

# Anti-Americanism in South Korea , Korean culture and the threat of war



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### The Spread of Anti-Americanism in South Korea

The U.S. military presence in South Korea has prevented a possible North Korean invasion since the end of the Korean War. Although it is true that the U.S. helped split Korea into two, the U.S. role as a peacekeeper in the post-war era should not be forgotten. Nevertheless, the anti-American sentiment is spreading in South Korea for three main reasons: human rights violations by the American soldiers stationed in South Korea, the unjust Republic of Korea (ROK)-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and the reckless and aggressive nature of the Bush administration. Compared to Clinton's moderate policy on Korea, pursuing Bush's aggressive foreign policy will only provoke North Korea and will inevitably bring about another bloody Korean War. In addition, Bush's 'axis of evil' remark and Jay Leno's harsh comment<sup>1</sup> on a Korean skater Kim Dong-Sung – that he must have kicked and eaten a dog out of frustration from being disqualified from the 2002 Winter Olympic event – have fueled the spread of anti-American sentiment already ruffled for the three reasons above. In order to prevent a possible North Korean attack, it is crucial to form a strong ROK-U.S. alliance that can only be brought about by arresting the spread of anti-Americanism and by the U.S. adopting a generous approach in dealing with the North.

Unless the human rights violations by the GIs are justly punished, the anti-American sentiments will persist and weaken the ROK-U.S. alliance by the U.S. losing the support and the trust of Koreans. If the ROK-U.S. alliance weakens, North Korea will once again attempt to usurp the Korean peninsula by force with no superpower present in

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<sup>1</sup> Jay Leno remarked, "he must have kicked a dog in frustration, then eaten it after losing the gold metal..." In response, Kim Jong-Pil, a former prime minister of S. Korea stated, "[w]hat an ignorant son-of-a-bitch he is"

South Korea to diminish its possibility of victory. To deter such an invasion by the North, it is necessary that the upsurge of anti-American sentiment be calmed so that a tightened bond between South Korea and the United States can form. In the late twentieth century, there have been frequent gatherings by human rights supporters and college students who demanded rightful compensation and termination of crimes committed by American soldiers. On May of 2001, an anti-American festival named 'Oh! No~USA Festival' was held at Seoul's Kyunghee University and in a renowned town called Myongdong. The concert money will be used to help alleged victims of crimes committed by the U.S. soldiers and to fight environmental pollution near U.S. bases. "We want to let people know the true face of the United States," says a student activist organizing the event (Chang, 1). According to a December 2001 survey conducted by the polling firm of Potomac Associates, "the majority of Koreans (59 percent) believe that the United States benefits more from the relationship than does Korea...[and] virtually half (49 percent) of those surveyed concluded that they felt anti-American sentiments were growing" (Steinberg, 1).

The current GI crime rate in South Korea proves why it is so hard to stop such anti-American sentiment among South Koreans. In South Korea, crimes that are committed on average five times or more in a day by American soldiers go unpunished, not to mention numerous rape and murder incidents in which most criminals can flee and hide from the crime scene since they are not placed under Korean jurisdiction until convicted. The highly publicized brutal murder of Yun Keum-Yi on Oct. 28, 1992 sparked the spread of anti-U.S. bases sentiment, and the frequent sexual crimes committed by the GIs – mostly in GI Towns called *Kijichons* – have forced groups of

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("Leno's," 1).

human rights supporters to carry out public demonstrations and protests. Resistance of these women victims, however, have deconstructed the U.S. hegemony. Liberating themselves from the binary notion of masculinity and femininity, of the powerful and the less powerful, these women have asserted their power by showing multiple sites of resistance throughout the nation. The women victims of South Korea are now engaging themselves in political action, just as thousands of ants march over and engulf what once was a huge bread – the United States. Their resistance, however, has not yet been able to curb the number of crimes and justly punish those who commit crimes. Although demeaning remarks and behavior toward Koreans by the U.S. soldiers can be noted frequently, South Koreans have no legal means to prevent themselves from becoming subjects of such discrimination. Unfortunately, the Korean government has no voice on these “minor” crimes under the SOFA Agreement. It is also important to note that there is a new generation of victims called Amerasians – children born of Americans and Koreans – who live as outcasts due to their mixed race. In such a conservative society based on the values of Confucianism, the Amerasians are oftentimes abandoned, lead promiscuous lives themselves, or resort to becoming criminals.

Together with human rights violations by the U.S. soldiers, the unjust Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) has instigated people to take a negative stance on the U.S. military presence in the Korean peninsula. The loss of people’s faith in the U.S.’s role as a protector will inevitably lead to the weakening of ROK-U.S. alliance; however hard the Korean government may try to do otherwise, the voices of citizens, in the end, win the government over. Since the U.S. military occupation after World War II until 1967, the ROK had no sovereignty and had no voice even in the face of complete surrender of

jurisdiction. During the first U.S. military occupation of South Korea, the two nations made a promise that ROK surrender all rights and allow “the U.S. Armed Forces’ exclusive rights to the military bases and facilities under the condition that the U.S. Army withdraw in 1949” (“United States,” 1). The promise was obviously broken. Although the ROK-U.S. SOFA Agreement was first established in 1967, it “is considered the most unequal law by international legal standards (“United States,” 1). Not only did the agreement force the Korean government to dispatch troops in Vietnam, but it also demanded an enormous share of defense cost; “[t]he share of ROK in 1995 was \$30 million, which amounts to 78% of the stationing expenses, with an annual increase of 10%” (“United States,” 1). The revisions in 1991 and in march of 2001 made small changes only to the issue of criminal jurisdiction and increased the South Korean share of defense cost. According to Item 6 of the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty - the basis of SOFA - it is stated that the free stationing of U.S. bases is valid indefinitely. The purpose of the U.S. military occupation is not stated at all, and Item 1 of Article 4 renders the U.S. Armed Forces no obligation to restore the damaged land back to the original state.

Major SOFA issues that have angered South Koreans the most are criminal jurisdiction and environment abuses. These two issues have been publicized to a great extent by the Korean media, bringing into people’s awareness their status as victims and as citizens of what the U.S. soldiers think is a lowly, precarious Third World nation in need of their protection. The “minor” crimes of GIs go unpunished due to the unequal SOFA Agreement, which applies pre-indictment custody to only 12 extreme crimes including rape and murder. The ROK-U.S. SOFA Agreement connivingly lists only 12 carefully worded, extreme crimes as applicable to pre-indictment custody. For example,

almost every crime mentioned has to result in death in order to be applicable to pre-indictment custody and include the following: “assault resulting in death, fleeing a traffic scene resulting in death, murder, etc.” (“Path to Agreement,” 19). This can be seen in the following excerpt from the 2001 ROK-U.S. SOFA Agreement:

The military authorities of the United States shall transfer custody to the Republic of Korea authorities if the offense over which the Republic of Korea has the primary right of jurisdiction and for which the Republic of Korea has requested the transfer of custody at the time of indictment or thereafter falls within the following categories of cases of sufficient gravity to warrant custody and adequate cause and necessity exists for such custody.

- (a) murder;
- (b) rape (including quasi-rape and sexual intercourse with a minor under thirteen years of age);
- (c) kidnapping for ransom
- (d) trafficking in illegal drugs;
- (e) manufacturing illegal drugs for the purposes of distribution;
- (f) arson;
- (g) robbery with dangerous weapon;
- (h) attempts to commit the foregoing offenses;
- (i) driving under the influence of alcohol, resulting in death;
- (k) fleeing the crime scene after committing a traffic accident resulting in death;
- (l) offenses which include one or more of the above-referenced offenses as lesser included offenses.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> “United States-U.S. Military Bases-ROK-US Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)”

Deconstruction of the ROK-U.S. SOFA Agreement further reveals its unfair nature; it applies to the U.S. troops stationed in Korea and not to the Korean troops on the U.S. soil. The United States' presence in the Korean peninsula has been a symbol of masculinity, while South Korea can be seen as feminine; the U.S. is paternalistic and hegemonic while South Korea has always been penetrable and, in a metaphoric sense, has been raped by the ruling power.

Regarding environmental abuses, the U.S. Army has been dumping toxic chemicals such as formaldehyde to the Han River, "the lifeline of 10 million Seoul citizens" (Choi, 242). On May 8, 2002, bombs were dropped by one of the three U.S. A-10 aircrafts on its flight from Osan Air Base to the training range, injuring a dozen people and destroying more than 170 houses. Deaths have also resulted from the mistakes made by the U.S. soldiers. Under the SOFA Agreement, the U.S. is not responsible for such environmental degradation or damages incurred upon South Koreans, and the Korean government cannot release the environmental contamination report without U.S. consent. Although some organizations such as Green Korea, Greenpeace, and the WorldWatch Institute have some documentation of contamination, the Korean government refuses to release them in fear of fueling the anti-American sentiment that threatens to explode if sparked. Therefore, people dwelling near the military bases have no means of knowing the extent to which they are exposed to toxic chemicals and possess no material evidence that they can use to obtain legal compensation for their health problems. The extent of their anger seems understandable considering that the people cannot find ways to legally punish the U.S. bases for gradually killing civilians through environmental contamination.

The Koreans' stance on the U.S. role has only been aggravated with the advent of the reckless Bush administration. The abrupt change from the mild U.S. foreign policy of the Clinton administration to an aggressive, unyielding one in the Bush administration has frustrated the two Koreas and Clinton supporters; together with the Sunshine Policy, the Clintonian approach towards North Korea has brought about the lessening of tensions that seemed almost inevitable until just recently. By the end of the administration, Clinton was at the brink of making a historical visit to North Korea, and the banning of missile development, export, and testing would have been possible if the administration lasted a little longer. When the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) or North Korea refused inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1993 and threatened to withdraw from the nonproliferation treaty (NPT), the Clinton administration came up with a bright idea: in 1994, the U.S. and North Korea reached a U.S.-DPRK Agreed Framework to stop the plutonium production in North Korea in exchange for building two nuclear electric generating plants of latest design. By the end of the reactor building, North Korea will have to shut down all of its plutonium generating reactor sites and open up doors for inspection to take place. In addition, Clinton's ardent support for the Sunshine Policy and tolerant, yielding nature of his foreign policy gained the support of the two Koreas, and it was the collaboration of the three nations that advanced the reunification process to the next step.

With Clinton's support for the Sunshine Policy, the Kim administration of South Korea was able to instigate tourism to Mt. Geumgang in North Korea and begin three rounds of family reunions between the North and the South. By having dialogues with the North, the U.S. government, in exchange for lifting some sanctions, obtained a pledge

from the North that it would not flight test any long-range missiles. There also has been a mention of building the inter-Korean railroad and arranging more family reunions to gradually ease the tension that has lasted for over fifty years. Most Koreans supported the U.S. policy regarding North Korea, and the spread of the anti-American sentiment was solely due to the human rights violations by the American soldiers and the unjust SOFA Agreement.

Some conservatives, however, claim that the Clintonian approach in dealing with North Korea has brought about nothing. They accused him of “attempting to secure a foreign policy legacy during his final weeks in office” (“Bush alters,” 1). Clinton could have made a mistake by allowing foreign launches of North Korean satellites in exchange for the banning of North Korea’s ballistic missiles. In addition, the 1994 agreement reached during the Clinton administration has only added to the nation’s political and economical burden, with no guarantee of return from North Korea. The positions have switched; instead of the U.S. pushing North Korea to ban its nuclear development, North Korea is threatening that if the U.S. does not build the reactors of latest design without delay, it will reclaim its promise of banning the plutonium production. The conservatives siding with the Bush administration also point out the stupidity of Clinton giving a reward in a type of “nuclear coin,” which can only strengthen the North Korean side and can turn out to be harmful (Gilinsky, 2). For conservatives, waiting for North Korea’s collapse is the best solution, noting the how North Korea has never kept its promise and is characterized by unpredictability; reaching an agreement with such a despotic nation, they believe, is a fruitless effort.

In exchange for millions of dollars worth of aid from both the South and the

U.S., the only agreement implanted by the North is the three rounds of family reunions. Even when the former President Kim Young-Sam presented 150,000 tons of rice to the North, "Pyongyang dealt him a slap in the face by withdrawing from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT)" ("Illusion of the Sunshine Policy, 3). The logic of the Sunshine Policy derived from the Aesop fable that "...the Sun, rather than the North Wind, makes a traveler take off his coat" does not seem to apply when dealing with North Korea (2). In addition, the inter-Korean railroad building that the North bragged would take a maximum of six months to build hasn't even started, and "[t]he threat from the North has grown, not diminished, since 1994" (Melloan, 1). The conservatives claim that Pyongyang will never give up its missile or nuclear ambitions, and in that case, it is fruitless to reach an arms agreement with the North. It does not seem to make sense for most conservatives on the Bush side to support a "major proliferator of ballistic missile capabilities," which now seems to be working on the "long-range Taepo-Dong 2 (TD-2) missile with a capability of hitting Alaska and Hawaii with a substantial payload, and an arc from Phoenix, Ariz., to Madison, Wis., with a light payload" (Melloan, 2).

Although their claim that nothing significant or worthwhile has been achieved during the Clinton administration is valid to a certain extent, the pursuing of Bush's harsh foreign policy should change its course in order to prevent another bloody war -- far more bloody if it is, very likely, a nuclear war. Although the Clintonian approach brings changes about slowly, it at least does not instigate North Korea to consider waging a war. The anti-American sentiment results precisely from this point; the people of Korea want peace, not another war with their brothers and sisters on the other side of the border. It is also important to note that the Sunshine approach has indeed brought about some changes

(family reunions, the Geumgang Mountain tourism in North Korea, etc.), although they might be small compared to the final goal of reunification. Only by building brick by brick, a bridge towards the reunification can be built.

There are other reasons why the U.S. should adopt a milder foreign policy. Not only is it questionable whether North Korea will let itself collapse when the time comes, but the anti-American sentiment in reaction to Bush's aggressive foreign policy will blindfold South Koreans from seeing the necessity of U.S. military presence and force them to oppose it, already having been angered by human rights violations and the unjust SOFA agreement. Completely going against South Korean President Kim's Sunshine Policy – which Bush claims to support only in words – the Bush administration has imposed stringent rules on verification of missile banning, has forced North Korea to accelerate inspection procedures, and has been vague about financial reward to be given if North Korea abides by the U.S. demands in this regard. According to Donald Gregg, a former U.S. ambassador to South Korea, the U.S. and South Korea are like “two doctors with the same patient who have never compared diagnosis” (Slavin, 2). Unless the two nations come up with the same diagnosis, the reunification of the two Koreas is not likely to occur.

In addition to a ROK-U.S. partnership, the relaxation of tension among the three nations – ROK, DPRK, and the U.S. – is pivotal in paving the road to reunification, and it can only result from holding frequent talks among the three. With Bush's rash and aggressive remarks, it is very unlikely that the ongoing tension will ease. Bush's remark about “the axis of evil” made it almost impossible for North Korea to willingly hold another talk and sparked the spread of anti-American sentiment once again. George

Bush's categorization of North Korea as part of the "axis of evil" with Iran and Iraq has angered South Koreans, not to mention the probable reactions of North Koreans, who are claiming that such outright categorization of North Korea as a terrorist nation is equivalent to the U.S. boldly declaring a war. Protestors gathered to prevent Bush from visiting Korea in February of this year to demand his apology, claiming that "[t]he core of evil is the United States of America" (Barbara "Visit," 1). In a popular Korean newspaper, there appeared "the Statue of Liberty holding warplanes instead of a torch, while the moderate Korea Times opined that the U.S. anti-terror campaign appeared to be going in the wrong direction" (Barbara "Visit," 1). Some Koreans are fearing that the U.S. war on terrorism will shift its gears to include North Korea as one of the potential war targets. Bush's remark instigated people to take some extreme views of the U.S., including the one about how "the United States...has been promoting wars in order to serve their interest in selling weapons" (Barbara "Visit," 1).

Contrasting with the predominantly negative stance on the U.S. role in Korea, some continue to adopt a positive view. The older generations, scarred by the memories of the Korean War, tolerate Bush's harsh remark on North Korea since they believe that it is not the Sunshine Policy which prevented another war, but the deterrent power of the U.S. Army. They agree with Bush saying that he portrayed the real character of North Korea. According to the more tolerant group of Koreans, it is not the content of his remark that angered South Koreans but the rashness of his remark – making such a rhetorically violent remark without consulting with the South – that caused the upsurge of strong emotions. Some say, however, that it is the continual view of North Koreans as blood-related brothers and sisters that explains the strong reaction of South Koreans to

the “axis of evil” remark.

Jay Leno’s reckless comment, George W. Bush’s “axis of evil” remark and his aggressive foreign policy, human rights violations by the American soldiers stationed in South Korea, and the unjust Status of Forces Agreement have all contributed to the spread of anti-American sentiment in the Korean peninsula. The ROK-U.S. alliance is likely to weaken if the adverse feelings among Koreans toward the U.S. persist, and North Korea will not miss the chance to invade the South when the allies - the South and the U.S. - are in conflict with each other. In order to prevent another bloody Korean War, the ROK-U.S. alliance should remain intact and strong, and this can only be brought about by arresting the spread of anti-American sentiment both South and North Korea.

#### A reunified Korea: a reunified culture?

Although decades of a divided Korea have resulted in cultural differences between South Koreans and North Koreans, Koreans share the same roots. Recent efforts on both the North Korean and South Korean sides displayed cultural cooperative participation; the North-South Inter-Korea soccer games shortly after the FIFA World Cup 2002 this past summer exemplify one among several of these efforts.

“Despite heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula it looks like cross-border exchanges will proceed on a civilian level,” reported Chosun Ilbo, one of the top newspapers in South Korea, on July 22, 2002. “North Korea has accepted the South’s invitation to take part in joint celebrations for the August 15<sup>th</sup> Independence Day in Seoul, as well as an inter-Korean soccer match in September...the South Korean national soccer team’s outstanding performance in the 2002 FIFA World Cup Games had soccer fever sweeping the North, and this had a positive effect on the opening of the inter-

Korean soccer match. Back in 1990, an inter-Korean football match took place in both Pyongyang and Seoul, and in the following year a South-North joint team played in the international Youth Soccer Championship in Portugal.”

If the North and the South were to unite, it seems that from a cultural aspect, transitioning from a divided nation to a single one will be facilitated by these recent efforts. However, this is not to say that continued efforts will not be needed in smoothing the progress. In particular, a lot of older North Koreans who have been saturated with the Ju che (self-sustenance) idealism and have become used to the North Korean ways of life may feel awkward in mingling with South Koreans and absorbing the more modern, more Americanized way of living.

For instance, the Korean language has evolved into two different types of the same root language. Whereas in North Korea, the Korean language has maintained its pure form, untainted by any adoption of foreign words masked under Korean pronunciation and spelling, the Korean language in South Korea contains many American and foreign words. Moreover, the differences in a quasi-assimilation into global and American culture that South Korea has and the pure and localized culture that North Korea has extend to beyond mere language and communication. The streets in South Korea are laden with American franchises, such as McDonald’s, Burger King, Starbucks Coffee and Outback Steakhouse. One interesting aspect of these franchises, however, is the noticeable addition of Korean food items on the menus at these restaurants. At Burger King, for instance, the menu not only has whoppers and French fries, but it also has shaved ice with red bean, a popular Korean dessert. And at Outback Steakhouse, the menu includes kimchee, the staple side dish of Korean meals. Or take,

for instance, Lotteria, a Korean restaurant that's a spinoff of Burger King and McDonald's. This combination of Americanism with Korean traditional culture extends also to the clothing industry. WhoAU, a Seoul branch of the Abercrombie & Fitch store in the United States, sells Abercrombie & Fitch style clothing with different labels and even has pictures using the same models. Oddly, South Koreans adopt certain aspects of American culture while continuing to harbor their anti-American sentiments.

During the summer of 2002 in Seoul, two teenaged girls were killed when run over by a tank driven by American GIs. This incident exploded into a controversy over the leniency that the GIs were rewarded with, although civilians clamored for stricter punishment. During this time also, many South Koreans hoped to boycott certain American products in South Korea. Some stores even donned signs reading "No Americans welcome here" in its windows. This backlash suggests that perhaps South Koreans' commercial and investment interests clash with their personal and cultural ones.

More directly, such corporations as Hyundai in South Korea have taken initiatives to conduct tour trips to North Korea's Mount Geumgang, purportedly the most beautiful mountain on the entire Korean peninsula.

"Hyundai Asan, the operator of the Mount Geumgang tour project, will hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> international Mt. Geumgang Motorcycle Touring Contest in cooperation with the Korea Motorcycle Federation from Aug. 13-16 [last year, 2002], the company said Thursday," said a reporter from Chosun Ilbo late July of 2002. "Participants began their journey in Seoul and travel through Gangwon Province in South Korea then move to North Korea by ship to continue their race near the scenic mountain."

According to The People's Korea, a semimonthly newspaper on Korean affairs

and a Tokyo-based unofficial mouthpiece of the DPRK government, “North and South Korea are promoting their step-by-step reconciliation and cooperation process, as both sides held the 6<sup>th</sup> round of the reunion of separated families and relatives at Mt. [Geumgang] resort from February 20 to 25 [of 2002]... ‘The war separated our family, but we met again. Sorrowful separation never should continue,’ said Jong Dal Hwan, 78, from North Korean and his separated families and relatives from the South.”

Apparently, many civilians from the North and South much desire reunification and the woes caused by elongated separation due to the war may help both Northerners and Southerners overcome whatever initial awkwardness they may have. However, families have been separated for over fifty years; one may wonder if time and different experiences may have changed people beyond familiarity. Especially if a North Korean has been absorbed and brainwashed by Kim Il Sung’s and Kim Jung Il’s omnipotent ideology, expecting a completely smooth transition into South Korean society may require some extra time and effort on both sides.

#### North Korea, nuclear weapons and the threat of war

On March 10, 2003, North Korea fired its second short-range missiles into the sea. This act signifies “maintaining tensions in the dispute over its nuclear weapons program,” according to journalist Doug Struck on March 10, 2003 in the Washington Post. “South Korea and Japan are relieved that the test-firing, apparently of the same type of surface-to-ship missile fired Feb. 24, was not more serious. Countries in the region fear North Korea is planning to launch a ballistic missile or begin reprocessing uranium for nuclear weapons in its effort to force the United States into talks.”

The article continued by quoting from Japan’s defense chief, Shigeru Ishiba, who

said that he doesn't think the missile-firing will impact Japan's national safety. The missile-firing test was expected and bordering countries did not seem to be much alarmed by it.

According to the New York Times on March 10, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell "[repeated] what he told President Roh Moo Hyun of South Korea after attending Mr. Roh's inauguration on Feb. 25 [by saying] 'We're not going simply to fall into what I believe is a bad practice of saying the only way you can talk to is directly when it affects other nations in the region.'"

Both Powell and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice both reject negotiations with the North in anything other than a multilateral setting.

In a recent conference panel titled "North Korea: New Challenges, New Solutions" that took place on the Stanford campus, diplomats from Japan, Russia, the United States, South Korea and China discussed their stances on the current situation in North Korea. While the diplomats recognized Kim Jung Il's continuation of Kim Il Sung's Ju Che policy, they also voiced their thoughts that North Korea should be dealt with diplomatically and that peace talks and negotiation are of utmost importance. The panel's policy recommendations also reflected panelists' desire for a peaceful and effective solution. The panelists said that maintaining an alliance between South Korea and the United States is essential for success in any policy toward North Korea. Moreover, they need to agree on a "red line," a set limit on what they can allow North Korea to do. The other two policy recommendations included the United States' need to negotiate with North Korea before exercising any possible military action and the need for a quick resolution. The panelists agreed that North Korea is determined to develop

and possess nuclear weapons, rather than provide lip service to a non-nuclear defense policy or bargain with others.

Despite recent clamoring from North Korea, such as the recent missile-firing test in the sea, North Korea is desperate right now for survival, according to Daniel Chirot, professor of International Studies and Sociology at the University of Washington, in a talk titled “Dealing with Insulated Tyrants: Foreign Policy Dilemmas Raised by North Korea, Iraq, and Similar Cases” that took place at Stanford on February 28, 2003. Chirot also pointed out the obvious point that if North Korea launches a nuclear war, that action would be self-destructive.

Some South Koreans blame former South Korean President Kim Dae Jung for his implementation of the Sunshine Policy. These people claim that Kim only thought of the policy so he could win the Nobel Peace Prize. Moreover, they complained of its effectiveness. Although the notions of the Sunshine Policy included aid for the starving North Korean civilians, these people stated that the money actually went to the North Korean military and its development of nuclear weapons. Hence, the effects of the Sunshine Policy were opposite of its ideal purposes and goals.

One important aspect to take note of is the fact that older South Koreans distinguish North and South Korea on the basis of its governmental regimes; in other words, the older generation disagrees with North Korean government because it is a communist regime, and not a democratic one. They’ve even attached the derogatory term “bbalgengi,” which colloquially means “red people,” to North Koreans. The younger generation of South Koreans, however, perceive Korean autonomy as more important than governmental ideologies, although they do have a strong preference for democracy.

Recently in Los Angeles, Koreans and Korean Americans have been protesting against the Sunshine Policy, pushing for a stop in the excessive aid-giving actions.

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