13\) Ibid., 60.
Carter's Congressional opponents tried to use Singlaub's claim that South Korea faced a dangerous military threat from the North as a platform for pressing the President to suspend his policy. Congressman Robert Daniel, Republican of Virginia, focused his question on the origin of these increased weapons. Singlaub answered that the North Koreans were producing most of these new weapons themselves, except highly sophisticated ones such as aircraft. The general answered that:

North Korea has a very extensive industry. They are not only producing all of their own artillery, Soviet design. Their own trucks. They are producing their own armored personnel carriers. They are now believed to be producing their own tanks. They have not as far as we know gone into the production of aircraft, but they have received recent deliveries of highly sophisticated jet fighter aircraft in large numbers. Most of these have come from China, specifically the Mig-19. They have received other transport-type aircraft. Transport aircraft has increased by approximately 60 percent now giving them an airlift capacity to a single lift of between 4,000 to 5,000 troops. They have manufactured most of their own ships and boats. These are high speed amphibious vessels. They are missile boats equipped with what we believe to be the Styx missile. They are producing their own submarines. The submarine threat is one of those that bothers the Republic of Korea most seriously. They are of Soviet design but North Korean manufacture.14

Congressional hardliner Larry McDonald, Democrat of Georgia, and Robert L. Leggett, Democrat of California, tried

14 Ibid., 20, 34. The general explained why the submarine was serious threat to the South in his answer to Congressman Richard H. Ichord, Democrat of Missouri. According to the general's explanation, South Korea is regarded strategically as island because there is no land route access to allies and all its raw materials and manufactures must be transported by ship. Thus, submarines pose a great threat to the security of South Korea.
to paint a picture of North Korea's bellicose attitude by reminding the committee of tunnels that the North made in the DMZ and the Panmunjom incident, in which North guards killed two American officials with axes and metal pikes in August 1976. Being asked by Congressman Leggett whether tunnels were real or fabricated, the general forcefully answered that those tunnels in the DMZ were "very, very real" and a serious threat to the South. Singlaub confirmed that the tunnels started north of the DMZ and got through under the DMZ into the area of the southern edge of the DMZ when they were found by the South in 1974 and 1975. He explained that:

Those tunnels are dug through solid granite, approximately 200 to 300 feet below the ground, making it very difficult to detect. And they are large enough that you can drive vehicles through those tunnels. You can run troops through them, three abreast without any difficulties.

Meanwhile, liberal Democrats charged that the hearing was held intentionally to frustrate Carter's Korean policy. They claimed that the hearing was "inappropriate and only embarrassing the President." While liberal Democrats focused on the general's alleged naiveness about the press, Congressional conservatives sympathized with Singlaub's claim that he was mouse-trapped by the press. Congressman Lucien N. Nedzi, Democrat of Michigan, who was an ardent supporter of

carter's pullout policy, doubted Singlaub's naivete, raising the fact that the general spent almost ten years in the Washington area during the period of the Watergate. Nedzi suggested that Singlaub, who must have known how to deal with the press, intentionally criticized the President in order to hamper Carter's ability to implement the policy of phased withdrawal of the troops from South Korea. The Congressman maintained that the President had no obligation to explain his decision to military officers. He said, "this could be helpful but not necessary." Congressman Nedzi asked the general, "should the President go to Korea and hold a mass meeting of the infantry division and tell them the whole story?"

Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, a leading liberal Democrat from California, criticized Singlaub's disloyalty to the commander in chief by pointing out the general's open opposition to the President foreign policy. Dellums argued that the American people did not want to engage in another land war in Asia nor did they want to kill North Koreans or to die for South Korea. He said, "we don't want our young people to go and fight and die in a war that some old men dreamed up. That is the result of Vietnam."

17. Ibid., 28.
18. Ibid., 29.
19. Ibid., 44.
20. Ibid., 45.
The panel also discussed the Second Division's contributions to the security of Korea. Conservative Bill Nicholas, Democrat of Alabama, asked about the Second Division's strategic value in preventing the North from attacking the South. Singlaub answered that the Second Division was stationed between two direct corridors to Seoul from the North. Therefore, its location had important tactical value because the North Korean leaders who were contemplating a drive on Seoul would have to attack the division. That would, of course, be followed by full scale American intervention. That was why their Russian and Chinese sponsors, who did not want to have trouble with the United States in that area, restrained the North from attacking the South. If the Second Division was removed, Singlaub argued, the North could launch its attack without fear of fighting with American ground troops. Moreover, the Russians and Chinese who wanted to keep the unified Korea under their influence also could support the North without fear of direct confrontation with the United States. Therefore, the general concluded that the Second Division could not be replaced by any number of South Korean combat divisions.

Congressman Thomas J. Downey, Democrat of New York, called the hearing "a frontal assault" on Carter's new Korean

21. Ibid., 30.
22. Ibid., 30-2.
policy, asked the general the minimum numbers of troops that could perform a deterrent role. He asked, "will a rifle company on the DMZ possibly be enough to constitute a tripwire or does it necessarily have to be the 42,000 or could it be less?" 23

The general stated that about 40,000 United States forces in South Korea including the Second Division fulfilled the minimum requirement for the effective deterrent. He also raised the point that the presence of those forces in South Korea had prevented a war since the end of the Korean War. He said,

The deterrent to be effective, must be believable. It must be a believable force, and it must have sufficient strength not only to make a military contribution, but to be believable that it is capable being reinforced, rather than just being a force there by itself. 24

Dellums claimed that the presence of American troops could not be justified militarily, reminding the general of former Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's statement that the troops in Korea were only there for a political purpose rather than a military calculation. 25 The general rebutted Dellums claim by saying that many of those officials such as General Richard G. Stilwell, former commander of U.S. Forces in Korea, and the present commander General Vessey, who believed that

23. Ibid., 43.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., 22.
the Second Division's contribution to the military balance was insignificant, changed their minds after seeing the new intelligence coming out of North Korea. Singlaub argued that the Second Division, with more sophisticated weapons and better communication equipments than any South Korean division, had become very important in the military balance between North and South Korea in that new situation.

Congressman Les Aspin, Democrat of Wisconsin, questioned the general why the new intelligence information came out when the administration was about to change Korean policy. Singlaub answered that the Panmunjom incident of 1976 required United States intelligence to increase its study of North Korea. At the same time, more capable intelligence personnel, released from Vietnam because of the end of that War, were available to examine the strength of North Korea. He answered that:

It is a result of the availability of more analysts, as I understand it, in the intelligence community having been released from Vietnam, (was) able to concentrate on these areas. When these first indications came out, more and more have started to concentrate, and more of the intelligence is being examined, and there was a great boost in this in August of 1976. When we had our DMZ incident, trying to find out what does this mean? Is this the beginning of a major confrontation? And since August, there has been a great concentration of intelligence collection and analysis. the whole

27. Ibid., 31.
28. Ibid., 36.
picture has changed within a year. 29

The subcommittee also discussed the problem of the Second Division's tripwire role in Korea. Liberal Democrats argued that because the force was forward deployed, the United States had no alternative but to be involved in war should North Korea attack. Congress would have no chance to consider whether the United States should or should not wage a new war in Korea. 30 In case of fighting on the Korean peninsula, Dellums argued, the United States faced potentially disastrous consequences including, "automatic involvement in a new land war, early use of nuclear weapons or their being captured by North Korea, and the withdrawal of United States forces under fire." 31

Singlaub tried to remind Dellums of the purpose of the presence of U.S. forces in South Korea was to prevent war there, rather than to fight. He pointed out that there were no troops (save for at Panmunjom) "close to or on" the DMZ. Even if a new war broke out, the general maintained, U.S. forces would not become automatically involved in war because they were stationed far behind the front line. Therefore, the President would have enough time to consider the option of whether he should commit the force or not. The general

29. Ibid., 37.
30. Ibid., 44.
31. Ibid., 53.
confirmed that the troops would not be involved in war and could not be committed without the specific approval of the president.32

Both conservatives and liberals showed keen attention to cost figures projected for the withdrawals. A Government Accounting Office report and the Congressional Budget Office report figured that the United States could save a billion dollars a year by keeping the troops at home rather than in South Korea.33

Singlaub, however, ruled out the possibility of any big cost savings from the withdrawals. He argued that lower costs of maintaining facilities in Korea and many other benefits such as free use of the real estate fully compensated the transportation costs for all the supplies and personnel rotation. Moreover, taking the cost of building new facilities in the United States into consideration, the general predicted, there would be no savings. He said,

We have run some rather detailed studies ... on this subject of whether it is more costly to maintain the 2nd Division in Korea with the long distances that troops and material and supplies have to travel, or to maintain it in the United States. Those studies, while not conclusive, because there are many factors that are too difficult to measure precisely, show that if it is not cheaper to keep it in Korea, it is pretty close to it. Despite the increased transportation costs for all of the supplies and the people that rotate to and from Korea, there are many compensating or offsetting

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., 18, 48.
savings. These are brought about by the lower cost of maintaining facilities in Korea - the cost of labor is less than it is here. The cost of building materials is less there. Some of the other materials consumed in the normal operation and maintenance of a force there are less. The real estate has been given to us free of charge. The training areas are free of charge. We are not paying anything for the upkeep of those. That is the responsibility of the Republic of Korea. And there are other costs that the Republic of Korea picks up that in the United States we would be responsible for. 34

Meanwhile, liberal Democrats questioned why the South Koreans, who had twice the population and five times the gross national product as well as more military personnel, lacked self defense capability against the North. 35 Congressman Richard H. Ichord, Democrat of Missouri, criticized the South Koreans for their negligence of building a military capability even though they possessed far more population and resources than the North. While he did admit that the South Korea had been good ally, Ichord emphasized that the United States could not keep American forces in South Korea forever. He said, "I don't think we can continue to support South Korea as a satellite nation as the Soviet Union supports North Korea." The Congressman concluded that South Korea should develop their ability to defend themselves against their enemy. But he suggested that the President might adjust the process of withdrawal in accordance with a build up of South Korean

34. Ibid., 18.
35. Ibid., 33-7.
forces. 36

Meanwhile, Congressman G. William Whitehurst, Republican of Virginia, strongly recommended that the Carter Administration reconsider the pullout policy because it would affect more than security of South Korea. He argued that if the United States took that step, Japan would reassess not only its defense relationship but also its entire relationship with the United States. It might push the Japanese toward rearmament, including their own nuclear weapons. 37

Singlaub and Congressional conservatives thought that it was very unwise to withdraw combat forces without some countervailing concessions from North Korea. Congressman Robin L. Beard, Republican of Tennessee, and Singlaub made the same point. 38 When asked by Congressman Donald J. Mitchell, Republican of New York, about a schedule for a safe withdrawal, the general expressed his opinion that the United States could safely pull out its troops when North Korea was ready to sign a nonaggression pact with South Korea. He maintained that the United States could use the withdrawals as an effective tool for bringing about greater peace in the Korean peninsula. 39
Patricia Schroeder, Democrat of Colorado, complained that the hearing was "a Kangaroo court." She admitted American troops in Korea were very important to protect Seoul. But, she argued, the United States foreign policy should be made for America's priorities in the world rather than for particular interests of another nation. Therefore, Schroeder concluded, the withdrawal policy should be judged by the President based on America's world strategic priorities. 40

Congressman Dan Daniel, a Democrat of Virginia, strongly supported General Singlaub's words that "the purpose of having the force in Korea was not to fight war but to prevent it." and urged the President to listen to military experts in order to prevent another unnecessary war in Korea. he said,

When we listened to Dean Acheson, and he declared that Korea was outside our defense perimeter what happened? A vacuum was created and in marched the enemy. When I was in Vietnam in 1964, my first visit there, we were talking to military people, and I believed what they told me; because the evidence I think proved it - that if the politicians would stay out of their way they could win the war in 6 months - I think they could have. In the first instance, if we had won the Korean war we wouldn't have had a war in Vietnam. It seemed to me we are going right down that same path again. 41

Congressman Charles H. Wilson, Democrat of California, also fully supported Singlaub's cause and said that Carter's withdrawal policy was potentially one of the biggest mistakes the United States could make in recent history. He said,

40 Ibid., 40.
41 Ibid., 55.
I think it is a stupid mistake to telegraph our position to say within 5 years - we talked about Secretary of State Dean Acheson who telegraphed what we were going to do. And that is how we got into trouble in Korea. And here we are doing the same thing all over again.\textsuperscript{42}

On the next day, the \textit{Washington Post} covered the whole story of the hearing on the front page under the headline "House Panel Begins Frontal Assault on Korean Policy." Other major newspapers also favorably reported what Singlaub told before the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee. The papers stressed the general's assertion that all senior American and South Korean officials disagreed with the president on the withdrawal plan. And Washington did not provide the Korean command with the rationale for it, nor did they consult with military officials properly before they made a decision on the withdrawals. The papers played up the alleged rapid buildup of North Korean military forces and the new deterrent role of the Second Division envisioned by the general.\textsuperscript{43}

While Singlaub was testifying on Capital Hill, Defense Secretary Harold Brown was defending Carter's proposed withdrawal policy in his speech to the National Press Club on May 25. He said Carter's decision was based on South Korea's growing economic and military strength. The Secretary said

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 64.

that he and General George Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, believed the proposed withdrawal could be accomplished successfully if the United States continued to assist in upgrading Korean capabilities as well as maintaining its air and navy forces with a firm treaty. The Secretary said that:

I assure you that this carefully planned action definitely will not diminish our commitment to South Korea's security ... I believe that withdrawals of U. S. ground combat forces from Korea can be safely accomplished over the period of four to five years under the conditions we have publicly declared, namely, the maintenance of U. S. air and logistic support, continued strengthening of South Korean military forces and the full commitment of the United States to the security of Korea.

In response to Singlaub's Congressional testimony, Carter himself defended his new Korean policy at a nationally televised news conference on 26 May. The President confirmed that he did not agree with Singlaub's prediction that the pullout would bring war in Korea: "I certainly don't agree that there is any cause for a war to be expected." He emphasized that the withdrawal policy had been considered by the United States Government for many years because overall strategic considerations such as the relations among the major powers in that area had changed since the end of the Korean War. Carter affirmed that he made a decision after full consultation with the military leaders as well as the intelligence agencies. He also stressed that South Korea,

with much more population and a stronger economy than that of the North, was strong enough to stand on its own feet. He added incorrectly that even South Korean President Park Chung Hee wanted to remove American troops from his country. He said that:

I think it is accurate to say that the time has come for a very careful, very orderly withdrawal over a period of four or five years of ground troops, leaving intact an adequate degree of strength in the Republic of Korea to withstand any foreseeable attack and making it clear to the North Koreans, the Chinese, the Soviets, that our commitment to South Korea is undeviating and is staunch. We will leave there adequate intelligence forces, observation forces, air forces, naval forces, and a firm open commitment to our defense treaty, so there need not be any doubt about potential adversaries concerning our support of South Korea.

Asked by a reporter why he fired General Singlaub, Carter answered that the general was neither fired nor "chastised or punished," only transferred to a new position. However, the President explained that Singlaub was removed from his Korean post partly because of "a very serious breach" of his responsibility and partly because his effectiveness in Korea had been seriously damaged by his open opposition to the

45. President Park Chung Hee was interviewed by American reporters several times. He told them that his country's goal was to achieve self-defense. But his remarks were misunderstood by the reporters to indicate that Park wanted to remove American troops from that country. Later, Park denied that he wanted the departure of American troops. Instead, he urged American leaders to keep American ground troops until achievement of a definitive political agreement with the North. See NYT, 13 January 1977.

withdrawal decision. Carter added that Singlaub's continued stay in South Korea would have been a "disturbing factor", attracting admiration and attention" from others who opposed to the policy, and obstructing his superiors from carrying out the policy smoothly.47

After Carter's news conference, an editorial in the Detroit News claimed that the President "still has not convinced everyone that General Singlaub is wrong and he is right" on the pullout issue.48 The Chicago Tribune also commented in its editorial that "Mr. Carter at his news conference gave an answer that is not quite an answer." The paper continued to say that the President's explanation only left the impression that "this is what you're going to do, so shut up and get going."49

The Singlaub hearing heated up the Korean pullout controversy among the American public. Before the hearing was held, the American public did not care about the realities of the withdrawals. There had been discussions about issues of

---


49. Editorial, CT, 27 May 1977, sec. 3.
whether the general was right publicly to oppose the president's policy or if the President should or should not have removed the general from his post in Korea. But after the hearing, many Americans saw that the pullout might lead to another Asian land war just as easily as it might free them from an Asian involvement. As a result, many Americans changed their minds and raised their voices against the pullout policy. Carter's news conference, which attempted to explain how Singlaub was wrong, still could not fully convince the American public that the President was going the right way.

Meanwhile, the Singlaub hearings gave Congressional conservatives a platform to initiate a campaign against Carter's Korean pullout policy in Congress. This Congressional movement seriously damaged Carter's ability to carry out the policy.
Meanwhile, on the same day President Carter met General Singlaub at the White House, Philip C. Habib, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were ordered to attend a White House meeting. The meeting included Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Warren M. Christopher, Acting Secretary of State, Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense, and Richard C. Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Habib and Brown were preparing to brief South Korean and Japanese leaders on the withdrawal policy. They were instructed to give the leaders of both governments a full opportunity to express their views on the decision. At the same time, the two envoys were ordered by the President not to enter into negotiations with officials of South Korea and

Japan and not to give them any specific commitments.²

On 24 May 1977 both envoys arrived in Seoul, Korea. Habib, who had once served as ambassador in Seoul, made an airport statement that President Carter ordered them to confirm America's "continuing commitment" to South Korea's security "clearly and publicly." He also emphasized that the withdrawal would be gradually and carefully carried out in order not to disturb the military balance and security in the Korean peninsula as well as in Northeast Asia.³ While General Singlaub was testifying before the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee, the two presidential envoys officially began to consult with South Korean officials on the withdrawals at the Blue House, the presidential mansion in central Seoul. During a three hour session, Habib and Brown made it clear that Carter's pullout decision was final and non-negotiable. The envoys informed South Korean officials that the United States would remove about 6,000 ground troops from South Korea by the end of 1978 in accordance with the first phase of Carter's pullout program. They reaffirmed that the pullout would be made in a careful and gradual way so as not to break the military balance between the North and the South or weaken the security of South Korea. President Park Chung Hee expressed his thanks to the visitors for all the

². DSB 77 (11 July 1977): 50.
United States had done for South Korea since the Korean War and added that he also did not expect American troops to stay in Korea forever. President Park, however, made his position clear that he would accept Carter's decision on the condition that South Korea was compensated by the United States in return.  

In their three-day talks, Korean officials made it clear that they would prefer to keep United States forces in Korea. Meanwhile, they requested the envoys to give them control over some of the tactical nuclear weapons deployed in South Korea which had been tightly controlled by American troops in Korea. This was Park Chung Hee's idea of compensation. The Koreans also presented a shopping list of needed conventional weapons including tanks, anti-tank missiles, aircraft, and aircraft rockets. Habib and Brown expressed their opinion that there would be no difficulty about conventional weapons, but they refused to even discuss nuclear weapons. Korean officials asked the envoys to provide details on how the United States intended to continue its security commitment to their country. They requested that the United States strengthen the Korean Mutual Defense Treaty in order to guarantee automatic American

---


5. DSB 77 (11 July 1977): 49.

involvement in the event of war in Korea. Habib and Brown made it clear that to amend the treaty was well beyond the scope of their mission. 7

The three day talks produced nothing except that consultation was officially started. Details of the pullout program were scheduled to be discussed at the tenth annual Military Consultative Committee meeting in Seoul in late July or early August 1977. However, the South Koreans clearly understood that the withdrawal decision itself could not be negotiable and all that remained before them was to decide time table of the pullout and the size of compensation in return. 8

At his farewell news conference in Seoul on 26 May, Habib reiterated American determination to keep its security commitment to South Korea and expressed his sympathy on Korean requests for compensation by saying it was "perfectly reasonable and rational." 9 Meanwhile, General Brown left no doubt about the removal of the tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea by stating that all missiles would be taken out from South Korea with all American ground combat elements. 10 However, the general disclosed that not all American ground

7. Ibid.
8. CT, 6 June 1977; FEER 96 (10 June 1977): 10-1.
troops would be withdrawn. Brown did not specify the remaining force but he implied that duties of those troops were to support the United States air force units and some soldiers for logistics and communication.11

On the way to Washington, Habib and Brown stopped in Japan to explain the background of Carter's decision to Japanese leader. They met with Foreign Minister Iichiro Hatoyama and Asao Mihara, Director-General of Japan's Self-Defense Agency. The envoys reportedly informed the Japanese that Carter made his final decision of the withdrawals only after he had obtained assurances from Peking and Moscow that the two Communist empires had no intention of encouraging North Korea to heighten tension in the Korean peninsula after the American pullout.12

The Japanese leaders diplomatically conveyed their concerns over the security of South Korea and Northeast Asia. They suggested the pullout should be carried out in an


12. NYT, 6 June 1977; WP, 6 June 1977; LAT, 6 June 1977; CT, 6 June 1977. NHK, the semi-governmental radio and television network, reported this, quoting an unidentified Japanese government source. A Washington Post correspondent, John Saar, reported that both China and Russia had been told that the United States was determined to defend South Korea that any military action to the South would lead a direct confrontation with Washington. The New York Times quoted one official in Washington that he did not expect either Peking or Moscow to start trouble or to encourage the North to do so, no formal assurance had been received from China or Russia. The Los Angeles Times quoted one independent source that called this report "imaginative."
appropriate manner in order not to disturb peace and stability in that area.\textsuperscript{13}

The two presidential envoys told Japanese officials that at the end of the withdrawal program, only 6,000 non-combat American ground troops out of 32,000 would remain in South Korea;\textsuperscript{14} but, they said, Carter would not carry out the schedule for the withdrawals regardless of what happened in Asia. The envoys also stressed that the five year framework for the pullout was a "basic goal," but it would be alterable and the withdrawals would be done step by step and circumstances in Asia would be scrutinized at each stage before proceeding to the next stage.\textsuperscript{15}

On 10 June Habib and Brown were called to the Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs and Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Committee on International Relations to brief Congress on the results of their Far Eastern trip. In his statement before the subcommittee, Habib defended Carter's pullout plan by saying that the withdrawal "is a natural, proper development in our ongoing security relationship" with South Korea. He emphasized that the decision was made after the Carter Administration had "carefully weighed the military and international

\textsuperscript{13} DSB 77 (11 July 1977): 50.
\textsuperscript{14} WP, 6 June 1977.
\textsuperscript{15} LAT, 29 May 1977.
considerations involved."\textsuperscript{16} General Brown also testified before the Subcommittee that there would be some risk involved but "it is of an acceptable degree." He further assured that war would not break out from "a rational decision" of the North Korean leaders in case the United States carried out the withdrawal program. The general added that the United States Government could not make foreign policy based on "irrational acts."\textsuperscript{17}

The two envoys also testified before the Subcommittee that Seoul and Tokyo officials accepted the withdrawal plan on the condition that the United States would take "adequate measures" in order to insure the security of South Korea and Northeast Asia. They also were convinced that American ground troops could be removed from South Korea without any risk of war because China and the Soviet Union had no intention of supporting such an invasion.\textsuperscript{18}

Habib and Brown's trip to Seoul and Tokyo was aimed to communicate the Carter Administration's decision of 5 May 1977 on the pullout to the both governments formally. It made South Korean officials realize that Carter's decision was final and irreversible. The South Korean Government focused its efforts on getting more compensation rather than on suspending the

\textsuperscript{16} DSB 77 (11 July 1977): 49.

\textsuperscript{17} WP, 11 June 1977.

\textsuperscript{18} NYT, 11 June 1977.
policy. At the same time, Seoul planned a rapid development of its defense industries and seriously considered a covert nuclear weapon project for the nation's self-defense. The envoys' message dismayed the South Korean people, especially Christians, and it incited them to protest Carter's withdrawal policy through street demonstrations. 19

CHAPTER VIII

THE BYRD AMENDMENT

The Singlaub affair also ignited Senatorial debates on the Korean pullout policy. Senator George McGovern, senior Democrat of South Dakota, who was the Democratic presidential nominee in 1972, strongly supported President Carter's new Korean policy. He argued in his article "The U. S. Risk in Korea", which was published in the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) Defense Review in May 1977, that the Second Division was in a "tripwire position" which guaranteed United States automatic involvement in case of another war in Korea whoever would start it. He continued to argue that the President or Congress would have no choice with American troops under fire. Therefore, in order not to become involved in another Asian land war, the Senator claimed, the United States should give up being a policeman of the DMZ in the Korean peninsula.¹

Senator John C. Culver, Democrat of Iowa, who was a

member of Senate Armed Service Committee, stated in his interview with the U. S. News & World Report that the South Korean Army had grown strong enough to defend the country against Northern aggression. He pointed out incorrectly that South Korean President Park himself acknowledged the self-defense capability several times,² said, "I believe now is an appropriate time to phase out the redundant American ground presence there."³ The Senator also stressed the changed strategic conceptions of China and Russia by indicating that Kim Il Sung, who visited Peking after Vietnam fell, was not encouraged to start aggressive moves, and he was not even allowed to visit Moscow.⁴

Senator Alan Cranston, Democrat of California, agreed with Senator Culver that neither China nor Russia were likely to support North Korea's attempt to attack South Korea. However, Cranston, while claiming that he had long been a student of the Korean issue, was concerned about South Korea's possible adventuring into the North. He argued that whoever started war first, the United States had no choice to be involved in another war in Korea as long as American ground troops stayed along the border. Therefore, he claimed, United States should remove its troops immediately in order to avoid

². For detailed consideration, see Chapter VI, 82.
⁴. Ibid., 28.
its tripwire role.\footnote{LAT, 7 June 1977.}

Meanwhile, Senate Republican leader Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee sharply challenged Carter's new Korean policy. In his written statement submitted to the Subcommittee, Baker argued that the Carter Administration was proceeding with its withdrawal plan on the basis of "a campaign promise" made by Carter, not a careful and comprehensive review by the relevant military experts. The senator stressed that the pullout would create uncertainty throughout free Asia, stimulate regional tensions, and risk a major outbreak of hostilities on the Korean peninsula.\footnote{WP, 11 June 1977.}

Senator Barry Goldwater, Republican of Arizona, also criticizing Carter's withdrawal policy, said, "I am convinced that this action could lead to war in South Korea."\footnote{CT, 17 June 1977.} Senator Charles Percy, Republican of Illinois, and influential Democratic Senator John Glenn joined the critics of Carter's Korean withdrawal policy. They were followed by Senator Sam Nunn, Senator Henry Jackson, Senator Daniel Inouye, and Senator Gary Hart.\footnote{Vance, Choices, 128-9. According to Vance, Senator Percy, one of the most ardent supporters for Asia, told Holbrooke, banging his fist on the table, that he would forge a united Republican opposition to the pullout.}

During debate on the fiscal 1978 State Department
operations authorization bill (HR 6689), Senate majority leader Robert C. Byrd, Democrat of West Virginia, submitted an amendment endorsing Carter's withdrawal policy technically, yet omitting the explicit four to five years pullout timetable. However, minority leader Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. and angry conservatives did not want to accept Byrd's language which supported the Carter's pullout plan, and tried to submit an amendment to delete the language in question. Concerned that Baker's amendment might create a strong negative mood in the Senate against Carter's proposed policy even if it was defeated, Byrd proposed to modify the language. Finally, after seven modifications in three hours, the Byrd Amendment was adopted by seventy-nine to fifteen votes. In its final version, the Byrd amendment neither supported nor opposed Carter's Korean pullout policy but expressed the sentiment that United States policy toward Korea "should continue to be arrived at by joint decision of the President and Congress." It also asked the administration to submit to the Senate an annual report assessing the effect of the withdrawals. The Senate vote neither bound the President legally and constitutionally nor totally rejected Carter's plan, but the debate explicated that Carter would face substantial opposition from Congress if he attempted to carry

out the policy without modification.\textsuperscript{10}

On 17 June Carter made it clear that, in spite of the senate resolution, he would proceed with his pullout program as scheduled. The White House announced that the President would respect the Byrd amendment and continue to consult with congress on the withdrawal policy. However, Carter reaffirmed that he would not change his basic decision by emphasizing the fact that certain decisions on the deployment of military personnel were the sole responsibility of the commander in chief.\textsuperscript{11} In his interview with Bob Clark and Barrie Dunsmore of ABC news on 19 June, Secretary of State Vance also claimed that the Byrd amendment could not restrict the President's rights to proceed with the policy. However, he added that the administration would welcome Congressional cooperation and consultation on the Korean policy.\textsuperscript{12}

In the meantime, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee received a closed door briefing on 20 June about the impact of the withdrawal on South Korea from Stansfield Turner, Director of the CIA. Afterward, Chairman John J. Sparkman, Democrat of Alabama, said, "there had been some confusion over the basis of intelligence as it relates to the question of a possible pullout of United States ground troops from Korea

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{WP}, 17 June 1977.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{NYT}, 18 June 1977.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{DSB} 77 (18 July 1977): 78.
over the next few years." The chairman added that there was "no urgency" and the committee would take no action one way or the other in the near future.\textsuperscript{13}

The Byrd Amendment did not limit President Carter legally, nor did it fully reject his Korean policy. However, it clearly represented the Senatorial concern over the withdrawal policy and constrained the President to modify or suspend the withdrawals.

\textsuperscript{13} WP, 21 June 1977.
For ten years, the Washington and Seoul governments had held an annual security meeting to discuss general defense issues between two countries without attracting public attention. Unlike the previous ones, the tenth Security conference had attracted considerable interest especially in South Korea because the meeting would define the troop pullout schedules. In order to fulfill the policy within the proposed period, the Carter Administration had to settle upon a specific pullout schedule with Seoul at the meeting. Moreover, they had to demonstrate to the public that it could be done safely in order to calm the growing domestic and overseas objections to the policy. Meanwhile, the Seoul Government had to secure adequate compensatory measures from the United States to fill the military gaps that the departure of the Second Division would create. They also needed a strong American defense promise to deter war in Korea as well as to soothe the growing fears among South Korean people.

In order to prepare for the conference, officials of both
countries frequently met in Washington and in Seoul. To judge from the number of preliminary meetings to prepare for the tenth annual conference, the issues were troublesome. On 3 June in Washington, Korean Ambassador Kim Yong Shik visited Philip C. Habib.\(^1\) In Seoul, on 10 June, the first committee meeting between both countries military officers was held at the United Nations Command headquarters.\(^2\) On 14 June Richard L. Sneider, United States Ambassador in Seoul, and Korean Foreign Minister Park Dong Jin met to discuss adequate compensatory measures that the United States could offer in the next annual security meeting in Seoul.\(^3\) On 10 July, two weeks before the annual security meeting, Under-Secretary Habib visited Seoul again for talks with both American and Korean officials on the proposed pullout policy. Besides laying the groundwork for the tenth annual security meeting, his purpose was also to discourage the Seoul Government from attempting to develop its own nuclear weapons.\(^4\)

---


2. Ibid.


4. NYT, 9 July 1977 and 11 July 1977; CSM, 11 July 1977. South Korean officials repeatedly advocated the development of nuclear weapons if they were faced serious security threats from the North. President Carter, who did not want nuclear proliferation, confirmed that South Korea would be continuously covered by American nuclear umbrella in his interview with editors of the U. S. News & World Report in June 1977. He also hinted that he might use nuclear weapons in South Korea if the North were to start another war. See U.S. News & World Report 82 (6 June 1977): 19.
While officials of both countries were negotiating on the pullout plan, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance repeatedly confirmed to the public that American troops could be safely pulled back home with in four or five years. On 28 June the secretary claimed that the South Korean Army could fully defend its nation with United States air and naval support. On the next day, in his address before the Asia Society at New York, Vance reaffirmed that South Korea's economic growth and military strength were the basis for President Carter's decision on the pullout. The secretary, pointed out that American ground forces in South Korea only constituted about 5 percent of the total ground troops in South Korea. He maintained that a careful phaseout of these troops over a four to five year period would not endanger the security of South Korea. He also expressed his strong expectation of China's new role in keeping peace and stability in the Korean peninsula by stating that "we consider friendly relations with China to be a central part of our foreign policy" in that region.

On 23 July Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, accompanied by officials of the State Department, the National Security Council, and the Pentagon, visited Seoul in order to attend the tenth Annual Security Consultative Conference between the

---

6. Ibid., 1 August 1977, 142-3.
United States and South Korea.\(^7\)

In his arrival statement, Secretary Brown stressed America's firm intention to respond to any attack from North Korea against the South. He said,

> We will affirm the intention of the United States to maintain powerful military forces in Korea and throughout the Western Pacific in order to respond promptly and decisively to any armed attack against the Republic of Korea.\(^8\)

However, in his greeting statement, South Korean Defense Minister Suh Jyong Chul expressed a sharply different view by emphasizing the importance of preventing such an possible attack. He said,

> Our purpose is to deter a renewal of war. I believe our combined strength and determination must remain strong enough to discourage any miscalculation by the adversaries.\(^9\)

At the beginning of the talks, Secretary Brown officially informed officials of South Korea that the United States would remove 6,000 troops including one brigade of the Second Division by the end of 1978 as the first stage of the withdrawals. At the same time, the secretary offered a four-year US$1.9 billion aid package for its compensation - a one-shot US$300 million credit for weapon purchases, a four-year US$1.1 billion military sale credit (US$275 million each

---


\(^8\) LAT, 24 July 1977.

\(^9\) Ibid.
year), and free gift of US$500 million worth of weapons and equipment held by the Second Division in South Korea. Brown also advised Koreans that about 8,000 to 9,000 ground troops would be pulled back by 1980. And the rest of them except 7,000 air force personnel and about 3,000 to 6,000 troops involved in communication, logistics, and intelligence would be removed by 1981 or 1982.

The secretary also tried to persuade Koreans with a new rationale for the withdrawal. He claimed that "a sound five year withdrawal program", prepared by Carter, would be better than leaving troops in place but open to Congressional action that could lead to a "spasm withdrawal," that would not give Koreans a chance to offset the loss of military capability. He also told Koreans that South Korea would be politically more stable if the balance of military power between the South and the North could be established without the presence of U.S. ground troops.

South Korean delegates wanted to keep American ground troops as long as possible in order to gain time to build up their military capability. They asked the U.S. delegates to

---

10. LAT, 25 July 1977; WSJ, 25 July 1977. (US$1.4 billion credit was repayable in seven years at 8 percent interest).


keep two brigades of the Second Division and its headquarters in Korea until the last month of the withdrawal. Secretary Brown made this concession to the South Koreans in a meeting with President Park.\(^{13}\)

In the wake of the Vietnam defeat, the South Koreans already set aside US$5 billion beyond the normal defense budget for a force improvement program over a five year period. The Koreans told the U.S. delegates that they would need at least US$2 billion in aid to fill in the gaps of military capability created by departing American troops.\(^{14}\) Secretary Brown did not make a specific promise but explained Carter's plan to ask Congress for a US$1.9 billion Korean aid package. Defense Minister Suh asked Secretary Brown to complete compensatory measures before the withdrawal began. However, Brown made it clear that the United States plan was to have them proceeded "in parallel."\(^{15}\)

The discussion focused on what would be left behind and what would be taken out. Koreans wanted the United States to leave behind 116 latest model M-60 tanks held by the Second Division and buy more of this model in order to offset the North Korean's sizable advantage in armor. American delegates


\(^{15}\) LAT, 26 July 1977; CT, 26 July 1977.
rejected the Korean proposal because the older M-48 tanks held by South Korea were equivalent in capability, moreover the new weapon would require the South Koreans to assume an additional burden for separate logistic line. The United States delegates did agree to hand over sizable numbers of helicopters and armed personnel carriers held by the Second Infantry Division to South Korea. But the United States offered only a limited ammunition stockpile in South Korea, between 250,000 and 300,000 tons (about US$700 million value) that the Korean troops could use for thirty to forty-five days in case of military confrontation, even though the Korean delegates wanted to have a stockpile several times as large.

The South Koreans were eager to buy more sophisticated weapons from the United States, but the United States delegates advised Koreans to concentrate on defensive rather than offensive weapons because they did not want both Koreas to accelerate an arms race. However, Secretary Brown promised to let South Korea buy American weapons "on a priority basis" including the sophisticated F-16 fighter. He also promised that the United States would help with the development of South Korea's new defense industry. At the same time, the secretary promised to expand joint military

18. Ibid.
exercises, establish a combined United States - South Korea Military Command, and strengthen the United States Air Forces in Korea. 19

The issue of 600 tactical nuclear weapons held by American forces in Korea was one of the most sensitive points in the two days of talks. The United States made it clear that South Korea should rest its defense on non-nuclear weapons, while confirming that South Korea would continue to be protected by the United States nuclear umbrella. 20

Meanwhile, Secretary Brown gave President Park a personal letter from Carter. The letter reaffirmed the United States commitment to South Korea in spite of the withdrawals. The President confirmed in his letter that the United States would provide "prompt support" to help South Korea against any armed attack in accordance with the mutual defense treaty of 1954, and added that "neither North Korea nor any other country should have any doubt the continuing strength of this commitment." In his letter to Park, Carter offered a new pledge that he would keep American ground troops involved in communication, logistics, and intelligence in South Korea "for the indefinite future." 21

After ending two days of talks, both parties issued a


seven page joint communique. The gist of the joint communique is as follows:

The first 6,000 GIs would go home by the end of 1978.

A U.S. - Korean Command would be created after the first phase of pullout was complete.

The U.S. Air Force in Korea would be strengthened as ground troops return home.

The American nuclear umbrella would continue to cover South Korea following the withdrawal of ground forces.

The U.S. would help South Korea beef up its own armed forces and help with Korea's new defense industry.

Congress would be asked to approve a Korean aid package totaling an estimated US$1.9 billion.

The U.S. agreed in principle to sell weapons on a priority basis, including F-16 jet fighters, to South Korea.

The U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea made in the 1954 treaty would be unchanged.

The U.S. and South Korea urged North Korea to agree to the resumption of the S-N dialogue suspended by the North in 1973.22

The successful completion of the tenth Annual Security Consultative Conference brought the Carter Administration one step close to the withdrawals. However, it still could not calm the growing domestic and overseas objections to the policy. Nor did the security meeting mitigate the Congressional conservatives' movement to suspend the policy.

---

such an opposition threatened Congressional approval for a US$1.9 billion Korean aid package, which was essential in managing the withdrawals. Therefore, Carter's successful completion of the proposed withdrawal program was still unclear.
CHAPTER X

SAMUEL S. STRATTON AND CONGRESSIONAL CONSERVATIVES

Samuel S. Stratton was born in Yonkers, New York on 27 September 1916. He was educated in the public schools of Schenectady and Rochester, New York and at Blair Academy, Blairstown, New Jersey. He graduated from the University of Rochester in 1937. Stratton entered Haverford College in Pennsylvania and got a M.A. degree in 1938. For next two years, he continued to study philosophy at Harvard University, and in 1940 Stratton obtained his second M.A. degree there. After that, Stratton started to work for Congressman Thomas H. Eliot of Massachusetts for 2 years. In 1942 he joined in U.S. Naval Reserve. In 1943, after he had studied the Japanese language at the University of Colorado in Boulder for one year, Stratton worked at headquarters under General Douglas MacArthur's Command in Australia as a Japanese interpreter. He participated in landings in New Guinea and in the Philippines during World War II and received the Bronze Star Medal twice. From 1948 to 1954, Stratton taught philosophy at
Union College in Schenectady and at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. At the same time, he joined local radio and TV stations as a news commentator. During the Korean War, he was recalled to active duty. In 1956 he was elected mayor of Schenectady. As mayor from 1956 to 1959, he reformed city government and campaigned to wipe out gambling in the city. One local journalist described Mayor Stratton as "the most controversial figure ever to stir up political sparks" in the history of the city. In 1959 Stratton became a United States Congressman.¹

Since taking his seat in the House, Stratton had been a member of the Armed Services Committee. He advocated effective military management and did not favor an increase in the defense budget. Meanwhile, in the area of foreign policy, Stratton always supported U.S. military assistance and other foreign aid programs.²

As soon as the Singlaub affair occurred, Stratton called for Congressional hearings, pointing out that Congress had never been officially advised of President Carter's withdrawal


² Moritz, Biography 1966, 394. Stratton was the only opponent among members of the House Armed Services Committee to a bill of 1965 requesting salary increase for military men a US$1 billion each year.
policy, nor had the policy been discussed in the Congress. As Chairman of the House Armed Services Investigations subcommittee, Stratton encouraged General Singlaub to present his beliefs and urged fellow Congressmen to decide whether the proposed policy risked a war in Korea.³

Having concluded from the Singlaub hearings that the pullout would involve the risk of a war in the Korean peninsula, Chairman Stratton and other Congressional conservatives decided to continue their examination of the policy. They asked the Pentagon to make General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Bernard W. Rogers, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, to be available for Congressional hearings.⁴

At the same time, the House Armed Services Committee officially requested the National Security Council (NSC) to provide copies of the Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM-13) and Presidential Directive (PD/NSC-12) on Korea in order to know the details of the withdrawal plan. However, the NSC rejected the Congressional request by answering that those documents were too sensitive to be presented to the Congress.

³ Cong. HASC 95-71, 2-10. During the hearing, Stratton frequently requested Gen. Singlaub to repeat his views, repeating them himself in his questions, e.g.: "In other words, General, what you are telling us is, as far as you know the overwhelming majority of people on the spot in Korea, either military or civilians, feel that the withdrawal of all U.S. ground forces from Korea is a mistake and could run the risk of war?"

⁴ LAT, 27 May 1977.
Congressional conservatives censured the Executive for ignoring the Constitutional right of the Congress to review those documents.\textsuperscript{6} Congressman Charles Wilson, Democrat of California, complained that "only the President and Secretary Brown seem to know what in the world is going on as far as the defense of our country is concerned."\textsuperscript{7} Congressman Richard Ichord, who was a former law school professor at the University of Missouri, advised the committee that the executive process of the presidential directive would be matter of executive privilege, but the directive itself could not be the matter of executive privilege. He suggested that the committee issue a subpoena. However, the committee decided instead to again request that the NSC provide Congress with the documents.\textsuperscript{8}

In the meantime, General George S. Brown and General Bernard W. Rogers denied General Singlaub's assertion that military experts were not consulted by the President on the withdrawal policy except on the timing of the pullout. Both generals confirmed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff participated in the NSC meeting and other security review processes which

\textsuperscript{5} Cong. HASC 95-71, 87-8.  
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 77, 92-4.  
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., 87.  
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 93-4.
led to President Carter's decision to pullout the ground troops from South Korea. General Brown added that local commanders in the Pacific and Korea were also consulted by Carter.9 Contrary to Singlaub, Rogers and Brown defended Carter's new Korean policy by claiming that the withdrawal would be "an acceptable risk."10

Liberal Democrats expressed their satisfactions with both generals' testimony on the withdrawals. Congressman Dellums told Brown that:

This is a very interesting moment for me, today, General Brown ... I am having a great deal of fun this morning ... Based on all those factors you came to the conclusion you are in support of the President's policy with respect to phased withdrawal of troops in South Korea. And that, to use the military term, you perceive the risk but that risk is within acceptable range. I would seem to me that testimony ought to be adequate for all members of this committee and Congress. That is that the president, the State Department, the Pentagon, (the) Joint Chiefs of Staff, everyone has looked at it from a multiplicity of perceptions, factored in a multiplicity of considerations, and has come to the conclusion that you can withdraw troops.11

Meanwhile, Stratton officially requested General Brown to provide the committee with copies of back-channel telegraph traffic, which represented the personal view of military personnel on the issue, in order to trace Singlaub's assertion that most local officials believed that the withdrawal would

9. Ibid., 78-80, 111.
10. Ibid., 85, 124.
11. Ibid., 138.
seriously increase the risk of war.\textsuperscript{12}

Congressman Marjorie S. Holt, Republican of Maryland, conscious that every government officials confirmed the United states would remain a Pacific power, asked General Brown how the United States could remain a Pacific power if the Carter Administration pulled out troops and nuclear weapons from South Korea, which was one of the most important overseas bases in Asia. Holt said, "what do we do, just stand up and say we are a Pacific power and everything will be all right?"\textsuperscript{13}

Congressman William L. Dickinson, Republican of Alabama, argued that even though the North Koreans did not consider the South a threat, they still increased their capabilities tremendously in manpower, aircraft, naval vessels, and particularly tanks during the past five years. Pointedly he asked, "what kind of calculation should a reasonable person draw from that?"\textsuperscript{14}

Congressman Larry McDonald, Democrat of Georgia, argued that since Kim Il Sung did not change his attitude of using force in achieving unification, it is hard to understand why the administration suddenly made the gesture to withdraw troops at that particular moment. He was concerned that the

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 121-2.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 132.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 136.
withdraw policy could be easily be interpreted by the United states allies in Asia as a "symbol of our bugging out, or getting flaky, or flakier."\(^{15}\)

Stratton and other conservative Congressmen tried to block the policy by comparing the situations between Korea and NATO. Congressman Robert E. Badham, Republican of California, argued that the United States did not pull its troops out of Germany even though that country had a stronger economy than that of Korea. He also stressed that there was much more risk of war in Korea than in Germany by pointing out the fact that the North Koreans had shot down an American helicopter in the DMZ area on the previous day.\(^{16}\)

Rogers and Brown emphasized that the greatest threat still lay in Europe rather than in Asia because Warsaw Pact forces had been enhanced in size and sophistication during the ten years while the United States was engaged in war in South Asia. Both generals also argued that they could not equate Europe with Korea because the United States did not face the Russians or Communist forces like the Warsaw Pact in Korea.\(^{17}\)

Stratton admitted that the most important United States strategy was keeping a stable situation in Europe. However, he claimed that it would not be to the United States'

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 129.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 128.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 98, 128.
advantage to stir up a war in Korea even though Northeast Asia was strategically less important than Europe. He said, "if we have a stable balance there and we can keep a stable balance there, why should we want to run any risk of upsetting it at all?" The chairman, while mentioning his two years of service in the Korean War, said, "I certainly don't want to go back again or see our country go back again." He also stressed that the Vietnam War proved that the deterrent capability of air and naval forces was not as great as ground forces. Stratton said, "I think all indications we saw in Vietnam that you can't fight an infantry war with air and naval power; you have to fight it on the ground."

Stratton, criticized the government's intention to increase a NATO budget by 3 percent while at the same time talking about withdrawing troops from South Korea. He warned that it might give the enemy impression that Asia wasn't really important to the United States. The chairman reminded the committee that the United States got into World War II not because of what happened in Europe but because of what happened in Asia. Americans, interested in the nation's security, should pay more attention to what was going on in

18. Ibid., 99.
19. Ibid., 323.
20. Ibid., 325.
Stratton again used the Pearl Harbor analogy during the testimony of Roger Sullivan, Deputy of Foreign Mission, United States Embassy in Taiwan:

I went through Pearl Harbor and we were told that the Japanese wouldn't possibly attack us and everything was under control, and it didn't work out that way. So we are trying to get to the bottom of a situation. We are not zeroing in on you or anybody else, but this has been a rather revealing experience to us.

Stratton stressed that the North Koreans maintained a threatening offensive capability. They could attack Seoul with very little warning, less than six hours. He said, "if the North Koreans come down and take Seoul in 30 hours or something like that, the ball game is largely over." The chairman also pointed out that only a single brigade of American troops kept the peace and stability in Berlin, a city that was surrounded by communist power. He argued that it was possible because the presence of American ground troops there were a tremendous deterrent, said, "it seems to me the same thing would apply to Korea."

Congressman Harold Ford, Democrat of Tennessee, while emphasizing that the goal of United States involvement in Europe was to create a deterrent, claimed that the same

---

22. Ibid., 256.
23. Ibid., 336.
24. Ibid., 315.
25. Ibid., 99.
argument should be made in Korea. He said, "if you replace 35,000 U.S. troops with 35,000 South Korean troops, regardless of how well they are equipped, they do not have the same deterrent capability."\textsuperscript{26}

In his written statement to the committee, Congressman William M. Ketchum, Republican of California, who was a veteran of the Korean War and World War II, expressed his deep concern over the proposed withdrawal policy. Ketchum doubted the rationale of the policy decision. He did not think that the South Korean Army was strong enough to maintain the status quo in the Korean peninsula. Peace had been kept only through the presence of American ground troops. The North attacked the South shortly after the completion of the American military withdrawal from South Korea in 1949. He further argued that any drastic shift in the delicate balance of power in Korea would disturb political, economic, and military stability not only in Asia but also in Western World as well. He said,

The question is not can we afford to remain in South Korea, but can we afford not to remain in South Korea? We must be made to fully realize the grave implications with which we are dealing. The chance we take today can only become the peril we face tomorrow.\textsuperscript{27}

Meanwhile, Congressman Robin L. Beard, Republican of Tennessee, discussed the advantage of using Korean soil as a training area for United States soldiers. The congressman

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 98.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 212.
argued that American soldiers got more motivation in Korea than in any other place in the United States because they were "locked into a situation in a war zone." He maintained that unless there was a significant cost savings benefit, it would be mistake to give up the most effective U. S. training area in the world.28

Having heard the criticism of Carter's withdrawal policy, Stratton and three other hawkish committee members traveled to South Korea and other countries in the Far East in order to obtain on-the-spot views of the military situation in Korea. During their trip from 2 to 16 January 1978, the subcommittee delegation met not only with senior American military and civilian officials but also with relevant foreign military and civilian officials in Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Philippines in order to learn their views on the proposed pullout policy.29

After completing his Far Eastern trip, Stratton made a report entitled "Review of the Policy Decision to Withdraw United States Ground Forces from Korea." The report pointed out the following findings:

28. Ibid., 239-40.
29. Cong. HASC 95-61, 1-2. The committee heard views of Donald S. Zagoria, Professor of Government at Hunter College and Graduate Center of the City University of New York, Professor Morton A. Kaplan, Director of the Center for Strategic and Foreign Policy Students at the University of Chicago, and Richard G. Stilwell, a retired general who was former commander-in-chief of U.S. forces in Korea. All of them criticized Carter's pullout policy.
President Carter had arrived at his decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Korea well before his inauguration. The Subcommittee found no evidence that the President had sought any advice, assistance, recommendations or estimates of probable impact of his withdrawal decision on U.S security considerations or stability in the Far East from the Joint Chiefs of Staff ... or from any other knowledgeable military sources prior to making his decision....All of the testimony presented to the subcommittee agrees that the presence of U.S. forces in Korea, particularly U.S. ground forces, has been the single most important factor in preventing the outbreak of a new war in Korea....On the basis of current intelligence estimates and all the information made available to it, the subcommittee concluded that the North Koreans possess the capability of attacking the South with a minimum of warning, and that the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division is needed for an adequate defense. Were that Division to be withdrawn, the defense of Seoul would be greatly complicated.30

The report emphasized the significant psychological deterrent role of the Second Division in addition to its combat capability. It also pointed out that the withdrawal would not save money, but might well result in increased cost, lose the best feasible training ground for American combat troops, and reduce America's influence in the Pacific.31

The report concluded that the 30,000 U.S. ground troops in Korea fulfilled the same deterrent function as some 300,000 American troops stationed in Western Europe. Therefore, its pullout without a proper countermeasure would not only significantly increase the chances of war with Communist North but also seriously endanger the safety of the remaining

30. Ibid., 2-4.
31. Ibid., 3-4.
American troops in South Korea. The report accepted the announced schedule of removing 6,000 troops from South Korea on condition that the Congress enacted legislation authorizing the transfer of their equipments to the South Korean Army before they left Korea. However, it suggested a slower and more protracted withdrawal and recommended that the President modify his plan and for him to use the remaining American forces as a final card to conclude a peace settlement between North and South Korea.

Chairman Samuel S. Stratton and his fellow conservative Congressmen played the greatest role in rallying Congressional objections to Carter's Korean policy. They not only called for hearings but also traveled to South Korea and other Asian nations to obtain local commanders' views on the policy. They made a report that Carter's proposed policy would only risk war without getting significant benefits. Their report convinced Congressional conservatives that the Korean withdrawal policy was a mistake. It encouraged the conservatives to continue to stand against the policy.

32. Ibid., 5-6.

33. Ibid., 6-7, 18.
The United States' top military officers were overwhelmingly opposed to President Carter's proposed withdrawal policy. After the President officially decided the pullout policy on 5 May 1977, however, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to support the presidential decision on the condition that the United States reaffirmed the Mutual Defense Treaty, supplied adequate military compensation, and maintained U.S. air and naval power in South Korea even after the pullout. But the local commanders in the Pacific still did not support Carter's pullout policy. Their continuing opposition not only inspired Congressional conservatives to the policy, but also raised the spectre that Carter might face the blame for any future conflict between the two Koreas. This debate continued to slow the momentum of


Carter's policy.

The Singlaub affair divided the military leaders into defenders or critics of President Carter on the withdrawals. General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, who favored a partial and slower pullout, defended the president's decision after the Singlaub affair. He argued that South Korea, with its strong economy and sizable, well disciplined professional military forces, was strong enough to defend itself against the North. The United States would need to help the South Korean Army to develop additional capability in areas such as logistics and intelligence. But because of the South Korean's overall defensive capability, he argued, it would be unfair if the United States continued to let them remain dependent on American protection. In his brief statement before the House Armed Services Committee on 14 July 1977, General Brown defended Carter by emphasizing that the President was fully aware of the following views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that North Korea cannot now attack South Korea with assurance of victory. The ROK force improvement program plus the so called compensatory actions which are being defined, if approved and supported by the Congress and carried out in a timely manner, will assure successful defense against attack subsequent to U.S. ground force withdrawal. If that capability is accompanied by a strong, visible U.S. commitment to support the ROK through our Mutual Defense Treaty, then only an irrational act or a serious

3. Cong. HASC 95-71, 128.
miscalculation would lead to war.\textsuperscript{4} General Brown admitted that there would be less risk if the United States left its ground troops in South Korea and that the withdrawal did entail additional risk. But he said that he believed it would be an "acceptable risk." He contended that:

The likelihood of this program leading to war was perhaps slightly higher than it would be if we didn't do it, but we really don't think war is going to come as a result of it. I think that is probably as clear and about as close as I can come to defining it. It is acceptable. It obviously would be unacceptable if we thought it was going to lead to war.\textsuperscript{5}

General Bernard W. Rogers, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, also defended Carter's policy by claiming that the risk involved in the pullout would be "acceptable." He also told members of the House Armed Services Committee on 13 July 1977 that, "there is a risk involved, greater than the risk in retaining the status quo ... that the risk will be an acceptable risk."\textsuperscript{6}

Meanwhile, United States military commanders in the Far East strongly opposed any pullout of the Second Division from South Korea. Even before Carter took the Oval Office, General John W. Vessey, Commander in Chief of United Nations and United States Forces in Korea, who was among the most ardent

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 111.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 127.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 85.
critics of the Carter's pullout policy, declared in an interview with John Saar of the *Washington Post* that the withdrawal would heighten the risk of war in the Korean peninsula. On 30 April General Vessey reaffirmed his view in his interview with the United Press International by saying, "In my view the withdrawal of all the American ground troops would raise the possibility of war in Korea." The general noted that the Second Division was located along a possible North Korean invasion route to Seoul. He claimed that this deployment was very important to deter war in Korea because it gave a clear message to the North that they must fight the United States as well as South Korea if they tried to size Seoul. Vessey emphasized the importance of the Second Division's deterrence role stating that "we are here to prevent war, not a fight one." He also argued that "the cost of one day of war in blood and resources could equate to fifty years of deterrence."

The general also said that North and South Korea's military capability were roughly equal. Therefore, the South Korean Army could take care of themselves in a war with the

---

8. Ibid., 21 May 1977.
North in case outsiders would not interfere. In such a case, he claimed, "I would gamble on a southern victor." However, Vessey predicted, the Soviet Union and China would have no choice but to support North Korea because of its strategic importance to them. He argued that Korea was also strategically important to the United States because it set right in the middle of the Soviet Union, China, and Japan. Therefore, he stressed that stability in that part of the world was essential not only to Korea but also to the United States' national security. On 3 October 1977 before members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee, Vessey clearly expressed his opposition to the withdrawal policy by saying that "as a military commander, if you want my opinion, I don't want you to withdraw any forces." In February 1978 Vessey reaffirmed his unequivocal opposition before the Senate Armed Service Subcommittee by saying that "if I had my say, I would not withdraw."

General John H. Cushman, commander of I Corps (ROK/US) Group in Korea, argued in his article "Military Balance In Korea" that the results of war games showed that the South


13 Cong. HASC 95-71, 255.

Korean Army, even fully supported by United States tactical air, naval, and logistic support, could not defend Seoul from North Korea's surprise attack. He criticized Carter's pullout policy by arguing that it was based on "an inaccurate assessment of the actual military balance on the Korean peninsula." The general pointed out that the Second Division had a deterrent function as well as combat function. While the combat capabilities of the Second Division could be transferred to the South Korean army, the deterrent function could not. He told members of the House Armed Services Investigation Subcommittee that if the Carter Administration pulled back its ground troops in the wrong way, it would cause "an unwanted and unnecessary war." However, if the United States did it right, it would give the Koreans self-confidence. "Do it right" in his opinion meant that the last American ground forces should remain in South Korea until the North realized that they could not take over Seoul by force.

Admiral Maurice F. Weisner, United States Navy, Commander in Chief of American Forces in the Pacific, also stressed the deterrent value of American ground troops in South Korea by

---


16. Ibid., 361.

17. Ibid., 364-5.

arguing that a fully capable Korean Division could never have
the same level of deterrent value that the Second Division
had. He argued that the North Koreans regarded the Second
division as "a direct indication of U.S. willingness to defend
the South." He said, "I believe the removal of U.S. combat
forces would be perceived by the North as a lessening of the
U.S. resolve and could increase the probability of an
attack." He also warned about a negative Japanese reaction
to the withdrawals because the Japanese historically placed
a great deal of importance on land forces. The pullout of the
Second Division could only be perceived as a reduction of
American commitment in that area. The admiral emphasized
that the pullout obviously would unnecessary increase the
level of tension and the possibility of adventurous action in
the part of the Far East. Before the House Armed Services
Subcommittee in January 1978, he said that "from the military
viewpoint, I would prefer to have the troops stay." 

General Vessey's deputy Lt. General John J. Burns

19. Ibid., 445.
20. Senate Committee on Armed Services, Hearings on
Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and
Development, and Active Duty, Selected Reserve, and Civilian
Personnel Strengths: Fiscal Year 1978, 95th Cong, 1st sess.,
(Hereafter cited as Cong. S. 1210). The admiral claimed that
North Korea could attack Seoul successfully without the
assistance of China and Russia.

21. Ibid., 2362.
22. Cong. HASC 95-71, 430.
expressed his opinion in an interview with John Saar of the Washington Post. He also preferred that the Second Division stay in South Korea. He said, "the withdrawal must be managed to avoid any disastrous change in the military balance on the Korean peninsula or credibility of the American commitment."\(^{23}\)

The general, who flew 102 combat mission as a fighter pilot in the Korean War, added that American air units in South Korea should be significantly strengthened in order to fill the military gap that the withdrawal of the Second Division would create.\(^{24}\)

Meanwhile, one United States officer in Seoul expressed doubt about the effectiveness of air units' deterrent role by saying that "warplanes are like geese. They can honk and fly away. Who really believes that if we don't have the resolve to keep troops in Korea that we are going to bring them back if a war starts?"\(^{25}\)

George J. Keegan, jr., a retired U. S. Air Force major general, also discounted American air units' deterrent role in Korea. He argued that the bulk of the military targets were well protected by massive underground bunkers and shelters and even tactical nuclear weapons could not break them down. The general claimed that reinforcing air and naval power could

\(^{23}\) WP, 19 May 1977.

\(^{24}\) Ibid.

\(^{25}\) Ibid.
not fill the military gap that the withdrawal of American
ground forces would create. He said the Korean pullout "is a
part of the United States world politics of retreat."26

General George G. Loving, Commander of United States
forces in Japan, gave importance to the phasing of the
withdraw process and compensatory measures. The general,
stressing the reassessment process of each stage, said that
the United States must be sure occasionally to stop the
process and check what was happening in North Korea as well
as in Northeast Asia, and then adjust the plan in accordance
with changed conditions.27 His deputy General John Q. Henion,
who also favored keeping the Second Division in South Korea,
claimed that the United States had to have a plan to
reposition the unit in Korea in addition to a full
compensatory program in order to show the North that South
Korea was fully supported by the United States. Otherwise, he
advocated, the withdrawals should be delayed.28

General James F. Hollingsworth, former Commander of I
Corps (ROK/US) Group, who adopted the forward defense and
massive firepower strategy during his stay in South Korea,
also emphasized the importance of the time phasing the
withdrawals by saying that "I support President Carter's

28. Ibid., 303.
proposal to withdraw. However, I agree with President Park's timing."\textsuperscript{29} The general urged the Carter Administration not to begin the initial withdrawal of 6000 troops until Seoul completed its five-year army modernization program in 1980. He claimed that the United States should continue to assist and support in the modernization of Korean armed forces and the development of defense industries, especially capability for the production of aircraft and indigenous tanks. He added that "I think if we got all things that they need now in place, then we can consider an orderly withdrawal."\textsuperscript{30}

Admiral Robert Baldwin, Commander of the Seventh Fleet, admitting the fact that the Seventh Fleet was involved in Korea very heavily, said that Korea was the most sensitive spot in the whole area of its operations from the east coast of Africa to the Sea of Japan. The admiral said that he was not an expert on the army picture in Korea, so he could not predict the consequences of Carter's policy. However, the admiral claimed, he believed that the withdrawals without full compensation would heighten the risk of war in the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{31}

General Richard G. Stilwell, retired as the commander in chief of the United Nations and U. S. Forces in Korea in 1976,

\textsuperscript{29} Cong. S. 2571, 1863.

\textsuperscript{30} I bid.

\textsuperscript{31} Cong. HASC 95-71, 213-20.
questioned Carter's policy in an interview with Newsweek's Tokyo bureau chief, Bernard Krisher. Stilwell noted that Kim Il Sung had never given up his goal of unifying Korea by force in his lifetime. He also emphasized that air and naval forces could not replace the deterrent function of the Second Division because they were far away from Seoul. For effective deterrence, he said, "the deterring forces must be positioned between the enemy and any logical objective." Stilwell was also concerned about three possible Japanese reactions to the pullout - substantial rearmament, development of nuclear weapons, accommodation with the Soviet Union - and claimed that the United States ground troops in Korea should not be pulled back until North and South Korea achieved a peace settlement. The general also emphasized in his article "The Need for U.S. Ground Forces in Korea," published in the AEI Defense Review in May 1977 that the Second Division played "a unique, non transferable function in the prevention of war." He concluded the article with the following rationale for the maintenance of the Second Division in South Korea:

They are key to the security and well being of 36 million human beings and to the protection of U. S. interests... Their presence provides the only lever that might force the North to accept the reality of two Korean states... They are valuable - indeed essential - assets

33. Ibid., 51.
in furthering our major objectives in Northeast Asia: strengthening the partnership with Japan; minimizing the Soviet presence; improving relations with the people's Republic of China; sustaining the region's economic momentum; fostering a climate in which the kind of democratic institutions we espouse can take root; and preventing nuclear proliferation...

Finally, that band of 30,000 is the symbol that the United States is no less concerned with the future of the free societies of Northeast Asia than those of the Atlantic Community.35

General Stilwell, an ardent critic of President Carter on the withdrawal, maintained before the House Armed Services Subcommittee that another war in Korea would be also a "no win" scenario because of the big powers' inevitable involvement. Therefore, he advocated, the United States should give the concept of deterrence first priority in solving the Korean problem.36 He also predicted that the United States could safely leave South Korea within fifteen years if the South Koreans kept the same pace of economic development as they had over the previous fifteen years.37

American officers, who overwhelmingly opposed Carter's Korean withdrawal policy, were split into two groups by the Singlaub affair. Top officials in Washington such as General George S. Brown and General Bernard W. Rogers changed their positions and defended the President while most local commanders apparently still disapproved of the pullout policy.

35. Ibid., 28.


37. Ibid., 203-4.
It could be explained that officers in Washington, who were more exposed to political affairs, changed their minds out of constitutional as well as political considerations while local commanders still judged the situation from a purely military point of view. The local commanders' continuing opposition to the pullout, even after the Singlaub affair, undermined the Carter Administration's ability to carry out its policy.
CHAPTER XII

SCHOLARLY OPINION

President Carter's Korean policy also sparked a debate among scholars. A review of articles published in major newspapers and periodicals shows that most scholars objected to the proposed withdrawal.\(^1\) These scholars also influenced American public opinion. Many Americans began to doubt the safety of the policy because of those experts' opposition.

Donald S. Zagoria, Professor of Government at Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, pointed out in two articles, published in the New York Times, that President Carter's decision to withdraw United States ground troops from Korea was very much Carter's own idea. Carter was determined to avoid another war in Asia, and

\(^1\) I have researched 24 scholars' articles on the withdrawal which were published in major newspapers and periodicals from January, 1977 to July, 1979. None of them fully supported Carter's Korean policy. Scholars' letters to editors are treated below as "public opinion."

135
his pullout policy was based on ill advised reasons.\textsuperscript{2} Zagoria argued that Kim Il Sung, who had not given up his ambition of reunification of Korea, had recently showed "a strong hint of paranoia," might attempt to take over the South if the United states pulled its troops out of South Korea. He pointed out that Kim had been preparing for a war since the middle of the 1960s by pouring huge amounts of money into war industries. Consequently, the North could have a much higher war capability over the South. Once the United States ground troops were pulled out, Zagoria argued, the well equipped North Korean Army could take over Seoul successfully in spite of American air and naval opposition.\textsuperscript{3} Moreover, the two big communist powers were not in a position to prevent Kim from initiating a war against the South because the North had enough independent military capability.\textsuperscript{4} If Seoul fell to the North, he maintained, the United States would be faced by three agonizing options: bombing Seoul, bombing other targets in North Korea, or pressing South Korea agree to a cease-fire immediately. The first option would require the destruction


\textsuperscript{3} Zagoria, "Leave Korea," 88.

\textsuperscript{4} Cong. \textit{HASC 95-71}, 172.
of Seoul, the capital city and population and economic center of South Korea. The second would risk Chinese and Russian intervention. The third, which according to Zagoria most American policy makers would prefer, would make the South inferior to the North permanently. Therefore, he claimed, "the least dangerous and painful course for us is to continue to deter the North from starting a war." 5

Besides the risk of war, Dr. Zagoria cataloged his objections and criticisms. Asians would have the negative impression that the U.S. was no longer interested in the Pacific. The Japanese might react with a nationalistic lurch to the right or left, followed by rapid rearmament or an accommodation with the Soviets. China would reconsider Sino-American relations and might seek a Sino-Soviet accommodation. The two Koreas would be engaged in a new arms race, including nuclear weapons, over which the United States would lose control. The Soviets would try to fill the resulting vacuum, politically and militarily. In any case, an excellent bargaining chip which could be used to coax the North into accommodation with the South would be sacrificed. 6

Finally, the President's policy would not decrease the risk of "another Vietnam" but increase the risk of American involvement in a new Asian land war. Therefore, he concluded

6. Ibid., 89-92.
that the Administration should change its withdrawal plan from an "unconditional" to a "conditional one," with some troops deployed until the two Koreas reached a political settlement.\footnote{Ibid., 92-95.}

Dr. Ernest W. Lefever, Director of Georgetown University's Ethics and Public Policy Center, pointed out in his article "Withdrawal from Korea: A Perplexing Decision" that the withdrawal policy was decided by Carter and his aides who thought that the United States should avoid any involvement in Asian conflicts, neither because of domestic public pressure nor overseas requests. He argued that this abrupt and undebated decision would not only have a negative impact on Asian allies, but it jeopardized the United States' own interests in the Far East. He agreed with Dr. Zagoria that the immediate reactions from Japan, China, Russia, two Koreas, and other Asian allies could ultimately affect the entire global balance of power and significantly damage the American position in the world.\footnote{Ernest W. Lefever, "Withdrawal from Korea: A Perplexing Decision," \textit{Strategic Review} 6 (Winter 1978): 28-35. He was a professional lecturer in international relations in the Department of Government and a senior associate of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Georgetown University.}

Professor Morton A. Kaplan, Director of the Center for Strategic and Foreign Policy studies at the University of Chicago, criticized Carter's new Korean policy before the
House Armed Services Subcommittee on 1 August 1977 by arguing that "our current policy increases the risk of war."⁹ He argued that if a war broke out in Korea, the Carter Administration or any successor would have no choice but to be involved because of its essential global strategic situation.¹⁰ Dr. Kaplan also pointed out possible undesirable reactions from Japan, a key ally in Asia, as a result of the withdrawals. He maintained that Japan deployed most of their troops in the north in order to defend themselves from a Russian attack and they relied on South Korea to defend them from the other direction. The pullout, therefore, would influence the basic Japanese defense conception and might excite a rise of extreme nationalism in Japan, which might create an unnecessary crisis in relations between the United States and Japan.¹¹

Edward Luttwak, Associate Director of the Johns Hopkins Center of Foreign Policy Research, was also concerned about a negative Japanese reaction. He reminded readers that the Japanese had always been sensitive to the balance of power in Korea. Japan could be driven by Carter's decision and the rise of the Soviet Navy in the North Pacific to turn to "a stance of neutralism or even accommodation with the Soviet Union out

⁹ Cong. HASC 95-71, 175.
¹⁰ Ibid., 173-4.
¹¹ Ibid., 172-6.
of fear for its own security." He was also concerned about China. He argued that the Chinese, who publicly supported the American pullout, actually feared the Soviet Union's overwhelming influence on North Korea. If the United States withdrew its forces, Luttwak argued, the balance of power in the region would be so upset that China would have no ability to moderate the action of Kim Il Sung.

David Nelson Rowe, Professor of Political Science at Yale University, argued in his article "Danger Spot in the Far East" that Carter's pullout policy as well as the reduction of the American security guarantee to Taiwan would drive the Taiwanese to seek help from the Soviet Union. If Russia got a submarine base at a Taiwanese deep water port, they could triple covert submarine operations in the Pacific. And these developments would force the Japanese to into "armed external imperialism."

Joseph M. Ha, Professor of International Affairs at Lewis and Clark College, and his research associate, Gregory M. Luebbert, emphasized the Second Division's restraining influence on both North and South Korea. In an article in the Asian Survey they argued that the withdrawal might lead to uncontrolled minor conflicts, even though a general war was

---

13. Ibid.
unlikely. A renewed Korean conflict would force Japanese conservatives to initiate a major rearmament program, especially a naval build-up, and expedite a naval arms race in that region. It would also make the two big communist powers compete for Japanese favor. A rearmed Japan would pursue a more independent foreign policy. Moreover, Chinese, perceiving a rearmed Japan as a threat, might seek a rapprochement with Moscow. Thus, the Pacific and world balance of power might be affected and tensions heightened.\textsuperscript{15}

If the danger were to increase, South Korea would seek to develop nuclear weapons, even though they had signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Thus, the United States should reconsider its withdrawal policy, and even after a pullout, should try to reduce tension in the Korean peninsula by keeping good relations with Japan, China, and Russia and by influencing North Korea to change its belligerent attitude.\textsuperscript{16}

Professor Ha further argued elsewhere that the Carter Administration had three options for Korean policy:

1. a permanent military presence with no attempt at negotiations,
2. an unilateral withdrawal, by stages or otherwise,
3. negotiations which, if successful, would be


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 748-51.
followed by withdrawal. 17

Dr. Ha argued that if the United States merely wanted to avoid another war in Korea, the administration could follow the first option. If the United States simply wanted to eschew any involvement in another Asian land war, he said, the administration could follow the second option. But if the United States would insure peace and stability in the Far East, he claimed, the Carter Administration must follow the third. He said, "if we recognize this, we will not trample our own interests in the pursuit of policies which might yield only short-term benefits." 18 He also suggested that the United States, Japan, China and Russia should play a major role in reducing regional tensions by encouraging both Koreas to sign a non-aggression pact and by agreeing that none would support an aggressor. 19

Astri Suhrke, Assistant Professor of International Relations at the American University, Washington D.C., and Charles E Morrison, Professional Lecturer at John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington D.C., argued in their article "Carter and Korea: The Difficulties of Disengagement" that even though Carter's new Korean policy would fail to reduce tensions between North and South Korea,


18. Ibid., 622.

19. Ibid., 621.
it was unlikely to create any of the immediate destabilizing consequences that opponents of Carter feared. In the long run, both scholars anticipated that South Korea's economic growth would overwhelm the North and force inferior North Korea to "seek a closer alignment with China or, more probably, with Soviet Russia." If this would occur, they concluded, "it will no doubt be of very great concern to the Japanese and set the stage for large power re-engagement, rather than disengagement, in Korean affairs."20

Frank Gibney, Vice President of Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., pointed out the basic differences between Americans and Asians concerning Carter's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from South Korea. In an article in Foreign Affairs he argued that Americans believed the bad days of the Cold War were already over, and that they anticipated that the withdrawals would lessen tensions in Asia. However, Asians worried the withdrawal policy would actually increase tensions in that area. He argued that considering America's isolationist mood after the Vietnam War, the withdrawals would seem "logical and necessary." He added, however, the United States should seriously consider "the ripple effect of a round, shiny pebble from Washington suddenly tossed into a still Asian pond,

causing undulations far beyond the point of impact." He pointed out that although American troops made up only a tenth of NATO strength, like the Korean brigade, they played an obvious deterrent role. He also pointed out both Japan and China's nervous reaction to its announced withdrawal policy, and criticized Cater's unilateral announcement without any concessions from the other side. Gibney continued to argue that because the United States air and sea power did not deter North Korea's attack on the South in 1950, the South Koreans would not trust in Carter's promise of continued air and naval supports.

Like Dr. Suhrke, Gibney was concerned about the possibilities of the South's adventuring against the North with overwhelming economic and military strength in the long run. He said that Asians, especially Japanese, feared that the able and ruthless South Korean President, Park Chung Hee, might attempt to attack the North with his own arms in the near future if the U.S. ground troops were removed completely from north of Seoul. He was also concerned about the dangerous consequences of Japan's rearmament and nuclear proliferation in this area after the pullout, and said the Carter Administration should reconsider the result of the


22. Ibid., 164-6.
Gregory Henderson, Adjunct Associate Professor, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, pointed out in an article published in the Washington Post that Carter's withdrawal policy combined with strengthening Korean capability would not decrease the danger of war in Korea. He argued that North Korea would not see US$800 million of new United States weapons as "redressing of a balance between North and South Korea, but an overwhelming threat." Therefore, the North also would request Moscow to provide more sophisticated weapons such as Mig-24s and 25s, and it would augment tension in the Korean peninsula. In an another article in the New York Times, Dr. Henderson suggested Washington-Pyongyang arms reduction talks. If no progress was made, he claimed, the Carter Administration should suspend its pullout plan.

Eugene V. Rostow, Professor at Yale University Law School, was suspicious of Russia's attitude. He claimed that the Soviets always answered setbacks in one theatre with trouble in another. Rostow recalled that the Korean War broke out after the Greek, Turkish, and Berlin crises. Thus, in his

---

23. Ibid., 166-7.


view, the United States' rapprochement with China contributed to the Middle East War of 1973. If the United States would withdraw the Second Division, he argued, the Soviets might again train North Korean forces in Siberia, give them advanced weapons, and achieve the same kind of surprise they contributed to in the Middle East in 1973 and the Korean War. Therefore, Rostow recommended that the United States keep its ground forces in Korea intact for the time being.26

Young Whan Kihl, Professor of Political Science at Iowa State University, emphasized in his article "Korea's Future: Seoul's Perspective" that the pullout policy would expedite Korea's independent development of nuclear weapons in order to overcome the North's superiority in conventional weapon systems. He pointed out President Park's plan for the establishment of research centers such as the Korean Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) as well as his campaigning to encourage a number of overseas Korean scientists to return home. Khil contended that the South Korean Government clearly opposed a multilateral agreement on a nuclear-free zone for Korea and said that "Seoul has invested in the development of its own nuclear capability and indeed may have already crossed

the threshold of no return on a nuclear time table."27

Young Sun Ha confirmed in his article "Nuclearization of small States and World Power Order: The Case of Korea" that South Korea already possessed enough experts and engineers for developing nuclear weapons. He also observed that President Park had ordered his Defense Development Agency to study the possibilities of developing its own nuclear weapons as soon as Saigon fell in 1975. Considering South Korea's concern over its security after the pullout, its rapid economic growth, and its capability for developing nuclear weapons, the author argued, the Seoul government might seriously consider developing its own nuclear weapon system in order to both effectively deter Northern attack and use it as a "bargaining chip" in negotiating the withdrawal schedule with the United States.28

L. L. Wade, Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Davis, maintained that if the United States unilaterally carried out the withdrawal policy, Seoul


28. Young Sun Ha, "Nuclearization of Small States and World Power Order: The Case of Korea," Asian Survey 18 (November 1978): 1139-43. He was a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science, University of Washington, Seattle, and a pre-doctoral visiting fellow at the Center for International Studies, Princeton University. According to the author, South Korea possessed about 1,000 atomic energy experts including 250 scientists. It expected to increase to about 3,000 by 1981, and 5,500 by 1986. A U.N. report said that about 1,300 engineers and 500 scientists would be enough for making nuclear weapons.
would build its own nuclear deterrent. He said, "surely this is the wrong way to conduct foreign policy." Wade also stated that South Korea was a middle-sized industrial state. Therefore, the United States should deal with Korea as it did with European allies and Japan.\(^{29}\)

Li Lin Chun argued in an article in the *Asian Outlook* that Carter did not create the withdrawal policy, but merely implemented the plan more actively than his predecessor. According to the author, the United States basic strategic policy is to keep sea power superiority in the Pacific. The United States participated in two major Asian land wars in Korea and Vietnam not to keep peace in that area but to consolidate its sea power because the United States thought it could not exercise its sea power in the Pacific without securing defense ports in Asian continents. But after the Vietnam war, the United States changed its main policy to keep its sea power in the Pacific without holding defense posts in the Asian mainland. He argued that "the decision by Carter to withdraw U.S. forces from Korea was a further step taken to implement the strategy of giving up land and holding sea power in Asia."\(^{30}\)


Chun maintained that the two communist superpowers had not changed their goals, strategies and tactics in Asia. He recalled that the United States pulled out its troops from Indochina, in hoping that Peking and Moscow would cooperate to keep peace in that area. But it only led to the downfall of three democratic countries there. Chun doubted Carter's promise to keep peace and security in the Korean Peninsula after the withdrawal of the troops from South Korea. The author warned that the President should consider the plan based on military strategy rather than political strategy. Otherwise, He said, "if something unexpected occurs, President Carter may not be able to handle it properly." 31

These academic writings greatly affected the public debate on Carter's Korean policy. Their negative views on the future of American relations with the major world powers because of the pullout discredited Carter's announced rationale for the withdrawal. At the same time, these scholars' views gave Congressional conservatives a theoretical base for their objections to Carter's Korean policy. Dr. Zagoria and Dr. Kaplan were called to the hearings of the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee and testified that Carter's Korean policy was a mistake. It eventually affected the House Armed Services Committee's approval of the Stratton Amendment that the Carter Administration should

31. Ibid., 17.
suspend the policy until two Koreas settled a peace agreement. In addition, these scholars views gave the American public an impression that most experts outside the government did not agree with the President on the pullout issue. This made the public reconsider its support for Carter's Korean policy.
CHAPTER XIII

NEWSPAPERS VIEWS

Before the Singlaub affair occurred, American news media heavily covered the Koreagate affair and showed little interest in the pullout issue. The Singlaub affair changed these newspapers' coverage. The nation's major newspapers competitively covered the Singlaub affair as well as experts' views on the issue. In addition, the papers expressed their own views on the pullout through their editorial pages. Major American newspapers were evenly divided on President Carter's Korean policy. The conservatively inclined Wall Street Journal and the Chicago Tribune, as well as the independent Washington Post and the Detroit News criticized Carter's Korean policy while the left leaning New York Times and the Chicago Sun Times, as well as the independent St. Louis Post Dispatch, the Cleveland Press, and the Houston Post defended President Carter. The Los Angeles Times, which favored the President's Korean policy at first, changed its attitude later. Those newspapers, pro and con, attracted public attention. At the same time, the heavy coverage made the Carter Administration
proceed more cautiously.

The Chicago Tribune, one of the most ardent critics of Carter's pullout policy, criticized it as an "ill-informed and ill-considered policy." in its editorial of 19 June 1977.\(^1\) Through over a dozen editorials for nearly two years from the Singlaub affair to Carter's suspension of the program, the paper continuously claimed that Carter's pullout policy was a mistake and should be suspended entirely. The editors contended that Carter devised this idea irresponsibly for purely domestic political reasons because he believed American people were tired of their military involvement in Asia after the Vietnam War.\(^2\) They also argued that the problems involved in the policy went beyond Korea itself, and said, "our troops in Korea are an important factor in our relations with Japan and with both Chinas. They are a factor in our credibility among both our friends and our potential enemies throughout the world."\(^3\) The paper requested that the President clearly answer these following five questions in order to convince Americans that this was not an "ill-informed and ill-advised policy" before he proceeded too far with the plan.

1. Would the withdrawal cause Japan to become nationalistic and build large military forces and increase tensions in the Pacific area?
2. Would it cause Japan to seek accommodations

---

1. Editorial, CT, 19 June 1977, sec. 2.
2. Editorials, CT, 25 April 1978, sec. 3 and 23 January 1979, sec. 3.
3. Editorial, CT, 28 July 1977, sec. 3.
with China and Russia and cease to be a useful U.S. ally?
3. Would it encourage Russia to move against China along the Ussuri River?
4. Would it cause South Korea to build its own nuclear weapons and expedite the dangerous nuclear proliferation that the U.S. was eager to prevent?
5. What would be the effect on China?

The editors emphasized that many Americans were concerned about the effects on Japan. Any results of Japanese reaction would harm American interests. They also argued that if the president proceed with his plan, the Chinese, who believed that American ground forces in South Korea were an effective leverage against Soviet expansion in that area, might sense a vacuum and build up its military strength in Manchuria in order to keep the Korean peninsula under their influence. It might be followed by a Soviet reaction. Therefore, it would increase the dangers of a military confrontation in that area.\(^5\) The editors of the *Chicago Tribune* continued to argue in their editorial pages that it remained a mystery why the United States was seeking to pullout its ground troops from South Korea when its economic and military strength were crucial to the region. An 10 August 1977 editorial contended that the Carter Administration was playing a fool's game called "Baffle 'em all." It argued that Carter should be wise enough to understand that he was no longer an obscure


\(^5\) Editorials, *CT*, 4 July 1977, sec. 1 and 23 January 1979, sec. 3.
candidate and that his views might terrify the entire world. The editors repeatedly recommended the President to suspend the "entirely baffling and foolish idea." 6

The Wall Street Journal also criticized Carter in its editorial of 31 May 1977 saying that Carter's unilateral decision to withdraw American troops from South Korea damaged American credibility in the whole world even though it might not be followed by a new war in Korea. The editorial argued that it would unnerve not only the Japanese but also the Chinese who began to see the United States as a new ally and a needed counterweight to Russia. This wrong-headed policy might lead the Chinese reluctantly to turn against the United States and back toward the Soviet Union. The editor also pointed out that the United States was blamed for the military unbalance between North and South Korea. According to the editorial, Washington had deliberately limited the South Korean Army's offensive capability while promising them the protection of the United States defense umbrella. Meanwhile, Russia and China helped North Korea's massive military build-up without such a restriction. The editor concluded that American ground troops should be kept in South Korea "not out of habit but because they are an anchor of stability that serves American interests," which was the same reason United

states troops had been in Europe for more than 30 years. 7

In its editorial titled "Withdrawal Decision Seen as New
Threat to Peace," on 27 May 1977, the Detroit News also
pointed out that the decision was made without serious
consultations with United States Army officers. The editor
said, "the more we read and hear about the plan for a phased
withdrawal of U.S. ground troops from South Korea, and how the
decision was reached to adopt it, the more it worries." 8 On
28 April the editor of the paper also stated that there was
no sensible reason for the withdrawals at that moment because
it would only "heighten the danger of an outbreak of war,
threaten Japan's security and give the world the message that
America has lost interest in Asia." 9 The editors of the paper
also pointed out several times that Cater made a mistake in
announcing his decision unilaterally without any concession
from the opponents that would help to ease the tensions. 10
After the new intelligence report was issued, the editorial
of 28 June 1979 stated that North Korea had secretly built up
its military power. The writer asked, "For what purpose?
Defense against a weakened adversary?" The editorial concluded
that "the plan for American troop withdrawals from South Korea

should be scrapped. Peace is simply not a game that one side can safely play alone. 11

Meanwhile, in its editorial of 2 August 1977, the New York Times supported Carter's unilateral decision by refuting charges that the President made his decision unilaterally, arguing that "the North Koreans had nothing comparable to trade." Since the South Korean forces outnumbered those of North Korea, the editor argued, Carter could not trade with the North Koreans for a reduction of their forces. The editor continued to argue that Carter's announced withdrawal plan actually would reduce tensions at the DMZ at least for the next five years because the North Koreans understood that any minor conflict would make the United States postpone or even reverse the timetable of the pullout. Even after the pullout, the editor claimed, deterrence would be continued because the North could hardly attack the South because of the presence of powerful American air forces in South Korea. 12

The Cleveland Press fully supported Carter, stating in its editorial of 23 May 1977 that strong air and naval forces as well as the United States defense treaty with South Korea would be enough to deter North Korea from attacking the South. The editor of the paper criticized the opponents of the President by claiming that they did not learn any lesson from

recent history. The editor said, "the Korean War and Vietnam War proved conclusively that the American public will not support involvement in a land war on the Asian mainland." The editor concluded that an attempt to maintain U.S. infantry troops in South Korea indefinitely would be "not only wishful thinking but bad strategy." 13

The St. Louis Post Dispatch also supported Carter claiming in its editorials of 7 June and 18 July 1977 that the withdrawal was an overdue recognition of the fact that "there is no longer any necessity of maintaining a sizeable American presence there." The editors argued that the South Koreans, who had a larger army, greater manpower, and stronger economy than the North must defend themselves against the North's aggression without the aid of American infantry troops. The editors maintained that the 30,000 American ground troops were numerically insignificant in demonstrating an effective military or diplomatic purpose. Moreover, the editorial continued, the withdrawals not only diminished the chances of American involvement in other Asian land war but also the further loss of American lives. Therefore, the editors concluded that the troops should be brought home in accordance with Carter's proposed withdrawal plan. 14

The Houston Post and the Chicago Sun-Times also fully


supported Carter's decision on the pullout, arguing in their editorials that there was considerable evidence such as the congressional Budget Office report, which proved that American ground troops in South Korea were no longer needed for military purposes but were there for political reasons. The editor of the Houston Post, emphasizing a tripwire role of American troops in South Korea in its editorial of 25 May 1977, said, "It is time to end this presence that is not justified by the need and expense." The Chicago Sun-Times also claimed in its editorial of 21 May 1977 that "it's in this country's best interest to divorce itself as much as possible from South Korea's repressive government, without inviting an attack on the South by Communist North Korea."

The Washington Post, which initiated the Singlaub affair by reporting the general's views, expressed its opinion through an editorial of 30 May 1977. It contended that the troop withdrawal itself was not a bad idea. However, the paper warned the President that if he did not manage the plan "with exquisite care," other major interests of the United States such as prevention of nuclear proliferation would be seriously jeopardized because the South Koreans might seek to develop their own tactical nuclear weapons as an alternate means of


deterrence. The editor conclusively stated that "the simple slogans of withdrawal are poor guides to the complexities of the situation on the ground."\(^{18}\)

The *Los Angeles Times*, the most ardent defender of Carter, fully supported his new Korean policy from the beginning of his administration through its editorial pages. Immediately after Vice President Mondale's Tokyo meeting, the editorial of the paper on 2 February 1977, pointed out South Korea's far greater economic and military strength. They justified Carter's proposed withdrawal policy by saying, "it is matter of doing the right thing in the right way." The editorial continued to say that:

North Korean bellicosity provides some basis for that fear. But given the impressive military strength of South Korea and the clear absence of any Soviet or Chinese interest in supporting North Korean aggression, a renewal of the Korean war that concluded nearly 24 years ago seems extremely unlikely.\(^{19}\)

When the Singlaub affair occurred, the paper conceded in its editorial of 27 May that the general's concern over the withdrawal was justifiable because military planers always had to prepare for the worst situation. What really bothered military men was that the history of 1950 might be repeated in Korea. But the editor recalled that the Communist North could attack easily attack the South in 1950 because the South


\(^{19}\) Editorial, *LAT*, 2 February 1977, sec. 2.
Koreans were virtually unarmed. But South Korea in 1977 possessed a formidable military capability. Moreover, United states air and naval units as well as a mutual defense treaty, which did not exist in 1950, strongly supported Korean security. In addition, China and Russia were unlikely to discard detente and support North Korea's unrealistic attempt to invade the South. Therefore, the editor concluded, Carter's withdrawal policy was "not unacceptably risky."\(^{20}\)

When the Senate approved the Byrd Amendment requiring the President to consult with Congress before proceeding with further withdrawals, the paper, through its editorial of 31 July 1977, criticized the Senate by claiming that the Senate was attempting to bind Carter's good foreign policy with "a judgement that falls short of being supported by the facts."\(^{21}\)

Two days later, the editor of the paper urged Congress to support Carter's withdrawal plan by approving the Korean military aid package submitted by the President. The editor said, "Congress, we think, ought to cooperate with this plan by approving the appropriations that will be necessary to make it work."\(^{22}\) However, the Los Angeles Times changed its attitude after the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that the President suspend his withdrawal plan based on a new 1979

\(^{20}\) Editorial, LAT, 27 May 1977, sec. 2.

\(^{21}\) Editorial, LAT, 31 July 1977, sec. 2.

\(^{22}\) Editorial, LAT, 2 August 1977, sec. 2.
intelligence report on North Korean military strength made by the CIA and the DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency). The paper urged the President to change his mind by claiming that the Joint Chiefs of Staff's advice "seems to us the sound course."

The editorial of 28 June 1979 continued to say that:

Many wars, including the North Korean invasion of 1950, begin in miscalculation. If maintaining a division or so of American troops in South Korea helps to deter any such new miscalculation, the cost will be worthwhile. Certainly it would be preferable to the cost of misreading North Korean political intentions, given that country's apparently formidable military machine.23

Unlike newspaper editorials, most of the nation's influential columnists strongly supported Singlaub's position and criticized the President's Korean pullout policy. Kenneth Adelman, who had been an assistant to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld during the Ford Administration, argued in his Chicago Tribune column that Korea was one of the most important strategic points on earth where major five world powers watched with keen interest. He said no one in Washington understood why Carter tried to remove the primary deterrent force from this sensitive area of the world. He also argued that the President's policy would please the Soviet Union and particularly North Korea, but it would anger America's main allies such as Japan, South Korea, and many Europeans. Moreover, the withdrawal plan would give a negative impression to a new ally China. It made the United States seem

to have no intention of stopping Russian expansion in Northeast Asia. Therefore, he argued, the danger of the withdrawal policy would certainly outweigh the nebulous benefits. He concluded that "the troop withdrawal could have been a wise one, had the necessary diplomatic groundwork been laid and changes in the international scene been brought about over time. As it stands, however, it is a rather reckless course appealing in appearance through unjustified in substance."24

Norman Pearlstine argued in a column in the Washington Post on 29 May 1977 that the withdrawal policy was not only unlikely to achieve its goals but it heightened the risk of war as well as endangered the balance of power in Northeast Asia. He continued to argue that North Korea's President Kim Il Sung had never given up his desire to communize the South. But both Moscow and Peking were unwilling to allow Kim to attack because they did not want to confront the United States directly in that area. If the United States removed its ground troops from South Korea, their concerns would be diminished and the risk of attack would consequently increase. Therefore, he maintained, peace and stability in Northeast Asia could only be kept as long as the troops in Korea acted in the "tripwire role." Pearlstine, also emphasized that only South Korea positively responded to the American request for support

during the Vietnam War by providing about 50,000 of its troops. He warned that the United States might lose a valuable, loyal ally in Asia by proceeding with its policy unilaterally. The columnist concluded that the United States troops must be kept in South Korea until both Koreas completed a political settlement by signing a nonaggression pact.25

J. F. terHorst, an influential national columnist, agreed with Pearlstine that China and Russia would not support Kim Il Sung's invading the South if the Second Division stayed in Korea. He said, "once the United States leaves, their reason for denying Kim's claim leaves, too." He was also concerned that the pullout would heighten tensions between China and Russia over gaining the control of the Korean peninsula as well as the Sea of Japan. Such a confrontation would sharply destabilize the region and, of course, would seriously concern the Japanese whose defense primarily defended upon an American security promise. He concluded, "U.S. troops are not primarily in South for its needs but for ours."26

Donald Morris, a columnist of the Houston Post, argued that North Korea's decision as to when to attack the South would depend not so much on the number of the ground troops in Korea as on America's will to defend South Korea. He


maintained that the United States commitment to South Korea did not really require the presence of massive ground troops. However, he concluded that the presence of the troops was the best proof to the North Korean that the United States was seriously concerning the security of South Korea.\(^\text{27}\)

Joseph C. Harsh argued in the *Christian Science Monitor* on 26 May 1977 that the troops stayed in South Korea not for the security of Korea but for the protection of Japan. He maintained that if South Korea became communized, communists from the mainland could directly attack Japan unobstructed by any significant land barrier. Therefore, he claimed, in order to defend Japan properly, South Korea should be kept as a strong ally. He predicted that sooner or later Japan would take over the present America's role in South Korea for its own security. Until that time, he claimed, "the United States must stand as the protector and guarantor of South Korean security." The columnist, also reminded his readers that China's influence had been the key to the Korean problem. He wrote, "it would be foolish to withdraw American troops from South Korea if there were any reason for thinking that Peking wanted another Korean war. But it will be safe to withdraw these American troops if it is known that Peking has a tight

\(^{27}\) Donald Morris, "Chip Shot, Bad Decision Hurt Singlaub," *Houston Post*, 9 June 1977. (Hereafter cited as HP).
Jack Anderson, a prominent national columnist, expressed concern about South Korea's development of nuclear weapons as the result of the United States withdrawal of its nuclear umbrella as well as its ground troops from South Korea. The columnist, pointed out President Park's continued intention of developing Korea's own nuclear weapons. He cited the evidence of Park's frustrated attempts to buy a nuclear fuel plant that could produce plutonium, an essential ingredient of nuclear weapons. He also argued that if South Korea developed nuclear weapons, Japan obviously would develop its own nuclear bombs and Peking also would feel obliged to give its skill to North Korea. For this reason, he concluded, "keeping our troops and our nuclear weapons in South Korea may be the only way the United States can prevent membership in the nuclear club from getting out of hand."  

Michael Kilian, a columnist of the Chicago Tribune, argued that "Candidate Carter recklessly promised to withdraw American troops from the Republic of Korea, ostensibly because of the human rights situation there." Kilian admitted that President Park was a dictator. But the columnist claimed that Park was ruling his country no harsher than did Chicago's late Mayor Richard J. Daley, who used secret police to check his

---


opponents and who tried to buy votes on Chicago's West side during a mayoral election. Kilian emphasized the geographical importance of the Korean peninsula by arguing that Korea is not a far off Namibia." He warned the Carter Administration that "Whatever happens there directly and immediately effects Japan, China, Russia, and consequently the United States." The columnist, comparing the Carter's Korean policy to that of Truman's, said that Carter seemed not to have learned any lesson from the Korean War in 1950. He concluded that the troop withdrawal policy was "ill considered" and Carter could be accused of "naivete, hypocrisy, and irresponsibility." 30

Meanwhile, Charles W. Yost, a syndicated columnist and a former United States Ambassador to the United Nations, defended Carter's decision in his columns in the Los Angeles Times on 5 June 1977 and in the Christine Science Monitor on 3 June 1977. Yost pointed out the significant differences between the situation in Northeast Asia in 1950 and that of 1977. In 1950, he argued, Stalin was eager to participate in the post war control of Japan because he believed Japan would eventually play a great role in the Asian balance of power. However, his attempt was repeatedly blocked by the United States. Therefore, Stalin encouraged Kim Il Sung to attack the South, hoping that an unified communist Korea would affect

---

Japanese stability. By 1977, however, Japan had already become a great power economically and politically, and another Korean war would only give them a chance to be a military big power again. Therefore, he claimed, the Soviet Union was not in a position to encourage Kim in such an attack. Yost also pointed out that the Russians and the Chinese, who were allies in 1950, were no longer allied but hostile each other because of border dispute. And both communist super powers were fearful that another Korean war might give the other side an advantage in the regional balance of power. Moreover, they did not want to produce an unwanted political confrontation with the United States by encouraging Kim to attack the South because both nations got significant benefits from their improved relationship with the United States. Therefore, he concluded,

It is therefore difficult to imagine either the Soviet Union or China encouraging Kim Il Sung to attack the South, or its doing so against the will of the communist great powers. These broader considerations seem far more likely to determine the nature of any real threat in Korea than a narrow focus on the relative military capabilities of North and South, and hence fully to justify President Carter's decision to phase out U.S. ground forces. 31

The nation's influential newspapers were evenly divided over the pullout policy. Editors who defended Carter's recall of General Singlaub also approved his withdrawal policy, while those who attacked Carter's reaction to the indiscreet general

did not support the policy in their editorial pages. Unlike editors, columnists overwhelmingly criticized Carter's decisions on the pullout policy as well as on the Singlaub affair. Rival newspapers such as the *New York Times* vs. the *Washington Post* and the *Chicago Tribune* vs. the *Chicago Sun Times* stood on opposite sides on this issue because of ideological differences, as well as their competition for reputation and circulation. These papers' competitive coverage on the Korean pullout policy, pro or con, attracted public attention. Growing public interest in the policy, due in part to the newspapers' heavy coverage, caused Carter to move more cautiously.

---

CHAPTER XIV

PUBLIC OPINION

Before the Singlaub affair, the American public, by and large, did not pay attention to Korean issues except Koreagate. The public generally approved of President Carter's withdrawal policy, partly because most people did not want to risk involvement in an Asian land war and partly because of the illegal lobbying scandal and human rights violations by the Park Administration. However, the Singlaub affair brought more attention to the Korean withdrawals. As a result, more Americans understood the realities of the pullout policy. After the Singlaub affair, Americans expressed their opinions on the pullout through letters to the editors of newspapers or periodicals.

Many letters supported the policy, reflecting the "new isolationism" that was common in post-Vietnam America. Anthony Kang, Morristown, New Jersey, defended Carter's new Korean policy and said that South Korea was not vital to American interests. He deplored that Nixonite Asian scholars misled the
United States into the Vietnam War and said, "why should we continue to apply yesterday's Vietnam policy to Korea today?" He argued that situations of Vietnam and Korea were different in many ways. But they shared a basic common factor in strategic and political problems. Therefore, he concluded, it was natural that the Carter Administration reexamine the United States Korean policy in accordance with the Vietnam experience. 1

J. T. Van Voorhis, Chairman of Barnes & Brass Co., Clarkburgs, West Virginia, who favored the pullout, said, "too long have we been the source of too much for too many small countries." 2

Edward Friedman, Chairman of the East Asian studies program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, pointed out that "not all sources of tension stem from problems in the North," and argued that the United States should not act as a global policeman as she had done in 1945. 3

John W. Howell, jr, President of Howell & Associates, Inc., Springfield, Ohio, also criticized the United States' global role. He wrote,"The U.S. cannot police the world

---

1. NYT, 7 July 1977. I have chosen these samples from various newspapers and periodicals. I selected these based on people's opinions on the pullout issue, their occupations and regions. Scholars who expressed their opinions through letters to the editors were treated with public opinion.


3. NYT, 6 November 1977.
forever. We cannot afford to keep troops all over the world, especially for a dictator such as Park Chung Hee. 4

Other Americans felt that South Korea should be able to support itself. Gary Savage, a service coordinator for Flynn Hill Elevator Corporation in Long Island City, New York, favored the Korean withdrawal policy. He pointed out that nearly three decades of the United States' support for the Korean Armed Forces was a long enough period for South Korea to develop its own deterrent capability against the North. 5

Jay C. Wockler, Santiago, California, also argued that "if South Korea cannot defend itself after 25 years of our financial and military help, then they are not worth having as an ally, and we might as well let them go down the drain." 6

Richard E. Galvan, a certified public accountant in Long Beach, California, who was wounded during the Korean War, firmly stated that "we should never again fight a land war on the continent of Asia." He, strongly defending Carter's pullout policy, said, "air and naval support are okay. Let the Asiatics supply the infantry. It is less costly to help build their land forces than supply our own." 7

5. Ibid.
6. LAT, 9 August 1979, sec. 2.
Others defended Carter because they did not like the tripwire role of the Second Division in Korea. In his article "Letter From Seoul," Weyland McGleigh supported Carter's cause. The Korean war was kind of a civil war, he argued, and another war would be possible whenever one side could conceive of victory. If a war broke out, the United States would automatically be involved in a war as long as American ground troops stationed there. Therefore, he claimed, the United States should remove its troops from South Korea immediately and have the Koreans solve their own problems. 8

John M. Kane of Rockville, Maryland, argued that South Korean security actually could not rely on the presence of U.S. ground troops in South Korea. He said, "our troops are simply hostages to South Korea's fears of fighting in North Korea." He also claimed that the troops in South Korea would only guarantee Congress's approval of additional American troops in the case of confrontation. 9

Others supported Carter's withdrawal policy simply because they objected to Korea's undemocratic government, its violations of human rights and illegal lobbying. In her letter to the editor of the Chicago Tribune, Linda Jones, Church Committee on Human Rights in Asia, argued that "the lesson we need to learn is not from Harry Truman's mistake of troop

withdrawal", but from "Iran and Nicaragua, where we have supported unpopular dictatorships instead of democracy." She added that "continued U.S. support of an unpopular dictator cannot but delay a peaceful solution." Therefore, she concluded, the Carter Administration should give priority to supporting a democratic government rather than a military regime. 10

Christopher M. Choi, Chicago, also pointed out that the South Korean Government not only violated the basic human rights of their citizens but also undermined the democratic process of the United States by engaging in illegal lobbying activities. He claimed that the Carter Administration should press the Park regime to restore human rights and democratic freedoms. If President Park refused to cooperate, Choi claimed, the United States should remove its ground troops from South Korea immediately. 11

Meanwhile, many Americans, influenced by General Singlaub's assertions, objected to Carter's new Korean policy. Fred M. Skipper, jr., Vice President of Wyn Shields Co., Inc., North Charleston, South Carolina, sympathized with Singlaub's cause. He argued that the United States forces should be kept in South Korea because "the best defense of peace is a strong

11. Ibid., 22 December 1976, sec. 4.
A State Farm Insurance Company agency manager in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, George J. Atwood who favored a strong United States commitment to the Pacific area said that "the U.S. must keep a strong armed force in the Western Pacific. The threat of war makes this necessary. A continuous vigil must be kept or we could have another Pearl Harbor."13

James Padilla, Manager of Leacom Cablevision Inc. in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, who was also persuaded by Singlaub, criticized Carter's Korean withdrawal policy. He wrote that:

The cost of moving the U.S. Second Infantry Division would offset the benefits. South Korea needs American help in the field, as well as in the air and on the water. As a citizen, I would rather pay whatever we are paying, and keep North Korea in line.14

Other Carter critics argued that Americans spent too much blood and treasure on Korea to give up at that stage. Mark M. Mercer, Office Manager for Walters Lumber Co., Inc., Chatham, New Jersey, also expressed his opposition to the withdrawals. He wrote that "Our pulling out would only lead to the defeat of the South Korean forces. If we pull out, all our expenses and efforts to date will have been for nothing. We must stay until the final goal is reached and the country can be self-

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
Harold B. Holtzman, an agent for State Farm Insurance Co., in Hamburg, Pennsylvania, who favored keeping the troops in South Korea, said, "I feel we have paid too dearly in American lives to give South Korea to the communists, which is what we would do if we pulled out."  

Others criticized the President by citing lessons of the past. Larry L. Warner, Jr., San Pedro, Los Angeles, argued that if the Carter Administration proceeded with the pullout plan, history would repeat again. He asked the administration how South Korea could defend against the combined might of North Korea, China and the Soviet Union. He wrote that:

American forces should stay in Korea, standing firm and fast against the Red hordes. Eternal vigilance is the price to be paid for liberty. For God's sake America, throw off this cloak of apathy and wake up.

In 1974, a year before the fall of Saigon, the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations conducted a poll about American involvement in another Korean war. It showed that only 14 percent favored United States involvement, while 65 percent of them were against direct American action for South Korea.

A month after the Singlaub affair, from 17 to 20 June

---

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. LAT, 27 May 1977, sec. 2.
176

1977, the Gallup Poll Institute surveyed public opinion about Carter's new Korean Policy. First, interviewees were asked whether they heard or read about the proposal to withdraw American troops from South Korea during the next four or five years. Nationwide, 78 percent replied in the affirmative, with awareness highest among men, the college educated, Republicans, and those 50 years of age and older. Second, interviewees who said they had heard or read about the proposed withdrawal policy were then asked, "In general, do you favor or oppose this proposal?" The answers were:

Favor .......... 40 %
Oppose .......... 38 %
No opinion ..... 22 %

By Sex
Male
Favor .......... 42 %
Oppose .......... 43 %
No opinion ..... 15 %

Female
Favor .......... 39 %
Oppose .......... 32 %
No opinion ..... 29 %

By Education
College
Favor .......... 40 %
Oppose .......... 42 %
No opinion ..... 18 %

High School
Favor .......... 41 %
Oppose .......... 36 %
No opinion ..... 23 %

Grade School
Favor .......... 40 %
Oppose .......... 34 %
No opinion ..... 26 %

By Region
East
Favor .......... 40 %
Oppose .......... 37 %
No opinion ..... 23 %

Midwest
Favor .......... 42 %
Oppose .......... 39 %
No opinion ..... 19 %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>36 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>24 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Age</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>25 - 29 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>46 %</td>
<td>Favor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>Oppose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>24 %</td>
<td>No opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 30 - 49 years |       | 50 year and over |       |
| Favor | 39 % | Favor | 41 % |
| Oppose | 41 % | Oppose | 35 % |
| No opinion | 20 % | No opinion | 24 % |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Politics</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>51 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>17 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>47 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>23 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Independent |       |
| Favor | 36 % |
| Oppose | 41 % |
| No opinion | 23 % |

The results showed that opinion among the various group was remarkably even with some difference by sex, education, age, region, and politics. More females than males favored Carter's withdrawal policy. The middle two age cohorts opposed the policy while Americans in the younger and older age groups supported the President's decision. By education, the more people were educated, the less they backed the President. Regionally, Southerners were least likely to back Carter's Korean policy, while Westerners mostly supported the policy. By politics, Carter's own party members generally approved the

---

20. Ibid., 1133-4. Record of Gallup Poll accuracy shows that the error margin from 1970 to 1976 was 1.2 percentage points.
Korean pullout, while Republicans strongly opposed it. Meanwhile, more Independents agreed with the Republican's view rather than that of Democrats. On the whole, American public opinion was evenly divided over Carter's proposed withdrawal policy.

In the late July 1977, after the Carter Administration's further efforts to demonstrate that there was no risk of war even after the pullout, a New York Times - CBS News Poll showed that 52 percent of Americans disapproved Carter's withdrawal policy, while only 34 percent backed the President.21

A month later, the Nation's Business asked its readers whether they favored the pullout or not. The answers were that 75 percent of readers who expressed an opinion did not support Carter's new Korean policy, while only 25 percent of them favored the withdrawals.22

Meanwhile, an NBC News poll in August showed that 45 percent favored the withdrawal, while 37 percent opposed it and the rest were undecided.23

Thus, the various polls after the Singlaub affair clearly explained that Carter's Korean withdrawal policy was not

---

21. NYT, 29 July 1977. The survey was based on telephone interviews conducted from 19 to 25 July 1977 with 1,447 adults. It suggested a 5 percentage error margin. The rest, 14 percent, had no firm answer.


popular among American citizens. It also showed that the more educated middle class and admittedly conservative Americans believed after the Singlaub affair that Carter's decision on the withdrawal of the troops from South Korea was too risky to support.

The pullout policy, which had given an advantage to Carter during the presidential campaign of 1976, suddenly became a burden to the President when he was preparing to seek his second term in 1980. If he were to suspend the policy, it would be welcomed by most military officials and Congressional conservatives. At the same time, it would raise political problems with liberal Democrats who had fully backed Carter in the 1976 election.\textsuperscript{24} If the President decided to stick with the policy, he had to overcome strong public objections, which might jeopardize his second term. Therefore, the Korean withdrawal policy became an "Achilles' Heel" to President Carter after the Singlaub affair.

\textsuperscript{24} LAT, 21 July 1979.
CHAPTER XV

KOREAGATE AND THE KOREAN AID PACKAGE

The Korean lobbying scandal helped Carter to make the withdrawal policy as a major 1976 presidential campaign issue. Ironically, it blocked the Congressional approval of the Korean aid package which was necessary to manage the pullout. There were three groups of Congressmen who opposed aid for Korea. The first group opposed the troop withdrawal policy itself. The second group disliked President Park's human rights violations. The last and most serious group of Congressmen feared that they might be suspected of receiving bribes from a South Korean agent, Park Tong Sun, if they supported it. ¹ Congressional leaders, who believed that the aid bill could not pass under such circumstances, delayed laying the military aid bill before the Congress until December 1977. This delay had forced President Carter to slow down the withdrawals.

¹. LAT, 27 July 1977.
Park Tong Sun was a South Korean businessman who was believed to earn millions of dollars per year exporting American rice to South Korea. He founded the fashionable Georgetown Club in Washington D.C. in 1967 and spread cash around Washington to buy favors for his country. Park was believed to spend about a million dollars a year to buy influence on Capitol Hill. He entertained Congressmen in his Georgetown Club, which became a favorite gathering place for Washington dignitaries, made campaign contributions, arranged trips to South Korea, and, in some cases, simply paid cash outright.²

In its early days, the case of Park Tong Sun appeared to be purely a Washington scandal: a wealthy businessman bribed several Congressmen with money and gifts to buy friends for his country.³ But the case had ballooned into a serious international problem when Kim Hyung Wook, the former head of the South Korean Intelligence Agency (KCIA), testified before the House Subcommittee on International Organizations on 22 June 1977 that the Park Tong Sun affair was an "official plan"

³. WSJ, 22 September 1977. For the detailed considerations, see the Washington Post, 3 March 1975, 23 March 1975, 27 July 1975, 15 October 1976, and 24 October 1976. Park involved in the illegal lobbying since the late 1960s. But the Department of Justice did not begin serious investigation until 1975. The scandal attracted the American public when the Washington Post on 15 October 1976 reported that the Justice Department was investigating an unprecedented Congressional corruption.
of the South Korean Government. 4

Moreover, when the House Ethics Committee disclosed on 10 July 1977 that at least 115 Congressmen or former congressmen were involved in the Park Tong Sun scandal, Congress moved to investigate the lobbying scandal in order to clarify the scandal and to regain their traditional public reputation. Congress, particularly the House, had become increasingly sensitive to allegations that a large number of its members received Park's money and gifts. 5 Therefore, the House Ethics Committee hired the former Watergate special prosecutor Leon Jaworski to head its investigation. 6

As soon as he took over the case, Jaworski requested that the State Department support efforts to obtain Park's testimony and to obtain records related to his activities. 7 On 23 August Park Tong Sun was charged on 36 felonies. All of them related to an alleged influence buying operations in the United States. 8

President Carter, Secretary of State Vance, Attorney General Griffin B. Bell and leaders of both houses of Congress such as House Speaker Tip O'Neill warned the South Korean

5. NYT, 11 July 1977.
7. WP, 8 September 1977.
8. NYT, 9 September 1977.
Government that failure to cooperate with American efforts to investigate the Park Tong Sun affair would not only strain diplomatic relations with the United States but also jeopardize Congressional approval for the Korean military aid package.\(^9\)

In response to United States pressure for Park's return to Washington, the South Korean Government officially announced its non-involvement in the case on 7 September without mentioning whether they would allow Park return to the United States. It claimed that Seoul never appointed Park Tong Sun as its agent and "what he did or did not do was not done with the foreknowledge, approval or cooperation of the government of the Republic of Korea."\(^{10}\)

Seoul officials repeatedly denied official involvement in the case and said, "As a fully sovereign and law governed nation, Korea finds no ground or no reason to turn over any of its national merely on the ground that he is suspected of having violated foreign law."\(^{11}\) President Park Chung Hee also continued to refuse to talk with American officials about the case, ironically citing Park Tong Sun's human rights.\(^{12}\)

---


11. Ibid., 9 September 1977.

12. Ibid.
American officials were particularly concerned that the illegal lobbying affair could jeopardize Carter's withdrawal plan. Therefore, they emphasized to South Korean officials the rising anger in Congress over Seoul's stubborn refusal to cooperate, and urged them to send Park to Washington to answer bribery and conspiracy charges resulting from the federal grand jury indictment.13

In response to the South Korean refusal to return Park Tong Sun to Washington, Congressman Bruce F. Caputo, Republican of New York, submitted an amendment aimed at cutting off US$110 million of United States economic aid to South Korea. At the same time, Congressman Andrew Jacob submitted an amendment to cut all South Korean economic aid from the budget resolution.14

In explaining the proposed amendment, the Congressman said that US$110 million of United States Food for Peace aid should be cut because "through this program Park Tong Sun perpetrated his frauds against this Congress."15

Even though the House overwhelmingly defeated Jacob's Amendment by 268 to 120, Caputo's Amendment was defeated by an unexpectedly close vote of 205 to 181.16


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.
Since the Korean War, South Korea had enjoyed warm support from healthy majorities in both houses of Congress. Even frequent reports about human rights violations made by the Seoul Government had not seriously harmed Korea's status as a Congressional favorite. However, the result of the Caputo's Amendment clearly showed that the Park Tong Sun scandal and Seoul's stubborn refusal to cooperate had seriously damaged traditional Congressional attitudes in favor of South Korea.\textsuperscript{17} This also made it clear that if Seoul continued to reject United States demands, Congress would not be in a mood to vote the Korean military aid package which was essential to proceed with Carter's pullout program.\textsuperscript{18}

Under these circumstances, Carter formally requested Congress on 21 October 1977 to enact the bill and authorize him to transfer US$800 million worth of military equipment mainly held by the Second Division in Korea to the South Koreans without reimbursement. In his letter to Thomas P. O'Neill, the Speaker of the House, Walter F. Mondale, the President of the Senate, and the Senate Majority leader Robert C. Byrd, the President reiterated his determination to withdraw the troops from South Korea within five years. And then, he explained why he proposed the bill. He said, "the legislation I am proposing is designed to help make certain

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 28 October 1977.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 9 September 1977.
that Korean defense capabilities are not weakened by our ground force withdrawal." In order not to endanger the security of South Korea as well as East Asia, the President emphasized, it was essential to turnover the United States owned military equipment to the South Korean Government.\(^{19}\)

A week later, on 27 October, Congressman Clement J. Zablocki, Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, announced that Congress would not act on Carter's request for the weapons turnover because there was no hope of passing such a bill, given Seoul's refusal to cooperate with the Congressional investigations into the Park Tong Sun affair. Zablocki said he was sorry that Carter made the request at that sensitive moment, and said, "there is no doubt in my mind that under the present circumstances, without progress toward cooperation in the Korean investigations, it would be impossible to get some legislation."\(^{20}\)

Meanwhile, Zablocki's committee unanimously passed a resolution requesting Seoul to "provide complete access to all facts relevant" to the Congressional investigations into the Park Tong Sun scandal.\(^{21}\)


\(^{21}\) NYT, 28 October 1977; WP, 28 October 1977.
In his news conference, Chairman Zablocki said that the Korean aid package could not be discussed in Congress until Seoul cooperated with American investigations on alleged influence buying. At the same time, the chairman echoed a fear that had been expressed by his fellow Congressman that they might be forced to vote against any form of Korean aid in order to prove that they had not been involved in the Park's scandal.22

Congressman Edward J. Derwinski, Republican of Illinois, who was an ardent supporter of Korea, said that the resolution was "over kill." But he did not oppose the resolution.23

House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill said he also had no plan to bring the weapons transfer proposal to the House floor unless the South Korean Government made Park Tong Sun available to the House investigations. He said if Seoul did not permit Park to testify to the investigations on the scandal, they would face the risk of loss of American military aid. He said, "We need Tong Sun Park over here. Unless he's returned, you're in dire trouble."24

Senate Majority leader Robert C. Byrd, who opposed the appointment of a special prosecutor, argued that Park's scandal was "overblown" and that Park himself exaggerated his


23. NYT, 28 October 1977.

own importance in Washington to impress his government. But Byrd acknowledged the negative mood of Congress about the Korean scandal. He was concerned that it could affect congressional votes on any future Korean aid package. Meanwhile, Byrd urged leaders of Asian countries to press Seoul to cooperate with the American investigation by emphasizing that "the stability of the whole area could be jeopardized by the failure of the Government of South Korea to act in this regard." 25

Chairman of the House Ethics Committee, John J. Flynt, Jr., Democrat of Georgia, who presided over the three-day hearing from 21 to 23 October 1977, concluded that the bribery effort was an "official plan" of the South Korean Government. Yet to know the full truth he needed Korean cooperation. He made it clear an interview with a reporter that "cooperation meant helping to obtain the testimony of Tong Sun Park." 26

On 31 October 1977, The House of Representative unanimously passed a resolution requesting Seoul to cooperate "fully and without reservation" in the Congressional investigations into the Korean influence buying scandal. 27

At this point, the South Korean Government began to realize that any further attempt to stonewall Congress would

27. Ibid., 1 November 1977.
not only seriously damage the diplomatic relations between the two countries but also impede approval of the military aid package. Therefore, as soon as the House passed the resolution unanimously, Seoul suggested to the United States that negotiations be resumed at the diplomatic level to find a solution for the Park Tong Sun affair. Finally after eight weeks of intense negotiations, the South Korean Government agreed to send Park to Washington to testify before Congress under full immunity.\textsuperscript{28}

In the meantime, even before the Park Tong Sun scandal was settled, former Korean Ambassador Kim Dong Jo's illegal lobbying activities in Washington aggravated the situation. Kim was Seoul's Ambassador in Washington from 1967 to 1973 and then became national security adviser to President Park. His bribery of various Congressmen was revealed to the public when a former Korean embassy press secretary, as a witness at the House Ethics Committee hearing of October 1977, testified that he saw the ambassador stuffing a briefcase with money to pass to members of Congress.\textsuperscript{29}

In his interview with a \textit{Newsweek} reporter, Kim Dong Jo denied illegal lobbying activities and his connections with the KCIA. He said, "they are not only untrue, but also

\begin{itemize}
  \item NYT, 27 October 1977; WP, 27 February 1978.
\end{itemize}
ridiculous... I never tried to influence American Congressmen or officials by conducting such lobbying activities." The former ambassador also claimed that his onetime secretary told a lie before the committee in order to justify his seeking political refuge in America. Kim said,

I have never carried a briefcase in my life, let alone stuffed it with cash. I don't know why he is telling these lies. My guess is that he is trying to justify his defection. 30

Leon Jaworski strongly urged the State Department to make Kim available to investigators of the alleged bribery scandal. He repeatedly claimed that without the testimony of Kim Dong Jo the investigation of Koreagate would not be satisfactorily completed. At the same time, he suggested that a threat to cut off aid might persuade the South Korean Government to allow Kim to provide sworn testimony. 31

Secretary Vance asserted that the Carter Administration could not press the South Korean Government to return the former ambassador to Washington because he had diplomatic immunity in accordance with international agreements. However, the Secretary expressed his hope that Seoul would waive these rights and help with the Congressional investigations of the case by permitting Kim to testify before the House Ethics

Unlike Park Tong Sun case, the South Korean Government refused even to discuss the matter with American officials, and declared that in accordance with international convention Kim would not go to Washington.  

Adlai E. Stevenson, Chairman of the Senate's Select Committee on Ethics, also urged the South Korean Government to permit the Committee to investigate its former Ambassador Kim by alleging that he was ready to block United States economic aid to Seoul including a US$500 million loan for two nuclear reactors.

On 10 May 1978 the South Korean Government officially refused to allow ex-envoy Kim to testify before the House Ethics Committee. In his interview with the Han Kook Il Bo, a Seoul newspaper, on 21 May, Foreign Minister Park Dong Jin reconfirmed Seoul's position of blocking any Congressional attempt to hear Kim's testimony in connection the alleged bribery scandal.

Meanwhile, the House International Relations Committee on 24 May unanimously passed a compromise resolution, 31 to 0, warning Seoul that it could lose United States economic aid to Seoul including a US$500 million loan for two nuclear reactors.

---

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., 26 February 1978, sec. 4.
35. Ibid., 11 May 1978.
36. Ibid., 22 May 1978.
aid if former Ambassador Kim Dong Jo was not available to testify. On 31 May the full House also passed the resolution, on a 321 to 46 vote, warning the South Korean Government that the United States might cut off economic aid if they did not cooperate with the Congressional investigations of the former ambassador. Congressman Jim Wright of Texas, the majority leader, said "this resolution is a very clear message." Congressman Clement J. Zablocki, Chairman of the House International Relations, said, "the resolution is unequivocal in its message - that only the full cooperation of the South Korean Government is acceptable." Thomas P. O'Neill also made it clear that an "evasive response" by Seoul would not be tolerated.

On 22 June the House, in retaliation for Seoul's continued refusal to have Kim testify, voted, 273 to 125, in favor of cutting off US$56 million economic aid to South Korea under the "Food for Peace" program, the only form of economic aid then provided to South Korea. The State Department, however, expressed its strong objection to the resolution because the resolution might require American diplomats to be

37. Ibid., 25 May 1978.
38. Ibid., 1 June 1978.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 23 June 1978. On 10 August the Senate refused to agree with the House to keep South Korea out of the Food for Peace Program. CQWR 36 (1978): 2201.
exposed to similar investigations by other nations. They were also concerned that further pressure on the South Korean Government would seriously deteriorate its diplomatic relations. Some Congressmen from farm states also opposed the resolution by claiming that it would hurt American farmers.

Meanwhile, the South Koreans believed that US$56 million worth of aid would affect their booming economy very little. South Korea preferred to lose economic aid rather than to be coerced into violation of international conventions and to suffer an insult to its dignity as a sovereign state.

In the meantime, the White House announced that the Carter Administration would begin to withdraw ground troops from South Korea whether Congress approved the weapon transfer bill or not. On 9 December 1977 the Carter Administration submitted to Congress a twelve-page report in respond to the Byrd Amendment requiring a periodic review of the Korean situation. In that report, the State Department reaffirmed that the withdrawal plan would be done on schedule. The report pointed out that the administration desperately needed

41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
Congressional approval of the Korean military aid bill in order to fulfill the pullout plan without the risk of war. It also pointed out that South Korea had tremendously improved its military capacity for defensive war. Therefore, the proposed pullout would not threaten the security of South Korea.45

On 8 February 1978 Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance, in his response to questions before the House International Operations Subcommittee, urged Congress not to cut off military aid to South Korea by linking the illegal lobbying scandal with the withdrawal plan. The Secretary claimed that the Congress should decide military aid to South Korea based on its security needs, not on the needs of a domestic investigation.46

Secretary of Defense Harold Brown also urged Congress not to link the military aid bill with the Korean lobbying scandal. Appearing before the House International Relation Committee, Brown said, "we condemn such actions as a serious misinterpretation of our governmental processes and of the mores of the American people. At the same time, we must not let the Tong Sun Park affair obscure our basic national interests in Korea."47

46. NYT, 9 February 1978.
47. NYT, 23 February 1978.
At the same time, two reports, opposed to linking military aid with the scandal, were submitted to the Congress by its members. On 9 January 1978 in their eighty-five-page report submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator John Glenn, Democrat of Ohio, and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, urged Congress not to link the Korean military aid bill to the bribery scandal. The report emphasized that "long-term United States political alignments in the whole East Asian region must not be jeopardized for the short term objectives of the scandal investigation."48

Another report, adopted by the House Armed Services Subcommittee on 26 April by a seven to one vote, also urged Congress to approve the military aid package regardless of the lobbying scandal in order to protect the remaining American troops rather than to aid South Korea. The report requested the President to postpone the pullout schedule if Congress failed to approve the US$1.9 billion military aid package including the US$800 million transfer bill.49

At the same time, inquiries on Koreagate seemed nearly over. After almost twenty months of investigation by the House and ten months by the Senate, Congress could get the whole picture of the lobbying scandal. Moreover, the mood of Congress had changed. By the end of April Congress wanted to

49. Cong. HASC 95-61, 4-6.
finish the investigation process as quickly and quietly as possible because further investigations only would harm congressional reputations, as well as relations with South Korea.⁵⁰

On 2 May the House International Relations Committee approved the US$800 million transfer to the South Korean Government.⁵¹ On 11 May the Senate Foreign Relations Committee also approved an amendment stating that the Second Division could transfer their weapons and equipment to the South Korean Army and train them in its use.⁵² On 15 May the Committee passed the Korea military aid bill. It included the transfer of US$800 million worth of American military equipment, US$275 million for supporting South Korean military modernization plan, and US$90 million for ammunition stockpiles.⁵³ On 24 May the full House, for the first time, voted overwhelmingly, 247 to 142, not to interfere with President Carter's withdrawal plan without mentioning the military aid package.⁵⁴

On 20 July in his letter to Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, Carter requested him to help clear the way for the

---

⁵⁰ NYT, 22 May 1978. The evidence showed that 30 Congressmen and former Congressmen received money from Park Dong Sun as contributions or gifts.


⁵² NYT, 12 May 1978.


proposed pullout plan by passing the Korea military aid package. At the same time, the President suggested that the proposed period would be "sufficiently flexible to accommodate developments" on Korea. 55

On 26 July the Senate passed the Foreign Military Aid bill, 73 to 13, including the Korea aid package and sent it to the House. 56 On 20 August the House approved the bill authorizing the President to transfer up to US$800 million in defense equipment and services to South Korea through 31 December 1982 "in conjunction with the withdrawal of the 2nd U.S. Infantry Division" from South Korea. 57

Finally, on 7 September Senate-House Conferees on the security assistance authorization bill adopted the House provision, with the single proviso that all military equipment transfers be made in proportion to the rate of U.S. troop withdrawals. 58

When news of Koreagate first broke, the affair was regarded simply as a wealthy Korean businessman's immoral activity. Kim Hyung Wook's testimony, which revealed the South Korean Government's direct involvement into the scandal, created a serious international problem. Because of the

57. Ibid., 2045.
58. Ibid., 2562.
scandal, Congress reluctantly delayed the Korean military aid bill, which was essential for the President to manage the pullout. This forced Carter to delay the program. Eventually, it gave the President one more year to study the Korean situation before he made a final decision.
CHAPTER XVI

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSIDERATION

While Congress was delaying the vote for military aid to south Korea, partly because of the Korean bribery scandal and partly because of Congressional reluctance to vote for troop withdrawals, the President decided on 21 April 1978 to mitigate the original pullout program for the first time since he took power. In a written statement, the President said, "In view of the crowded legislative calendar, and also because of other matters concerning Korea, there is a possibility that the Congress may not act now on this proposal." Therefore, the President said that he ordered withdrawal of only one combat battalion of 800 troops rather than a proposed full combat brigade of 3,400 troops by the end of 1978. However, he added that non-combat elements of 2,600 would be removed on schedule and his intention to carry out the full withdrawal within five years would be not changed. In his statement, Carter described his decision as a "prudent" measure, adding that approval of the Korean military aid package was a necessary ingredient in
the withdrawal strategy.\textsuperscript{1}

The decision to slow down the pullout program was announced at the same time the Soviet Union shot down a Korean airliner which was off course near Murmansk, where Soviet naval and rocket forces were concentrated. However, the White House denied there was any connection between its decision and the Korean incident.\textsuperscript{2}

Senator Charles Percy, Republican of Illinois, who proposed an amendment requiring the President to consult fully with Congress before withdrawing the troops from South Korea, applauded the announcement: "by adjusting the withdrawal schedule, the President will gain additional time to make a full reassessment of U.S. policy in South Korea."\textsuperscript{3} Chairman Zablocki of the House International Relations Committee also praised Carter's decision to slow down the program, anticipating that the President's decision would press Congress for immediate action on the military aid package.\textsuperscript{4}

Meanwhile, Senator John H. Glenn, Chairman of the Asian Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, continued to assail the administration's overall policy, claiming that the President mistakenly attempted to withdraw

\textsuperscript{1} PPP 1 (21 April 1978): 768; WCPD 14 (24 April 1978): 768.
\textsuperscript{2} NYT, 22 April 1978; WP, 22 April 1978.
\textsuperscript{3} CT, 24 April 1978.
\textsuperscript{4} WP, 22 April 1978.
troops without supplying the promised military aid to South Korea. He added that the partial withdrawal without proper compensatory measures would give a bad impression to American allies. It would seem that the United States "is pulling back all over the world" without taking proper precautions.  

On 26 April the House Armed Services Committee, in direct challenge to Carter, passed the amendment proposed by Chairman Samuel S. Stratton, requesting the President keep 26,000 American ground troops in South Korea until North and South Korea ended "the state of war" by signing a peace treaty. Stratton's amendment also requested the President not to withdraw any troops from South Korea without getting Congressional approval of the Korean military aid package.  

On 11 May the Senate Foreign Relations Committee also approved an amendment requiring Carter to submit to Congress with "a comprehensive report on the viability of each troop pullout from South Korea four months in advance."  

At the end of May, National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was an ardent supporter of Carter's pullout policy, visited China for three days to discuss normalization of Sino-American relations as well as Korean issues. Unexpectedly, in Peking, he faced strong objections from

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 27 April 1978.
7. NYT, 12 May 1978.
Chinese leaders to the U.S. withdrawal program. 8

On 26 July the Senate passed the Percy amendment by an eighty-one to seven vote. It warned that further withdrawal of the troops from South Korea might "seriously risk upsetting the military balance in that region." The amendment again requested the President to consult fully with the Congress. 9

On the next day, however, at the eleventh Annual Security Consultative Meeting at the Naval Amphibious Base in Coronado, California, Defense Secretary Brown reconfirmed that the pullout would be carried out within five years despite the Senate warning. 10

On 1 August the House, while approving the Korean

---

8. NYT, 26 May 1978; CT, 26 May 1978. Brzezinski believed that the U.S. should use China as a lever against Russia. He stopped in Tokyo on the way home and told Prime Minister Fukuda that he and Chinese leaders did not agree on the pullout. Chinese objections might have affected his views on the policy. He also stopped in Seoul on 25 May 1978 and delivered Carter's personal letter to President Park reaffirming that the U.S. commitment to South Korea would not change regardless of the pullout.

9. LAT, 28 July 1978; COWR 36 (29 July 1978): 1921. Senator Charles H. Percy described his amendment as a "strong, strong message" to the President from the Senate. He also claimed that the vote margin showed the clear evidence that the Senate was "deeply concerned" about Carter's Korean policy. Senator Sam Nunn added language to the amendment that President Carter should report to the Congress on the pullout's possible effect on South Korea's deterrent ability and the anticipated reaction from the North. The amendment also requested the President to submit an additional report to the Congress which would explain South Korea's possible independent nuclear weapon capability. It also asked the President to report the Congress about the impact of the pullout on the U.S. relations with Japan, China, and Russia.

military aid package, passed an amendment proposed by Edward J. Derwinski, Republican of Illinois, 219 to 189. Like the percy Amendment, it cautioned Carter that his Korean withdrawal policy might seriously risk disturbing the military balance in the Far East. The amendment also requested the president to undertake "full advance consultation with congress."\(^{11}\) Meanwhile, the House rejected, 212 to 189, an amendment offered by Samuel Stratton to prevent further troop withdrawals from Korea unless the President obtained congressional approval first.\(^{12}\)

After that, Congressional attempts to block the proposed withdrawal policy calmed down. The Carter Administration, with the Congressional approval of the Korean military aid package, prepared to transfer weapons and equipment of the Second Division to the South Korean army in the connection with the pullout of United States ground troops. In addition, the administration agreed to sell most of the sophisticated weapons that were requested by South Korea, except sixty F-16 fighters, in order to strengthen Seoul's military capability.\(^{13}\)

On 7 November 1978, hoping to maintain a deterrence against the North during and after the withdrawals, the Carter

\(^{11}\) CQWR 36 (5 August 1978): 2044.

\(^{12}\) NYT, 2 August 1978.

\(^{13}\) WP, 23 November 1978.
Administration hastily activated the combined American - South Korean Command which had been designed for several years to better coordinate their military operations in case of emergency in Korea.\textsuperscript{14} At the same time, the United States deployed a new squadron of 12 F-4 jet fighters to a United States air base in South Korea in order to bolster air defense in accordance with the American compensation plan.\textsuperscript{15}

In the meantime, information was obtained which indicated that the entire withdrawal policy might need to be rethought. At the beginning of January 1979 the Army Times disclosed a new United States Army Intelligence Agency new report on North Korean military capability, ostensibly based on "intercepted communications between North Korean units, satellite photography and reports by South Korean agents." The report concluded that North Korea's military capability was far greater than previously estimated. Moreover, they were offensively equipped and deployed.\textsuperscript{16} The Army's new figures on North Korea capability were as follow:

\textsuperscript{14} NYT, 7 November 1978; WP, 7 November 1978. General John W. Vessey, Commander of American forces in Korea and U.N. command, was appointed as the new commander of the combined forces. His deputy was a Korean four star general, and staff members were equally divided between two countries.

\textsuperscript{15} WP, 7 November 1978.

As soon as the new report was issued, the Pentagon's forty analysts started a major study of new satellite photographs and other data that the Army agency provided. CIA Director Stansfield Turner also ordered the CIA and DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency in the Pentagon) to reassess North Korea's combat strength based on the new data. At the same time, the Joint Chiefs of Staff began to reappraise the military balance between North and South Korea based on the new Army intelligence report in order to determine whether they still could support Carter's withdrawal plan.

On 9 February Carter announced in his news conference that he was holding "in abeyance" any further troop reduction until he and his intelligence agencies reassessed North Korean military capability based on new intelligence data and other factors such as the impact of Sino-American normalization, Chinese opinion, and the perspective of the dialogue between South and North Korea.

Two months later, Both the CIA and the DIA reported to the President that the numbers of North

---

Korean troops reached about 600,000, over one fourth larger than the previous estimate. Having reviewed new information provided by the CIA and the DIA, the Joint Chiefs of Staff in April 1979 formally advised Carter to suspend the pullout plan until 1981. In their report, the Chiefs told the President that "both the increased size of the North Korean military and its recent muscle flexing make withdrawals too risky at this time." 21

Meanwhile, the army's new intelligence report revived Congressional criticism of Carter's withdrawal policy. In his letter to the President on 3 January 1979, Stratton urged Carter to hold any further pullouts until his subcommittee reassessed the situation based on the Army's new report. 22 He also claimed to hold hearings in the House on the Korean pullout plan in order to discuss the new intelligence information. 23

On 23 January 1979 the Senate Armed Services Committee Pacific Study Group, Senators Gary Hart, Harry F. Byrd, Sam Nunn, and John G. Tower, sent a report to President Carter

22. NYT, 4 January 1979.
urging him to suspend the pullout. They pointed out that the new intelligence information made Carter's proposed withdrawal plan "too risky" at that time. Therefore, they concluded that the pullout schedule should be halted until the risks were reassessed based on the new intelligence information. The report said,

The withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from the Republic of Korea should be discontinued. The new U.S. intelligence reassessment of North Korean military strength leads us to conclude that even planned improvements in South Korean forces will not compensate for withdrawal of the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division. The reassessment casts grave doubt upon the validity of earlier judgments about the nature and stability of the Korean military balance that formed the basis of the administration's decision in May 1977 to withdraw U.S. ground troops form Korea ... It is the judgement of the Study Group that to proceed at this time with additional U.S. troop withdrawals from Korea would neither serve the security interests of the United States nor contribute to stability in Northeast Asia.

On 22 June Senator John Glenn, Democrat of Ohio, also issued a report asking the President to halt his withdrawal plan until South Korea could be assured of its own defense against the North. He argued in his report that North Korea's advantage would decline in the next decade while the South's advantage would rise because of its far stronger economy and

24. NYT, 24 January 1979; WP, 24 January 1979. They were all members of the Senate Armed Service Committee.

larger population. He predicted that the South could defend itself against the North without American help "in the not distant future." Therefore, he concluded that the United states should reserve its troop withdrawal policy considering the information on North Korea's military capability and maintain its troops until the South achieved the military balance with North.  

He said,

A recent intelligence estimate has reappraised the North Korean situation and concludes that its forces are considerably stronger than previously believed. It is my judgement based on this new information, that the risks involved in continuing the troop withdrawal demand that we reserve our policy and maintain the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea.

Congressional approval of the Korean military aid bill encouraged the Carter Administration to carry out the policy. It reenforced air defense in South Korea and prepared to transfer weapons and equipment to the South Korean Army. But the Army's new Intelligence report again blocked the smooth process of the policy. The new report was so critical, it forced the President to undertake a basic reconsideration of his withdrawal policy. Moreover, this new report revived Congressional objection to Carter's Korean policy. Therefore, Carter had no alternative but to retreat from his Korean plan.

---


27. Ibid., 1.
CHAPTER XVII

SOUTH KOREAN REACTIONS

The South Korean leaders, who had experienced the Korean War and so always feared another invasion from the North, were dismayed by Carter's election in 1976 because of his campaign pledge to pull out American forces. Government officials, military officers, scholars, even opposition political leaders were worried at the prospect of President Carter's new Korean Policy.

As soon as Jimmy Carter was elected as the 39th President of the United States, the ruling Democratic Republican Party concluded its congratulatory statement by saying that they hoped President-elect Carter would "understand South Korea's security problems and the threat of invasion by North Korea and would maintain friendly relations."\(^1\)

Kim Dong Jo, a former Foreign Minister and then a senior security advisor to President Park, carefully expressed his hope that the new Carter Administration would not change its

\(^1\) NYT, 4 November 1976, 26.
Korean policy drastically even though President-elect Carter vowed to remove American ground troops and atomic weapons from the South Korea during the presidential campaign.²

A few days before the inauguration, President Park Chung Hee expressed his opinion at a televised news conference. Park stated that he did not object the pullout itself, but the United States should not remove its ground troops from South Korea until the North agreed to sign "a non-aggression pact" that South Korea had already proposed in 1974.³

In an interview with Andrew H. Malcolm, a special correspondent to the New York Times, South Korean Minister of Culture and Information Kim Seong Jin emphasized the important role of United States ground troops in Korea. Kim, who was Korea's chief spokesman, stated that the Americans should seriously consider "the expansionist tendencies of the Communists" in the Far East.⁴

After having failed to gain Vice President Mondale's acceptance of an invitation to Seoul when he visited Tokyo on 1 February 1977,⁵ South Korean officials understood that they could not change President Carter's mind. Thus, they began to

² WP, 4 November 1976, 22.
³ NYT, 13 January 1977, 2.
⁴ Ibid., 16 January 1977.
study ways to cope with the situation. Among the most drastic of their considerations was the decision to build a new capital city about sixty miles south of Seoul for security considerations. This would be done within five years, the same period that Carter proposed to pullback American ground troops home.6

In the meantime, the South Korean Government, having realized that the Japanese also feared a proposed American pullout, attempted to cooperate with the Japanese Government in delaying the United States withdrawal plan. In the hope of more amicable relations with the new Japanese Government of Premier Takeo Fukuda, on 27 December 1976, Seoul released three Japanese businessmen who were sentenced to penal servitude for life for spying in South Korea.7 On 7 January 1977 Seoul proposed "a three nation security committee" with Japan and United States, hoping that it could develop into a collective security system like NATO in Europe.8

In February, Seoul sent forty-three Congressmen led by Kim Jong Phil, the former prime minister, to Tokyo to attend an annual meeting of the two countries' lawmakers. On 16

6. NYT, 12 February 1977. Primary reason for the relocation of the capital was to reduce the rapidly rising population in Seoul rather than to consider its security. Because of the timing of the announcement, it brought great fears among the South Koreans. So the government withhold the plan later.


8. Ibid., 8 January 1977.
February 286 of both countries' legislators - 43 Korean delegates and 243 Japanese lawmakers including 7 cabinet ministers - adopted a resolution expressing their "deep concern" over the proposed United States withdrawal policy.  

The resolution stated that:

Delegations from both countries highly evaluate the deterrent to war which American troops in Korea have provided and express deep concern that, in the absence of a North-South Korea nonaggression pact, or objective proof that peace has been firmly established in the Korean peninsula, any reduction of American ground forces would be an invitation to instability in the Korean peninsula ... as well as to instability in Northeast Asia as a whole.  

The Korean delegates proposed to include in the resolution an official request from both governments for a postponement of the pullout until South Korean forces could defend the nation themselves. But Japanese delegates, while backing up President Park's call for a nonaggression pact between the two Koreas as a precondition for the pullout, rejected the Korean proposal claiming it was an issue between the United States and South Korea.  

When President Carter confirmed his withdrawal policy officially at the press conference of 9 March 1977, President Park made up his mind to end his country's traditional security reliance on the United States, and began to take

---


10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 27 February 1977.
practical steps to foster the development of a self sufficient military capability against the North's threat. In June President Park established the Enlarged Conference for promotion of the Arms Industry, a special high level body which consisted of cabinet members, military officials, and business leaders in order to expedite the development of the defense industries. The committee decided that South Korea was to produce all its own arms except highly sophisticated electronic equipment such as aircraft within four or five years.

At the same time, Seoul reconsidered a covert nuclear weapons program which was cancelled in the early 1976 because of strong diplomatic pressure from the United States and Canada. Officially, President Park denied Korea's plan for

---


13 Ibid., 10 October 1977; FEER 96 (10 June 1977): 10. South Korean Government put the defense budget of 1978 at about US$2 billion, about 35 percent of the total budget. It totaled 6.4 percent of the GNP. It was expected to climb to 7 percent of the GNP.

14 WP, 4 November 1978; LAT, 4 November 1978 and 13 November 1978. According to these papers, President Park, who feared for his country's security because of President Nixon's decision to pull 20,000 troops out of South Korea in 1972, set up the covert nuclear weapon program. But the program was cancelled because Belgium refused to provide South Korea with a nuclear fuel laboratory equipped to handle plutonium after the India's surprise nuclear test of 1974. France cancelled the sale of the reprocessing plant to South Korea in January 1976 under intense diplomatic pressure from the United States and Canada. But President Park openly vowed to develop an atomic bomb if the United States removed its nuclear weapons from South Korea.
nuclear weapons. However, a senior aide to President Park pointedly hinted that the policy could be changed. He told the reporter of the *Washington Post* firmly:

> As a matter of principle we should have the freedom to take necessary actions within our ability to ensure our own survival... As to the question of nuclear weapons development, we would consider the matter on that basis.16

On 30 June 1977 Foreign Minister Park Dong Jin officially told the Korean National Assembly, during the debate on the withdrawals, that South Korea could develop atomic bombs if they believed that their country's survival was at stake.17 On 2 July the Assembly passed a resolution asking President Carter to reconsider his decision of the withdrawal. The Korean Congressmen expressed their thanks to the United States for its military support, but criticized Carter's new Korean policy. They stressed in their resolution that "the withdrawal of 33,000 American ground troops threatens peace in Korea, destroys the balance of power and discredits American commitments overseas." They also asked Washington to provide them with enough compensation for their armed forces to defend the nation against any attack from the North.18

---

18. Ibid., 3 July 1977.
In 1978 Seoul changed its original plan for nuclear power plants by doubling the size of their program. They decided to invest more than US$70 billion by the year 2000 in building forty-three nuclear plants, a capacity almost equal to that of the United States in 1978. By doubling nuclear projects, Seoul wanted not only to cope with the energy crisis of the late 1970s but also to influence Carter's withdrawal decision indirectly. South Korean officials believed that American officials obviously understood that a peaceful nuclear capability could be easily changed to military purposes.

In the meantime, the South Korean Government, hoping that the two big communist powers could restrain North Korea from causing tension, began to launch a careful campaign to broaden relations with China and the Soviet Union by giving them signals that Seoul was eager to explore trade, cultural exchange, and sports activities. In October 1978 Kim Kyung Won, a chief foreign affairs adviser to President Park, told the press in Hong Kong that Seoul was ready to open diplomatic relations with China. Subsequently, this message was repeatedly mentioned by high officials of the Korean Government. In December Foreign Minister Park Dong Jin officially encouraged businessmen to get in touch with their Chinese trade partners and not to be concerned with

ideological differences between the two countries. One official said, "we are enough of a substance as a country now that eventually China - and Russia, too - will realize it is nonsense not to deal with us." 21

At the same time, President Park proposed to North Korea the exchange of goods, civilian technology and capital in an attempt to reestablish political negotiations that had been suspended since August 1973. Through such broad economic exchanges and cooperation, Seoul hoped to reduce the possibility of military confrontation between the two Koreas after the pullout. 22 On 16 December 1978, two months before Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's visit to Washington, the South Korean Government urged the Carter Administration to seek Chinese help in reopening talks with the North. 23 On 19 January 1979 President Park proposed new peace talks to North Korea during a nationally televised news conference. He said that South Korean officials were ready to meet with officials

21 WP, 30 December 1978. For the first time, in September 1978, the Soviet Union allowed a South Korean Cabinet member (Shin Hyon Hwack, Minister of Health and Social Affairs) and two journalists to visit Moscow. Jae Hoon Shim, "Kisaeng and Making up," FEER 102 (6 October 1978): 15-6.

22 NYT, 23 June 1978.

23 Ibid., 17 December 1978. At the end of January 1979 when Deng Xiaoping visited Washington, Carter asked him to influence Kim Il Sung to prevent any military movement against the South. Deng told the President that North Korea would not initiate an aggression in the Peninsula. He also said that if he pressed kim, the North would turn to Russia. Thus, China would lose its influence. See Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith. Memoirs of a President (New York: Bantam Books, 1982): 205-6.
of the North at "anytime, anywhere, and without any conditions" for reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula. In the next month, both sides met at the Panmunjom truce site and agreed to reopen the North-South Coordinating Committee, which was set up in 1972 for discussing political issues between the two Koreas and had been suspended since 1973.

In the meantime, most South Koreans watched the inauguration of the Carter Administration with anxiety but hoped its new Korean policy would not affect their national security seriously. The Hankook Ilbo, a major Seoul newspaper, described the new President as "no ordinary President." The more conservative Chosun Ilbo commented in its editorial that "it would be worthwhile watching how Carter's idealism fitted in with the realities of politics."

The South Koreans, who were waiting for a favorable word from President Carter, were disappointed to hear that Carter turned down a Seoul Government request for Vice President Mondale to visit Seoul on the way to Tokyo, a two hour flight from Seoul. They were even more surprised when Vice President Mondale, who had promised European leaders to give full support to NATO in order to defend them against the...

---


27. Ibid. 95 (11 February 1977) 31; NYT, 29 January 1977.
Communist threat only a few days before, came to Tokyo and announced the withdrawals officially. This led the South Koreans to believe that the Carter Administration changed the United States' global strategy from "Europe first to Europe only." Therefore, they were concerned that the Carter Administration might abandon them in case of military confrontation with the North, just as the United States abandoned South Vietnam in 1975.28

Vice President Mondale's announcement of the withdrawal combined with the stunning revelation of the Seoul Government's new capital plan produced tremendous fears among seven million Seoul residents, many of whom had suffered severely from the Communist North during the Korean War. Immediately after the news was revealed, the price of stock dropped sharply and all real estate transactions were frozen. President Park tried to calm such fears by promising them to definitely defend the city in the event of attack from the North, but his words could not put to rest wide-spread fears among his people.29

Opposition to Carter's withdrawal policy created a rare national consensus in South Korea. From top government officials to a shoe shine boy, everybody was skeptical and seriously worried at the prospect of a new American Korean


29. NYT, 12 February 1977.
policy which might threaten their country's survival. They knew that North Korean forces were within easy striking range of Seoul. Once United States ground troops were removed, they understood, it would be impossible for the United States to save South Korea from the invaders from the north. One citizen said, "the geography explains a lot about this country. How would people in Washington feel if there were 10 Russian divisions sitting as close as Dulles Airport?"30 A shoe shine boy in a Seoul tea room said, "No, I don't want American troops to leave." A more affluent customer, who expressed his objection to the U.S. pullout, told a correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor:

I've been through the first Korean War and I'm not afraid to die if it means a better life for my children. But there is no sense dying in a useless war. If the North Koreans invade, certainly the Americans will bomb them. And if Seoul is taken certainly we will take it back. By that time how many of us will be dead?31

The South Koreans suspected the rationale explained by Mondale in Tokyo that South Korea's growing economic and military strength made the presence of American troops in Korea unnecessary. One citizen said,

We just don't see how the U.S. can justify their force reductions here on the grounds of our developed economy... How does our economy compare with Germany's? You don't hear anything about an American withdrawal from there. It just seems that the U.S. cares more about Europe than it does about

Korea. 32

Dr. Kim Jun Yop, Director of Korea University's Asiatic Research Center, also questioned the real purpose of the pullout. He said,

First of all, to an outsider, it is not clear at all what the purpose of withdrawal really is... I do not believe that Washington has yet offered a satisfactory explanation of why the troops had better be withdrawn. To save money? To improve security? To support democracy? To promote detente? To appease Pyong Yang? To please Korea's critics? What conceivable, rational purpose could be really served by withdrawal is a question I find impossible to answer. 33

Many South Koreans also worried about the loss of the Second Division's deterrent function. A retired Korean Major General, Kim Chum Kon, Dean of Graduate School of Business and Public Administration at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, emphasized the deterrent role of the Second Division. He said that "when U.S. troops are deployed along the main invasion route, they cannot be avoided in the event of an attack. That's the deterrent value."34 A senior aide to President Park said,

If the concept of deterrence is valid in Europe... it is even more valid on the Korean peninsula. There has been no actual war in Europe since World War II. But North Korean tanks smashed across the 38th parallel five years after World War II in open defiance of the line of division agreed upon between

the U.S. and the Soviet Union.  

South Korea's Primer Minister Choi Kyu Hah regarded the United States troops in South Korea and in NATO as "two pillars of policy" that deter the Soviets aggressions from the both sides. He argued that the Soviet Union was acting cautiously because they could not adventure either eastward or westward. He alleged that if the United States would remove the troops from South Korea, Russia would feel free to behave more aggressively in Europe.  

Many Koreans were also perplexed at the unilateral nature of Carter's pullout decision. They did not understand why he got nothing in return from the North. Foreign Minister Park Dong Jin said, "withdrawal could have been used as one of our most important bargaining chips in settling the Korean issue." He continued to argue that Carter gave a tremendous advantage to North Korea by fixing the period of the withdrawal over the next five years. He said, "to say everything in advance sounds honest. But when the other side doesn't apply the same honesty, I'm afraid we end up the losers."  

South Koreans pointed out Carter's decision was ill-timed. They were already in the midst of army modernization program that would be completed by the beginning of the 1980s.

37. USNWR 83 (18 July 1977): 54.
They believed that the best American policy was to wait and let its development go forward until the South Korean Army could reach parity with the North. One of President Park's aides said,

"We are in the process of becoming stronger... We have to make adjustments now, initiate changes. The withdrawal raises totally unnecessary additional risks that shouldn't arise. When South Korea will improve its armed forces to match the North, that will be the time to withdraw." 38

Like other Koreans, dissidents opposed to President Park believed that American withdrawal would increase the risk of war. Father Jack Corcoran, an American missionary, who was quite familiar with dissidents, said that almost all dissidents were against the withdrawal. 39 Even Kim Dae Jung, the leading dissident, declared his opposition to the pullout, while in jail, claiming that it might encourage Kim Il Sung to attack the South. 40 Former President Yoon Bo Sun emphasized that Kim Il Sung could not be trusted. He said, "they are beyond common sense. An American withdrawal might not prompt an immediate invasion, but it could cause the North to rethink the possibility." 41

38. NYT, 7 August 1977.
39. CT, 5 September 1977, sec. 3.
41. NYT, 16 January 1977.
Lee Chul Sung, newly elected Chairman of the New Democratic Party which was the leading opposition party in South Korea, urged the Carter Administration to withhold its pullout decision until South Korea could achieve military balance with the North. At the same time, he expressed his concern that Washington's excessive public pressure over President Park's human rights violations together with a campaign for the pullout might provoke a strong nationalistic reaction from both the repressive Park's regime and the South Korean people. This could give President Park further excuses to clamp down on the freedom that opponents still enjoyed.

In order to discuss the above problems with political and government leaders of the incoming Carter Administration, Lee decided to visit Washington in January 1977. In New York, on March 8, Lee again expressed his view that even though he did not favor the permanent presence of United States troops in his country, he hoped the United States would keep its

---

42. Ibid.
44. John T. Connor to Vice President Walter F. Mondale, 12 January 1977, NSC Memorandum 782, WHCFSF CO 41, CO 82-2, FG 38; Kim Jun Yop, Director of Asiatic Research Center in Korea University, to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 31 January 1977, NSC Memorandum 807, WHCFSF CO 41, CO 82-2, FG 6-12. According to NSC Memoranda 782 & 807, the NSC staff regarded Lee Chul Sung as an instrument of President Park's Government and not a Korean dissident. Yet because of his legislative responsibilities, they decided to allow him to make a brief courtesy call on the Vice President, but politely turned down his request to see Dr. Brzezinski.
ground troops until South Korea could assure its security. He added, "such time is at least 10 years away."\footnote{NYT, 8 March 1977.}

Yu Chin O, a former chairman of the chief opposition party, remembering the U.S. pullout of 1948 and the late Dean Acheson's statements, said "the United States should not repeat the mistakes it made just before the start of the Korean War 27 years ago."\footnote{WP, 24 May 1977.}

Kim Hyung Wook, a former director of the South Korean Central Agency who revealed details of the Park regime's covert operation for buying influence in United States Congress, claimed in Washington that the South Korean forces were too weak to face the North Korean Army. He said, "the presence of U.S. ground troops in Korea is the only effective deterrent force against North Korean aggression... Their withdrawal from Korea at this time is wrong."\footnote{NYT, 6 June 1977.}

The human rights campaigners, who believed withdrawal would increase the risk of war, were very concerned about Park's anticipated curbs on their activities once American pressure was removed and South Korea had a self-reliant defense. One Christian mentioned an old Chinese saying that "two people can be in the same bed but with different dreams." He went on to say human rights campaigners agreed with
president Park on the pullout, but for different reasons.48 One dissident, who experienced prison life for criticizing the government, expressed his objection to the withdrawals. He said, "in comparison with North Korea our country is free, even though I criticize... In South Korea, we have the possibility of Democracy one day."49 The Families Association of Prisoners of Conscience in Korea delivered a statement that the withdrawal would give Park cause to control the nation more tightly: "we are worried that the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea will cause further suppression of the people along with strengthening of the dictatorship."50 A Korean professor explained what worried the critics of President Park:

Many of the President's critics look to the United States Government and American press for support in their struggle. They are concerned that the United States troop withdrawal will leave them alone.51

Many Koreans perceived that Carter linked the pullout with Koreagate and human rights violations. They regretted that Carter did not separate these issues and their country's security. One citizen complained about Carter's pullout decision by arguing that:

Ninety per cent of Koreans are in love with

49. CT, 5 September 1977, sec. 3.
50. WP, 30 March 1977.
Americans, but now American boyfriend forgets us. We don't understand. We wonder why you blame all this Koreagate on us, when it was just one man, Tongsun Park.\textsuperscript{52}

Former President Yoon Po Sun, who was on trial for criticizing Park's dictatorship, told a \textit{New York Times} reporter that "we can't ask the United States to go simply because inadvertently they helped to maintain Mr. Park's dictatorial machinery. And we can't help the North Korean cause just because we don't like what Mr. Park is doing."\textsuperscript{53} He warned that if the United States left South Korea because of Park's violations of human rights, it would challenge "America's own liberal values of human rights and democracy."\textsuperscript{54} The seventy-nine-year old resolute foe of Park continued to say that:

\begin{quote}
You are bound to help us... It is your responsibility because there are no boundaries on humanitarianism. But above that you have a special relationship with us.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

The Carter Administration's public pressure on the South Korean Government over human rights violations was the most baffling and irritating issue to President Park. Moreover, Park was especially afraid of his fellow citizens' impression that Carter decided to withdraw American ground troops from South Korea because of his violations of human rights, since

\textsuperscript{52} Nick Trimmesh, "Even South Korea's Dissidents Want the U.S. to Stay," \textit{CT}, 5 September 1977, sec. 3.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{NVT}, 7 March 1977.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{WP}, 30 March 1977.
this kind of negative impression could jeopardize his political life.\textsuperscript{56} Therefore, Park reconfirmed that the human rights issue was not relevant to his country and made it clear that he would not free political prisoners to please Carter.\textsuperscript{57}

Park's aides also repeatedly denied human rights violations in South Korea. They claimed it was a "biased opinion" of the United States. Many officials believed that some kind of restriction on political activities was necessary because of their unique situation, trying to develop their economy while continuously coping with the North's threat. They also regarded the Carter Administration's open pressure on the human rights issue as a challenge to their legal system and interference in their domestic political affairs.\textsuperscript{58} Even mild-mannered Deputy Prime Minister Nam Duck Woo, who was educated in the United States, defended his government's restrictions on opponents' activities. He told a correspondent of the \textit{Time} that:

\begin{quote}
There is not one developing country in the world where Western democracy really works. The government in a developing country must give guidance, direction, (and) stability. It is the only way to grow. If students are in the streets all the time, everybody is nervous, business suffers. We cannot afford it.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{FEER} 96 (10 June 1977): 12.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{WP}, 24 June 1977.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{NYT}, 13 March 1977 and 20 March 1977; \textit{FEER} 96 (10 June 1977): 12.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Time} 109 (6 June 1977): 32.
\end{footnotes}
In the meantime, Carter's removal of General Singlaub stunned the South Koreans because most of them understood that the general was a man who knew most about North Korea because of his position as senior UN command delegate at the Panmunjom peace talks. Singlaub's dire prediction that the pullout would lead to war in Korean peninsula was splashed across the front pages of all Korean newspapers and received heavy TV and radio coverage for several days. Former President Yoon told a reporter that General Singlaub "spoke for all of us." Park Joon Kyu, the Policy Committee Chairman of the ruling Democratic Republican party, ridiculed the general's dismissal. He said, "if punishment is necessary, why shouldn't Carter recall General Vessey, who is the Supreme U.S. Commander here?"

Editors of Seoul daily newspapers wrote long articles about Singlaub's thirty year military career. They argued that the general spoke correctly and the White House did not have as good a sense of North Korean capabilities as the United States Command in South Korea. An editor of the Seoul Daily Newspaper, who saw the Singlaub affair as a power struggle between Washington and the Seoul command, said, "it's Vessey's

---

61. Ibid.
white flag, isn't it?" 63

The Singlaub affair led to street demonstrations and rallies throughout Seoul. On 22 May more than 500 Christians, including many critics of President Park, met at Saemunan church in downtown Seoul in order to support Singlaub's cause. They prayed for a reversal of Carter's decision on the pullout. Reverend Kim Jong Dae praised Singlaub for "pointing out a very grave flaw" in President Carter's policy. Reverend Kim Kwan Suk, Secretary General of the Korean National Council of Churches and a leading human rights campaigner, made a speech before the audience saying that "we tried to express our misgivings and uneasiness about the troop withdrawal... If it's possible, we would like to reverse the decision." 64 He later met Under Secretary of State Habib and explained Korean church leaders' fears over the possible North communist's aggression after the withdrawal. At the meeting, he also asked for Carter's strong commitment to human rights in South Korea. 65

At the same time, hundreds of other Christians, who carried banners and placards declaring "Absolute Opposition to the Withdrawal of U.S. Forces" or "The Withdrawal Would Threaten the Church," assembled at the residence of United

---

63. FEER 96 (10 June 1977): 12.
states Ambassador Richard L. Sneider to protest Carter's pullout decision. 66

Opposition to the withdrawal had created a rare consensus in South Korea, and even Habib's confirmation of America's continuing commitment to South Korea could not ease discontent there. A cartoonist of the Cho Sun Il Bo, a Seoul conservative daily newspaper, depicted the mood among the South Koreans in its front page cartoon. It showed a bewildered Korean holding Carter's letter promising American commitment after the pullout while thousands of troops were seen going home. The Korean complained, "only this letter?" 67

Indicating the South Koreans' fear over the withdrawal, a senior Park aide told a New York Time reporter that "if we had our way, the United States would bring in an additional two divisions." 68 A South Korean Air Force general claimed that two thousand aircraft would be needed to compensate for the withdrawal. 69 The local Korean papers also claimed that South Korea would need at least US$25 billion to finance a new five year army modernization plan in order to keep military balance with the North without the presence of American ground

67. NYT, 7 August 1977.
The Korean Christian Ad-hoc Policy Committee, which was supported by about 400 ministers belonging to eighteen protestant denominations, placed a half page advertisement in the Washington Post appealing for the aid of American churchmen in changing Carter's policy. They emphasized in the declaration that all churches in North Korea were wiped out and many church workers and believers were killed by the Communists. Moreover, they reminded Americans that many Christian believers were murdered brutally by Northern Communists during the Korean War. The declaration stated that "because we know all too well the inhumanly brutal nature of the Communists, we do not regard the murder of the good citizens of Cambodia as simply some other person's business."

The committee concluded its declaration by saying that they would continually oppose the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea until permanent peace would be settled in the Korean peninsula "according to God's will." 71

In October, Reverend Kim Kwan Suk and sixteen other Korean church leaders, who were participating in a meeting of Korean and American church leaders in New York, tried to persuade their American counterparts William P. Thompson, President of the National Council of Churches (NCC), Claire

70. CSM, 25 May 1977.

71. WP, 14 June 1977.
Randall, General Secretary of the NCC, and other American church leaders to oppose the planned withdrawal. But they were very disappointed to find that in reality many American ministers favored Carter's troop withdrawal policy and refused to support the Korean church leaders proposal.\footnote{CSM, 17 November 1977.}

Unlike other communities, the Korean business community, which had heavily relied on foreign capital and trade, was not affected seriously by the pullout policy. At the beginning of the Carter Administration, many businessmen expressed their concern over a possible cut in foreign loans and a future shrinkage of the Korean economy. With considerable anxiety a corporate lawyer told a Washington Post reporter:

The retreat of American troops increases the risk of war... With the President and the Congress showing they don't want to help South Korea. We wonder if the American banks will want to keep on lending us money.\footnote{WP, 24 May 1977.}

As time went on, however, there were few signs that foreign businessmen and bankers were shying away from doing business in Seoul. The world's conservative bankers had never abated their business in Seoul. The country's economy was the fastest growing in the world during the 1970s, averaging...
nearly 11 per cent real growth per year.\textsuperscript{74}

Some Korean big businessmen even expected that the pullout would require more business investment in the defense industry. Kim Woo Choong, President of Dae Woo Industrial Company, who believed the withdrawal would actually expedite the development of the Korean defense industries, expected that foreigners would not cut their business because of the proposed pullout. Kim told a reporter from the \textit{Washington Post} that foreign investors, whom he had met, did not express any worries. Kim said, "businessmen are very realistic. They're worried about return equity. Who is leaving? More are coming."\textsuperscript{75}

As Kim expected, American investors never cut their business in Seoul. Zoltan Merszei, President of Dow Chemical Company, who planned a US$250 million project in South Korea told a \textit{Wall Street Journal} reporter that:

\begin{quote}
There isn't even a wait-and-see attitude. People are looking to do things here. We feel that South Korea offers us the opportunity and the return on investment we're seeking. So we think Korea is a good place for Dow.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{WSJ}, 30 August 1977. In 1976, South Korea's GNP jumped 15.2 per cent to US$25 billion. According to a confidential report of the World Bank issued earlier 1977, South Korea had been transformed from "one of the poorest developing countries to a semi-industrialized nation."

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
Du Pont also planned to open a liaison office in Seoul in late August 1977. William Dizer, General Manager of its Tokyo office, told a reporter from the Wall Street Journal that:

We've been thinking about this for several years. I don't think the troop withdrawal has even been a factor in our decision. We've been very much impressed with the progress in South Korea. 77

At this point, South Korean business leaders did not have any difficulty in borrowing the necessary money from foreign investors. Kim Woun Gie, Governor of the Korean Development Bank, even complained with pleasure that foreigners were so eager to lend money to Korean borrowers that there was much more credit than could be used. 78 By the end of 1978, about 1,500 American firms opened business in South Korea and its trade reached to US$7 billion and was rapidly growing. 79

During the first year into the Carter Administration, there was still no sign of anti-Americanism in South Korea, despite strong objections to the pullout. Nick Thimmesh, a Chicago Tribune correspondent, depicted the mood of Seoul:

The South Koreans cling to the U.S. to the point of dependency. There are more hurt than angry that Mr. Carter announced weakening of the relationship.... The gratitude South Koreans feel for the U.S. remains strong. There are no "Yankee, Go Home!" sings, no declarations from dissidents that the U.S.

77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. DSB 79, (February 1979): 30-1.
is a fickle exploiter.  

Bernard Weinraub, a New York Times special reporter, also expressed a similar opinion. He said,

Although American officials are worried about anti-American sentiment, the South Koreans express more sorrow and puzzlement than anger and insist that the reasons for the pullout are incomprehensible.  

By the middle of 1978, however, relations had become strained. In April 1978 when State Department announced an American table tennis team's plan for attending an international tournament in Pyong Yang in the following year, rumors suddenly spread out Seoul that the Carter Administration was considering three-party talks - the United States and the two Koreas - an idea which was submitted by President Tito of Yugoslavia to President Carter, but rejected by Seoul. The South Koreans, remembering what happened in South Vietnam after the Paris peace talks, were again worrying that the United States might abandon their country as she did in Vietnam after the peace talks in Paris. This event together with the humiliation of Koreagate and the Blue House bugging incident, in which the CIA was alleged to have bugged the


81. NYT, 7 August 1977.

82. WP, 20 April 1977.

83. American papers reported that the CIA activated electronic surveillance of the Blue House, the presidential residence in Seoul, since 1970. The reports said that the CIA placed a listening device inside the Blue House and got information about the illegal lobbying affairs. The State
South Korean presidential residence, produced anti-Americanism in South Korea. William Chapman, Special correspondent of the Washington Post in Seoul, reported this mood in Seoul:

The current jitters follow a series of events that have combined to provoke rare signs of anti-Americanism in South Korea. It began with the troop withdrawal announcement, continued through the humiliating Tongsun Park affair, and came to a head in the reaction to the alleged bugging of President Park Chung Hee's official mansion, the Blue House. In May 1978, Dr. Brzezinski visited Seoul on the way to his home from China in order to calm the South Koreans' loud protests over the pullout plan. In Seoul, he tried to assure Koreans that they did not have to worry excessively about a possible North attack after the pullout by pointing out to them the fact that South Korea's US$40 billion economy was four times larger than that of the North and its population was twice the North's. Of course, South Koreans were not pleased to hear his explanation of rationale of the pullout. Park Choong Hoon, Chairman of the Korean Trade Association, told a reporter from the New York Times that:

Once you withdraw forces completely, North Korea will be tempted to attack. Brzezinski is not a better judge than our generals facing the North... They have all the intelligence reports on the North Korean military build up.

The South Koreans who feared another war in the peninsula


84. NYT, 25 April 1978.
85. Ibid., 30 May 1978.
strongly objected to Carter's pullout policy even before Carter took the oval office. As the process went on, however, the Koreans realized that they could not change Carter's policy and tried to prepare themselves for self defense. They gave unanimous support to their government's campaign for a self sufficient military capability by approving a 40 percent increase in the defense budget. 86 It strengthened President Park's political position and gave momentum to expedite the development of South Korean defense industries, which were started in the early 1970s when President Nixon removed 20,000 American troops from South Korea.

The South Korean Government reconsidered a covert nuclear weapons program and doubled the number of planned nuclear power plants in order to influence Carter's new Korean policy. At the same time, the government began cautiously to change its traditional security reliance on the United States, and tried to reach accommodation with communist countries, including North Korea by exploring trade and cultural and sports exchanges. This campaign was partly successful, and Seoul was able to invite the Eastern block as well as the West to the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

Meanwhile, President Carter's unilateral announcement of the withdrawals served to plant anti-American sentiment in the Korean public mind. Before the withdrawal policy anti-

86 LAT, 1 September 1979.
Americanism had been almost nonexistent in South Korea since the end of the Korean War. This was aggravated by the humiliation of Koreagate, the Blue House bugging affair, and the Kwangju crisis of May 1980.87

87. Jae Hoon Shin, "Gunfire Ends the Insurrection," FEER 108 (30 May 1980): 9-10. In the Kwangju incident, the South Korean Government calmed an insurrection by force. Casualties numbered anywhere between 200 and 300. Radical Korean college students have claimed that the United States, which had an operational responsibility for the Korean Army, allowed them to crush this peaceful demonstration for democracy by force. They also maintained that casualties numbered about 2,000.
CHAPTER XVIII

CARTER'S TRIP TO KOREA AND SUSPENSION OF THE PULLOUT

While Seoul officials were approving Park Tong Sun's return to Washington for Congressional testimony, they carefully floated an idea of a summit meeting between President Carter and President Park in order to discuss problems of the proposed withdrawal plan. But President Carter, who earlier rejected Seoul's request that Vice President Mondale visit Seoul on the way home from Tokyo at the beginning of his term, ignored the idea.¹

In July 1978, however, President Carter expressed interest in a possible meeting for the first time in a news conference, saying that he had no plans to invite President Park to the United States but had no objection to meeting him.² At the end of 1978, partly because the Korean lobbying scandal was almost over and partly because congressional

¹. NYT, 8 January 1978.

objection to the withdrawal had calmed down after passage of
the Korean military aid package, the President considered
visiting Seoul and using the proposed weapons transfer as
leverage to improve human rights in South Korea. Carter
informed the Koreans that he intended to visit Seoul after the
Tokyo economic summit.3

As soon as Carter's plan to visit Seoul was announced,
three leading Korean opposition leaders, a former President,
Yun Po Sun, a religious leader, Ham Suk Heon, and a former
President candidate, Kim Dae Jung, sent a letter to Carter
asking him to help with freeing about 400 political prisoners
and repealing emergency decrees that blocked Korean political
freedoms since 1972.4 But, after realizing that their request
was not officially recognized by the White House, the
opposition began to criticize President Carter while opposing
his trip to Seoul.5

Meanwhile, one month before Carter's official visit to
Seoul, the South Korean Government abruptly freed sixteen
opposition figures to improve the political climate.6 At the
same time, however, the Seoul Government began to prevent
leading opponents from participating in any dissident meeting

3. WP, 8 November 1978.
5. Ibid., 14 June 1979.
designed to stop Carter from coming to South Korea. The Education Ministry ordered university authorities to shorten the spring term in order to bar students' demonstrations during Carter's stay in Seoul. Kim Young Sam, new head of the leading opposition New Democratic party, strongly criticized the government's over-reaction. He remarked that "the government is going crazy." 8

As Carter's visit came nearer, there was a wave of repression including house arrests. Kim Dae Jung who was freed in December 1978, but then was put under house arrest, said that "we are suffering from so-called Carter shock. We expected the human rights situation to improve at least before President Carter's visit, but just the opposite has happened." 9

Meanwhile, on June 20, Carter told a Japanese reporter that he would meet not only President Park but also opposition party leaders as well as religious leaders and others to discuss ways of improving human rights in South Korea. At the same time, the President, admitted that a new CIA report confirmed that North Korea had a stronger military capability than previously estimated. He also told reporters that he would discuss that matter with President Park and his local

8. Ibid., 22 June 1979.
9. Ibid.
commanders in South Korea before he made any further decision concerning the pullout.10

Carter reaffirmed that he had made no decision on the pullout issue yet in his letter to Whan Hyon So, the president of the Oriental Press in Korea. Carter said, "I want to take a look at the situation, talk to President Park, and consult with Congress" before he made up his mind. The president added, "whatever decision is made, one thing is clear: Our commitment to the security of the Republic of Korea is unshakable."11

On 29 July, unlike previous Presidents, Carter arrived in Seoul at night12 and spent the first night with American soldiers at Camp Casey, the headquarters of the Second Division, north of Seoul and twelve miles south of the DMZ. He did this in order to show the South Koreans his desire to keep a certain distance from President Park.13 In a brief speech at Camp Casey after jogging with American soldiers for three miles, the President hinted that he would press

---

president Park to improve human rights conditions in South Korea by emphasizing the fact that 50,000 young Americans lost their lives for "equality, justice, freedom, and the preservation of basic human rights" for the South Koreans during the Korean War.  

The next day, Carter attended at a welcoming ceremony at Yoido Plaza. The President was warmly greeted by about 800,000 citizens who lined a four-mile route through downtown Seoul. President Carter, who encountered only massive police security in Tokyo a few days before, was very impressed by the big welcoming crowd. Near the Seoul City Hall, he abruptly got out of his open roof limousine to shake hands with people in the crowd.  

At the first meeting at the Blue House after having completed the exciting thirty-minute motorcade in downtown Seoul, President Park directly challenged Carter's withdrawal policy, hoping that the President would formally announce the suspension of his plan. Carter, who had already been pressed


15. LAT, 30 June 1979. A month later, on 31 July, at a town meeting at Bardstown, Kentucky, Carter told American citizens how much he was impressed, saying that "I just came from South Korea just 2 or 3 weeks ago, I have never had such an outpouring of a welcome in my life. There were literally millions of people on the street expressing their thanks to America for guaranteeing the independence and freedom of the people of South Korea." PPP 2 (31 July 1979): 1349; WCPD 15 (6 August 1979): 1349.
by domestic and foreign leaders about the pullout issue, did not want it raised again by President Park. Secretary Vance described the situation later in his book, *Hard Choices*:

When he reached Seoul, he found to his intense annoyance that President Park intended to raise the issue with him directly. He asked us to prevent this from happening, since he already knew Park's views. However, despite our warnings, Park began the first meeting between the two men with a forty-five minute statement on the dangers that the troop withdrawal policy created for his country and the region. We could almost feel the temperature in the room drop as Park continued, through an interpreter, his assault on the policy. Sitting between the President and Harold Brown, I could feel the contained anger of the President, but there was nothing to be done but let the drama play itself out.16

Carter ignored Park's presentation on the pullout issue. Instead, he took up mainly the issue of human rights violations under the Park regime.17 The President pointed out that Park's violations of human rights were undercutting American public support for the United States security commitment to South Korea.18 President Park tried to defend his strong rule by arguing that some restrictions on human rights was inevitable in his country in order to defend the nation against an aggressive North Korea as well as to expedite economic development.19

---

17. Ibid., 130.
That afternoon, Secretary Cyrus Vance, Ambassador William H. Gleysteen, and Assistant Secretary Richard C. Holbrooke gave a firm warning to President Park through his aides that if he wanted to avoid a personal rupture with Carter, Park should not press him about the pullout policy. They also made it clear that the policy would be decided not in Seoul but in Washington after consultations with Congressional leaders. The message got through, and the state dinner was successful.\(^{20}\)

At the state dinner toast, President Park did not mention the troop withdrawal and only criticized North Korea's military buildup. He could not help noting, however, that "the clouds of war still hang over the Korean peninsula." He also expressed thanks for American cooperation in the development of his country and expressed his hope that Carter's state visit to South Korea would consolidate friendship between two countries.\(^{21}\)

In his response to Park's statement, Carter emphasized that "the United States has been, is, and will remain a Pacific nation and a Pacific power." He also reaffirmed that the United States commitment to South Korea's security would be "strong, unshakable, and enduring." The President, praised South Korea's economic accomplishments, said that South Korea proved the fact that "a free economy is the clearest road to

\(^{20}\) Vance, *Choices*, 130.

shared prosperity and a better life for all." And then told
the Koreans that improvement of human rights should keep pace
with the country's dramatic economic progress. He said,

There is abundant evidence in Korea of the dramatic
economic progress a capable and energetic people can
achieve by working together. I believe that this
achievement can be matched by similar progress
through the realization of basic human aspirations
in political and human rights.22

On Sunday morning, Carter met twelve Korean church
leaders, including Kim Kwan Suk, President of the National
Council of Christian Churches of Korea and a leading anti-Park
campaigner, at the residence of United States Ambassador
William Gleysteen.23 At the evening reception, Carter had a
twenty-three-minute talk with Kim Young Sam, Chairman of
Korea's New Democratic Party. They discussed issues of human
rights and political freedom. Carter did not, however, meet
Kim Dae Jung, Seoul's most prominent dissident, who was forced
to stay at home.24 Meanwhile, Secretary Vance handed in a list
of over 100 names of political prisoners to Foreign Minister
Park Dong Jin calling for an investigation and their
release.25

22. PPP 2 (30 June 1979): 1205; WCPD 15 (9 July 1979):
1205.

23. WP, 1 July 1979; CT, 2 July 1979, sec. 2.


25. NYT, 2 July 1979; LAT, 2 July 1979. It was the first
time that the United States submitted a list of political
prisoners to South Korea or any ally asking that they be
freed.
During the forty-three-hour visit, Carter officially reaffirmed that his withdrawal policy remained unchanged, but he privately told President Park that he was studying a delay of the pullout of 19,000 of the 31,000 ground troops, and also hinted that his administration was seriously considering the total suspension of the program.26

In the joint communique issued at the conclusion of meetings with President Park on 1 July 1979, Carter left open the possibility of a further pullout of the troops from South Korea. However, he reaffirmed that the United States would keep the Mutual Defense Treaty with Seoul and protect the Koreans under United States’ nuclear umbrella. In the communique, Carter and Park proposed a three-way parley to Kim Il Sung in order to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, the Presidents ordered Secretary of State Vance and Foreign Minister Park to get in touch with the Foreign Minister of North Korea "in an appropriate manner."27

Two weeks later, on 17 July, the South Korean Government announced the release of eighty-six political prisoners, the largest release of dissidents since 1975, in accordance with Carter's recommendation during his visit to Seoul.28

26. WP, 2 July 1979; CT, 1 July 1979; LAT, 1 July 1979.

27. PPP 2 (30 June 1979): 1208; WCPD 15 (9 July 1979): 1205; CT, 3 July 1979; LAT, 15 July 1979. Three days later, on July 3, North Korea rejected the proposed three way talks claiming that the reunification was a domestic issue.

Three days later, on 20 July 1979, after having completed withdrawal of only 3,670 troops including one 674-man combat unit, Carter formally announced that he would suspend the Korean pullout plan based on new intelligence assessments of North Korea's military strength and other factors, such as the steadily growing Soviet military power in East Asia. In his statement, read by Security Advisor Brzezinski, the President declared that withdrawal of the Second Infantry Division "will remain in abeyance." Carter also revealed in his statement that he would not discuss the issue for the rest of his term by saying that "the timing and pace of withdrawals beyond these will be reexamined in 1981."  

As soon as Carter announced his decision to suspend the proposed withdrawal plan, the Los Angeles Times, the most ardent defender of Carter's pullout policy, declared its full support for the decision by claiming in its editorial of 25 July that "it is the right decision."  

There is no evidence that Carter's trip to Seoul affected the Korean withdrawal policy. Carter already had made up his mind to suspend the pullout before he reached to Korea. His official visit to Korea was designed to provide a face-saving setting for the suspension of the withdrawal policy. At the

---

29. CT, 21 July 1979.


same time, Carter believed that he could use the possibility of suspension as leverage to improve human rights in South Korea. Therefore, Carter outrightly gave Park a list of political prisoners he wanted released. It was an unprecedented diplomatic action by the United States. Carter's message got through and Park released political prisoners in accordance with Carter's request. Overall, Carter's trip to Seoul was successful. He announced the suspension of the pullout policy under relatively favorable circumstances.
CHAPTER XIX

JAPANESE REACTIONS

The Korean peninsula has been regarded as "a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan" because the two countries are located less than one-hundred miles apart with strong geopolitical and psychological ties.¹ Therefore, the Japanese have historically been sensitive to the implications for their nation's security of the situation in the Korean peninsula. The 1977 edition of Japanese Foreign Policy, an annual Japanese government publication, stated that "the Korean Peninsula is a very important region whose peace and security is vital to Japan's own security."² Moreover, close economic ties with South Korea established during the 1970s made the Japanese especially nervous about President Carter's intention

¹. WP, 28 December 1976.

². Yashuhisa Nakada, "The Korean Peninsula and Japan's Security, the Resurgence of Japanese Politico - Military Roles in the 1980s." WHCFSF, General CO 82-2, CO 78. In his article, Nakada recommended that U.S. ground troops continue to stay in South Korea. This article was sent to Brzezinski on 12 May 1977 by William R. Kintner, President of Foreign Policy Research Institute in Pennsylvania.
to withdraw the Second Division. In 1976 Japan enjoyed a US$900 million favorable balance of trade out of total US$3.8 billion bilateral trade with South Korea. They had invested US$2.8 billion in South Korea, which was Japan's largest market in Asia and was second only to the United States as a destination for Japanese exports.³

Because the Japanese benefited greatly from the status-quo in the Korean peninsula, they did not want the situation destabilized by the withdrawal of United States ground troops. Therefore, immediately after Carter's November election victory, Japanese officials expressed deep concern over Carter's proposed withdrawal policy. They emphasized that the pullout might not only destabilize the Korean peninsula but also threaten the security of Japan.⁴ Japanese Vice Defense Minister Takashi Maruyama, who voiced outspoken opposition to the pullout plan, claimed that even when South Korea became strong enough to defend the country themselves, the presence of U.S. ground troops would be "an absolutely essential prerequisite for retaining stability" on the Korean peninsula.⁵ Foreign Minister Iichiro Hatoyama, reminded the United States that its withdrawal in 1948 caused the Korean War, said, "If you look at history, it is a fact that war

⁴ Ibid., 13 November 1976.
⁵ Ibid.
occurred once in Korea because of withdrawal of U.S. troops there. Hence, our anxieties."  

At the beginning of December 1976, the Tokyo Government urged the President-elect not to make any sudden withdrawal decision. Prime Minister Takeo Miki said, "it is conventional Japanese thinking that drastic changes in the military balance in the Korean Peninsula are unfavorable to peace and security there." However, in the middle of January 1977, Foreign Ministry officials, who agreed with Defense Ministry officials that any drastic change of the United States' Korean policy would threaten Asian political stability, began to say they were not in a position to oppose Carter's new Korean policy. They said, "what we want is some kind of U.S. guarantee for stability there."

At the meeting with Vice President Mondale, Japanese leaders expressed their opinion that "the withdrawals would be a serious mistake." They emphasized that any sudden, drastic troop withdrawal could create a military imbalance in Korea and it would not only threaten the security of South Korea but also endanger Japan's security. However, Japanese officials, who understood President Carter would not rescind

7. NYT, 2 December 1976.
9. Vance, Choices, 128.
his pullout plan, tried to lengthen the United States pullout schedule. Japanese officials told Mondale that they were not in a position to oppose an American plan itself, but it should be done "slowly, gradually and after consultation with Japan and the South Korean Government."\textsuperscript{10} Even after the meeting, Japanese officials publicly expressed their hope for the mitigation of the plan by declaring that they understood the pullout of all troops from South Korea would be taken over "many, many years."\textsuperscript{11}

However, Japanese officials made it clear at a meeting with the vice president that they did not want to discuss with the United States delegates the specific timetable and number of soldiers to be withdrawn, partly because they could not alter American policy and partly because they knew the South Koreans were very sensitive to outsiders's interference in their security problem.\textsuperscript{12} Foreign Minister Iichiro Hayotama said, "the rate at which the 42,000 U.S. troops are brought home is essentially a matter for Washington and Seoul to negotiate."\textsuperscript{13} Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, emphasizing the larger issue of the United States role in regional stability, also said, "any withdrawal is a matter for the United States

\begin{flushright}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textsuperscript{10} & WP, 2 February 1977. \\
\textsuperscript{11} & NYT, 4 February 1977. \\
\textsuperscript{12} & Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{13} & WP, 1 February 1977. \\
\end{tabular}
\end{flushright}
and South Korea and not a subject in which Japan can interfere." Immediately after the meeting with Mondale, the prime Minister sent a warning letter to other government agencies that "noisy opposition to the withdrawal would be unwise." 

The official Japanese policy of being noncommittal to the pullout was clearly displayed when Fukuda rejected President Carter's proposal for a broadened Japanese political role in international affairs. At the Washington Summit Conference Fukuda expressed his grave doubts about the withdrawals. He said it would upset the military balance and consequently threaten peace and stability in Northeastern Asia. Fukuda also made it clear that Japan would not take any role in the security of South Korea. Japanese policy regarding the pullout had remained noncommittal. When Defense Secretary Brown explained to them the results of the consultations with Seoul officials in July 1977, Foreign Minister Hatoyama told Brown that "we don't have any disagreement at all." 

While Japanese officials were noncommittal officially, many of them privately expressed their worries about the pullout to the news media. Even Prime Minister Fukuda himself

---

15. WP, 8 July 1977.
expressed his doubt about Carter's plan of strengthening South Korean Army and United States Air Force in South Korea in order to keep stability in the Korean peninsula. He said, "that's what I think Carter has in mind." One Foreign Ministry official told a correspondent of the U.S. News & World Report that:

We'll continue to explain to the U.S. our own opinions and concerns as well as the concerns of other Asian countries. So if it is true that the U.S. is revising its Asian policy, Japan's view and the views of Asia will be understood and reflected.

Ambassador Fumihiko Togo, who served as Deputy Foreign Minister before he came to Washington, addressed the annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Organization of Asian Studies at Princeton University. He said that the troop withdrawal should be reconsidered so as not to upset the balance of power in the Korean peninsula, emphasizing the United States' role in keeping peace and stability in the Far East.

Many Japanese Defense Ministry officials also expressed their suspicions about the United States' promise that it could keep peace and stability on the Korean peninsula after


19. USNWR 83 (18 July 1977): 54. The reporter asked one Western Japanese expert that "What role do the Japanese want the U.S. to play in Asia?" The expert answered, "exactly what it is doing now, no more and no less."

the pullout without securing assurance from Moscow or Pyongyang. Moreover, they believed that the rationale for the pullout offered by the United States was "inadequate" considering the fact that the Soviets had steadily increased their air and naval strength in the Far East while American naval and air forces in the Pacific declined. 21

Many Japanese security experts regarded the Soviet Union as a potential major enemy and doubted America's will to keep the balance of power in the Far East. They opposed the pullout by warning that the Soviet navy would dominate Japan's air and sea routes if the United States undertook further troop withdraws in Asia. 22 They were concerned over Russian expansion into South Korea after the U.S. pullout. They argued that such a move would not only increase a threat to Japan's security but also disturb its oil supply line from the Middle East. 23

President Carter's pullout policy combined with the rapid Soviet military build up in the Far East produced a major defense debate in Japan. This received the greatest attention in the news media after a Soviet Mig-25 landed in Japan on 6

21. Ibid., 1 August 1977.
23. NYT, 12 February 1978.
September 1976. An editorial in the Mainichi Shinbun of 16 January 1978 pointed out that President Carter's decision to withdraw the troops from South Korea was part of America's long term policy of "separation from Asia." Two days later, the Nihon Keizai reported a similar view that the United States was beginning to separate from Asia while the Soviet Union was building up its military power in the Far East. The paper also reported a Japanese defense official saying that "today Korea and tomorrow Japan...the United States' separation from Asia is real."

The Asahi Shinbun, the world's largest newspaper with twelve million circulation, on 25 February 1978 pointed out that the United States commitment to Japan had weakened. An editorial stated:

The U.S., while showing concern over the Soviet naval build up in the Far East, is still moving to diminish its presence in Asia... As a result, the Japanese commitment is apparently becoming less important to America.


27. Ibid., 975, cit., Asahi Shinbun, 25 February 1978.
On 30 March the paper warned the Japanese that Japan faced the most difficult challenge to its security since the Second World War.  

The Tokyo Shinbun speculated on a possible Soviet naval invasion of the northern island of Hokkaido. At the same time, the Yomiuri Shinbun claimed that the Japanese could no longer trust America's will to defend Japan. The newspaper alleged that the United States was planning to move its Pacific Seventh Fleet to the Atlantic in the event of confrontation in Europe. Pointing out the fact that American predominance in the Pacific was ending because of growing Russian naval power in the Far East, the Yomiuri Shinbun urged the Japanese Government to rethink its traditional security ties with the United States. The Sankei Shinbun also pressed Japanese political leaders to reconsider their defense policy, pointing out that the Soviet Union had quickly increased its military power in Asia.

Most Japanese defense officials agreed with the news media's viewpoints. Shin Kanemaru, Director General of Japan's Defense Agency, expressed his concern over Russia's strong military buildup. He said, "Russian warships and other vessels

---


29. NYT, 14 May 1978.


31. Ibid., 970, cit., Sankei Shinbun, 10 February 1978.
make such frequent appearances in the Sea of Japan these days that we might as well refer to those waters as the Sea of Russia."\textsuperscript{32} In comparing the military power of Japan with that of the Soviet Union, Kanemaru, pointing out that Russia deployed 2,000 aircraft in the Far East while Japan possessed only 400 aircraft, said that Japan had nothing more than "bamboo spears against machine guns."\textsuperscript{33}

The annual Japanese defense "White Paper" of 1978, unlike the previous papers, regarded the Soviet Union as Japan's principal potential enemy. The paper stated that "given this increase in Soviet forces in the area, the United States Seventh Fleet did not have the strength to fully protect Japan's vital sea lanes."\textsuperscript{34} Mr. Atsuyuki Sassa, a defense adviser at Japan's Defense Agency and a chief of the study group which helped produce the White Paper, expressed his concern about the strength of Soviet power in the Far East. He told a correspondent of the \textit{New York Times} that "even if they did not use nuclear weapons, their forces are strong enough to destroy us, especially hitting our sea lanes."\textsuperscript{35}

Many other Japanese experts also urged the Fukuda Administration to set up a more independent defense posture.

\textsuperscript{32} NYT, 14 May 1978.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 29 July 1978.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
Tadeo Takubo, Editor of the Foreign News Department of the Shigitsushin, argued in an article in the Chuo Koron that Carter's pullout policy was an extension of the Nixon Doctrine, which had aimed to press Japan to bear more defense responsibility commensurate with its economic power. He maintained that the Japanese Government had to make use of that opportunity to build up a self-reliant defense capability as well as to reach accommodation with the Communist great powers.36

In his article, "The Withdrawal of U.S. Troops from South Korea and Its Problem" published in Sandai Hogaku, Hitegiro Kodani agreed with Takubo that the real goal of the policy was to urge Japan to spend more on its own defense. He pointed out that the credibility of American security promises had sharply declined among the Japanese after the Vietnam War. He maintained that Japan had to break away from its traditional security reliance on the United States and establish an independent defense capability. Moreover, he claimed, for its security Japan should ultimately assume the American defense role in South Korea.37


Oida Kejo also emphasized the importance of the Korean Peninsula to Japan's security in an article in the Kokugo (National Defense). He wrote, "the withdrawal is not only a Korean problem, but also is ours." Kejo claimed that the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty should be reconsidered and Japan had to strengthen the Self-Defense Force (SDF,) especially by considerable expansion of naval and air forces. Thus, they could cope with any threats from the western coast as well as from the northern border. 38

In an article published in the Jiyu, Takashi Den, a political commentator, was concerned about the potential Japanese economic losses due to the proposed withdrawal. In order to protect that profitable market, he maintained, Japan had to continue its investments boldly in South Korea even after the pullout in order to prevent North Korea's military attack on the South. 39

News media debates and discussions over the national security greatly influenced public opinion. A Yomiuri Shinbun nationwide poll in April 1978 showed only 21 percent of Japanese believed that the United States would keep the joint security treaty in the event of war while 38 percent doubted


the United States's will to honor the treaty.\textsuperscript{40} The debate sparked a new campaign to heighten awareness of the national defense issue. It consequently led the Japanese to reconsider building up the Self-Defense Force, which had been regarded as "taboo." An \textit{Asahi Shinbun} nationwide poll at the beginning of 1978 showed that 77 percent of the Japanese supported the existence of the SDF, and many of them urged the Japanese Government to strengthen the SDF.\textsuperscript{41} The Defense Agency's own poll in the same period showed the highest record of 83 percent approval of the SDF since the end of World War II.\textsuperscript{42}

Partly because of the encouraging results of these polls and partly influenced by Carter's pullout policy, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda brought up the defense issue in his 1978 Administration Policy Speech at the opening session of the new Diet.\textsuperscript{43} In the debate about the defense issue, surprisingly, the opposition Komeito (Clean Government Party), generally considered pacifist, changed its traditional attitude and declared its support of the SDF.\textsuperscript{44} The Japanese Government

\begin{footnotes}
\item[40] \textit{NYT}, 14 May 1978.
\item[42] Ibid.
\item[43] \textit{NYT}, 14 May 1978. This was the same time as the President's state of the union address in the United States. Mentioning the defense issue in Administration policy speeches was very rare because supporting the SDF in the Parliament was a "taboo" in Japan.
\item[44] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
increased its defense budget by 12.4 percent, amounting to US$8.76 billion, without facing any severe objections, and allocated US$2 billion to buy new aircraft, ships, and sophisticated weapons. At the same time, Japan's National Defense Council decided to buy 100 F-15 fighters and 43 P-3C anti-submarine patrol planes, at the cost of US$4.5 billion, from the United States over eight to eleven years. This was the biggest aircraft order Japan had ever made.

Meanwhile, voices for reconsidering Japan's traditional reliance on the United States for its security became louder. The Japanese Government tried cautiously to reach accommodation with Communist countries such as China and North Korea. In attempting to have a dual diplomatic relations with the two Koreas, the Japanese Government, while officially supporting Seoul, sent a delegation led by Congressman Chuju Kuno, who was a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, to Pyong Yang. They instructed the delegates to issue a joint communique to back up the North Korean position that all foreign troops and nuclear weapons in South Korea should be removed.

---

45. Ibid., 12 February 1978.

46. Ibid., 29 December 1977. According to Gordon, Japan chose the F-15 because of its "look down" radar and its defense superiority against invading aircraft.

47. Ibid., 1 August 1977.

48. LAT, 9 September 1977.
In order to improve relations with China, the Japanese Government approved the Japan-China Long Term Trade Agreement for eight years in February 1978. Moreover, Tokyo planned to provide a huge low interest loan program to China to expedite economic cooperation by solving China's foreign currency needs. But being faced with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) regulation that the lowest interest limit on such loans was from 7.25 to 7.5 percent, the Japanese Government unprecedentedly decided directly to deposit more than US$1 billion in cash in the Bank of China in Peking at a 6 percent interest rate. In October 1978 Japan moved closer to China by inviting Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping to Tokyo and by signing the Peace and Friendship Treaty with China.49

As a result of Carter's withdrawal policy, the Japanese realized that they could not rely on the United States for their national security. It led the Japanese to understand the importance of their Self-Defense Force which had been ignored by the Japanese public. As a result, Tokyo could build up the Self Defense Force without any public opposition. At the same time, the Japanese Government also began cautiously to accommodate the communist super powers, especially China. They signed Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peaceful Understanding prior to the normalization of Sino-American relations. At the

49. CSM, 14 December 1978.
same time, the Japanese concretized dual diplomatic relations with North and South Korea to enhance their security and economic interests.
President Carter's Korean withdrawal policy was one of the most controversial foreign policy issues during his entire Administration. Dr. Nam Joo Hong claimed in his book, *America's Commitment To South Korea*, that Carter's pullout policy was Nixon's legacy. It is true that the withdrawal policy was partly a continuation of the so-called Nixon Doctrine that the United States would no longer take a front line security role for the defense of Asian allies. However, Carter proceeded with the policy based on his own initiative and for his own purposes rather than as an extension of the Nixon Doctrine. Carter introduced this idea when he was an almost unknown presidential candidate fighting for national recognition. Carter read American public opinion as disgusted by negative images of South Korea, as well as opposed to further American involvement in any Asian conflict because of the aftermath of the Vietnam War. He successfully made the Korean withdrawal a major campaign issue in differentiating himself from other presidential candidates.
Carter's withdrawal policy contained several weak points from the start. First, he did not seek out the opinions of military experts before making his campaign promise. Second, the campaign pledge became a major United States foreign policy without serious consultation with military experts, Congress, and leaders of the concerned countries. Third, he boxed himself into a corner on the issue when he prematurely announced the policy. His administration had not sufficiently studied all possible options and ramifications.

From the beginning of the Carter Administration, there was discontent with the policy within the government, and it faced some opposition from Congress. However, voices of opposition to the policy were not strong enough to attract public attention until the Singlaub affair occurred.

President Carter, who was concerned about the growing opposition to the pullout within his administration as well as outside the government, needed to take strong action against General Singlaub in order to prevent further open opposition to his foreign policy from subordinates. The abrupt summons of the general was intended to show that Carter had made up his mind already and would not change it. At the same time, the President expected to calm down growing opposition within his administration by punishing Singlaub severely.

In dealing with the Singlaub affair, however, Carter made a serious mistake by recalling the general to the White House. He should have ignored the general's remarks published on the
front page of the Washington Post or should have had Defense Secretary Harold Brown or Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army Bernard W. Rogers take care of the case by removing the general from his Korean post quietly. President Carter's unnecessary overreaction caused the heavy media coverage of the Singlaub affair as well as the withdrawal policy itself. It was followed by a full scale debate in Congress on his new Korean policy, as well as a lengthy academic discussion on the issue.

By humiliating the patriotic and professional general, Carter gave the American public the negative impression that he had broken his campaign promise that, unlike his predecessor, he would welcome open discussion on American foreign policy. Moreover, Carter's tolerance for Ambassador Young's maverick activities in the United Nations while he was punishing Singlaub planted in American minds the negative image that the President applied a double standard in dealing with public officials.

At the same time, the Singlaub affair reminded the American public of President Truman's recall of General MacArthur during the Korean War and incited public debates on the Korean issue. As a result, the American public, who tacitly approved Carter's new Korean policy when it had been given little attention, began to realize the disadvantages as well as advantages of the pullout policy. Many Americans then urged the Carter Administration to consider the issue more
cautiously. Various polls demonstrated this opinion shift.

The Singlaub affair gave Congressional conservatives the momentum to rebut Carter's pullout policy. During the Vietnam War, Congressional conservatives supported the administration's policy while liberal Democrats were in opposition. But, in dealing with the withdrawal policy, ironically, they changed their positions and liberal Democrats tried to defend the administration while Congressional conservatives attacked it. Among Congressional opponents, Congressman Samuel S. Stratton, Chairman of the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee, played the most important role in rallying Congressional opposition to the Carter Administration's one sided handling of the pullout policy. His proposed amendment, attempting to stop the further withdrawal of 26,000 American ground troops until North and South Korea achieved a political settlement, could not be approved by the full House. But Stratton's campaigns against the pullout were influential enough to attract Congressional attention to the issue, and it destroyed the Carter Administration's policy momentum.

Moreover, military officers and security experts' overwhelming opposition to the policy became a heavy burden for the President. In addition, overseas allies' warnings, especially from Japan and the new ally, China, could not be ignored by Carter.

As Carter well understood, considering the growing
opposition within and outside the government, the Korean withdrawal policy, which had provided him with an advantage in the 1976 election, could be used to criticize him in the next election. As a matter of fact, Carter, who did not produce any remarkable domestic policy achievements, wanted to demonstrate his expertise in foreign policy by ending the threat of American involvement in an Asian land war with the removal of all ground troops from South Korea. By the middle of 1979, however, Carter had achieved several notable diplomatic successes by completing the Panama Canal Treaties, the Camp David Agreement, the normalization of relations with China, and the signing of the SALT II. Therefore, he did not have to wrestle with the controversial pullout policy that had become less important to him politically.

In addition, The South Korean Government's threat to develop nuclear weapons for its survival after the American pullout embarrassed the President because it could directly cause the proliferation of nuclear weapons throughout the world. As every United States President before him had fought to restrict nuclear weapons, Carter did not want to go down

---

1. Panama Canal Treaties signed on 7 September 1977 and it was ratified in April 1978. On 15 September 1978 Carter announced normalization of diplomatic relations with China and their official relations began on 1 January 1979. Premier Begin and President Sadat signed the Camp David Agreement on 26 March 1979. Carter signed SALT II at Vienna Summit on 18 June 1979. But it was not approved by the Senate because conservatives believed that the treaty would give the Soviets a first strike potential. See Brzezinski, Power and Principle, 82, 194-195.
in history as the President who expedited the expansion of nuclear weapons throughout the world because of his Korean withdrawal policy.

Having considered all these factors, Carter had no choice but to suspend his withdrawal policy. However, it was not easy for him to announce the suspension of the policy because he repeatedly and strongly confirmed his intentions to the American public. Of course, the suspension of the policy would please Congressional conservatives, the military, scholars, and many American citizens who favored the status quo on the Korean peninsula, but it had the potential disadvantage of raising political problems with liberal Democrats who fully backed him in the 1976 election. Fortunately, Congressional delay on the Korean aid package because of the Koreagate affair gave him an excuse to slow down the schedule. Even after Congress approved the Korean military aid package in August 1978, Carter did not attempt to restore his original pullout schedule. Instead, he adhered to the delayed schedule. An early 1979 Army intelligence report on the North Korean strength, and the CIA and the DIA's confirmation of the Army report gave the President a face saving excuse to suspend his pullout policy.

In his visit to Seoul, Carter believed he could use the suspension of the policy as leverage to improve human rights in South Korea. He openly pressed President Park to improve human rights and urged Park to restore democratic process. At
the same time, Carter proposed to North Korean leaders a three-way conference. If it was successful, Carter thought, he could produce another Camp David achievement in the most sensitive area in Asia. If the North rejected his proposal, it would provide him with a good excuse to suspend the pullout policy. As Carter expected, President Park yielded to his pressure and freed eighty-six political prisoners as soon as he returned home, while Kim Il Sung rejected his proposal for a three-way conference. Thus, in July 1979, Carter announced the suspension of the Korean withdrawal policy under relatively favorable circumstances.

The fiasco of Carter's Korean proposal should teach politicians that it is dangerous for presidential candidates to use national security issues in their campaigns without access to classified information and without broad consultations with experts and concerned foreign leaders. In the middle of the 1970s, South Korea, an emerging economic power, was expected to assume more defense responsibilities. But the country was not yet strong enough to stand on its own feet. Moreover, considering the tremendous tension between North and South Korea, the rapid buildup of Soviet naval power in the Pacific, followed by the Soviet-Vietnam Treaty of 1978, Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, and the Chinese border war with Vietnam in February 1979, Asia was not as stable as

Carter believed. With his Korean policy Carter had jumped into Asian affairs with both feet before even knowing how deep the water was.

As a result of the pullout, anti-Americanism, which was almost non-existent in South Korea since the end of the Korean War, was inflamed. On the other hand, Carter's initiative had some constructive effects. It impelled South Korea to expedite the development of defense industries. Thus, the South Koreans were able to achieve a more independent defense capability. Although Carter's action may have been premature, it did lay the groundwork for the future withdrawal of American forces by encouraging Korea and Japan to do more in their own defense. At the same time, the pullout policy encouraged South Korea toward a more independent diplomacy. Relations with other communist countries were actively improved, with added gains in the widening of trade relations. Although they would not be diplomatically formalized until the late 1980s, these changes began to take shape a decade earlier.

In South Korea Carter's withdrawal policy created a very rare national consensus in opposition to the policy and it temporarily strengthened President Park's political position. Paradoxically, the decision to suspend the pullout, which freed South Koreans from worries of another war, allowed them to continue to campaign strongly against President Park's dictatorship, to demand the restoration of democracy, and ultimately to topple Park after seventeen years' rule in South
Korea.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Original Sources

Congressional Sources


Newspapers


*St. Louis Post Dispatch*. 1977-81.


Secondary Sources

Articles


Buchanan, Patrick J. "The General Deserves Respect." CT, 26 May 1977, Sec. 3.


Horrocks, Nicholas M. "Park May Be a Dull Witness, After All." NYT, 26 February 1978, Sec. 4.


Kilian, Michael. "Do Korea's Faults Mean Reds Should take It over?" CT, 28 June 1979, Sec. 3.


Lefever, Ernest W. "Opening a Korea Gate." NYT, 30 September 1977.


Ornstein, Norman J. "Lobbying For Fun and Policy." Foreign Policy no. 28 (Fall 1977): 156-65.


Park, Yung H. "Japan's Perspectives and Expectations Regarding America's Role in Korea." Orbis 20 (Fall 1976): 761-84.


----------. "Singlaub's Colleagues Also Oppose GI Pullout." WP, 21 May 1977.


Sterba, James P. "Repression Fails to Silence South Korean Opposition." NYT, 1 July 1979.


Thimmesch, Nick. "Even South Korea's Dissidents Want the U.S. to Stay." *CT*, 5 September 1977, Sec. 3.


------------- "In Korea, War Goes on Underground." *USNWR* 84 (6 November 1978): 36.


Yost, Charles W. "For Clarity on Korea" CSM, 3 June 1977.

"Northeast Asia: The Real Danger Is Unforeseen Events." LAT, 5 June 1977, Sec. 4.

Zagolia, Donald S. "Korea: To Stay or Not to Stay." NYT, 2 July 1977.


"Destabilization?" *Economist* 262 (5 February 1977): 71.


"Pressure to Keep the U.S. in South Korea." Business Week no. 2578 (26 March 1979): 45-6.


Books


The dissertation submitted by Tae Hwan Ok has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Theodore J. Karamanski, Director
Associate Professor, History, Loyola

Dr. Sheldon S. Cohen
Professor, History, Loyola

Dr. Mark A. Allee
Assistant Professor, History, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

November 10, 1989

Date

Theodore [Signature]

Director's Signature