



2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference: Morning Keynote

Tuesday, April 9, 2013
Washington, D.C.

Moderator:

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Transcript by Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.

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MR. : Good morning. So if everyone who's standing could find a seat quickly, that'd be great. Just a quick logistical note about this morning – we have two sessions back to back. Typically we would have a break in the middle but because of the way the scheduling worked out we'll just stay in this room. So if after this session you can just keep your seats that would be appreciated. We'll quickly turn things around and have the next session start immediately thereafter.

[00:00:32]

At this point I will turn it over to my colleague Doug Paal to introduce the next session. Thank you.

DOUGLAS PAAL: Good morning, everyone. My name is Doug Paal. I'm vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment. And it's my privilege today to serve as introducer for our distinguished speaker in the first session.

Today we're fortunate to have with us M.J. Chung, who is a prominent politician, scholar and sportsman in Korean life. He has served in the National Assembly for seven terms, run unsuccessfully but vigorously for president in 2002, serves as the chairman of Ulsan University and very much a part of the world of think tankers. He's founded and today chairs the Ulsan Institute, which is South Korea's biggest foot forward in the world of think tank research, policy advice and gathering of important figures to discuss the issues of the day.

Mr. Chung has been educated at Seoul National University, MIT and our own Washington SAIS, where he earned his Ph.D. in international relations. And today he's going to address us at a time of great interest in the Korea Peninsular nuclear situation, Korean Peninsular tensions under the new leader of the North and the – if you've been listening to your headlines a bit this morning and the news – the ever-present efforts of the new leadership in the North to ratchet tensions up.

I'm looking very much forward and I hope you'll join me in welcoming M.J. Chung.
(Applause.)

M.J. CHUNG: Good morning. Thank you, Doug, for the kind introduction. I would like to thank the Carnegie Endowment for inviting me to this very important conference. We are gathered here today to talk about a very serious topic, so let me try to lighten the atmosphere a little by starting with a joke, if you don't mind.

[00:03:07]

At an art museum in Europe, an Englishman, a Frenchman and a North Korean stand before a painting of Adam and Eve holding an apple in the Garden of Eden. The Englishman says, the man has something tasty to eat and is eager to share it with the woman. Based on that, I would conclude that they are rather obviously English. The Frenchman says, I disagree. They are walking around entirely naked, so they must be French. (Laughter.) You seem to understand French. (Laughter.) The North Korean says, there's no doubt in my mind that they are North Korean. They have no clothes to wear, barely anything to eat and they still think they are in heaven. (Laughter.)

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North Korea's economy has collapsed. It is isolated. It is under heavy international sanctions. However, we have failed to stop North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons. The story of how the global community failed to prevent and isolate, failing state from acquiring the ultimate weapon will go down in the annals of diplomatic history as one of the most spectacular and consequential failures.

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The fact that four major powers – the United States, China, Russia and Japan – were all directly involved in the effort at one stage or another only makes the failure that much more poignant. Gross negligence, misunderstanding, misjudgment and lack of strategy and paralysis produced the worst possible outcome. Historically speaking, when it comes to the Korean problem, this unfortunately seems to be the norm. From the division of the peninsula to the outbreak of the Korean War and now North Korea's acquisition of the bomb – the Korean problem has always been handled in such a manner.

This morning, I'll tell you why I think so. Korea was divided because the U.S. invited Stalin to join the war against Japan and then was caught off guard. Near the end of World War II, fearing a couple million casualties, the U.S. begged the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan. Only too pleased, Stalin broke the Soviet-Japan nonaggression pact and declared war on Japan on August 8, 1945 – one week before the Japanese surrender. On August 10th, two days later, stunned that the Soviet army had already entered Korea, the U.S. hastily drew a plan to stop the Soviet advance.

(Inaudible) – Dean Rusk and a fellow junior officer drew the 38 parallel line as the demarcation line between the U.S. and Soviet occupation zones. It was said that they used a National Geographic map to draw the parallel. No one was interested in Korea. The first element of the U.S. forces arrived on the Korean Peninsula on September 8th, one month after the Soviets. Korea was liberated from Japanese rule, but only at the cost of national division.

The Korean War was also the result of U.S. policymakers' gross negligence and misjudgment. Even though China was communized in 1949, the U.S. pulled 30,000 troops from South Korea that same year. In a speech in January 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson left South Korea out of the U.S. defense perimeter in the Pacific. Five months later, North Korea started the Korean War – a war that resulted in over 5 million casualties.

[00:07:50]

I was born in the southern port city of Busan in 1951, during the war. Had it not been for the U.S. intervention, I would not be here today. So I'm very grateful for the U.S. coming to our rescue, but Korea always came as an afterthought for U.S. policymakers. Friends and colleagues, international politics surrounding North Korea's nuclear program is strikingly familiar. From the beginning, the U.S. misunderstood the nature of the North Korean regime and misjudged its intentions.

During the first North Korean nuclear crisis, most thought that North Korea would give up its nuclear program in exchange for normalizing relations with the U.S. Others thought that the regime would collapse and the problem would simply disappear. In his 2002 State of the Union

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address, delivered four months after the September 11th attack, President Bush declared North Korea a member of the “axis of evil.”

[00:09:08]

The next year, the U.S. invaded Iraq. Many, including North Koreans, thought that North Korea would be next. North Korea started to accelerate its nuclear and missile programs. However, for the next three years, the U.S. became bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan. This gave North Korea time and excuse to build the bomb.

During the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and later on, then the Iranian nuclear program came to the fore. Most U.S. policymakers saw the North Korean issue as a distraction. During presidential elections, the issue was ignored because it was thought to be too (thorny ?) or intractable. For long stretches of time, North Korea was a problem, but not a crisis.

It is also a story of how the U.S. and China failed to prevent nuclear proliferation before their very own eyes in slow motion over two decades. The six-party talk was chaired by China and supported by the U.S. However, the U.S. and China often failed to adopt a common stance, allowing North Korea to play the two superpowers off each other.

The U.S. was distracted and the Chinese simply thought that North Koreans were incapable of building a bomb. It was an - it is an object lesson in how a rising power – China – allowed its (sensible ?) strategic rivalry with the U.S. to blind it from seeing the true nature of the threat arising from a rogue state on its border.

[00:11:02]

Since Deng Xiaoping, Chinese foreign policy has been prudent and circumspect. During years of the rapid growth of China, the whole world felt safe benefiting from its economic development. However, ever since North Korea’s sinking of the South Korean naval ship, the Cheonan, and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, the Chinese have startled and alarmed neighbors by protecting North Korea on the international stage.

But it makes sense for China to keep North Korea as a buffer state, even if it means letting it go nuclear. But first and foremost, we Koreans blame ourselves. Our national security policy was hijacked by domestic politics. Successive presidents, right or left, were consumed by the wish to hold their summit with the North Korean leader. An inter-Korean summit was regarded as a symbol of statesmanship. The blind pursuit of a summit often saw South Korean president (paying off ?) North Korea while misleading and manipulating international as well as domestic public opinion.

A former president reportedly said that North Korea has neither the will nor the capability to develop nuclear weapons, and that he would take responsibility if they did. Another said that it was rational for North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. South Korea’s policymakers not only refused to face reality, but sometimes fabricated it.

In 2002, the U.S. confronted the North Koreans with evidence showing they were developing highly enriched uranium. Even though the North Koreans admitted this to be true, top

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advisor to the president of Korea accused the U.S. of creating a crisis by making unfounded accusations. They became North Korea's advocate.

It is estimated that during 10 years of sanction policy, South Korea transferred nearly \$10 billion worth of cash, goods and aid to North Korea. Now, North Korea has nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles. Ten years ago, even before North Korea's first nuclear test, Graham Allison presciently warned in his book, "Nuclear Terrorism," that, on the current course, North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and their nuclear weapons production line promises to become the greatest failure in the nearly 230-year history of American foreign policy.

[00:14:02]

Unfortunately, few heeded his warning. Our leaders have been hopelessly naïve, to say the least. Professor Allison is also the author of "The Essence of Decision," a classic study of the Cuban missile crisis. As serious as that crisis was for the U.S., the threat posed by North Korean nuclear weapons to the South Korean people is far more acute and direct.

What does this diplomatic failure tell us? First, it tells us that North Korea will not voluntarily give up its nuclear weapons. From the beginning, North Korea developed and – (inaudible) – like his father, Kim Jong Un cannot reform North Korea because he himself is a prisoner of the system. That is why he cannot give up nuclear weapons and why normalization of relations with the outside world is not his goal.

Second, North Korea is still under the illusion that the South Korea-U.S. military alliance can be dissolved. That is why they continue to pursue a quote, unquote "peace treaty" with the U.S. The long-term psychological consequences of North Korea's nuclear terror on South Korea will be dire. South Korean economy and democracy prosper because of the Korean people's indomitable spirit.

Our entrepreneurial spirit and thirst for freedom is what make our success possible. North Korea's nuclear weapons can cast a pall over this spirit. A recent poll taken after North Korea's third nuclear test shows that the South Korean public feels deeply threatened by North Korea's nuclear weapons. Our threat perception has dramatically increased, and our life pattern has been seriously damaged by North Korean nuclear weapons. South Korea's national interest has been severely damaged already.

[00:16:15]

So what are our options? Diplomacy has failed. Persuasion has failed. (Carrot ?) – (inaudible) – have all failed. They have all failed because, what you have failed to understand is the nature of the North Korean regime. The policy of engaging North Korea, including the Sunshine Policy, derived its rationale from an Aesop Fable. The assumption was that if we – if we provide North Korea with unconditional aid and security guarantee, it will understand the outside world's true benign intentions and open up voluntarily, giving up its nuclear weapons.

But a more relevant analogy for understanding the nature of the North Korean regime is another Aesop Fable – that of the frog and scorpion. As the story goes, a scorpion was trying to

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cross a stream. Not able to swim, he asked the frog to carry him on his back. But the frog refused, saying if I carry you, you will sting me and I will die.

[00:17:22]

The scorpion replied, why would I do that? If I sting you, I will drown too. Convinced, the frog began swimming across the stream with the scorpion on his back. However, midstream, the scorpion stung the frog. As they were both drowning, the frog cried out, why did you do it? Now you have killed both of us. The scorpion replied, I can't help it. It is my nature. Which analogy do you think is more relevant?

As for South Korea, we admit that decades of prosperity have made us soft. (Inaudible) – confrontation and conflict. Our democracy sometimes divides rather than unites us. Building and sustaining a bipartisan national security policy is not easy. The new administration of President Park Guen-hye is about to launch its (trust politic ?) with North Korea.

However, its success will depend on whether you have a powerful deterrent. Not just sweet incentives and good intentions. The international community needs to reset its North Korea policy. It needs to make the denuclearization of North Korea its highest priority. We need to put all the options on the table.

First, U.S. tactical nuclear weapons that were withdrawn in 1991 should be reintroduced. That was recommended by the House Armed Services Committee in an amendment to the Fiscal 2013 National Defense Authorization bill. It would send a clear warning that by continuing its nuclear program, North Korea is releasing the nuclear genie in East Asia. They can also be indispensable as a bargaining chip for the ultimate denuclearization of North Korea.

Second, the agreement between South Korea and the U.S. to transfer wartime operational control to South Korean forces in 2015 should be nullified. The (upcoming ?) transfer will dissolve the Combined Forces Command. Now is not the time to make North Korea's dream come true. Third, in this time of crisis, plans to move the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division south of the Han River should also be stopped.

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The four normalization programs for the U.S. forces in Korea should be revived. We should send North Korea a clear message that the most threatening and reckless they become, the more resolute and powerful our response will be.

Fourth, some even say that the only way to (serve ?) the North Korean nuclear (program ?) is for South Korea to follow the India-Pakistan example or the case of Israel. Facing an extraordinary threat to national security, South Korea may exercise the right to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty as stipulated in Article 10 of the treaty. South Korea would then match North Korea's nuclear progress step by step, while committing to stop if North Korea stops.

South Korea should be given this leeway as a law-abiding member of the global community who is threatened by a nuclear rogue state. It is like a member of the gun control lobby in good standing whose neighbor, who's a gangster, just acquired assault rifles and threatens him. In order

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to buy a gun to protect himself and his family against a gangster, he now wishes to withdraw his membership temporarily.

[00:21:28]

The only thing that kept the Cold War cold was the mutual deterrence afforded by nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons played a critical role in taking the place in Europe during the Cold War. The lesson of the Cold War is that against nuclear weapons, only nuclear weapons can hold the peace. North Korea and for that matter, China as well, should note that South Korea has this option if it persists in possessing nuclear weapons. Nuclear proliferation in East Asia will unfold at the invitation of North Korea endorsed by China. The question for China is, does it want South Korea to bring back U.S. tactical nuclear weapons or develop its own nuclear capability?

Fifth, dialogue can and should be an option. We are not against pirate talks between the U.S. and North Korea; however, any dialogue with North Korea must approve denuclearization at the top of the agenda.

Finally, if nothing changes North Korea's mind about nuclear weapons, the only way to deal with the problem would be to bring about change in the North Korean regime itself. This needs not be as radical a prescription as many think. In China, the regime was changed when Deng Xiaoping described Mao's legacy as seven parts good, three parts bad. The international community should work together to bring about similar changes in North Korea.

We are grateful for the security that the U.S. has provided us in the past, present and future. The U.S. is our only ally. However, no matter how close we are, no two nations' national interests can line up 100 percent. This is just common sense. The alliance has been highly successful; however, it failed to stop North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons. Telling us not to consider any nuclear option is tantamount to telling us to simply surrender. Our goal is and will continue to be the denuclearization of the entire Korean Peninsula. Let us put all the options on the table. Let us try to prevent the unthinkable by thinking the unthinkable. Give room – give Korea room to maneuver.

[00:24:20]

Let me now conclude my remarks. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula may be the last hurdle before the peaceful reunification of Korea. Such that the German reunification was the key to a united and peaceful Europe, so will the reunification of Korea be the key to permanent peace in East Asia.

Friends and colleagues, if you look at the sheer magnitude of the geopolitics of the vast Eurasian continent, a fact that a small country like South Korea, located at the tip of the continent, remains a free democracy, is a miracle, a miracle in progress. Please help us sustain this miracle.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. PAAL: Well, M.J. has certainly made some news today with his proposals for departing from the NPT, returning – as you've done before – called for returning American tactical nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula, and then finally Korea to develop its own nuclear capabilities.

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I'd like to take on the premise of your argument and ask how will North Korean incentives be changed by the reacquisition of American tactical nuclear weapons and the development of Korea's own nuclear capability, when – in light of the fact that North Korea already believes that the nuclear umbrella is what they're responding to, that the United States supplies? And what do – what do you find short, what do you find deficient about the nuclear umbrella provided by the United States that makes you argue for these extraordinary steps?

MR. CHUNG: You are asking the heavy question many American friends asked me over the last week while I'm in the States this time. Your question is why I don't think the nuclear umbrella provided by your military is not sufficient enough. Well, the – I believe your nuclear umbrella is something we need very much, but the point is your nuclear umbrella can deter from – deter North Korea from using the atomic bomb, but it cannot deter North Korea from building more weapons. It cannot make North Korea dismantle their existing nuclear weapons.

MR. PAAL: So your argument is that your steps would give leverage to –

[00:27:18]

MR. CHUNG: Yeah, they really – these days, we are concerned the goal of American government is just anti-proliferation, not CVID, complete, verifiable, irreversible dismantlement of existing North Korea weapons. We South Koreans, we don't think that peaceful coexistence with nuclear North Korea is not possible. We have to try our best to dismantle existing North Korean nuclear weapons. Your nuclear umbrella is not sufficient enough to dismantle North Korean nuclear program. So it is a difference between reintroduction of tactical nuclear weapons and nuclear umbrella for their purpose.

MR. PAAL: In the final portion of your remarks, you talked about regime change in North Korea. In the earlier parts of your presentation, you said that the Sunshine Policy and the follow-on efforts of President Kim were unsuccessful at using inducements to break the hold of the Kim family in the north. What would be the method by which you would pursue regime change in the north?

[00:28:40]

MR. CHUNG: If we say regime change, we may sound radical, but we can find a way which Chinese and North Koreans – Chinese and some North Koreans may find – may find relevant and useful. But there – as I said so before, when Mao Zedong passed away, Deng Xiaoping said Mao had seven good points and three bad points. And I think that China could start to change it, the policy, and they could reform the nuclear system. Do you think it is too much, for us, South Koreans and Americans, asking Chinese and North Koreans why don't you think of, you know, this kind of method?

MR. PAAL: So this is another way of looking at how to persuade China to bring about the pressures of change.

MR. CHUNG: Similar change to North Korea. But these days, experts, they compare Korea – North Korea with Imperial Japan before World War II. They said they see more

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similarities between the two: one leader who's considered very divine and one ideology and the military-first doctrine, and they were – they can be trapped in their – in their own logic and then contradictions become too big. They can become suicidal. And then my point is, we have to be prepared for the worst possible scenario.

MR. PAAL: Well, now it's time to open the floor to the audience for questions or comments. We ask you to make your comments and questions brief. And when you go to the microphone to be recognized, please identify yourself and your affiliation.

Over here.

[00:30:55]

Q: (Off mic) – studies. Thank you very much, Mr. Chung, for a very eloquent, forceful presentation. I think it's a brave man to come to the nonproliferation conference of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and to make these points.

I wonder if it's really credible, though, to suggest that reintroducing nuclear weapons in South Korea under either of the circumstances you posit is more credible than the conventional force that can be applied in the case of any North Korean provocation. The American B-52 bombers, the B-2 bombers, the F-22 fighter jets all reminded everyone on the peninsula of America's might and will to use it. Nuclear weapons are – have not been used for so long that there's a norm against their use, and many people think that really would South Korean public want nuclear weapons ever used against a northern half of the peninsula that someday would be a part of a unified Korea? Isn't it much better to be responding with conventional forces?

MR CHUNG: Well, you ask me – excuse me – another standard question, why I am proposing the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons, instead of reinforcing conventional forces in South Korea. If our ultimate – if our ultimate goal is winning the war, we can simply reinforce conventional forces. But if our ultimate goal is to prevent the war, then reinforcing of conventional forces itself has not helped very much. The recent military demonstration by American troops is the B-52, F-22 over Korean space, but they can't reassure South Koreans extended – the use of extended deterrence, including nuclear umbrella. My point is very simple. Nuclear weapon is a political weapon. And you know that we have to deal with this problem politically, and we better send not only military measures but we better send political measures.

[00:33:42]

I sometimes wonder how your American leaders talk about this issue. Maybe President Obama ask military commander in Hawaii and military commander in South Korea, president – American president may ask them question, what's going on on Korean Peninsula. And military generals may say, Mr. President, don't worry. Even though North Korea claims they have several nuclear weapons, don't worry. We can wipe them out one day. And then your president may ask again: Are you sure there is no problem? Yes, military generals say, don't worry. We can handle that. That means we – American military, together with South Korean military, can win the war one day. But winning the war is not our objective. We want to prevent the war, we want to deter the war. There's a difference.

MR. PAAL: I think in the back is the next question.

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Q: Hi. Miles Pomper from the Monterrey Institute. Two questions. The first one is, you make an assumption about North Korean reaction to your suggestions about tactical nuclear weapons or South Korean nuclear weapons, which is essentially that North Korea will capitulate and this will be because of the improved leverage that you'll have in the situation. But one could posit another scenario, which is more dangerous for the region as a whole. Japan becomes a nuclear weapons state, China decides in reaction to that and your moves to boost its nuclear forces and deploy its own nuclear weapons to North Korea. So first of all, why do you think is that's – your proposal will lead to a more positive scenario rather than a negative scenario?

And secondly, does your proposal of any traction within South Korea itself, particularly with the Park administration, or are these just your thoughts?

MR. CHUNG: I understand – you have two questions, whether all the options – (inaudible) – can have a positive outcome or not, and then whether my ideas are in line with our new government (policy?).

[00:35:59]

Well, the – as for the second question, whether there's a consensus in Korean government, well, South Korea is a democracy. And I understand every democratic government should do their best to reflect the opinions of its own people. According to recent public opinion survey, two-thirds of South Koreans support the reintroduction of tactical nuclear weapons. They also support South Korea's nuclear armament as well.

As for your question – first question, whether trying all these options can be helpful or not, I think they are indispensable options. That's my understanding.

Q: Could you explain your rationale?

MR. CHUNG: Why I think they are needed? Well, it's – I don't think maintaining the status quo is not an option. I don't think North Korea shoot nuclear weapon to south tomorrow. I don't think so. But it is kind of a threat – being threat in the situation continue for next three years, five years, the ordinary pattern of life can be damaged and the spirit of South Korean people damaged, the spirit of South Korean people can be – (inaudible) – which we should try to prevent.

[00:37:37]

MR. PAAL: The next questioner. All right.

Q: Thank you very much for a very sober and provocative presentation today that I think conveyed –

MR. PAAL: Would you identify yourself, please?

Q: Oh, Susan Burk, formally with the State Department working on NPT issues. I think you conveyed very clearly the frustration that the South Koreans feel and others feel about the challenges of North Korea. But recognizing South Korea's strong nonproliferation record and its commitment and leadership within the nonproliferation treaty regime process, what do you think the impact would be on the NPT regime if South Korea were to announce its intention to withdraw?

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MR. CHUNG: I'm not an expert on international law. I asked many questions about these issues. What I understand is, North Korea declared several times – 1993 and 1994, 2003 – they said they were withdrawing from NPT, and no U.N. Security Council sanctions were discussed at all. And these day – even these days, some – (inaudible) – country at the Security Council, some think North Koreans still a member of the NPT, some don't. There's a big confusion. I'm very skeptical about the effectiveness of this NPT regime itself. But we have to deliver our (resolve ?) there. This current situation is not – (inaudible).

[00:39:22]

Q: My name is Mark Hibbs. I'm from the Carnegie Endowment, Nuclear Policy program. Dr. Chung, as you know, a decision to leave the NPT and build nuclear weapons would entail a certain amount of political risk. Aside from the comments that you've made in the Korean press recently, I had not seen, in the strategic community in South Korea, any similar discussion or consideration of what the risk would be for Korea leaving the NPT. If you look at the response of the Korean people in recent weeks to North Korea's escalation, what you see is a remarkable calmness and a apparent willingness to go forward hand in hand with the United States in defending the country against a range of North Korean threats. The opinion research that you quote that suggests that South Koreans favor the deployment or the development of a nuclear weapon option, in my view – and I ask you if you share this view – they appear to express a sense of vulnerability, but that vulnerability is not a strategy.

So, my question for you is where in the North – in the South Korean strategic community and the discussion in civil society or in the government is there any discussion reflecting your concerns here and your interest in keeping this option open? Is there anyone else in South Korea who shares your views at all? Thank you.

MR. CHUNG: I hope I understand your question. I understand your question is what – (inaudible) – concerns us in South Korea's strategic community and civil society. I hope there's something like a strategic community in South Korea. I use the term “unthinkable.”

[00:41:48]

In South Korea, we rely on your nuclear umbrella we – simply take (for granted ?) your government can handle the North Korea problem so we don't have to do it ourselves to really think of this terrible idea or the scary things. That's what happened during the first nuclear crisis.

When the nuclear crisis occurred – 1993, 1994 – my own government, my own government, the foreign ministry of South Korea, did nothing. Your government's assistant secretary of state – (background noise) – had all the negotiations with North Koreans and produced an agreed framework in Geneva and promised to build two light-water nuclear vehicles. And you know what happened. I may – I better not mention the name.

Some of the men who were also in charge of that negotiation agreement said later – one man asked him a question: Why did you agree provide two light-water nuclear vehicles to North Korea? He simply said, well, we thought North Korea – (inaudible) – less – (inaudible) – completion of the – completion of the construction. He was wrong, he was wrong. And some even said the

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construction of the vehicles was a simple – (inaudible) – why at the core was normalization of relations between North Korea and the U.S.

[00:43:41]

So I asked him the question: Do you really think North Korea wants to have – wants normalization with you? He thought for a minute. I told him North Korea cannot afford to have American embassy in (Pyongyang ?) with all those satellite antennas. I told him I don't think that's what North Korea wanted 20 years ago. He thought for a minute and told me, oh, I'm correct, he was wrong. Your people who negotiated on behalf of South Korea's national security issue told us 20 years later they were all wrong. And then your question is not American policy(maker ?). You are asking me whether I'm a minority in South Korea's, you said, strategic community.

Well, at least, you know, it takes time for people to understand the nature of the issue, the nature of the threat. And I proposed this idea, the introduction of technical nuclear weapons, in South Korea's national assembly two years ago. Very few people talked about that. But next to the Chinese newspaper, the English paper, Global Times, wrote a story and wrote a big editorial describing my idea, very dangerous idea. I was glad to see that because I felt it was first time for China to show their real concern. They started to be concerned. And then this idea, withdrawal from NPT, is very unthinkable for Korean strategic community, if there is such thing in South Korea. And then it may take time, it may – people say it's too radical, too provocative, too controversial, but in due time people will understand why we have to think about the unthinkable.

MR. PAAL: Next question, please.

Q: Thank you, (Paal ?). Major General Yong Shu (ph) from China.

MR. CHUNG: You are guest media?

MR. PAAL: No, no, major general –

Q: No, no, I'm a major general –

MR. CHUNG: Oh, you're a major general –

Q: – from People's –

MR. CHUNG: I met you in Korea, right, before?

Q: We did. (Chuckles.)

[00:46:16]

So, very interesting and stimulating presentation, thank you. My present concern, in your comment, your presentation about China's role in the solution and China's efforts in the solution of the Korean – of the DPRK nuclear issue.

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China has been setting up the six-party talks and hosting the six-party talks for several years. And it seems to me that you blame China a lot for the situation that we are all in today. So, my question is what is your general evaluation of China's role in the – its effort – how do you evaluate China's effort to solve the DPRK nuclear issue? Is China helping the North Korean – North Korea to buy time so that it can have nuclear weapons, or do you think it is really detrimental to China's interest to have a DPRK with nuclear weapons? Thank you.

[00:47:31]

MR. CHUNG: I hope I understand your question: whether North Korea is in China's interest or not. Is that your question?

MR. PAAL: I think that's a good summary, yeah.

MR. CHUNG: OK. Well, if China thinks nuclear-armed North Korea does not matter for China's long-term interest, that's very hard, very difficult to understand. If United States government allow – (off mic) – to go nuclear, do you think that's a sensible policy for U.S.? We don't think so.

China is already surrounded by nuclear states: Russia, India and Pakistan. So, Chinese policymakers may think additional several primitive nuclear weapons produced by North Korea cannot be – cannot really change the major – the basic power equation in East Asia. That's not correct. That's very wrong. If North Korea remains nuclear, South Korea or even Japan should consider nuclear option. Suppose you are president of South Korea or prime minister of Japan. Don't you think that's a negligible – culpable – it can be a culpable negligence for those politicians to do nothing against North Korea's nuclear armament. South Korea and Japan should do something if North Korea is determined to remain nuclear.

MR. PAAL: It seems to me the case – the question is always framed among China experts that China really can't decide between the priority being given to denuclearization or to stability in Korea, and they again and again put the priority on Korea – stability over denuclearization.

MR. CHUNG: Well, that's a good question, Doug. A nuclear-armed North Korea is not a positive factor for the stability in East Asia in the long run.

MR. PAAL: The last question, up in the back.

[00:50:05]

Q: Thank you. My name is Sidara Nor (sp) and I'm from Pakistan. Sir, when we listen to you – your security concerns, we see something familiar in it, actually. You mentioned Pakistan with regards to the security perspective of developing nuclear weapons, particularly in Pakistan, before resorting to the nuclear course. Actually had advocated – had advocated various options before resorting to the nuclear for security, like joint security office of continent in early – as early as 1950s and '60s, then a nuclear weapon-free zone in South Asia, and then also advocated simultaneous signing of NPT and then CTBT later on.

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But when all fell on deaf ears – deaf ears, it finally resorted to the independent nuclear deterrence for security, right? And if we look at your option, as North Korea – South Korea actually having that option, internationally that would certainly be not an easy course, as you might have sensed from the various questions coming from that perspective. I'm curious to know, what is the public opinion in South Korea if it decides to – or it thinks of going that way? Thank you.

[00:51:15]

MR. PAAL: You understand? The essence of the question is, what is public opinion about taking up the nuclear option, as having failed at all the other options, much as Pakistan and India failed at various options and ended up developing independent deterrent?

MR. CHUNG: Yeah. Your question is public opinion on these options, the introduction and nuclear armament. When the – I think I mentioned already, according to various public opinion surveys, two-thirds of South Koreans support both reintroduction of tactical nuclear arms and South Korea's nuclear armament. That's the present – that's the outcome of recent opinion surveys.

MR. PAAL: We have time for one more question. The last couple of questions have been redundant of previous questions. If you – among the three of you who are standing there, or four, does one of you have something new to ask? We'll take you as our last then.

Q: Thank you. I'm Michael Krepon of the Stimson Center. In the current tense environment, one move that North Korea might make is to prepare to launch another missile. My question to you, sir, is what the appropriate response would be to such a move. Would it be for the United States or South Korea to destroy the missile prior to launch, to destroy the missile after it's launched, or to just let the missile proceed unencumbered? And if your answer is either A or B, what do you think the North Korean response would be?

MR. CHUNG: If North Korea should –

MR. PAAL: If North Korea's prepared to launch a missile, should it be – should South Korea and the United States destroy it on the ground, in the air or just let it fly? And if it's the first – on the ground or in the air – just being destroyed by our anti-missile capabilities, what should the North Korean response likely be?

[00:53:45]

MR. CHUNG: Yeah. Military people in South Korea, they used to say, these days, if there's a signal of North Korea's launching a missile, we can destroy the whole facility. That's what they say. And I understand American government has a similar military, where the operational rule to try to destroy the missiles before the launching of the missiles. Well, the – I hope those words provided by military leaders are correct. I hope they do have the capability to prevent, pre-empt those – any potential North Korean missile launching against South Korea, against the U.S. When they – at the moment, I'm not sure whether we have a complete – we have completed our preparations.

MR. PAAL: How would North Korea respond if their missile were destroyed?

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MR. CHUNG: Yeah. If we – if we remember those words made by Kim, they said they are going to do everything possible or available for them.

[00:55:47]

MR. PAAL: Well, on those – yesterday I heard a description of North Korea as the leader of the axis of evil ankle-biters. But they certainly – (laughter) – they certainly spend a lot of time getting our attention. And I want to thank you for providing very informed and provocative perspectives on this issue as well. Thank you. (Applause.)

(END)