

Civil-Military Relations in the Republic of Korea: Background and Implications*

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Abstract

Civil-Military relations in South Korea has been a topic of discussion, particularly since the spring of 2004, among many in policy and academic circles both in the Republic of Korea, and key allies — particularly the United States. In order to understand the challenges and problems that have been inherent in the Civil-Military relationship in South Korea since 2004, one must first address the unique and rather unprecedented leadership style of Roh Moo-hyun — and the historical reasons behind the policy moves he has

* The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, the Marine Corps University, or the United States Government.

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made. It is also important to understand the strengths and weaknesses that the current President brings to the Blue House. Roh's decision-making process is radically different than any of those who have previously served in the Blue House. An analysis of this unique decision-making process and how it has altered the way policy is made (particularly foreign policy and its impact on the current civil-military relationship) will be made in this paper. Other important factors in the current Civil-Military relationship include the vision of the National Security Council, the future of military reform, and current signs of Roh's vision to severely alter the status of the current Civil-Military relationship. All of these factors will be examined in detail in this paper.

Key Words: Civil-Military Relations, Military Security, Republic of Korea, 386 Generation, Roh Moo-hyun, Blue House

I. The Historical Impact of Civil-Military Relations on the Roh Administration

In past administrations, including the administration of Roh's predecessor Kim Dae-jung, the military has enjoyed a very important role, not only in foreign policy decision-making (particularly as it relates to the ROK-U.S. Alliance), but often in domestic policy making and internal politics as well. While the internal political role of the military has been severely downplayed in South Korea since the democratically elected government of Roh Tae-woo came into power in 1988 (and in fact became progressively less important in domestic politics with each new President), many of the memories of the abuses of the military on the ROK populace (many of them made in the name of national security), particularly

during the 1980s, remain strong in the minds of those who are now key players in the Roh Moo-hyun administration — and are likely in the consciousness of Roh himself (Hahm, 1997).

The key advisors surrounding Roh were very strongly influenced by the events of the 1980s, and in fact speak of these events often today. This in turn has had a strong impact on the Roh policies of dealing with both the ROK military and Seoul's key ally the United States. Many of these key advisors who helped Roh get elected and continue to serve in important positions within the ROK government, are known as the "386 Generation" faction. They are now well known in South Korea as individuals who "faced down" South Korea's military rulers at the time, often did hard time in prison for their student and labor activism, and spoke out against the corruption as they saw it, in big business and government in South Korea. The "386 Generation" faction is also noted for being vehement in insisting on a new tone of tolerance for North Korea, and for being at the head of a surge of anti-Americanism in South Korea that reached its zenith with the election of Roh as President in late 2002 (Moon and Clifford, 2003).

It is important to note the impact of the events of the 1980s on the individuals who now wield power in the Roh administration (particularly as they impact on civil-military relations and foreign policy), because these events continue to influence the mentality and decision-making process of the ROK government as of the writing of this paper. The icon event of the pre-democratic governments in Seoul is now considered to be the "Kwangju Uprising," an event where ROK special forces killed several hundred civilians in Kwangju in putting down a riot, and in the process created a controversy that rages to this day. On May 18, 2005, President Roh spoke of the impact of the Kwangju Uprising on the mindset of his administration saying, "... A civil society, which made remarkable progress after the democratic uprising in the 1980s should now improve Korea's level of agreement procedure through creative

participation that yields an alternative plan," further noting, "... a civil society has now emerged as a principal player in leading national affairs ..." (Kim and Cho, 2005). Such statements suggest Roh feels his is the first administration to seriously address a radically altered role for the military within South Korean society — an argument many would disagree with. In fact, as is often the case following a Roh speech, one of his aides chose to comment to the press following the address, saying "The society which Mr. Roh referred to includes civic groups, the press, the opposition parties, and local governments, I think Mr. Roh through his remarks suggested that he is now facing difficulties from opponents while he tries to promote diverse policies" (Min and Kang, 2005).

In the view of the author, while the Kwangju Uprising was a tragic event in the history of the ROK, tying the event to the foreign policy of the United States is also a tragic mistake. One of the key pillars of the anti-Americanism that is so paramount in the thinking of the leaders of the "386 Generation" faction of the South Korean government is the assertion that the United States knew of the planning for the violent suppression of the riots in Kwangju, and in fact encouraged the South Korean government to take the steps that they did to quell the riots (Shorrock, 1996). This will probably remain a subject of great dispute for many years, despite the fact that several key policy makers from that time period have spoken out saying that the United States was completely unaware the South Korean military planned to carry out the violent event — and in fact found out only as it was happening, receiving all of the facts several days after the fact.

There has been a great deal of evidence released to the public that strongly suggests the United States had nothing to do with the suppression of the Kwangju Uprising. Former Ambassador to Korea James Lilley has stated that, "In the case of Kwangju, the Combined Forces Command arrangement made for confusion

about American military relations with the ROK, as has been shown in many analyses of events at the time. In 1987, on the other hand, during the democracy demonstrations that brought forth Roh Tae-woo's "June 29th Declaration, there was a steady effort by civilians in the U.S. Government to prevent the use of force" (Clark, 2000). The Commander in Chief of United States Forces Korea at the time, General John Wickham, has specifically stated that neither he nor any of his staff had any idea that ROK forces would be used in the violent suppression of the riots in Kwangju, nor was he informed until it was far too late to do anything about it (Wickham, 1999: 127-149). Nevertheless, the Kwangju Uprising remains the largest single event in pre-democratized Korea in the minds of most of those in the "386 Generation" faction of Roh's government, and most continue to interpret it as an incident that was encouraged by the United States.

The continuing impact of events that occurred in the 1980s prior to Korean democratization is evident from more recent activities taken by the Roh administration and those in the Uri Party (his *de facto* supporting political party). A member of the National Assembly, Lee Kwang-jae of the Uri party, recently disclosed that he "cut off his finger and wrote a letter of resolve in blood so as not to betray his colleagues in student movements in the 1980s" (Jung, 2005). While this example is rather extreme, it points to the background and anti-military attitude (often complimented by an anti-American attitude) that exists among many of those in power today in the Roh administration and the Uri Party that supports it. Another recent and important event involves the recent forced resignation of Vice Defense Minister Yoo Hyo-il. Civic groups in Korea had created an outcry for his unsuitability to remain in office because of his alleged involvement in suppressing the Kwangju Uprising. Despite the fact that the government had argued that at the time his role was minimal, rumors that Yoo had also been involved in an "ideological cleansing" program where students

were violently abused eventually forced him to resign (B. Lee, 2005).

Finally, the role of the "Truth Committee," (a fact-finding committee of citizens led by the Rev. Oh Choong-il) in implementing recent reactions to past wrongful events has been very important during 2005. The committee thus far has focused on seven suspicious incidents initiated by the NIS (formerly the KCIA) in which human rights of Korean citizens were severely violated (*Chosun Ilbo*, February 3, 2005). Many of the incidents occurred during the Park Chung-hee Presidency, and it is unclear if the outcry by the left is being initiated in order to embarrass his daughter — the current leader of the opposition GNP Party — but to date the investigation is ongoing (*Ibid.*). Among the most gruesome of the seven incidents was the trial and subsequent execution of seven members of the Peoples Revolutionary Party, based on charges of treason from evidence obtained by then KCIA Director Kim Hyung-wook (*Chosun Ilbo*, April 8, 2005).

As evidenced by the discussion above, it is clear that the Roh Presidency and those within its power infrastructure has been strongly influenced by the events that occurred in the late 1970s and the 1980s. This was an era when South Korea was transitioning from a third world nation ruled by a military strongman to a strong, vibrant democracy. Because these were the formative years for both the current President, and many of those who hold key positions within his government, the important events that occurred during those years continue to influence the vision and the policy making of the present administration when it comes to foreign policy making and the future of the civil-military relationship. It is also important to understand the inner workings of the Roh government, and the strengths and weaknesses that he has brought to his Presidency. This issue will be examined in detail next.

II. Strengths and Weaknesses that Roh Moo-hyun Brought to His Presidency

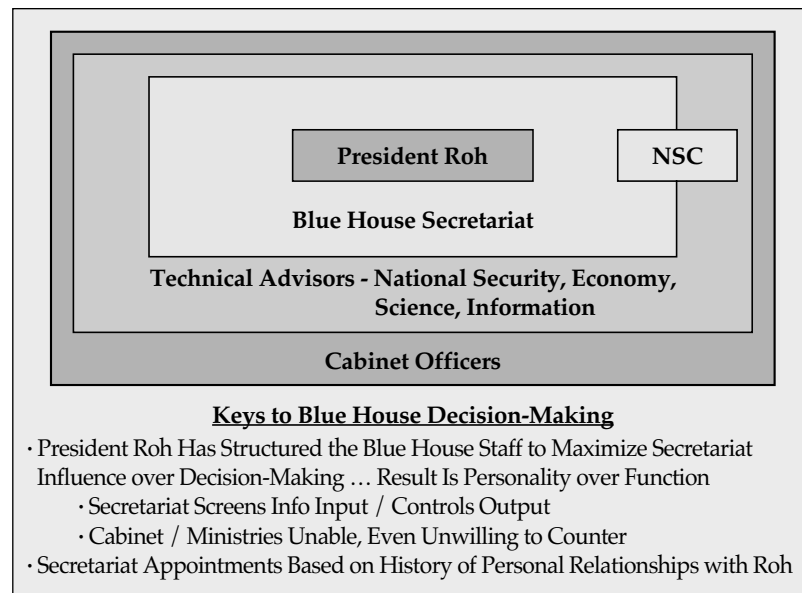
There can be no doubt that the current President of South Korea brought a charismatic and forceful personality to the Blue House. This, along with the facts that he is well-known as an extremely gregarious (likeable) individual, a tough infighter in politics, and very savvy politically at the local level, are important strengths that he has brought to the Presidency. He is also well known for being a man who "lifted himself up by his bootstraps," passing the bar exam without graduating from college.

While Roh has brought the strengths discussed above to the Blue House, he has also brought weaknesses that have had an effect on his administration's ability to govern. He had no significant leadership experience prior to assuming the Presidency. In fact, he gained his reputation resisting the government, not in working within it. His political experience is mostly limited to labor issues — often defending labor officials against the ROK government. Perhaps even more important in an age where South Korea has become a player on the global scene, Roh's visit to Japan was the extent of his foreign experience prior to assuming the Presidency — and he had never been to the United States (*Economist.Com*, April 16, 2004). This background had a strong influence on Roh's commitments; government reform, populism, raising the average ROK personal income to US\$ 20,000 a year, and perhaps the two most controversial issues of his Presidency to date, less dependency on the United States for national defense and the decentralization of the ROK government (*PBS News Hour Online*, December 19, 2002).

III. Roh Moo-hyun's Decision-Making Process: Differences from Past Administrations

Unlike past administrations (including that of his predecessor and political ally, Kim Dae-jung), the real power in the Blue House does not lie with Roh's cabinet officers. The result is that the whole decision-making process has become much more ad hoc. The real power in the Blue House lies with the Secretariat, which screens info and input, and controls output. To date, most cabinet ministers have been unable to counter this power.

Figure 1. Blue House Decision-Making

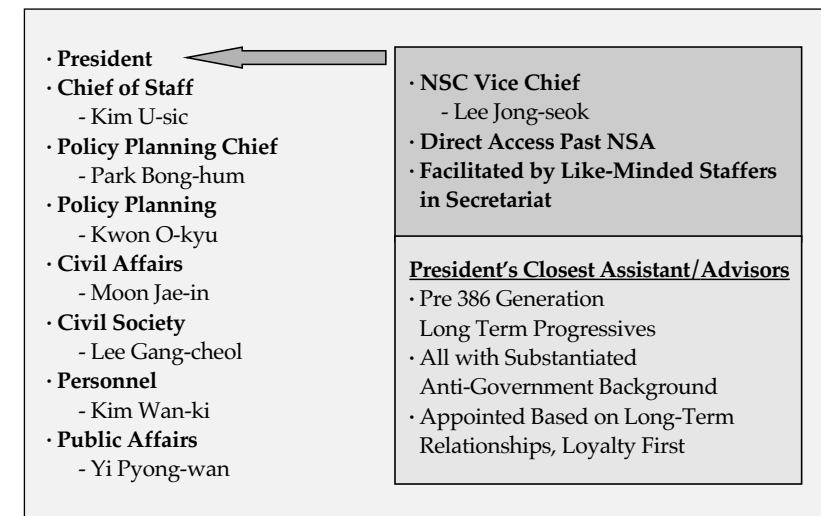


Secretariat appointments are based on a history of personal relationships with Roh, thus the result is that in the decision-making process, personality is emphasized over function.

Important aspects of the Secretariat include the fact that, as

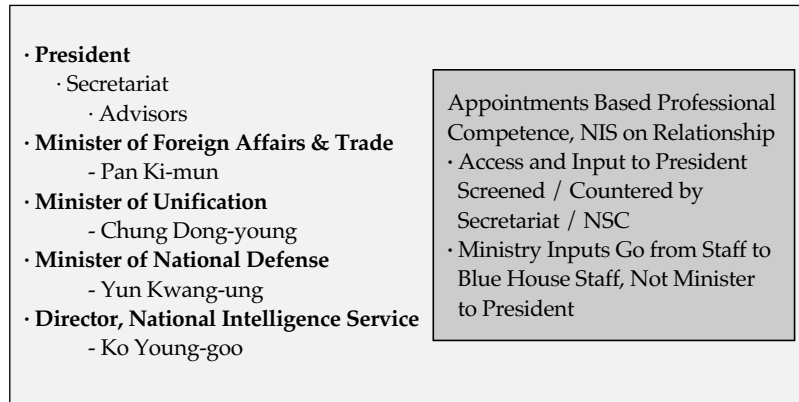
discussed above, these individuals are the President's most trusted advisors. Within the Secretariat, most individuals are older, long-term, left-of-center progressives, all appointed based on long-term relationships, and all intensely loyal to Roh. Arguably the most important advisor to the President when it comes to National Security decision-making, is National Security Council (NSC) Vice-Chief, Lee Jong-seok. Lee has direct access past the National Security Advisor (which caused a power struggle between him and earlier NSA Ra Jong-yil, who is now the Ambassador to Japan as a result) to President Roh (as well as his most trusted advisor, Moon Jae-in) and his power is facilitated by like-minded staffers in the Secretariat. Lee is also widely known to epitomize the values of the "386 Generation."

Figure 2. Secretariat (2005)



Regarding the subject of National Security, the cabinet members who deal with these key issues first have to deal with the Secretariat in order to get to the President. The Ministers of Foreign

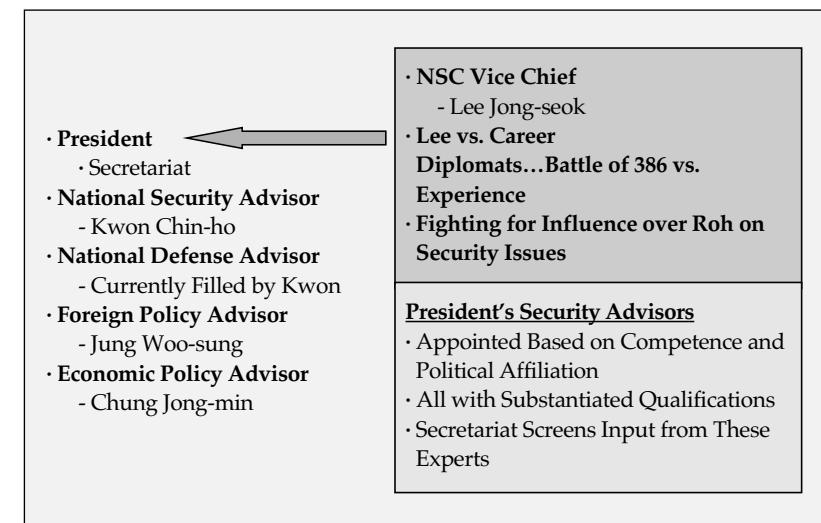
Figure 3. Cabinet — National Security (2005)



Affairs and Trade, Unification, National Defense, and the National Intelligence Service, all provide inputs that go from their cabinet ministry's to the Blue House Staff, not Minister to President (unlike the role played by Lee Jong-seok — who has direct access to the President and the Secretariat and runs the agenda and tone of NSC meetings). Their appointments tend to be based on professional competence, with the probable exception of Ko Young-goo, who was the NIS Director until resigning under a cloud of controversy (for allegedly mishandling several scandals) in June of 2005 (*KBS World Radio Online*, June 1, 2005). Ko is a former human rights lawyer like Roh, an acknowledged left-leaning protégé of the President, and a former activist who sought the freedom of those who ran afoul of the NIS many years ago — including the now famous Kim Nak-joong case — in which he was able to get a gentleman released from prison after being interned for 14 years by the NIS, for visiting North Korea as a young man (Larkin, 2003). Ko was replaced in July by former Justice Minister Kim Seung-kyu, who (just as his predecessor) has no prior experience in intelligence. Like Ko, Kim has vowed to “change the negative image” of the agency (J. W. Kim, 2005).

The President's actual National Security Advisors (as of summer, 2005) to include the Economic Policy Advisor, Foreign Policy Advisor, National Defense Advisor, and the man who holds the title of National Security Advisor, Kwon Chin-ho, also appear to have been appointed based on competence and political affiliation. But their input is also screened, much like cabinet members, by the Secretariat. The notable exception is Lee Jong-seok, who holds the title of NSC Vice-Chief, and has been involved in several power struggles with cabinet members that can be characterized as a battle of the 386 generation versus experience (Shim, 2005). As discussed earlier, Lee has direct access to the President, and it is widely believed that the NSC as dominated by Lee has led the government's diplomatic and security issues and often been the “epicenter” of policy confusion. Much of the “hub-bub” has been because of the fact that the forces within the government led by Lee reportedly value Korea's U.S. foreign policy on an equal standing with the U.S. over the ROK-U.S. alliance (Jung, 2004).

Figure 4. Advisors — National Security (2005)



There are several key issues regarding the decision-making process in South Korea as it exists today. The appointments made by Roh and the structure of the Blue House Staff have isolated functional expertise. As it stands today, the Secretariat formulates policy, and the ministries implement it. The influence battle overall appears to be between “386 Generation” individuals and “progressives,” versus those with significant domestic and foreign policy experience. This is also unique because media manipulation targets public opinion, and the internet plays a key role in information input and output that it has never played before (S. Y. Park, 2005). This unique, ad hoc system has embarrassed Roh on several occasions to date. The inexperience of the individuals who wield the real power in the administration and the rejection of past systems and styles in previous administrations has been very evident to the public at large. Of importance to this paper, the system as it is currently set up and managed minimizes the value of the military and intelligence agencies.

IV. Efforts to Minimize the Role of the Military: The May 14, 2004 Incident

The efforts — often cheered on by the younger generation in South Korea, to minimize and “civilianize” control and effectiveness of the military is exemplified by the May 14, 2004 incident in which both the ROK Navy and the military as a whole ended up extremely embarrassed in the eyes of the South Korean public. Because of efforts at reconciliation and the changing (again) of SOP for ROK Navy units operating along the Northern Limit Line (NLL), command and control procedures for Navy units came under heavy fire in the ROK press. The ROK Navy, which has had to deal in an increase in crossing by North Korean patrol craft, essentially now has its hands tied. The problems became public

during May and June of 2004, and embarrassed both the ROK military and the Blue House, eventually causing the Director of KDIA, the Minister of National Defense, and other high-ranking officers to resign — and causing highly publicized bad blood between the Blue House and the military. Morale in the ROK Navy and the military as a whole was severely affected.¹

The role of Lee Jong-seok in dealing with the military has been much more extensive than one would expect from someone in his position. The primary national security advisor on Roh’s transition team in 2003, Lee was formerly an academic, who was mentored by well-known Kim Dae-jung advisor and former NIS Director Lim Dong-won. When the NSC started in 2003, it had 27 action officers, now it has over 70 — and in reality they work for Lee, not the “National Security Advisor.” Since 2004, he has used his power and influence to ensure that those with a personal stake in the Roh administration are in key positions within MND. The most notable example of this is retired ROK Navy Admiral Yoon Kwang-ung, who moved into the position of Defense Minister when his predecessor resigned following the May 14, incident.

As a retired Navy Admiral (and the former commander of 2nd fleet), Yoon understood during the aftermath of the May 14, incident, how command and control worked within the ROK Navy, and that the incident was largely unavoidable. Nevertheless, he remained silent throughout the negative press coverage in the ROK press following the incident. Yoon, who is a strong, vocal supporter of Roh’s policies, also went to the same high school as Lee Jong-seok, and is considered a strong ally.

During 2004, Lee Jong-seok informed high ranking ROK MND officials that the “Main Enemy” reference to North Korea was outdated and needed to be dropped as a matter of policy. This

1. For more information regarding this incident and the aftermath, see Kim and Ser (2004), Shin (2004), *Chosun Ilbo* (July 26, 2004), and Choi (2004a).

also began to cause morale problems in the military. A poll taken as the Defense Ministry was considering the move to change the terminology, among 1,447 army officers and soldiers, revealed 84.8 percent believed that the government should in fact retain the terminology (*Chosun Ilbo*, November 14, 2004). In 2005, the terminology was dropped, and one army field officer was quoted as saying, "... it has become difficult to give our soldiers psychological training, and it will get tougher in the future" (Yu, 2005).

V. The Vision of the National Security Council: How It Effects the Civil-Military Relationship in Korea and Impacts Foreign Policy

The impact of the NSC on the policy making and foreign policy of the Roh administration is clearly much stronger than it has ever been in past Presidential administrations. While Lee Jong-seok does not officially hold the title of "Director" of the NSC (he holds the title of "Deputy Chief" and is also sometimes referred to as "Vice Chief"), he is clearly the driver behind the scenes when it comes to both foreign policy and defense issues. In fact despite the fact that Lee (who is a North Korean expert) lacks expertise and experience with allied diplomacy and military issues, the evidence suggests that the heads of both the Defense and Foreign ministries often have less access to the President than he does, and thus often deal with him as they would a peer (which in fact is probably the reality) (*Chosun Ilbo*, May 17, 2005). This becomes obvious if one simply observes the fact that Lee has taken the lead on such important issues as South Korea's now highly publicized nuclear tests conducted years ago, and how this issue would be worked out with the United States and the United Nations (S. H. Park, 2005). Lee has also been a key player in the sensitive and important issue of the ROK-U.S. Alliance and Strategic Flexibility (*Chosun*

Ilbo, May 17, 2005). Finally, Lee is frequently seen in public at fora of the highest levels, where he is often seen as a *de facto* peer of the ministers and Blue House staff members he is seated with (*Korea Update*, 2005; *Hot Issues in Korea*, 2004).

In order to understand the vision of the *de facto* leader of the NSC, one only has to turn to his writings during the pre-Roh administration era. During the spring of 2000, Lee wrote, "... dismantling the Cold War structure on the peninsula will contribute to assurance of a peace regime on the peninsula, consolidating coexistence of the two Koreas, normalization of the U.S.-North Korea and Japan-North Korea relations, lifting economic sanctions against North Korea, inter-Korean economic cooperation, resolution of the North Korean missile and nuclear issues, and the establishment of a peace treaty through the four party talks" (Lee, 2000). This vision not only goes against current mainstream and conservative policy in Korea (specifically, calling for a peace treaty and the lifting of economic sanctions), but it also goes against the current policy of the United States — and the policy of the Clinton administration at the time. These views, expressed as they were before Lee actually came to power in the government, give great insight into the reasons for the current tensions between the members of the NSC and many in the Defense and Foreign ministries.

Of course, as discussed earlier in this paper, one of the noteworthy aspects of the "386 Generation" faction of the current South Korean government is the anti-American bias that seems to be inherent in almost all literature and public statements regarding foreign and defense policy (and ultra-sensitivity to those in Korea considered to be "Pro-American"). To be fair, this has in many ways been openly encouraged by the President himself. It is a well-known fact that Roh campaigned on an anti-American platform, calling for changes to nearly every aspect of the ROK-U.S. Alliance during his march to the Presidency in 2002 (Lee, 2005). This view toward Americans, and the public statements regarding

those in South Korea regarded as being strongly “pro-American” were again emphasized on a visit to Turkey, when Roh was quoted as saying, “I feel troubled when I see that there are Koreans who possess a more pro-American way of thinking than Americans themselves” (Choi and Park, 2005). Lee Jong-seok has also made similar comments regarding the relationship with the U.S., such as the remarks he made in 2004 regarding the presence of U.S. forces in South Korea when he stated, “It’s not an issue that we can solve by grabbing the trouser legs (of U.S. soldiers to prevent them from leaving South Korea)” (S. W. Park, 2005).

The style and vision of key NSC members, and their leader, Lee Jong-seok has caused considerable debate and controversy previously, with not only the Defense Ministry, but the Foreign Ministry as well (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade). In fact, during 2004, then Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan was forced to resign because of the problems that many in his North America division were having with members of the NSC. The NSC was seen then (and is seen now) as being Roh’s real advisory and decision-making body in most issues — including those involving the United States. The issue also came up at that time that some in the Foreign Ministry were seen as being “too pro-American” in their diplomatic activities (some had also made rather unpleasant remarks about President Roh), as articulated by Uri Party member and National Assembly member Shin Ki-nam. Being seen as “pro-American” does not appear to be a position popular with many powerful members of the Roh administration these days (Cossa, 2004).

There also appear to be issues other than the differences in policy vision concerning North Korea and the United States. These issues appear to be very “Confucian” in nature, and involve age, ranking, and “who went to what school” (academic background). Many currently serving in the NSC did not go to “tier one” universities, as have most of the power brokers who have served in the

Foreign Ministry, nor have most of the members of the NSC attended elite military academies (such as the Korean Military Academy), as the key players in the Defense Ministry (many of them being Generals and Admirals or retired Generals and Admirals) have. This may also have caused some of the friction that continues to exist.²

The most recent (as of the writing of this paper) controversy that Lee Jong-seok has been involved in is the reported investigation into his handling of negotiations with the United States over the future of United States Forces Korea and the concept of Strategic Flexibility as it relates to the future of the ROK-U.S. Alliance and the geo-political situation in Northeast Asia — particularly as it relates to any future dealings with China. Reportedly, there have been two separate, very quiet, investigations into the matter, led by Unification Minister Chung and Roh’s closest advisor, Moon Jae-in, along with Cheon Ho-seon, Chief of the national security affairs office. There were reportedly both disagreement and confusion among the negotiators with the United States, and while the Blue House has denied that there was (or is) an actual “investigation,” it appears clear that the government had (and may still have) internal disagreement over the exact position to take — and the NSC’s role in it (J. H. Kim, 2005).

In all of the reports surfacing about this troubling chain of events, there was no mention of involvement by military officials, who appeared to be out of most of the decision-making picture. The same “investigation” was apparently looking into whether the issue of a military plan code-named “5029” had been mishandled. This complicated, highly sensitive, and important military plan has reportedly been shelved by order of the NSC, causing a great deal of concern both in the United States and South Korea. Again,

2. For more information on perspectives regarding this issue through the socio-cultural prism, See B. Choi (2005).

the involvement of the ROK military in this appears to be minimal (Min, 2005). The termination of this military plan and its ramifications will be discussed later in this paper in more detail.

VI. What Does the Future Hold for Military Reform?

Many of the events that are occurring in this period of extreme flux in South Korea appear to be leading to confusion in the ranks of those who hold power in the military as well as among the ROK public as a whole. The appearance is that many in the traditional power structure of both the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Ministry of National Defense, are being left out of almost all high-level planning and defense policy decision-making processes. A controversial new measure was introduced by the Defense Ministry to the National Assembly in May of 2005. The Ministry has asked the National Assembly to introduce a bill that would allow soldiers to establish their residency according to their assigned unit instead of their home of record. This measure, backed by several members of the Uri Party, would then allow provinces at the bases where soldiers were stationed to be eligible for higher revenue sharing from the central government. If the measure were to become a bill and be voted on, it also would have the potential to skew voting demographics in many areas (Jeon, 2005). While on the surface the bill appears to be very reasonable, it has the potential (because most conscripts are younger voters much more likely to lean toward the President's Uri Party) to create a political opportunity for the Uri Party and its initiatives which are often spawned or supported by the President — and seems to have no other clear advantage in the opinion of the author.

Other measures that will be submitted to the National Assembly are far more controversial. During April of 2005, Defense Minister Yoon announced that he would be introducing a reform pack-

age to the National Assembly that would initiate reform on the "French Model." The package would include changing the promotion system to allow civilians to sit on promotion boards, initiate structural changes, personnel cuts, and create "balanced development" between the army, navy, and air force. It would also guarantee the Minister's right to suggest personnel for key positions, and create a "special mission" to investigate dark episodes in the military's past — once again reaching back to the mindset of the "386 Generation" faction of "righting the wrongs" of the pre-democratization days of Korea, and opening up old wounds (*Chosun Ilbo*, April 28, 2005). At a briefing for the President, Yoon also announced that a plan to put the country's military on independent footing would include preparations for the U.S. transfer of wartime operational command to South Korea, and independent self-defense capabilities by 2025. The plan for restructuring of the military has met with difficulties in the past because of the North Korean threat and opposition from general-level officers (both conditions still exist). The President stated that the defense budget should be increased to 2.7% of GDP by the end of his administration (currently it is about 2.47% of GDP) (Kim and Ser, 2005). The figure suggested by Roh would still make the percentage of defense spending far lower than it was prior to the Kim Dae-jung administration — and lower than it needs to be according to the analysis of many experts.³

The reform introduced by Defense Minister Yoon and presented to the President in the 2005 Defense Ministerial Affairs Report given to the President on April 28th at the Grand Conference Room of the new government complex, appears to have been strongly influenced by the input of Roh himself. Roh seems to have been impressed with military reform that he has witnessed in

3. For an in-depth analysis of ROK defense spending over past years and projected needs in the out years, see Ministry of National Defense (2004).

Western European nations. At the meeting, the President stated, "... the legislation should reflect the case of France and be carried out in the long run based on a national consensus." He also stated, "Another task the military must do is to settle past histories," further remarking, "just like how Germany's facing its past faults was made possible by their leaders' resolution and courage to face the national pain that history revealed, I hope our military will be born anew by inquiring into the actual matters of the past" (Yun, 2005a). Thus, in the opinion of the author, the vision of reform that the current administration has continues to be heavily influenced by the impact of actions taken by a military dominated government during the formative years of President Roh and key members within his often confusing power structure that dominates decision-making within the government. There have been several signs of Roh's vision to severely alter the Civil-Military relationship as it exists today. They will be offered up for consideration and analysis next.

VII. Signs of Roh's Vision to Severely Alter the Civil-Military Relationship

There are many signs — most of them made for public consumption — that Roh intends to continue actively altering the Civil-Military relationship in South Korea. During Armed Forces Day in 2004, Roh emphasized that civilian control of the military which began to be intensified as Yoon became Defense Minister, would be further intensified, stating in part, "... we need strong resolution from the Army itself" (Kim, 2004).

Other events have also had negative effects on the ROK Civil-Military relationship. The highly publicized investigation into the "promotion scandal" involving high-ranking military officers caused further confusion and distrust between the Blue House and

the military (*BBC News*, November 25, 2004). Eventually, perhaps because of moving too fast, the prosecutors investigating the scandal were "relieved" by the Blue House. This caused further negative perceptions to exist among the South Korean public regarding Roh's handling of the military. Finally, during 2005, the Blue House reported that President Roh had decided not to attend the Korean Military Academy commencement ceremonies — and that he would only do so every other year. This was largely reported as being a move designed to "even the status" of the army, as compared to the other services (Yun, 2004).

The formalized Civil-Military relationship continued to be in a state of flux during February of 2005, as the Blue House announced it would eliminate the post of "National Secretary for Defense," and instead create a "Presidential Advisory Committee" on national defense development. The effects of the change (the post had been vacant for several months) are unclear as of the writing of the paper (H. Choi, 2005).

The most recent evidence (as of the writing of this paper) of Roh's vision to severely alter the *status quo* in Civil-Military relations in the ROK is seen in the announced shelving of an operational plan identified as "5029" in the South Korean press (discussed briefly earlier). The ROK NSC, in a highly unusual move, announced suspension of the plan because it "could infringe on the country's sovereignty." The reason this is so unusual, is that operational plans are usually considered the exclusive domain of the military, with almost no outside involvement from the NSC or other outside bodies (*Chosun Ilbo*, April 15, 2005). The plan, designed for sudden changes in North Korea (including regime collapse), would have involved operations led by Combined Forces Command under a U.S. General. Apparently, the NSC (led by the elements discussed earlier in this paper) believes the effort should instead be led by ROK forces. A spokesman for the NSC stated, "We have terminated the U.S.-South Korea Combined Forces Com-

mand's efforts to map out a plan, code named 5029, because the plan could be a serious obstacle to exercising Korea's sovereignty" (Yun, 2005b). The move has also reportedly caused concern in both ROK and U.S. military circles, because apparently, there is now no effective plan at all for an operation in the case of collapse of other crisis in North Korea short of all-out war (*Dong-A Ilbo*, April 15, 2005).

While it is not clear yet (as of the writing of this paper) what effects the changes in planning will have on the military, it is apparent that once again, the process has changed, and NSC involvement has continued to apparently over-ride the decisions of those in the Ministry of National Defense (it is unclear if the Ministry of National Defense was even involved in this decision). The collateral effect of the May 14, Incident, the "Main Enemy" terminology change, and the "Promotion Scandal" has been a noticeable drop in morale among the ROK military. In fact, the continuous lack of clarity regarding the military from the Blue House has left many high-ranking officers apprehensive about decision-making, military readiness, and foreign policy.

VIII. Conclusion

The effects of a Blue House policy that, based on past actions and public statements, is designed to drastically change many of the paradigms associated with Civil-Military relations in the ROK, have been negative in the short run. This is not to say that these moves will be unsuccessful in the long-run, or even that they are unwanted by many in the ROK public. But Roh's leadership style in carrying out this policy and the manner in which the military has been dealt with, has been viewed negatively by the majority of South Koreans. Polls during late 2004 suggested Roh's administration has bungled most attempts at reform targeting infrastructure

and command and control of the military (Choi, 2004b). More recent polls taken during May of 2005 continue to suggest that the approval rate for President Roh and the Uri party is declining (Y. W. Jung, 2005).

The worst effect has been upon the ROK military itself. The result of the constant maneuvering among the members of Roh's formal and informal power circles has essentially made high-ranking military officers and MND officials bystanders when it comes to real influence in Defense policy making. The treatment of the military by the Roh administration and its key officials has had a profound effect on readiness — most notably at the top, where decision-making and leadership has been severely impacted because of a lack of clear guidance from the Blue House, ongoing public policies that are perceived as being designed to weaken the prestige and infrastructure of the military, and perceived anti-American bias in the Blue House that puts strains on the ROK-U.S. military alliance.

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