

Presentations

International Relations in East Asia Before and After the Okinawa Reversion, as Seen Through South Korean Diplomatic Documents

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Introduction

Research on the reversion of Okinawa has primarily been based on historical materials archived in the United States and Japan. The range of available historical materials has expanded significantly over the past 20 years, however, most notably as a result of recent rapid publication of archival resources elsewhere in East Asia. This has inevitably impacted research on the Okinawa reversion, with researchers now utilizing not only Japanese and U.S. sources but also materials from South Korea and Taiwan. This expansion of multi-archival research has inspired fresh attempts to reconsider the reversion of Okinawa not just within the context of U.S.-Japan relations, but within the broader context of East Asia.¹ Concrete examples include examinations of how South Korea, North Korea, and Taiwan perceived and responded to the reversion of Okinawa and the preceding negotiations. In this paper I have attempted to analyze the diplomatic actions of South Korea and North Korea in response to the Okinawa reversion negotiations, and the views on security that those actions reveal.² My analysis highlights that the reversion of Okinawa was not just an issue concerning Japan and the United States, but a regional issue for all of East Asia, impacting many aspects of society, including politics, military affairs, and economics.³ Taking into account the abovementioned research trends and

¹ For a study on the Okinawa reversion, refer to Gabe Masaaki, *Okinawa Henkan to wa Nan datta no ka - Nichibei Sengo Koshoshi no Naka de* [What Was the Reversion of Okinawa? – In the History of Post-war Negotiations Between Japan and the United States] (NHK Publishing, 2000). For details on South Korean diplomacy around the time of the Okinawa reversion, I recommend: Kimiya Tadashi, “*Kankoku Gaiko no Dainamizumu - Tokuni 1970-nendai Shoto no Henka o Chushin ni*” [Dynamism of South Korea’s Diplomacy – With a Focus on Changes in the Beginning of 1970s] (Okonogi Masao and Chang Dal-joong (eds.), *Sengo Nikkan Kankei no Tenkai* [Development of Post-War Japan-South Korea Relations], Keio University Press, 2005); Lee Dong-jun, *Mikan no Heiwa - Beichu Wakai to Chosen Mondai no Henyo* [Uncompleted Peace – Reconciliation Between the United States and China and Changing Nature of the Korea Issue] (Hosei University Press, 2010). For newer research utilizing historical materials not just from Japan and the United States but also from South Korea and Taiwan, I recommend: Narita Chihiro, *Okinawa Henkan to Higashi Ajia Reisen Taisei - Ryukyu/Okinawa no Kizoku, Kichi Mondai no Henyo* [The Okinawa Reversion and East Asian Cold War Dynamics: The Reversion of Ryukyu/Okinawa and the Changing Military Base Issues] (Jimbun Shoin, 2020).

² Kobayashi Somei, “Okinawa Henkan o Meguru Kankoku Gaiko no Tenkai to Kitachosen no Hanno” [Development of South Korean Diplomacy Concerning the Okinawa Reversion and North Korea’s Reaction] (Takeuchi Toshitaka (ed.), *Nichibei Domeiron - Rekishi, Kino, Shuhen Shokoku no Shiten* [Discussions on the Japan-U.S. Alliance - History, Function, Perspectives of Neighboring Countries], Minerva Shobo, 2011).

³ As an example, South Korea’s security concerns arising from the Okinawa reversion were not merely limited to the physical aspect of military power. The reversion of Okinawa served as an opportunity to clarify complex issues concerning the legal status of Korean peninsula natives that had been residing in

their historical development and lineage, this paper aims to explore the reversion of Okinawa, and East Asian international relations before and after the reversion, from the perspective of South Korea.⁴

For South Korea, the reversion of Okinawa was a matter of extreme concern both politically and militarily. If Okinawa were to revert to Japan, it would become difficult for the United States to freely use its military bases in Okinawa. South Korea feared this would degrade the functionality of these bases and significantly impact its own security. As I will elaborate upon later, specific South Korean concerns included critical issues such as whether the United States would be able to reintroduce nuclear weapons to Okinawa after their initial removal, and whether the Japanese government would actually approve this through prior consultations. These concerns took shape within the context of South Korea's views and judgments on the international relations situation in East Asia, and to address them, South Korea began engaging in proactive diplomacy with Japan and the United States.

For this paper, I have drawn on diplomatic documents stored in Seoul's Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to attempt to analyze the nature of South Korea's concerns about the reversion of Okinawa and the diplomatic efforts South Korea undertook to address these concerns. My analysis focused on clarifying the following two issues: firstly, how Japan responded to South Korea's security concerns about the reversion of Okinawa, and how South Korea reacted, also taking into account the response from the United States; and secondly, how South Korea, and particularly its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was unable to entirely dispel its own concerns, perceived the situation, and what kinds of security-related diplomatic policies they were formulating based on its perceptions of the situation. By tackling these issues, my primary objective with this paper is to depict how South Korea perceived the East Asian international relations of the 1960s and 1970s, during which time the reversion of Okinawa took place, and thereby provide some insight into the multilayered and multifaceted nature of East Asian international relations during this period.

For the purpose of advancing the discussion dealt with in this paper, the historical narrative on the political and diplomatic processes around the reversion of Okinawa in parts 1. and 2. draws heavily on a previous paper of mine published in 2011. I would like to state in advance, however, that in the present paper I have attempted to reorganize the points of discussion and extract new ones by incorporating information from newly published historical

Okinawa since pre-war times. The South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated efforts to address this issue immediately after the Okinawa reversion. Although South Korea's aim was to protect its own citizens, it was also conducted as part of South Korea's political struggle with North Korea, which was marked by the duality of internal Korean Peninsula dynamics and the broader global logic of the Cold War. Kobayashi Somei, "Hakken/Bokyaku sareru Zaichu Korian: Amerika Shiseikenka Okinawa ni okeru Chosen Hanto Shushshinsha no Hoteki Chii o Megutte" [Discovered/Forgotten Koreans in Okinawa: Legal Status of People from the Korean Peninsula in Okinawa under the Rule of the United States] (*Waseda Asia Review* 15, Organization for Asian Studies, Waseda University, June 2013).

⁴ Narita's research is notable for its analysis of the political processes surrounding the Okinawa reversion, while taking into account the situation in East Asia, and relations with South Korea and Taiwan in particular. It is limited, however, in that it does not shed sufficient light on the intrinsic logic of the South Korean position. My own paper (2011) outlines the political process surrounding the Okinawa reversion with focus on South Korea. For details on this process, refer to Narita's research.

materials, and it therefore differs in many respects from my earlier paper.

1. South Korean Concerns About the Security System

(1) The Threat from North Korea and Distrust of the United States

The outbreak of the Korean War reinforced South Korea's perception of the threat posed by North Korea to the utmost, making the creation of a new security system South Korea's chief task and a pressing one at that. South Korea's security system in the 1950s depended on the deterrent power of the United Nations Command (established in 1950) and the joint defense framework established through the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea (which took effect in 1954). With the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea in 1965, links began to form between Japan and South Korea's security system. From the mid-1960s, South Korea's security system was formed within the U.S.-Japan-South Korea security triangle centered on the United States, based on the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

From the second half of 1960s, South Korea began to feel a strong sense of anxiety about its own security system. The primary factor behind this was an acute intensification of North Korea's provocative actions toward the South. Incidents such as the attack by North Korean special forces on the Blue House in January 1968, the Pueblo incident also in January 1968, the Uljin-Samcheok landings in October 1968, the armed infiltration near Jumunjin in March 1969, and the shooting down of a U.S. EC-121 reconnaissance plane in April 1969 all occurred in rapid succession. The South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs assessed this situation as having been influenced by: (1) the deterioration of the joint defense capabilities of South Korea and the United States, (2) South Korea's instability and slowing economic growth, and (3) North Korea's efforts to amplify public distrust towards the South Korean government with the aim of establishing a foundation within South Korea for "communist unification" and thereby create a pretext to launch a full-scale war against South Korea.⁵

To counter North Korea's efforts, the South Korean government sought to enhance domestic economic development and strengthen national defense as a means of deterrence against the North.⁶ South Korea was, however, plagued by problems including enormous financial burdens, which meant its efforts to build deterrence could not be fully realized, and the sense of crisis regarding the security situation remained unresolved.⁷ These circumstances

⁵ "Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba" [Important Issues Between South Korea and the United States and the Government's Position] (San Francisco U.S.-South Korea summit talks document), August 7, 1969, in diplomatic record C-0033-03 "Boku Seiki Daitoryo Beikoku Homon, 1968.8 20-25. Zen 3-kan (V.2 Shiryo Tsuzuri)" [President Park Chung-hee's Visit to the United States, 1968.8 20-25. Three Volumes in Total (V.2 Document Folder)], European and American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folder 9, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Seoul.

⁶ "Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba", folder 10.

⁷ Kurata Hideya, "Boku Seiki 'Jishu Kokuboron' to Nichibei 'Kankoku Joko' - 'Soryoku Ampo Taisei'"

led to the recognition within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that “gaining proactive support from the United States through adopting a forward-looking stance with the U.S. government will be crucial”⁸ in overcoming its financial and security challenges. While South Korea’s expectations of the United States were growing in this way, the United States was actually beginning to take actions that deviated from those expectations.

A second factor behind South Korea’s sense of anxiety was that the actions of the United States were intensifying South Korea’s distrust. The announcement of the Nixon Doctrine in July 1969 further fueled this distrust. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs assessed that changes in U.S. foreign policy brought about by the Nixon Doctrine could impact the effective and proper implementation of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea. This assessment motivated the ministry to attempt to strengthen relations with the United States while also conceiving a collective security system in preparation for a potential weakening of U.S. commitments to South Korea.

(2) Collective Security System Plan and Dissatisfaction with Japan

In the late 1960s, South Korea’s perception of the threat from North Korea strengthened due to the intensification of provocative actions from the North. At the same time, the Nixon Doctrine heightened concerns about a possible weakening of U.S. commitments to South Korea, leading to increased distrust towards the United States. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs assessed that changes in the balance of power in Asia in the 1970s would likely occur for the following reasons:⁹ firstly, a reduction in Britain’s military presence in Asia following a withdrawal of British forces from Malaysia, Singapore, and the Indian Ocean; secondly, the growing threat from the expansion of China’s military capabilities; and thirdly, an expansion of the Soviet presence in the region.¹⁰

South Korea, in an effort to prevent the weakening of U.S. commitments to Asia and specifically to South Korea, requested that the United States calmly observe how the situation was developing and act with caution.¹¹ South Korea actually anticipated, however, that a weakening of U.S. commitments would be inevitable, and that it would need to shift its own security posture and move away from a security system largely based on support from the United States and the United Nations. Consequently, South Korea began deliberating on a new collective security system that would require “substantive engagement in Asian regional security issues, and that, although conducted through different methods, would not be inferior

no Kokusai Seijikeizai” [Park Chung-hee’s “Independent National Defense Theory” and the U.S.-Japan “Korea Clause” – International Political Economy of the “Total Security Regime”] (Okonogi Masao and Moon Chung-in (eds.), *Shijo/Kokka/Kokusai Taisei* [Markets, States, International Systems], Keio University Press, 2001, p.148).

⁸ “Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba”, folder 11.

⁹ “1970-nendai no Ajia Josei Tenbo” [Prospects for the Situation in Asia in the 1970s], August 18, 1969 in diplomatic record G-0012-08 “Beikoku no Taigai Gunji Enjo Shiryo, 1969” [Documents on the U.S. External Military Support, 1969], European and American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folders 41-42.

¹⁰ “Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba”, folders 21-23.

¹¹ “Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba”, folders 24-25.

to previous forms of engagement”.¹² This move was influenced not only by South Korea’s perception of a growing threat from the North and growing distrust towards the United States, but also by dissatisfaction with the existing security system. South Korea felt that the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) had become an ineffective shell of its former self and viewed existing security frameworks as one-sidedly U.S.-centric, and lacking organic organizational structure and sufficient crosscutting cooperation among countries like South Korea and Japan.

While receiving side support from the United States, South Korea aimed to build a new collective security system centered on seven of the nations which sided with South Vietnam in the Vietnam War. It appeared to South Korea, however, that Japan was obstructing this effort. This was because it saw Japan as being unwilling to actively participate in the defense of Asia, despite the need for it to shoulder its own share of the burden within the security system.

By the late 1960s, the concerns South Korea had about its own security system were manifesting themselves in the form of the heightened threat from the North, distrust towards the United States, and dissatisfaction with Japan over its uncooperative attitude towards collective security. The emergence of the Okinawa reversion issue between Japan and the United States greatly exacerbated this dissatisfaction with Japan, and served as a clear catalyst, intensifying and bringing to the forefront South Korea’s concerns about its own security.

(3) Opposition to Application of the Prior Consultation System to U.S. Bases in Okinawa

The Treaty on Basic Relations Between Japan and the Republic of Korea was signed in June 1965, and came into effect in December of the same year. This not only normalized relations between Japan and South Korea, but also tied Japan to South Korea’s security system.

In August 1965, the prime minister of Japan, Sato Eisaku, made his first post-war visit to Okinawa, initiating steps toward the reversion of Okinawa under the policy of “*Kaku-nuki, hondo-nami*” (Nuclear-free, and administered as in Japan proper), but this sparked strong concerns in South Korea. This was because South Korea saw Japan’s “*Kaku-nuki, hondo-nami*” negotiation stance with the United States as a declaration of its intent to avoid getting actively involved in an East Asian collective security system. South Korea viewed the reversion of Okinawa as being directly linked to its own security, and therefore paid very close attention to how the Japan-U.S. negotiations played out.

Since the time of the Syngman Rhee administration, South Korea had advocated for the independence of the Ryukyu Islands and opposed the reversion of Okinawa to Japan due to its strategic military importance. By the 1960s, however, South Korea had shifted its stance to not opposing the reversion of Okinawa, on the condition that measures necessary for the security of the Far East were implemented. For South Korea, which harbored concerns about the reversion of Okinawa due to anxiety about its own security system, obtaining these security assurances became a top priority in its diplomacy with the United States and Japan.

South Korea frequently conveyed to Japan its concerns about the reversion of Okinawa.

¹² “Kanbei-kan Juyo Mondai to Seifu Tachiba”, folders 26-27.

In February 1969, at a Japan-South Korea cooperation committee meeting, the South Korean side expressed the view that U.S. military bases in Okinawa played a significant role not only in the defense of Japan but also in maintaining international peace and security in the Far East, and were also essential for the defense and security of South Korea.¹³ Concerns were repeatedly expressed by South Korean media, senior government officials, and National Assembly members that if, after the reversion, the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was applied to Okinawa, and if Japan refused, through prior consultations, to allow the U.S. military to bring in or deploy nuclear weapons in Okinawa, U.S. deterrence would be weakened, significantly impacting South Korea's security.¹⁴ In March 1969, the South Korean government strengthened its stance against the application of the Japan-U.S. prior consultation system to issues in Okinawa. They were concerned about limitations on the free use of bases in Okinawa by the U.S. military, and especially concerned about limitations on the bringing in of nuclear weapons and the ability of the U.S. military to launch operations from Okinawa to South Korea in the event of an emergency.¹⁵ South Korea's stance suggests two potential scenarios relating to the "Korea Minutes", a document pertaining to combat actions in the event of an emergency on the Korean Peninsula, which is thought to have been agreed upon during the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in January 1960. One possibility is that the South Korean side was unaware of the existence of the "Korea Minutes". The other is that they knew about it but intentionally pretended not to in order to strengthen their negotiating position with Japan. Further investigation and analysis of South Korean diplomatic documents will probably be necessary to determine the extent to which South Korea side was aware of the Korea Minutes.

2. Japanese Diplomacy Aimed at Dispelling South Korea's Concerns

(1) South Korea's Diplomatic Engagement with Japan

Japan felt uncomfortable with South Korea's proactive diplomacy on the issue of the Okinawa reversion, viewing South Korea's actions towards Japan as interference in its domestic affairs, which fueled Japan's irritation towards South Korea. South Korea's dissatisfaction with Japan intensified in turn, leading to heated diplomatic exchanges between the two.

In April 1969, South Korea's foreign minister, Choi Kyu-ha, invited Japan's Ambassador

¹³ "Kan/Nichi Kyoryoku Inkai Sokai, Dai 1-ji. Tokyo, 1969.2.12-15" [First Plenary Meeting of the South Korea-Japan Cooperation Committee, Tokyo, 1969.2.12-15] in diplomatic record C1-0022-06, folder 129.

¹⁴ "Telegram from the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to the Secretary of State", 02/26/69, POL19 RYU IS 2/1/69, RG59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box 2458, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

¹⁵ "Ryukyu (Okinawa) Mondai - Mondaiten to Seifu Tachiba" [Ryukyu (Okinawa) Issue – Problems and the Government's Position], March 17, 1969, in diplomatic record C-0029-20 "Beinichi-kan Okinawa Henkan Mondai, 1969.V.1 1969.1-6-gatsu" [The Issue of the Okinawa Reversion Between the United States and Japan, 1969.V.1 January-June 1969], Asian Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folder 83. For an explanation and Japanese translation of this document see: my paper, "Kankoku Gaiko Bunsho ni Miru Okinawa Henkan 'Ryukyu (Okinawa) Mondai—Mondaiten to Seifu Tachiba'" [Reversion of Okinawa in South Korea's Diplomatic Documents: "Ryukyu (Okinawa) Issue – Problems and the Government's Position"] (*Intelligence*, Vol.11, The Institute of 20th Century Media, Waseda University, March 2011).

to South Korea, Kanayama Masahide, to receive by hand a “memorandum to Japan”. The memorandum stated that the reversion of Okinawa was a security- and peace-related matter affecting all friendly nations in Asia and that the current functions of U.S. military bases in Okinawa, which were directly linked to South Korea’s security, ought to be maintained. When handing over the memorandum, Foreign Minister Choi expressed to Ambassador Kanayama his own perceptions of the security crisis and the importance of Okinawa:

“Considering the recent assertiveness of Communist China and Kim Il Sung’s boasting about his intention to unify the two Koreas by force, the South Korean government finds itself compelled to place the greatest focus on the defense framework of the Far East’s liberal camp. The Japanese government should also give sufficient consideration to the important role that Okinawa is currently playing in the defense of this region.”

In response, Ambassador Kanayama clearly expressed his displeasure, saying: “The issue of the reversion of Okinawa, which is Japanese territory, is the most critical matter of concern between Japan and the United States, and a solution to this issue ought to be discussed between Japan and the United States. The Japanese government cannot accept anything resembling intervention from a third country in this matter.”¹⁶ Similar expressions of displeasure also came from Japan’s foreign minister Aichi Kiichi, but at the same time, there were also statements aimed at dispelling the concerns raised by the South Korean side.

“As the South Korean side is aware, the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty includes the ‘Far East’ clause, and Japan is also obligated to consider the security of the Far East. Therefore, we are taking care to ensure that South Korea will have no cause to be overly concerned.”

The South Korean side believed, however, that Japan was trying to diminish the value of the U.S. bases in Okinawa in its negotiations with the United States.¹⁷ Statements by Foreign Minister Aichi did not dispel South Korea’s concerns; on the contrary, they even prompted President Park Chung-hee to issue strong statements to put a check on the Japanese side.¹⁸ Amid these developments, signs of a change in Japan’s stance began to emerge.

On June 20, 1969, Prime Minister Sato acknowledged in a speech at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan (FCCJ) that the bases in Okinawa play a significant role in the security of South Korea and Taiwan, and stated that this would be kept in mind during the negotiations for the reversion of Okinawa. About three months prior to this, however, Prime Minister Sato had responded to a question at a meeting of the Budget Committee of the House

¹⁶ “Okinawa Mondai” [Okinawa Issue], April 9, 1969, in “Okinawa Kankei: Okinawa ni Kansuru Daisangoku no Doko (Kankoku)” [Okinawa: Actions by Third Countries Regarding Okinawa] and Telegram from the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to the Secretary of State, 04/12/69, POL19 RYU IS 03/01/69, RG59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box 2459, NARA.

¹⁷ “Ryukyu (Okinawa) Mondai ni Kansuru Mendan Yoroku” [Digest of Meetings on the Ryukyu (Okinawa) Issue] in “Beinichi-kan Okinawa Henkan Mondai, 1969.V.1 1969.1-6-gatsu”, folder 171.

¹⁸ “Okinawa wa Nichibei-kan Dake no Mondai denai” [Okinawa Is Not Just an Issue Between Japan and the United States] (*The Asahi Shimbun*, April 26, 1969).

of Representatives that deliberations on the Okinawa issue did not extend to the issue of the security of South Korea and Taiwan.

Despite Prime Minister Sato's speech at the FCCJ, South Korea's dissatisfaction and distrust towards Japan continued to grow. In fact, during a U.S.-South Korea summit meeting and a regular Japan-South Korea ministerial meeting held in August 1969, the South Korean side frequently expressed to the United States and Japan its significant concerns about the reversion of Okinawa and the resulting decline in the functionality of the U.S. military bases there.

Efforts to dispel South Korea's concerns were also ongoing in Japan. Foreign Minister Aichi explicitly stated that the strategic value of Okinawa would not be compromised after its return to Japan. The Japanese side also conveyed to the United States, through U.S. ambassador to Japan, Armin Meyer, its desire to avoid making South Korea worried about possible limitations on the ability of U.S. forces to assist them, as a result of prior consultations, in the event of an emergency on the Korean Peninsula.¹⁹ The U.S. side also engaged in proactive efforts in Seoul and Washington D.C. to address South Korea's concerns, and South Korea's efforts to engage with both Japan and the United States on the issue continued.

(2) The Japan-U.S. Joint Statement and Ambassador Kanayama's Explanation to South Korea

As the negotiations for the reversion of Okinawa reached a critical point, Prime Minister Sato was concerned about advancing the Okinawa issue despite opposition from South Korea and Taiwan. Before the announcement of the Japan-U.S. joint statement, he instructed Ambassador Kanayama in South Korea to explain to President Park Japan's position of ensuring that the Okinawa issue would be resolved in a manner that would not compromise South Korea's security.²⁰ A decision was also made to send personal letters addressed to President Park and the president of Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek, dated November 21, in order to provide a further explanation about the reversion of Okinawa.²¹ The Japanese side was making attempts to indicate that maximum consideration was being paid towards South Korea and Taiwan.

The Japan-U.S. summit talks between Prime Minister Sato and President Nixon began on November 19, 1969. The South Korean side intensified its diplomatic efforts in Washington D.C. and Seoul from November 20, the day before the Japan-U.S. joint statement's release, in order to discover its content. On November 21, the joint statement was issued, and Prime Minister Sato gave an address at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. In his address, Prime Minister Sato clarified that in the event of an armed attack on South Korea requiring U.S. forces to use facilities in Japan as launch bases, the Japanese government would adopt a policy

¹⁹ "Aichi Daijin, Maiya Taishi Kaidan (Okinawa Henkan Mondai)" [Meeting Between Minister Aichi and Ambassador Meyer (on the Okinawa Reversion Issue)], August 28, 1969.

²⁰ "Daitoryo Kakka no Kanayama Nihon Taishi to no Mendan Yoroku" [Digest of the Meeting Between His Excellency the President and Japanese Ambassador Kanayama], November 24, 1969, in "Beinichi-kan Okinawa Henkan Mondai, 1969.V.2 1969.7-12-gatsu" [The Issue of the Okinawa Reversion Between the United States and Japan, 1969.V.1 July-December 1969], folders 208-209.

²¹ "Telegram from the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to the Secretary of State", 11/12/69, RG319, History of USCAR, Box 22, Folder 4, NARA.

of “positively and promptly deciding on its stance in prior consultations”. It has been pointed out that this speech fully addressed South Korea’s concerns regarding prior consultation issues relating to the reversion of Okinawa.²² The U.S. side reported to Japan, however, that South Korea still felt anxious.²³

On November 22, South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed President Park and Prime Minister Chung Il Kwon that the joint statement did not explicitly promise the removal of nuclear weapons from Okinawa or prohibition from reintroducing such weapons, and the ministry also communicated its intention to request a further explanation of the statement’s content from both the Japanese and U.S. governments.²⁴ Noteworthy at this juncture was the explanation about the content of the joint statement given directly to President Park by Ambassador Kanayama on November 24. The Park-Kanayama meeting lasted for an hour and a half (according to Japanese documents, it lasted one hour and twenty minutes). This was exceptionally long for a meeting between the president and an ambassador, indicating just how important the matter was.

According to South Korean documents Ambassador Kanayama stated the following during the meeting:

Ambassador Kanayama:

“The Japanese public, not just left-wing factions but Japanese citizens in general, harbor a particular sentiment against nuclear weapons due to the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese government has committed to the so-called Three Non-Nuclear Principles in the Diet. Nuclear issues like this are an extremely delicate matter. The other day I conveyed to Prime Minister Sato the South Korean government’s hope, in connection with nuclear weapons issue, that the reversion of Okinawa does not occur before the middle of 1970. At that time, Prime Minister Sato said that he understood South Korea’s concerns and explained that, while it would be preferable for Japan to have nuclear weapons as well, Japan has no choice but to adhere to the “*Kaku-nuki, hondo-nami*” policy due to domestic circumstances. The recent negotiations have adhered closely to those principles as well. As the joint statement clearly indicates, however, it agreed that, ‘without prejudice to the position of the United States Government with respect to the prior consultation system under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the reversion of Okinawa would be carried out in a manner consistent with the

²² Victor D. Cha (1999), *Alignment Despite Antagonism—The United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*, Stanford University Press, p.76.

²³ On July 16, 1970, during a monthly luncheon meeting held by Ambassador Kamikawa and Ambassador Raslam the latter pointed out the following: “Regarding the use of bases in Okinawa after its reversion, while Prime Minister Sato has already clarified, in his address at the time at the National Press Club in Washington D.C., the attitude that the Japanese government ought to take in prior consultations in the event of an emergency, the South Korean government still feels uneasy and has commented that there is still no clear consensus on the issue.” (“Chukan Beigun Genshuku Mondai” [Issue of the Reduction in the U.S. Forces in South Korea], July 16, 1970, in “Okinawa Kankei: Okinawa ni Kansuru Daisangoku no Doko (Kankoku)”.

²⁴ “Hokoku Jiko” [Matters to Be Reported], November 22, 1969, in “Beinichi-kan Okinawa Henkan Mondai, 1969.V.2 1969.7-12-gatsu”, folder 183.

policy of the Japanese Government.’

These prior consultations were also to cover any significant changes in U.S. armaments, and this can be interpreted as ultimately meaning that the introduction of nuclear weapons would be possible in an emergency.”

In response, President Park stated:

“With regard to the Okinawa issue, I have received Prime Minister Sato’s letter, and I am well aware of your efforts to provide explanations, especially your efforts to inform our government of the Japanese government’s stance prior to Prime Minister Sato’s visit to the United States, and I am also well acquainted with the content of the new joint statement.”

President Park did not react with any particular surprise to Ambassador Kanayama’s explanation, allowing one to infer that he may have seen the possible reintroduction of nuclear weapons in the event of an emergency as a matter of course. If Ambassador Kanayama’s statements are as recorded in South Korean documents, then he communicated to President Park the interpretation that Prime Minister Sato believed Japan needed nuclear weapons and that the Japanese government would allow the reintroduction of nuclear weapons in the event of an emergency. This account diverges from the explanations given to the Japanese public. In fact, on December 2, 1969, in a plenary session of the House of Representatives, Prime Minister Sato responded to a question on the issue as follows:

“The government intends to adhere to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles in Okinawa after its reversion, in exactly the same manner as in Japan proper. We have no intention at all of allowing the introduction of nuclear weapons in the event of an emergency”.

The statements by Ambassador Kanayama, as recorded in South Korean documents, suggest that while the Japanese government publicly denied the possibility of reintroducing nuclear weapons domestically, it conveyed to South Korea a different operational interpretation, indicating that reintroduction would indeed be possible. This raises the question: Did Ambassador Kanayama really make the remarks as recorded in the South Korean documents?

(3) Ambassador Kanayama’s Statements as Recorded in Japanese Documents

After his meeting with President Park, Ambassador Kanayama sent a telegram (No. 1393/strictly secret/urgent) to Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the same day, reporting the content of their conversation.²⁵ The telegram begins with a description of President Park’s reaction, but does not mention how Ambassador Kanayama explained the content of the joint

²⁵ “Okinawa Mondai (Kankoku Kankei)” [The Okinawa Issue (Related to South Korea)] No. 1393, from Ambassador Kanayama addressed to Japan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, November 24, 1969, “Okinawa Kankei 7” [Okinawa-related 7] classification No. 2011-0696, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Tokyo.

statement to him.

“In response to my explanation at the beginning of our meeting, President Park expressed his gratitude for the consideration shown by Prime Minister Sato in providing him with an advance explanation, and stated that he had received a full report on the details of the explanation I gave to Prime Minister Chung Il Kwon on the 21st. He also mentioned that he had thoroughly reviewed the Japan-U.S. joint statement, Prime Minister Sato’s address at the National Press Club, the press conference after the summit talks, and the coverage of these events in newspapers in the United States and Japan.”

There are no discrepancies between what is recorded in the South Korean documents and the events mentioned by Kanayama, such as the prior explanation given by Prime Minister Sato, and the briefing to Prime Minister Chung. President Park continued by stating: “South Korea’s position remains unchanged that it is absolutely essential that the bases in Okinawa remain in their current state, including the continued presence of nuclear weapons, and the ability to conduct unhindered launches.” However, he also stated that “I also well understand Japan’s domestic circumstances and accept that the ‘*Kaku-nuki, hondo-nami*’ policy is, in principle, unavoidable.” To President Park, the joint statement represented a “strong commitment from both Japan and the United States towards the defense of South Korea”, and he also felt “a qualified sense of relief that consideration had also been given to the bringing in of nuclear weapons through prior consultation in the event of an emergency.” Ambassador Kanayama’s statements played a significant role in creating this “qualified sense of relief”. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that President Park would still have been feeling intense anxiety about whether nuclear weapons could actually be reintroduced to Okinawa through prior consultation. Kanayama’s telegram also contained the following statement:

“Of course, I don’t intend to doubt Prime Minister Sato’s determination in this regard, but while it is said that a decision will be made promptly following prior consultations in the event of an emergency, one must also consider potential obstruction from the opposition party and rioting by students and others. Therefore, I’m personally unable to feel completely reassured about this matter.”

After making his statements above, President Park asked if prior consultations required the approval of the Diet. Ambassador Kanayama responded that within Japanese public opinion “recognition of South Korea’s strategic importance in Japan’s own defense has deepened, and the unrealistic arguments of the opposition party are increasingly being seen as unacceptable.” He added that “Prime Minister Sato’s ideas about the integrated nature of Japanese-South Korean defense is increasingly gaining public support” and that “it is unthinkable that anything would hinder swift government decision-making in the event of an emergency.” Along with this, he stated that prior consultations did not require Diet approval.

During the meeting with Ambassador Kanayama, President Park expressed his specific concerns about South Korea’s own security and the preparations that would be required. He

first spoke of South Korea's dissatisfaction and distrust towards the United States in relation to security cooperation. He then told Ambassador Kanayama that following the Blue House raid, he had met with U.S. presidential envoy Cyrus Vance and advocated for a retaliatory strike against North Korea: "If U.S. support is not forthcoming, South Korea will need to take some form of retaliatory action on its own." However, "the U.S. side didn't agree to this, so I had no option but to strongly insist that South Korea and the United States issue a joint statement that, should a similar incident occur in future, they would jointly take retaliatory measures." The U.S. side did not agree to this either, and "I could only issue a tepid statement that should a similar incident occur, the United States and South Korea would immediately consult with each other to determine their stance on the matter." This particular issue was subsequently reviewed during a U.S.-South Korea summit, leading to an agreement that, in the event of an incident such as the Blue House raid, decisions on the actions that need to be taken to deal with the North Korean threat would be made immediately in accordance with the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea. Nonetheless, President Park expressed that if President Nixon "engages in warfare on the one hand ... while publicly declaring that he is backing down and actually doing so on the other, he's unlikely to achieve an honorable peace in Vietnam." President Park insisted that "such actions by the United States are also a source of deep concern in relation to the defense of South Korea". It could be said that behind the strong concerns of South Korea over the reversion of Okinawa lay dissatisfaction with the U.S. response to threats from North Korea, as well as distrust of the U.S. commitment to the security of South Korea stemming from stance taken by President Nixon during the Vietnam War.

President Park then spoke of the necessity of nuclear weapons as a deterrent. He mentioned not only the threat from Pyongyang but also from Beijing: "Considering that Communist China's nuclear weaponry is now nearing a dangerous stage, I personally believe that the Mace missiles currently said to be deployed in Okinawa would be insufficient against a Communist invasion. I actually think it's necessary to deploy more advanced nuclear weaponry to deter war." This highlights the fact that, following China's first successful nuclear test in 1964, South Korea increasingly perceived Beijing as a threat and clearly recognized the necessity of nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

This perception of the situation indicated that South Korea remained anxious about reduced functionality of U.S. bases in Okinawa after reversion, especially with regard to the reintroduction of nuclear weapons. One could say that President Park was subtly suggesting to Ambassador Kanayama that Japan ought to allow the reintroduction of nuclear weapons through prior consultation. Ambassador Kanayama added that President Park of course "made particularly note of the fact" that "despite difficult domestic circumstances in Japan, Prime Minister Sato had shown deep consideration to South Korea's defense issues, as evidenced by the joint statement and the Prime Minister's address at the National Press Club, for which he was profoundly grateful." President Park was still, however, without any positive proof that nuclear weapons could be reintroduced in the event of an emergency, and his concerns had presumably not been dispelled.

The telegram sent by Ambassador Kanayama immediately after his meeting with President

Park did not include any mention of his explanation regarding the reintroduction of nuclear weapons noted in South Korean documents. Even if Ambassador Kanayama did actually make the statements recorded in South Korean documents, it is clear that they did not dispel South Korea's concerns about the potential decrease in the functionality of U.S. bases in Okinawa due to the removal of nuclear weapons and the resulting need for reintroduction in the event of an emergency. In fact, South Korean documents revealed that President Park expressed his strong concerns to Ambassador Kanayama about the operation of the prior consultation system and the potential prevention of the reintroduction of nuclear weapons due to the activities of Japan's pacifists and left-wing students, and particularly, Japan's government, should the opposition party come to power. In response, Ambassador Kanayama merely stated that he would report President Park's concerns in detail to the Japanese government.²⁶

Even though Prime Minister Sato made efforts to show consideration for South Korea in his address, and even if Ambassador Kanayama had provided explanations about the reintroduction of nuclear weapons that did not necessarily align with the Japanese government's views, President Park and South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to harbor doubts about the possibility of reintroducing nuclear weapons to Okinawa through prior consultations between Japan and the United States. This naturally manifested itself as profound anxiety about South Korea's own national defense system. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by Second North America Division of European and American Affairs Bureau of the ministry began reviewing the policy direction for South Korea's security diplomacy.

In Part 3, I will examine the ministry's perception of the situation and its policy direction in the 1970s. I will use the December 13, 1972 "Policy Direction of South Korea's Security and Diplomacy: Medium- to Long-Term Plan" document (hereinafter "the Policy Plan") as a guide.

3. Direction of South Korea's Security and Diplomacy in the 1970s

(1) The South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Basic Perception of the Situation in East Asia²⁷

In the early 1970s, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' perception of international relations in East Asia was as follows: Firstly, they assessed that rapid changes to the international situation posed challenges to the security of their nation. Reasons for these changes included: (1) A weakening of the U.S. commitment to foreign issues due to a shift in its foreign policy from confrontation to negotiation; (2) The entry of China into the United Nations, signaling more proactive involvement from China in international affairs; and (3) Japan's new role in

²⁶ "Daitoryo Kakka no Kanayama Nihon Taishi to no Mendan Yoroku", folder 208.

²⁷ "Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho" [Policy Direction of South Korea's Security and Diplomacy: Medium- to Long-Term Plan], December 13, 1972, in diplomatic record G-0025 "Kankoku no Ampo Gaiko Seisaku, 1972" [Security and Diplomatic Policies of South Korea], Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folders 22-23.

Asia following its emergence as an economic powerhouse. The ministry assessed that the international order in East Asia was rapidly transforming towards a reorganization.²⁸

Secondly, the ministry was aware that South Korea's security and diplomacy was facing challenges. The ministry anticipated the possibility of the "status quo [on the Korean Peninsula] being cemented through détente negotiations among major powers", and expressed concern that this might lead to prolongation of the division of North and South Korea. Furthermore, North Korea might perceive these détente negotiations as temporarily, or superficially, eliminating the risk of war on the peninsula, potentially leading them to provoke conflict. This necessitated a reevaluation of security and diplomacy policies to prevent such scenarios and achieve peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula. This had become the stance of the ministry, as will be more clearly demonstrated by the individual diplomatic policies discussed below.

(2) U.S. Defense Commitments and U.S. Forces Stationed in South Korea²⁹

In the early 1970s, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs picked up on signs of changing dynamics in East Asia and U.S. policy. This meant that the ministry had to first of all prioritize policy responses regarding U.S. defense commitments to South Korea and the presence of U.S. forces there.

The ministry had believed that the concept of joint defense with the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea (1953) at its core would remain in place for a considerable period, and that there would be no changes to U.S. defense commitments to South Korea. The ministry started, however, to assume a number of possibilities that could potentially shake those commitments. The first possibility was shifts in U.S. policy due to the Nixon Doctrine. The second possibility was the potential passage of the War Powers Resolution by the U.S. Congress, which, if enacted, was expected to impact the effective and proper implementation of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea. The third possibility was a change in the U.S. posture on the Korean Peninsula amid calls from Zhou Enlai and Kim Il Sung for the dismantling of the U.S.-South Korea military alliance as the improvement in U.S.-China relations became increasingly evident.

In light of the abovementioned possibilities, the ministry outlined the following diplomatic policies in the Policy Plan. Firstly, to reconfirm at every opportunity the U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea under the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea. Secondly, to very closely monitor changes in President Nixon's foreign policy and the direction of debate in the U.S. Congress on the War Powers Resolution, and to deliberate on appropriate responses when necessary. Thirdly, to remain ever vigilant as U.S.-China and U.S.-Soviet relations improve, to prevent any decisions that might impact the joint defense system of South Korea and the United States, and to prevent the United States from

²⁸ "Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho", Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea].

²⁹ "Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho", December 13, 1972, in diplomatic record G-0025 "Kankoku no Ampo Gaiko Seisaku, 1972", Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folders 24-29.

developing closer ties with North Korea.

Next, I would like to take a look at the U.S. forces stationed in South Korea, another issue that the ministry needed to address. The ministry viewed the presence of the forces as proof of the fulfillment of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea and the U.S. commitment to defend South Korea. The ministry identified three key benefits in their presence: deterrence, counterbalancing, and negotiation leverage. In other words, the ministry saw the U.S. forces in South Korea as an indispensable deterrent thwarting North Korea's desire to invade the South. Maintaining their presence at an appropriate level was deemed vital as a counterforce, given that North Korea had completed its war preparations and was capable of launching surprise attacks. The ministry also believed that the presence of U.S. forces positioned South Korea advantageously in North-South negotiations. After the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine, however, fears spread within the ministry that the current scale and distribution of deployed forces might not be maintained, with subsequent further reductions in U.S. force numbers taking place around 1975 following statements from senior U.S. government officials. The ministry explicitly stated in the Policy Plan a policy of making diplomatic efforts to maintain the current scale and distribution of U.S. forces in South Korea by asserting the following positions to the United States:

- Ensuring the continued presence of U.S. forces in South Korea is necessary to strengthen South Korea's position in North-South dialogue.
- As significant U.S. military withdrawals from Asia begin following the end of the Vietnam War, maintaining U.S. troops in South Korea will be in the interests of the United States in its role as a peacekeeping nation.
- Ensuring the continued presence of U.S. forces in South Korea will provide the United States with an advantage in negotiations with China.
- Delays in the modernization of the South Korean military due to the priority being placed on prevention of further reductions in U.S. forces, could hinder the enhancement of its fighting capabilities.

In addition to the above, the ministry also formulated the following policies towards the United States:

- If further reductions of U.S. forces in South Korea do occur, demand that the operational control that has been transferred to the commander of the United Nations Command be made merely nominal and demand that the U.S. side return substantive operational control.
- Even if the United States withdraws the 2nd Infantry Division and replaces it with rapid deployment forces, ensure these units are stationed in northern Seoul and pursue the modernization of tactical defense units stationed in South Korea such as the U.S. missile and anti-aircraft defense units.
- Work to curb excessive U.S. declarations that South Korea's self-defense capabilities have improved.

The Policy Plan highlighted the ministry's stance of lobbying the United States by emphasizing not only the significant benefits for South Korea but for the United States as well. The ministry's aim was to prevent any further reductions of the U.S. forces in South Korea and maintain their current scale and distribution.

(3) United Nations' Safeguarding of South Korean Security³⁰

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had considered that South Korea's security system was underpinned not only by the U.S. commitment to defend the country, but also by the United Nations Security Council resolutions passed immediately after the outbreak of the Korean War (dated June 25, June 27, and July 7, 1950). Heading into the 1970s, however, perceptions within the ministry regarding the stability of South Korea's security system began to change. South Korea's security system was beginning to face major challenges and there were concerns about the rapid changes that may occur due to changing circumstances in neighboring countries following the Korean War armistice and China's securing of the right of representation at the United Nations.

The potential "rapid changes" that the ministry envisaged included: (1) the complete withdrawal of U.N. forces (excluding U.S. forces), (2) the potential abolition of the United Nations Command (in South Korea and Japan), and (3) issues related to replacing the armistice agreement with a peace treaty and proposals for restructuring the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission. The ministry was also concerned that if North Korea were granted United Nations membership, South Korea's security concepts and security system would undergo a transformation, and they were particularly concerned about potential changes affecting one of the parties to the Korean War armistice.

As is widely known, the United Nations Command became a signatory to the armistice agreement instead of South Korea. To maintain its existing security system, South Korea needed to ensure the role played by the United Nations was sustained. It was noted in the Policy Plan that, while keeping in mind the possibility of North Korea's accession to the United Nations due to the changing international situation, South Korea must adequately leverage the status it had already established within the United Nations and continue with efforts towards unification and maintenance of its current security system. In light of these factors, the following specific policies were outlined in the Policy Plan:

Firstly, to work on preventing any attempts to repeal the United Nations Security Council resolutions and abolish the United Nations Command. Secondly, to continue working to ensure the long-term presence of United Nations forces in South Korea and Japan. Notably, the presence of Thai forces (a small number of air transport support units) stationed in Japan as part of the United Nations Command forces caused an extension of the 1954 United Nations Status of Forces Agreement, and South Korea considered it essential to continue diplomatic negotiations aimed at ensuring the long-term stationing of these Thai forces. Thirdly, should the dissolution of the United Nations Command in South Korea be resolved at the United

³⁰ "Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho", December 13, 1972, in diplomatic record G-0025 "Kankoku no Ampo Gaiko Seisaku, 1972", Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folders 30-31.

Nations, South Korea needs to work to ensure that the U.S. forces under the United Nations Command could remain stationed in South Korea based on the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

As the above shows, the ministry attached extreme importance to the support from the United Nations towards the joint U.S.-South Korea security system following the Korean War, and the ministry also incorporated measures relating to the United Nations in their diplomatic policies. Particularly in the 1970s, South Korea increasingly began to show signs of engaging in “non-aligned diplomacy” and the structure of international politics, including at the United Nations, began to change. This was due not only to China’s growing influence and the increasingly visible instability within alliances under the Cold War regime, but also the growing number of Third World countries, which meant that the structure underpinning U.S. dominance in the United Nations was becoming less assured.³¹ In this light, the Policy Plan can be seen as a reclarification of the importance South Korea attached to the United Nations, which had provided a stable supply of resources to bolster South Korea’s security system.

(4) The Quadripartite Power Structure and South Korea’s Security³²

Heading from the 1960s into the 1970s, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ perception of the Cold War structure changed. The Cold War structure of the 1960s centered on the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Heading into 1970s, the ministry predicted that a new structure would emerge in Northeast Asia centered on the four powers of the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, and China. This prediction was based on the weakening U.S. commitment to Asia, China becoming a nuclear power and increasing its involvement in the United Nations and other areas of the global community, and Japan’s emergence as an economic powerhouse. The ministry’s assessment was that these four powers were seeking to lock in the status quo on the Korean Peninsula and were attempting to pursue military neutrality (demilitarization).

In the Policy Plan, the ministry outlined the kinds of security policies South Korea would pursue in advance of the changes that they predicted would occur within the Cold War structure. Firstly, in their diplomacy towards the United States, they would work to maintain their mutual defense system and request that the United States play the role of guarantor of South Korea’s security. They would also pursue diplomacy aimed at receiving continued support for the modernization of South Korean military forces and would continue to call for the continued deployment of U.S. nuclear arms. Secondly, regarding their diplomacy towards Japan, it was noted in the Policy Plan that Japan would likely expand its military capabilities and that this would “serve as insurance for the liberal camp within the balance of power in Northeast Asia”. It was also noted in the Policy Plan that South Korea ought to maintain its neutral stance towards a Japanese military buildup, and seek ongoing support for

³¹ Kimiya Tadashi, “Boku Seiki Seiken no Tai-Kyosanken Gaiko – 1970-nendai o Chushin ni” [Diplomacy Towards the Communist Bloc under the Park Chung-hee’s Administration: With a Focus on the 1970s] (*The Journal of Contemporary Korean Studies*, Association for Contemporary Korean Studies in Japan, November 2011).

³² “Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho”, December 13, 1972, in diplomatic record G-0025 “Kankoku no Ampo Gaiko Seisaku, 1972”, Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea], folders 32-34.

the development of South Korea's defense industry through economic assistance from Japan while in doing so ultimately eliminating the potential for military and economic encroachment from Japan. It should be noted that there were differences between the Policy Plan and its draft version. The section relating to diplomacy with Japan in the draft version of the Policy Plan included the following statement:

“A [Japanese] military buildup would complement the weakening commitment of the United States, and Japanese nuclear armament would act as a deterrent against Communist China, serving as insurance for the free world in the balance of power in Northeast Asia. South Korea will internally support such moves and shift its existing policies accordingly, while maintaining a neutral stance externally. Furthermore, South Korea will secure support from Japan for the development of its defense-related industries, and in doing so ultimately ensure the prevention of military and economic encroachment by Japan.”³³ [Underlining added by the author]

The draft version of the Policy Plan mentioned a policy shift regarding Japan's nuclear armament, suggesting that some within the ministry viewed the nuclear armament of Japan in a positive light. In the final version of the Policy Plan, however, any references to Japan's nuclear armament, including the sentiment expressed in the underlined part above, were removed. Even though it was only mentioned in a draft document of a temporary and confidential nature, the existence of such opinions within the ministry supporting Japan's nuclear armament is noteworthy. Just what happened to such views remains an important issue to be clarified.

Thirdly, regarding diplomacy towards China and the Soviet Union, the ministry proposed abandoning the tone of enmity towards the two powers while opening the door to preliminary negotiations and opening up a path to discussions on the roles of China and the Soviet Union on the Korean Peninsula. Incorporated within this policy direction was South Korea's objective of containing North Korea. Fourthly, concerning relations with North Korea, any future military force reductions were to be conducted in tandem by North and South Korea, and any such reductions must be accompanied with solid guarantees.

In this way, perceptions within the ministry about the Cold War structure, saw a shift moving from the 1960s into the early 1970s, leading to their prediction of the emergence of a quadripartite power structure in East Asia. This was seen as something that would impact South Korea's security system, and the ministry were proposing diplomatic strategies towards the United States, Japan, China, and the Soviet Union, from the perspective of maintaining the existing system.

(5) North-South Relations and Security³⁴

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs documented North Korea's efforts in the Policy Plan, noting

³³ “Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Seisaku Hoko – Chuchoki Keikakusho”, Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Republic of Korea].

³⁴ “Kankoku Ampo Gaiko no Hoko” in diplomatic record G-0025 “Kankoku no Ampo Gaiko Seisaku, 1972”, Second North America Division, Bureau of European and American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign

that North Korea was actively engaging in diplomacy aimed at establishing relations with the United States and Japan in order to dampen their support for South Korea. The ministry also noted that North Korea was seeking the withdrawal of U.S. forces and the United Nations Command, and the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea with a view to removing foreign forces from South Korea. The ministry noted North Korea was also attempting to establish diplomatic relations not only with countries such as Australia and New Zealand, but also with the Philippines, Thailand, and other Southeast Asian countries, as well as with European nations like France and Sweden, and was also striving to join international organizations including the United Nations in order to establish an equal position with South Korea within the global community. Within the Policy Plan the ministry also makes reference to North Korea's aggression towards the South, noting that North Korea continues to advocate for an autonomous and peaceful unification of the peninsula free from foreign intervention, and is fully committed to improving its own position through inter-Korean dialogue and exchanges.

In response to these moves by North Korea, the ministry indicated in the Policy Plan that South Korea needed to dampen North Korea's intent to provoke war by hosting North-South Red Cross Talks and North-South Coordinating Committee meetings, and by implementing policies covering a variety of areas including North-South dialogue and exchanges. The ministry believed that diplomatic efforts to weaken and deter North Korea's military capabilities should continue, and that South Korea should pursue mutual North-South reductions of military power, and aim to conclude agreements with North Korea on matters such as the non-use of military force.

In light of the above circumstances, the ministry outlined, in the Policy Plan, the following policies on relations with North Korea: Firstly, South Korea ought to request that nations with which it already has diplomatic relations continue with their policy of not recognizing North Korea, in order to limit the extent to which North Korea can improve its international standing. The ministry also suggested that South Korea should concurrently make overtures to communist nations, including China and the Soviet Union, seeking improved relations with them. One could say that this policy anticipated the diplomatic policies of President Park, which later came to light. Indeed, on June 23, 1973, South Korea issued a Special Statement on Foreign Policy for Peace and Reunification, indicating the abandonment of the Hallstein Doctrine and announcing the intention to establish diplomatic relations with countries that have diplomatic ties with North Korea, including communist regimes. Secondly, South Korea ought to maintain a military balance with North Korea, establish a self-defense system in preparation for any contingency, and devote efforts to maintaining the U.S. military presence in South Korea and U.S. defense commitments to South Korea. This involved modernizing the South Korean military, nurturing a domestic defense industry, and converting general industrial companies into defense companies. Thirdly, South Korea ought to advocate to North Korea for mutual reductions in military forces, and for reciprocal measures such as the non-use of military power on the Korean Peninsula and nonaggression assurances.

In the Policy Plan the ministry proposed taking a “diplomatic” approach towards North Korea. The National Unification Board (now the Ministry of Unification) was established in March 1969, however, and the management of relations with North Korea were placed under its control. Were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ policies towards North Korea shared with the Ministry of Unification, and if so, how? South Korea’s policies towards North Korea from the 1970s onwards had a complexity that cannot be fully understood simply by observing the actions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Given this complexity, it is necessary to further scrutinize just how significant the policies towards North Korea outlined in the Policy Plan actually were.

Conclusion

I would like summarize what I have covered in this report into the following three points: First, the main concerns of President Park and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs relating to the reversion of Okinawa were the potential impact on South Korea’s security system of the decline in functionality of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa, and especially whether the reintroduction of nuclear weapons to Okinawa would be possible. The South Korean side was worried that the Japanese government might, through prior consultations, prohibit the United States from bringing nuclear weapons back into Okinawa, and this led to anxiety about the position Japan might take in its negotiations with the United States.

Second, the concerns and anxiety of the South Korean side relating to the reversion of Okinawa were not dispelled by Prime Minister Sato’s addresses nor by the explanations provided to South Korea by Japan and the United States. It is possible that Ambassador Kanayama provided detailed explanations, but even if this were true, they did not fully dispel President Park’s concerns, leaving South Korea’s strong sense of uneasiness towards the United States and Japan unresolved.

Third, the concerns and anxiety of South Korea were linked to major changes to the situations both within and without East Asia, such as the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine, progress with U.S. diplomacy towards communist countries, the rise of a nuclear-armed China, and Japan’s emergence as an economic powerhouse. Developments such as these provided the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with both motivation and opportunities to define new directions for South Korea’s security diplomacy. I would like to discuss some interesting points stemming from this situation.

One interesting point is that even during the Park administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs exhibited a willingness to initiate diplomacy with the Communist Bloc, even if its motive in doing so was to counter North Korea. While it would take some time before such diplomacy came to fruition as “Nordpolitik” under President Roh Tae-woo, it is perhaps an issue worth examining, by drawing on research findings from Japan and South Korea,³⁵ to

³⁵ Kurata Hideya, “Kankoku ‘Hoppon Gaiko’ no Hoga – Boku Seiki ‘Heiwa Toitsu Gaiko Sengen’ no Shoso” [The Germination of South Korea’s ‘Nordpolitik’: Various Aspects of Park’s ‘Special Statement on the Foreign Policy for Peace and Unification’] (*International Relations*, No. 92, The Japan Association of

look at how the initial willingness to engage with the Communist Bloc in the early 1970s was utilized to propel Nordpolitik forward. A second interesting point is that President Park and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had high expectations for nuclear weaponry as a deterrent. Just how the covert initiation of nuclear weapons development and nuclear research in South Korea in the 1970s is tied to the aforementioned concerns, anxiety, and expectations, is also an issue that warrants deeper investigation. Another interesting point is that there were some within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that voiced support for Japan's nuclear armament, although such views were ultimately removed from the final version of the Policy Plan. Underlying this was hopefulness about the bolstering of Japan's military capabilities, including nuclear armament, albeit combined with a wariness of Japan from economic and military viewpoints.

The reversion of Okinawa was not only a matter between Japan and the United States but also a regional issue affecting all of East Asia. It triggered strong concerns and anxiety in South Korea, but at the same time, or rather, precisely because of this, it served as a catalyst for South Korea to explore and establish a new direction for its diplomatic and security policies during the 1970s.

There are still many questions surrounding the Okinawa reversion that need to be clarified. Shining a light on these questions from various angles not only advances the study of the Okinawa reversion itself, but also helps in extracting clues for deciphering the complex and multilayered nature of international relations in East Asia at the time. Having made this last observation, I would like to conclude my paper here.

International Relations, October 1989); Kimiya Tadashi, "Boku Seiki Seiken no Tai-Kyosanken Gaiko"; Hong Seuk-ryule, "Detanto-ki Kankoku no Tai-Kyosanken Gaiko Seisaku" [Foreign Policy of the Republic of Korea Towards Communist Countries During the Détente Period] ("Detangteu-gi Hangug-ui Daegongsangwon Oegyojeongchaeg"), *The Korean Cultural Studies*, Vol.34, Research Institute of Korean Culture, Ewha Womans University, January 2018, among others.