

U.S. Security Policies in the Western Pacific

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The security environment, issues, and challenges facing the United States today in the Western Pacific are growing more complex. There is no direct single threat as there was during the Cold War in the form of Soviet-backed communism. The Cold War increasingly divided the region into two camps. However, there was a key, variable, shifting element in this situation: China, which turned against the Soviet Union, played off Moscow and Washington, and then shifted decisively into the U.S.-led coalition in the 1980s. China remains a key variable in today's security environment, but there are other elements in Western Pacific security that have joined it: North Korea as an emerging nuclear weapons state, Japan's enlarging security role, Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia, and volatile political attitudes toward the United States in countries once thought to be reliable allies.

China and North Korea constitute the distinct military challenges and potential threats facing the United States now and into the future. China's increasingly formidable missile and submarine forces constitute a military capability that could be used with greater effectiveness in the Western Pacific littoral adjacent to China. This potentially could affect the security of Taiwan, any future conflict scenarios involving China and Japan, and the ability of the U.S. Seventh Fleet to project American military power into this littoral from aircraft carriers.

The challenge from China, however, increasingly is as much for political influence as it is for military power. China seeks to use its growing arsenal of economic, political, and military tools to draw East Asian governments closer to it in terms of economic integration, political systems, and military cooperation. The economic side of China's initiatives is, singularly, relatively benign; but it is less benign when integrated with China's policy of supporting authoritarian systems (governments and militaries) in Southeast Asia, its related military and economic penetration of Burma, its emerging attempts to divide South Korea from Japan and the United States, and its attempts to limit the U.S. role in the new regional organizations.

North Korea now appears to have a nuclear weapons capability that could be used now or in the near future against U.S. and/or Japanese targets in the Western Pacific. Fortunately, the decline in North Korean conventional forces over the past ten years robs Pyongyang of the ability to use nuclear weapons to support aggressive military actions,

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including an attack on South Korea. However, the deterrence effect of nuclear weapons gives North Korea expanding options in the other role it has undertaken—that of a major proliferator of weapons of mass destruction into the Middle East and South Asia.

Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia may have peaked as a threat to American interests since it appeared in the form of Jeemah Islamiah after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the United States. There clearly has been progress in containing and weakening Jeemah Islamiah (JI) through effective police work and intelligence collection in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. However, regional security against Islamic terrorists has several soft areas that will be security problems into the future. The United States is seeking to draw attention to the vulnerabilities of shipping through the Malacca Strait where piracy is common and where terrorists could pose a threat to the giant oil tankers that pass through the Strait. The island of Mindanao in the Philippines remains a base for JI training and for JI and Abu Sayyaf attacks further afield in the Philippines and Indonesia. The sea corridor between Mindanao and the Indonesian island of Sulawesi remains a kind of “black hole” in regional security against the movement of terrorists, arms, and bomb-making materials. The Mindanao problem is a particularly difficult one because it combines a long-standing indigenous Muslim insurgency based on justifiable grievances with the new elements of Islamic terrorism. A similar combination has appeared in southern Thailand in the last two years. Another continuing soft area is the actual and potential future growth of Muslim fundamentalism in all of the states with substantial Muslim populations. The fuel for such growth is diverse: failed corrupt governments and militaries, the clash between Muslim values and Western cultural influences, the growing influence of Middle Eastern Islam in Southeast Asia, and reactions to U.S. Middle East policies.

Diverse Attitudes and Policies of Allies and Associates of the United States

Influencing the future of Japan’s security role in the Western Pacific constitutes arguably the most important task for U.S. security policy. Defining that role in military terms, influencing Japan to give up more of the post-World War II restrictions on its military policies, and managing diplomatically the attitudes in South Korea and China in opposition to an expanded Japanese security role all constitute significant challenges for the United States. Certain changes have been instituted since 1995, the latest being the recent Japan-U.S. statement regarding Taiwan; but in today’s security environment in the region, there appear to be three issues that will constitute tests of how far this transformation will go. One will be Japan’s willingness to take on specific military missions outside Japanese territory in coordination with the United States. The mission that especially comes to mind is anti-submarine warfare. This has the precedent of Japan’s agreement in the 1980s to patrol and defend sea lanes 1,000 miles south of the Japanese home islands, but such a role in the future would be more closely related to the security of neighboring states, especially Taiwan. The second issue could be the ability of Japan to agree to an expansion of U.S. naval and air forces in bases in Japan should the need arise. If Japan should take these actions, a third issue would be that of developing new command arrangements to insure the closest cooperation of Japanese and U.S. forces.

Much of the **popular** opposition in China and South Korea to an expanded Japanese security role stems from the issue of Japan's history in the first half of the 20th century and the degree to which today's Japan has acknowledged that history. That issue has grown rather than receded in intensity during the last 15 years. The Chinese Government has exploited the issue to limit Japan's military cooperation with the United States today; but U.S. policymakers should not depreciate the importance of the issue in influencing popular attitudes in East Asia against Japan and U.S. encouragement of a greater Japanese security role. This is because the criticisms that Japan has not acknowledged fully its history are partly justified. The long-standing U.S. silence on the "Japanese history issue" (even on the fundamental human rights issues of "comfort women" and force labor) appears not to have contributed to a dampening down of the tensions and runs an increasing risk of alienating South Korean, Chinese, and possibly other East Asian opinion from the United States. The relatively small number of Pacific War commemorations—in contrast to the many commemoration of the European War—did not send the messages to Japan, China, and South Korea that the European War commemorations sent to Germany regarding accountability and to other European governments regarding the responsible way to deal with the history issue. Another missed opportunity will be soon upon us when there is no major commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War this August comparable to the major event in Moscow in May 2005.

The absence of such an event in August adds importance to the event that Japan and the United States have arranged: the visit of the Japanese Emperor to Saipan on June 27-28, 2005. This is an opportunity for Japan and the United States to put the history issue on a higher, more responsible plane than it has been on for the last several months. However, that will depend on whether the Emperor addresses what happened on Saipan in June and July 1944 and the responsibility of the Japanese Government and military for what happened. This needs to include the suicide of nearly 22,000 Japanese civilians on the island, who believed the propaganda of the Japanese Government and military that American troops would rape the women and massacre the civilians. If these issues are avoided or glossed over, the wounds of the history issue will be opened further; the South Koreans and undoubtedly the Chinese are watching the Emperor's visit closely. Since he is coming to American soil, how the Emperor and his American host handle the history issue will affect Chinese and Korean perceptions of U.S. security policy. One hopes that the Bush Administration appreciates the importance of this event, will work closely with the Japanese regarding the Emperor's pronouncements, and will send the highest level U.S. representative to receive him.

My concern is this: In the absence of a commemorative event in August and in the absence of the needed pronouncements on Saipan this month, the commemoration of the 60th anniversary in Japan and even in the United States will focus on the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It seems to me that the atomic bombings dominated the commemoration of the 50th anniversary in 1995. If this occurs, the 60th anniversary will feed the revisionist interpretation of Japan as the victim in World War II, which factions in Japan's political right wing exploit to justify Japan's overall conduct

during the war and the controversial interpretations of this history in textbooks and, I am told, at the Yasakuni Shrine.

U.S. silence on the Japanese history issue and U.S. encouragement of an enlarged Japanese security role grate on the perceptions of South Koreans toward the United States. Since the late 1990s, this and a number of other issues also have led to rising South Korean criticisms of the United States and demands for changes in the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance. Now, American opinion of South Korea is beginning to reciprocate the negative perceptions. R.O.K.-U.S. policy coordination on the North Korean nuclear issue hit a new low in early 2005 in the aftermath of North Korea's successful strategy to undermine the six party talks, the contrasting passive Bush Administration strategy, and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun's pointed criticisms of the United States and expressions of sympathy for key North Korean positions. Seoul and Washington now are entering what appears to be a post-six party talks period. Their attitudes and policies toward North Korea likely will diverge further amidst mutual recriminations and blame. This will make more difficult negotiations over U.S. plans to change the U.S. military force structure in South Korea, especially to give U.S. forces "strategic flexibility" to be used outside the Korean peninsula in regional or extra-regional crises. President Roh directly challenged U.S. plans when he asserted that South Korea will not allow U.S. forces to be used in crises in Northeast Asia without R.O.K. permission. The South Korean Government also has indicated that it will seek to withdraw South Korean forces from the operational control, which the U.S. Commander in Korea has over them in wartime.

President Roh's declaration that South Korea will act as a "balancer" amongst the powers in Northeast Asia has raised concerns that South Korea and the United States in the future will not share basic strategic and political objectives sufficient to sustain the alliance. The definitions and directions of Roh's declarations have yet to be determined, and future negotiations could moderate the real impact. But if his assertion of a South Korean veto over U.S. strategic flexibility becomes a hard policy, the United States no doubt will have tough decisions to make regarding the future U.S. force structure in South Korea. While recent changes in U.S. forces have affected ground forces, such future tough decisions more likely would focus on considerations of withdrawing U.S. air power in South Korea. It is impossible to envisage the United States allowing South Korea a veto over the U.S. use of tactical air power in potential crises in the Taiwan Strait or the East China Sea. Decisions increasingly would focus on attaining minimal levels of U.S. forces in South Korea.

Even more fundamentally, if the balancer concept hardens into a South Korean doctrine of neutrality toward disputes involving the United States, Japan, and China, the United States would have to judge carefully the importance to U.S. interests of contributing to security on the Korean peninsula and continuing the alliance when the benefits of the alliance to the United States outside the peninsula become minimal.

In order to deal with these multiple strains on the alliance, the United States will need a more effective public diplomacy than it has practiced in recent years. The stories

and reports of the Bush Administration's weak public diplomacy strategy are well known; South Korea is one of the best examples of this weakness. Within the space of five years, there have been inaccurate assessments by the U.S. Military Command in Korea (USFK) of the strength of North Korean conventional military forces, mistakes in handling the accidental killing of two South Korean schoolgirls in 2002, weak explanations of the changes in the U.S. force structure announced in early 2003, the absence of any U.S. effort to counter the increasingly influential North Korean propaganda in South Korea on the nuclear issue, and an inadequate articulation of the core U.S. proposal in the six party talks (which Bush Administration officials have recently—and belatedly—admitted). Ambassador Christopher Hill tried to reverse the dearth in public diplomacy during his short tour in South Korea; but a much more systematic program will be needed to reverse the erosion of American credibility in the eyes of South Koreans. Personally, I lament the abolition of the U.S. Information Agency in the 1990s. U.S.I.A. did stellar work in South Korea during the politically troubled time of the 1980s. Right now, there is no comparable effort.

A more surprising challenge to the United States is the sudden erosion of Taiwan's defense policy and defense cooperation with United States. The current political deadlock over the Taiwan Government's proposed \$15.5 billion defense procurement package—if prolonged or made permanent—could significantly damage Taiwan-U.S. defense cooperation and even threaten the U.S. commitment to Taiwan's security. The procurement bill currently is stymied in the Legislative Yuan by the opposition Kuomintang and People First parties. The heart of the bill are the weapon systems, which President Bush and the Congress aggressively offered Taiwan in 2001—submarines, anti-submarine aircraft, and anti-missile defense systems. If this procurement dies, there undoubtedly would be no more U.S. commitments of weapons to Taiwan, and any possibility of Taiwan being incorporated into a U.S.-organized missile defense system probably would be eliminated.

Taiwan's growing political polarization and the differences between the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the opposition parties over policy toward China are now spilling over into defense policy and defense cooperation with the United States. The motives of the opposition are unclear; hopefully, it will seek soon to end the stalemate. However, the Kuomintang and the People First Party may perceive that upgrading Taiwan's military with U.S. weaponry contradicts their ambition to deal directly with China and to convince the Taiwanese public that they can deal effectively with China, in contrast to the DPP.

U.S. messages to Taiwan over the potential impact of this deadlock may not be strong enough in view of the seriousness of the situation. To date, they have not contained explicit warnings of consequences if the procurement package dies. This is in contrast to the pointed warnings, which the Bush Administration sent to President Chen Shui-bian and the DPP in 2004, over their plans to amend the constitution and strengthen Taiwan's separate identity—separate from China. For example, the recent positive statements of the State Department concerning the visits of opposition leaders, Lien Chan and James Soong, to China may have been positive in encouraging dialogue, but they

contained no references to the arms procurement package and Lien and Soong's responsibility for the deadlock.

Policies toward terrorism in Southeast Asia will continue to encounter difficulties with the United States' oldest ally in the region, the Philippines, and with Indonesia, sometimes a friend of the United States but sometimes an antagonist. U.S. military assistance to the Philippines in combating Abu Sayyaf in 2002 was effective in weakening the organization and won substantial praise from Filipinos. However, when the Philippine and U.S. militaries planned a larger operation in 2003 with a more direct U.S. military role, the old Filipino suspicions of American intentions arose again within the Filipino political elite, and the plan was aborted. Lower levels of U.S. military training and equipping of Philippine army battalions continue; and there currently are encouraging signs that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on Mindanao is willing to compromise on a peace settlement and end its ties to Jeemah Islamiah. However, the tenuous situation on Mindanao easily could turn negative, as it has on numerous occasions since the current cycle of Muslim rebellion began in the early 1970s. Such a development this time would enable JI to solidify a sanctuary on Mindanao and continue to use the Mindanao-Sulawesi corridor to move men and materials into Indonesia for terrorist operations. Abu Sayyaf also could gain new life. In recent weeks, U.S. Ambassador Francis Ricciardone and Charge d'affaires Joseph Mussomelli have asserted that Cotobato City on Mindanao's southern coast is a "doormat" for international terrorists and that Mindanao could become "an Afghanistan situation." The U.S. Agency for International Development canceled funding of a major road project near Cotobato. These provocative statements and actions suggest that the Bush Administration is growing more alarmed and more impatient with the JI presence on Mindanao and the failure of the Philippine Government and military to administer a coup d'grace to Abu Sayyaf after the successes of 2002. If the situation on Mindanao remains unsettled into the second half of the decade, the Bush Administration and the Pentagon may renew their pressure on the Philippine Government for an expanded U.S. military role in the southern Philippines. This would be especially likely if other Southeast Asian governments continue to have successes against JI but Mindanao and the corridor with Sulawesi remain a "black hole" in the war on terrorism in Southeast Asia. If the events of 2003 are any guide, this would create another heavy debate within the Manila-based Filipino political elite over the kind of military relationship the Philippines should have with the United States.

Sulawesi is only one of several problems the United States has and will have into the future in policies designed to enhance cooperation with Indonesia in combating Muslim terrorism. Indonesia is the weak link in security for the Malacca Strait. Its islands adjacent to the Strait are havens for pirates and potentially for terrorists. The Indonesian navy has minimal capabilities. The politically dominant army appears to have at best a low level commitment to security in the Strait. Raising the army's commitment probably is another motive behind the push of the Bush Administration and the Pentagon to resume full military-to-military relations with the Indonesian military (TNI). However, like past such attempts, the Administration's push could be disrupted and possibly thwarted by the TNI's human rights abuses in places like Aceh and Papua. The

reactions within Congress to the Administration's recent certification of TNI eligibility for participation in the IMET program are mixed. The re-drafting of the Leahy amendment by the Senate Appropriations Committee this summer in preparing foreign operations appropriations for fiscal year 2006 will be a key indicator of how much leeway Congress is willing to give the Administration on restoring ties with the TNI. Frankly, Congressional opponents of restoring ties are suspicious of the Pentagon and the U.S. Pacific Command because of their past ties with abusive TNI organizations like the Kopassus (the Indonesian Special Forces) and the lack of assurances from the Pentagon that a renewal of military ties will not lead to a repeat of these past practices. The absence of a sustained dialogue between the Pentagon and the congressional critics has prolonged these suspicions. This situation has gone on ever since the early 1990s, and it likely will continue to be an issue into at least the second half of this decade.

Military Decisions

The emphasis on the Pentagon's restructuring of the U.S. military globally has been on the U.S. Army, but in the Pacific, key decisions in the near future also will focus on the Navy and the Air Force. The key objective will be to create the best mix of U.S. forces in South Korea, Japan Proper, Okinawa, Guam, Singapore, Hawaii, and possibly other locations like Australia. A key aim will be to assure the greatest flexibility in the force to deal with multiple threat and conflict contingencies. There also will be the need to minimize obstacles to flexibility and effectiveness that could be caused by issues in alliance relations. There is the difficult question of what elements or mix of U.S. forces send the strongest message of deterrence to potential adversaries.

One continuing decision process is the buildup of U.S. anti-submarine forces in the Western Pacific. This involves the mix of attack submarines, surface ships, anti-submarine helicopters, and anti-submarine aircraft. Future decisions also likely will have to examine the size of anti-submarine forces as China continues to build its submarine fleet and deploys it further out from the Chinese coast and Taiwan. As stated previously, Japan's role in anti-submarine missions could be another factor as well as additional basing in Japan for U.S. anti-submarine forces.

U.S. military officials have stated an intention to deploy a second aircraft carrier to the Western Pacific. If this proceeds, decisions will have to be made regarding a main logistics base for a second carrier (Hawaii has been reported), and support bases in the Western Pacific. Moreover, if the Navy should undertake a direct role in providing security in the Malacca Strait, will its blue water capabilities be effective in a mission of coastal security involving scores of small coastal islands, coves, and passages? It would appear that the Navy would have adjustments to make to undertake the kind of mission that the U.S. Coast Guard is responsible for in U.S. coastal waters. Could the Coast Guard help to undertake such a mission in the Malacca Strait?

The Air Force has begun to rotate heavy bombers to Guam on temporary deployment; and some Air Force commanders have spoken of a possible permanent deployment of heavy bombers. Depending on the security situation in the region, the

issue of permanent deployment or temporary rotation could be an issue of continuing discussion among Pentagon and Pacific Command leaders.

Problems in alliance relations may create the necessity of future decisions regarding the basing of U.S. tactical combat aircraft in the Western Pacific. One key issue here is the role of tactical air forces in Taiwan or East China Sea contingencies. Regarding a Taiwan contingency, would the role of tactical air be confined to the air defense of Taiwan, or would it also include a mission of penetration air strikes at Chinese ports and missile sites? If President Roh Moo-hyun's "doctrine" of South Korean veto over U.S. strategic flexibility becomes a hard policy, it seems to me that the Pentagon and the Pacific Command would have to consider reducing U.S. tactical air power in South Korea or shifting from a permanent tactical air presence to temporary rotations in order to free up tactical air for potential contingencies like Taiwan and the East China Sea. The recent temporary deployments of F-117 fighters to South Korea may be a portender of this kind policy. One key element in reaching the soundest military decisions in this situation—regarding U.S. tactical air or U.S. ground forces in South Korea—will be making the most accurate and objective assessment of the threat posed by North Korean conventional forces to South Korea.

If U.S. tactical air needs to be withdrawn from South Korea or if additional tactical air is deployed into the Western Pacific, the issue of basing will be important. Guam is a possibility, but if the Pacific Command concluded that additional tactical air needed to be based closer to possible contingencies, then Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa could be the most suitable base for a buildup of tactical air. Deployments to Kadena could be especially important in an increase of tensions in the Taiwan Strait, because Kadena would put U.S. tactical air closest to Taiwan of any base and thus would have the strongest possible deterrent effect on Chinese decisions. However, if the proposal to move the Futenma-based U.S. Marines into Kadena comes to fruition, Kadena's ability to support a buildup of tactical air could be reduced or eliminated. Moreover, the political problem of the Marines on Okinawa raises another issue of whether a buildup of tactical air on Okinawa would be acceptable to Japan.

A difficult decision will face the Pentagon and the Pacific Command after September 2008 when the current planned ground force withdrawals from South Korea are completed. It seems to me that there likely will be pressure to withdraw the remaining combat brigade of the Second Infantry Division and shift the U.S. ground presence fully to logistics, intelligence, and command organizations. Any such decision could be controversial both in South Korea and in the United States. If the state of the R.O.K.-U.S. alliance continues to destabilize, the controversy between Seoul and Washington could be acute and threaten further damage to the alliance. Again, an objective assessment of North Korean conventional capabilities will be essential to the ability of both governments and military establishments to deal with this issue.

Over the last two years, there have been numerous reports of proposals and negotiations between Japan and the United States for the relocation of a portion of the 18,000 U.S. Marines stationed on Okinawa. Some of these reports have referred to sites

on Japan's main islands as alternative bases. Others have discussed Kadena Air Force Base as a site for relocation of the Marine air unit at Futenma. Guam and even Australia have been mentioned. The Marines defend their presence on Okinawa as essential to U.S. security policy in the Western Pacific, but it seems that there are several problems with this defense. The first is the vagueness of the contingencies cited that would require a commitment of thousands of Marines. Korea often has been cited; but the deterioration of North Korean conventional force capabilities is making the contingency of a North Korean invasion of South Korea less and less likely. The withdrawal of the Second Division from the demilitarized zone symbolizes that fact. Certainly, the Marines would play a key role in any U.S. invasion of North Korea, but the Okinawa Marines would be a small part of the massive forces that the United States would have to assemble for an invasion. That contingency is remote and probably would come into play only if North Korea proliferated nuclear weapons or materials to terrorists, who in turn used these against the United States or a key U.S. ally. Moreover, if, as likely, North Korea achieves a genuine nuclear deterrent, the contingency of a U.S. invasion would become even more remote. Other contingencies in the Western Pacific would involve U.S. air and naval forces rather than ground forces. This is especially the case regarding Taiwan. The only exception to this might be the southern Philippines. The major contingencies that involve and would involve the Marines are in the Middle East and South Asia, not East Asia. Okinawa's location is not essential to move Marines quickly to Middle East or South Asia conflicts. Disaster relief is a contingency that the Okinawa Marines have contributed to; but that would not appear to be a compelling argument for keeping a force of 18,000 Marines on Okinawa.

However, it seems to me that the most important reason for questioning the status quo on Okinawa is its effect on the ability of the United States to increase its tactical air strength there if tensions rise over Taiwan and/or if the United States has to withdraw its tactical air from South Korea. The status quo in the Marine presence would make this more politically difficult; Okinawan resistance undoubtedly would be more intense. If the Futenma Marine units were relocated to Kadena, that base probably would no longer be a base option for a major buildup of tactical air.

Command Structure Changes

The widely reported plans of the Pentagon to change the U.S. military command structure in the Western Pacific could raise a number of issues in security relations with Japan and South Korea. Currently, the United States is negotiating with Japan to transfer the U.S. Army's I Corps Command from Fort Lewis, Washington, to Camp Zama in Japan and merging the headquarters of the U.S. 5th Air Force in Japan and the 13th Air Force on Guam with the combined headquarters to be in Japan. It also is reported that the plans envisage a downgrading of U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) and placing USFK under I Corps. The establishment of I Corps Headquarters in Japan appears to raise at least three issues. The first has to do with I Corps' command responsibility for U.S. Army forces in the Middle East and Afghanistan and whether this exceeds the provisions of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty; the Treaty specifies that U.S. bases in Japan can be used for the security of the "Far East." The U.S. military has used bases in Japan for missions in the

Indian Ocean, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf, so the issue seems to be whether a U.S. command headquarters in Japan could have formal command responsibility in these regions and still adhere to the Security Treaty.

The second issue seems to be whether the establishment of these new command headquarters in Japan would be a preliminary step into negotiations for the establishment of a joint U.S.-Japan military command. If, as discussed previously, Japan began to undertake military missions in the Western Pacific outside of Japanese territory in parallel with U.S. strategic objectives, there would be a rationale for new command arrangements that would integrate U.S. forces in Japan and the Japan Self-Defense Forces. However, a joint command would have responsibility for planning military operations that would be totally offensive. That would go beyond even actual missions like anti-submarine patrolling, which still could be defined as defensive. Proposals for a joint command, therefore, would be the object of political debate in Japan over whether it would move Japan too far from the traditional and constitutional limitations on its military role.

Third, if USFK is subordinated to I Corps and the U.S. Commander in South Korea is reduced in rank (he currently is a four-star General), the current Combined Forces Command (CFC) in South Korea probably would not be viable. South Korea could be expected to press harder for removing South Korean forces from the operational control of the U.S. Commander in wartime. South Korea also likely would want changes in the current CFC arrangement under which the CFC Commander is always an American (the U.S. Commander) and his deputy is a South Korean. Given the direction of South Korean defense policy, it seems unlikely that South Korea would accept placing the CFC or South Korean forces under the operational control of an I Corps Headquarters in Japan in either peacetime or wartime.

Fourth, it is reported that one U.S. rationale for moving I Corps to Japan is to facilitate more joint training between the U.S. Army and Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF). There would be military benefits in this, but there could be political dangers. If a greater U.S. emphasis on the GSDF resulted in proposals and/or decisions by the Japanese Government to increase the size and strength of the GSDF, governments and publics in other East Asian countries could begin to voice concern, opposition, and criticism of the United States. The issue of Japan's history is largely due to the actions of the Japanese Army from the time of the takeover of Korea in 1905 until the end of World War II in 1945. Any major resurgence of Japanese ground forces no doubt would exacerbate this already difficult issue.

Concluding Remarks

The complexities of future U.S. decisions on security policy in the Western Pacific appear to be little understood in the United States or in the region. Truthfully, I did not fully grasp this until I prepared this paper; it was a good learning experience for me. I conclude by reiterating three themes, which I believe are interwoven under all the issue headings in this paper. First, it is important for the United States to work closely

with Japan in developing Japan's future security role in the region (including supporting legitimate Japanese concerns and grievances toward North Korea and China); but part of this task for the United States is to assure other East Asian governments and publics that the United States is watchful for any signs of a resurgence of Japanese militarism and also to send signals to extreme revisionist elements in Japan that the United States does not buy into their view of Japan's past. This two-part task would not be easy because it contains the contradictory elements of encouraging Japan to enlarge its military role while reminding Japan of the negative elements of its past. But the cost of not doing both could be increased South Korean alienation from the United States and increased Chinese justifications for aggressiveness in the Taiwan Strait and/or the East China Sea. It also could increase the strength of the revisionist groups in Japan. Other governments in the region—Australia, Singapore, and the Philippines—which were victims of Japanese aggression but which support a “normal” Japanese regional role, could play an important role in carrying out this two-part task.

Second, future U.S. decisions regarding the U.S. military presence in South Korea may be so sweeping in scope that, collectively, they could threaten the foundations of the alliance. U.S. administrations, the Pentagon, and the Pacific Command will need to weigh carefully--and patiently--the balances between military need and political impact of decisions over the future ground force presence, the level of tactical air power to retain in South Korea, and downgrading the U.S. command structure. If future decisions in all three areas are toward simultaneous minimalization of the U.S. military presence, the United States may arrive at that fundamental decision discussed earlier: whether U.S. interests in the future stability of South Korea's relations with the major powers is sufficient to justify a continued alliance with South Korea even if the alliance provides few or no direct benefits to the United States outside the Korean peninsula. Tactically, the Pentagon and the Bush Administration need to give the South Korean Government and people—and the U.S. Congress and non-government experts--a more advanced awareness of U.S. consideration and thinking on these issues than was the case in the 2003 decisions regarding U.S. troop reductions (decisions which were sound and rational).

Third, the Pentagon and the Pacific Command ought to consider their contacts with Congress carefully in planning future steps to restore relations with the Indonesian military. It seems to me that they would find a more sympathetic attitude if they emphasized to the relevant congressional committees transparency in their dealings with the TNI and other assurances that restored military ties would not repeat the mistakes of the past. Like Japan's history, there are lessons from the history of U.S. dealings with the TNI in the 1980s and 1990s that should be acknowledged and remembered in planning future dealings with the Indonesian military.