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The PCI News



William J. Perry Lecture Series



(Sec. Napolitano, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea)

The 5th Annual William J. Perry Lecture Series at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, Korea took place on Thursday, November 4, 2021. This year's guest lecturer, Secretary Janet Napolitano, is a professor of Public Policy and Director of the Center for Security in Politics at University of California, Berkeley. She has served as the president of the University of California from 2013 to 2020, as the US Secretary of Homeland Security from 2009 to 2013, as Governor of Arizona from 2003 to 2009, as Attorney General of Arizona from 1998 to 2003, and as US Attorney for the District of Arizona from 1993 to 1997.

Secretary Napolitano was warmly welcomed by Ewha Womans University President Dr. Eun-Mee Kim with welcoming remarks

and introduction. This year's lecture topic, "**Preparing to Lead: Today's Challenges for Tomorrow's Leaders**" with the overall focus on women in leadership was well received by the in-person and virtual audiences.

Following the lecture, a discussion and Q & A session was led by PCI board member and Ewha Womans University Professor Jie-Ae Sohn. In attendance were PCI co-founder, Spencer Kim, Board Members, Dr. John Linton, and former Foreign Minister of South Korea Kang Kyung-wha.

To view the video recording of the lecture, please visit:
www.pacificcenturyinst.org/recent



(From Left to Right: A. Fulk, D. Lee, Sec. J. Napolitano, S. Kim, Dr. E. Kim, Dr. B. Howe, FM K. Kang, Prof. J. Sohn, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, Korea)

Seoul Peace Initiative Conference 2021



Seoul
Peace
Initiative
Conference 2021

Hosted by the Seoul Institute and Seoul Metropolitan Government, the first annual Seoul Peace Initiative Conference 2021 took place from Monday, November 8 to Tuesday, November 9, 2021 simultaneously in Seoul, Korea and virtually. PCI board members, Dr. Charles Morrison and Dr. John Delury, along with PCI co-founder, Spencer Kim were invited to participate in

the discussions. The overall theme of the two-day conference was 'Road to Peace and Coexistence in Cities and the World'.

Dr. Charles Morrison presented on "The Lessons of Covid-19 for the Global Health Regime" and Mr. Spencer Kim on "Seoul, Sanctions, Security: Thinking the Unthinkable". Dr. John Delury participated in a discussion under 'Geopolitical Approach to Peace and Security'.

To view the video recording of the conference, please visit:
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Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

This opinion piece featuring PCI Board Member, S. Nathan Park was published in the Foreign Policy on October 22, 2021.

Why South Korea’s Liberals Are Defense Hawks

Seoul’s new missile technologies have both Pyongyang and Beijing in mind.

By S. Nathan Park

If it were happening in the other Korea, the manic pace of weapons development in South Korea would have caused global alarm. On Sept. 15, just hours after North Korea’s test of two short-range ballistic missiles, South Korea unveiled at least five different missile technologies: a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), a bunker-busting ballistic missile, a supersonic anti-ship cruise missile, a long-range air-to-surface missile, and a solid-fuel engine for space rockets. South Korean President Moon Jae-in was in attendance for these tests, immediately after Moon welcomed Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who was visiting Seoul.

This round of testing put South Korea in a small elite group when it comes to missile technology. South Korea’s SLBM was fired by the ROKS *Dosan Ahn Changho*, a domestically produced attack submarine that became the first air independent power (AIP) submarine to fire an underwater ballistic missile. Because AIP submarines are virtually silent, the ability to fire an SLBM out of an AIP submarine is considered a “game changer.” South Korea is just the eighth country in the world to develop an SLBM; the other seven—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, India, China, and North Korea—all have nuclear weapons. It’s not unimaginable that South Korea could follow suit.

It shouldn’t be surprising that all this is happening during a liberal South Korean presidency. Peace through strength and autonomous self-defense have been consistent themes in South Korean liberals’ defense policy, despite the caricatures painted by conservatives. Yet in foreign-policy circles outside South Korea, confusion persists as to why a supposedly dovish Moon is engaged in a furious arms race—in part because right-wing narratives crafted in Seoul are often picked up in Washington.

An important strain in South Korea’s liberal politics is an emphasis on national autonomy. The South Korean left understands the late 19th and 20th centuries as a period of deep humiliation, as the country underwent a series of subjugations—first by imperial Japan’s colonial rule and then by the

division overseen by the United States and Soviet Union. To avoid repeating that fate, they argue, Koreans must strive for self-determination. An important component of that self-determination is *jaju gukbang*, i.e., autonomous national defense.

In addition, South Korean liberals have had political reasons to take a strong tone on national defense, in order to dispel the public image that they were soft on North Korea. Even as South Korean liberal administrations sought dialogue with North Korea, they always backstopped that dialogue with a show of force that discouraged Pyongyang from attempting a destabilizing military venture.

Former President Kim Dae-jung, for example, is remembered for his Sunshine Policy, in which South Korea pursued reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea. But often forgotten is the fact that among the three principles of inter-Korean relations that Kim presented in his 1998 inauguration speech—which formed the foundation of the Sunshine Policy—the first principle was “zero tolerance of North Korean military provocation.” In June 1999, the South Korean navy scored a decisive victory by sinking an invading North Korean torpedo boat and severely damaging three patrol boats in the disputed waters off the western coast of the Korean Peninsula, even as the Kim Dae-jung administration was continuing its attempt at dialogue with North Korea’s Kim Jong Il.

Roh Moo-hyun’s presidency from 2003 to 2008, which followed Kim Dae-jung’s, was a pivotal moment in the South Korean military’s modernization. The firebrand liberal’s administration was “the only time Seoul came close to truly pursuing autonomy” in international affairs, according to Scott Snyder, a Korea expert at the Council on Foreign Relations, as Roh envisioned South Korea as serving as a “balancer” of Northeast Asia. Jokingly nicknamed “the militarist of hopes and dreams” by his admiring supporters, Roh was obsessed with building autonomous defense capacity.

The Roh administration’s military modernization plan introduced in 2005, titled Defense Reform Plan 2020, serves as the blueprint for the South Korean military to this day. During Roh’s presidency, South Korea became the world’s fifth operator of the Aegis Combat System with its *Sejong the Great*-class destroyer and earnestly began producing domestic jet fighters and attack submarines—whose scale models decorated Roh’s office desk. South Korea’s national defense budget increased by an average of 8.9 percent annually in the five years of Roh administration, a growth rate that has been unmatched since.

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Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

Why South Korea’s Liberals Are Defense Hawks

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After nine years of conservative administrations under Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, Moon picked up in 2017 where Roh left off. Criticizing the conservative administrations’ commitment to national defense, Moon has averaged 6.5 percent average growth in the defense budget in his nearly five years as president, outpacing his predecessor’s 4.2 percent. Under purchasing power parity terms, South Korea’s defense budget surpassed that of Japan (which has 2.5 times the population of South Korea) in 2018, and it is expected to surpass in nominal dollars in 2023. The Moon administration’s drive to increase defense spending was such that Kim Jung-sup, a senior research fellow at the Sejong Institute and former official at South Korea’s Ministry of National Defense, said: “The Blue House wanted to spend more than what the Defense Ministry or the Joint Chiefs could realistically procure.”

Moon lobbied the United States to lift the missile guidelines that limited the range of South Korea’s missiles and convinced the Biden administration to abolish the guidelines following a summit meeting this May. Only four months later, in September, South Korea’s Agency for Defense Development announced that it had successfully tested a short-range-in-name-only ballistic missile with a massive 6-ton warhead. Reacting to the test, Ankit Panda, a weapons expert and senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, described the situation as “reaching arms-racing levels that shouldn’t be possible.” In addition, South Korea under the Moon administration purchased a fleet of F-35 stealth fighter jets and midair refueling aircraft and began building its own supersonic fighter jets and a light aircraft carrier. The 2021 edition of the Global Firepower index ranks South Korea as sixth in the world in conventional military strength, ahead of all of Europe.

Within South Korea, this history is well established. Yet in foreign-policy circles outside South Korea, the fact that a supposedly dovish liberal such as Moon was engaged in a mad dash for an arms race has caused confusion for some. One analyst, for example, conjectured that Moon’s weapons development hinted that the South Korean left might be reconsidering unification with North Korea. Another offered that the military buildup was in order to take back the wartime operational control (OPCON), which currently belongs to the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command. But these analyses do not account for the consistent policy direction of South Korea’s liberal administrations. As discussed above, South Korea’s liberal presidents have always pursued a dual-track poli-

cy of inter-Korean dialogue and military enhancement, and the OPCON transfer issue has been tangential to South Korea’s weapons program.

The inability to recognize the history and significance of South Korea’s military buildup misses a key dynamic in inter-Korean relations. North Korea has repeatedly made it known that it feels threatened by South Korea’s conventional capabilities. Pyongyang bitterly complained of “double standards” after South Korea’s latest missile tests and allegedly paid spies within South Korea to foment a protest against importing F-35 jets. Although sharper analysts such as Ian Bowers and Henrik Hiim recognized the importance of South Korea’s military program and the complication it introduces in the effort to denuclearize North Korea, in general, the missiles program in the northern half of the Korean Peninsula has been the only one generating international headlines.

This lacuna is problematic because the implications of South Korea’s military program go beyond the Korean Peninsula. One of them is nuclear proliferation. Seoul is at least thinking about nuclear armament: South Korea is the only country with an SLBM without a nuclear weapon, and nearly 70 percent of the public is in support of acquiring nukes. South Korea has secretly enriched uranium several times, and in 2003, the Roh administration quietly pursued a plan to construct a nuclear submarine before abandoning the plan due to heightened international attention on South Korea’s uranium enrichment activities. Since his inauguration in 2017, Moon has asked the U.S. government to provide technical support and fissile material for nuclear submarines. With Australia set to receive the nuclear submarine technology through the new AUKUS deal, the next South Korean administration is likely to push for weaponized nuclear technology in some form or another.

The upcoming presidential election in South Korea makes an objective assessment of Seoul’s military program even more urgent. Plainly, South Korea’s blue-water navy plan is not directed at North Korea but at power projection in the South China Sea, a critical shipping lane for petroleum from the Middle East to East Asia that China may attempt to blockade in a potential embargo against South Korea and Japan. The conservative opposition in South Korea has objected to the navy’s light aircraft carrier plan, with Assembly Member Shin Won-sik claiming: “If we introduce the carrier, all it will do is assist the U.S. Pacific Fleet.” Although the navy stressed the need to respond to China’s increasing number of aircraft carriers, Shin dismissed such concerns: “China’s carriers are not aimed at us; they are for the United States.”

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Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

Why South Korea’s Liberals Are Defense Hawks

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Yet many articles in prominent English-language outlets continue to promote the idea that a potential conservative administration in South Korea will be tougher on China, based on the reflexive assumption that conservatives will be stronger on national defense. But such assumption is ahistorical. After all, it was only six years ago, in 2015, that conservative President Park Geun-hye was the only leader of a major democracy to attend China’s World War II victory parade, applauding the People’s Liberation Army next to Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin. In the strategic competition between the United States and China, South Korea is among the most critical players. An evidence-based assessment of South Korea’s defense policy is more necessary today than ever.

PCI Board Members, Founders and Fellows often contribute to the media. The opinions expressed are solely those of the individuals involved and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Pacific Century Institute.

This opinion piece featuring PCI Vice President, Tom Plate was published in the South China Morning Post on September 21, 2021.

North-South divide: only Koreans themselves can find a way out of the impasse

By Tom Plate

- Thoughtful visions from Koreans both north and south of the DMZ are the best remedy for the perpetually tense Korean peninsula
- Outside powers claim to want to help fix the problem, but almost 70 years after the Panmunjom armistice, reconciliation is no closer

Frustrations come with any occupation, and writing columns about Asia and America, as I have without stop for 25 years, is no exception. Asia is powerful and dynamic, and one size does not fit all. But, for me, no one subject has proven more elusive and more frustrating than the enduring topic of the two Koreas on their tensely divided peninsula.

Outsiders should venture an opinion about this elongated legacy of the Cold War only with deepest humility. My initial take on the divided peninsula back in the 1990s, in the Los Angeles Times, took the idealistic view that Koreans, north and south, could work out their own peace settlement if only

those darn outsiders would just stay out of it.

The idea had appeal to many Koreans but scant international traction. Outside powers claimed to want to help fix the problem, but here we are. Almost 70 years after the Panmunjom armistice put the pistols back in the holsters, Koreans are no closer to reconciliation.

Perhaps the continuing divide of north and south is embedded in East Asian geopolitics. Buffer-lover China gets to claim it loves Koreans so much that good diplomatic relations with both sides are a must.

By contrast, the United States, self-designated global defender of freedom, notably lacks even a low-level official American mission up north. It subcontracts embassy business to harmless go-between Sweden.

Japan is anything but thrilled with Pyongyang’s nuclear arsenal, of course, but it cannot be but quietly delighted that its former colony remains cut down in size by its division.

In the south, below the demilitarised zone (DMZ) line that sliced Korea in half with all the tenderness of the cutting of a tree trunk, the US has yet another dug-in military settlement in Asia. It ostensibly serves solely to deter the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which at most has the population of Shanghai.

For its part, North Korea has a small but growing nuclear arsenal in existential fear of what the West – in particular the US – might do. Last week, it lit up the skies of the East Asia Sea and once again inflamed regional fears with rocket launches. Two splashed down in the Yellow Sea but made waves globally.

Earlier in my column’s evolution, I would liken the North’s periodic missile eruptions to the tantrums of a child in the corner playpen screaming for someone’s attention. Even today, this might have some validity.

International economic sanctions, which have been applied to North Korea almost continuously since its founding in 1948 – well before it went nuclear – are up for renewal at the United Nations at the autumn session of the General Assembly that brings national leaders together. The rockets’ red glare was Pyongyang’s primary aim.

International economic sanctions against any country do

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North-South divide: only Koreans themselves can find a way out of the impasse

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cause pain and are frequently the weapons of choice by the UN and major powers when they don't know what else to. The question is, who are they really hurting? In this instance, they certainly did not stop Pyongyang from going nuclear.

The truth is that sanctions are usually the mindless default option. Everyone knows that ruling elites manage to keep their caviar or kimchi supply line open no matter what; it is the general populace that mainly feels the pain.

South Korea is a wunderkind economically and technologically. While the North Korean economy gets ranked below even Palestine, the Republic of Korea is like some glittering Las Vegas.

By the indexing metric of gross domestic product, South Korea's economy ranks in the world's top dozen, ahead of even Russia. President Moon Jae-in's administration in Seoul has pushed a pro-negotiation line with the North.

This approach would be called a “sunshine policy” in past administrations, especially that of Kim Dae-jung, who won a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts. I always supported it, in fear of the obvious – the darkness of apocalypse.

But South Korean presidential terms are limited by the national constitution to one five-year term. France, by contrast, has evolved into a more sensible limit of two five-year terms.

By next year, it is possible that South Korea will revert to the risky and unimaginative Pyongyang hawk-hardline. Domestic politics as well as outside international influences nail the country's north policy to a bed of bipolar inconsistency.

Concern is global. The Korean diaspora is well spread out, but in the US it is concentrated in New York and southern California, power centres in American politics. As much as Koreans complain about erratic US diplomacy, they know where they would have to turn in a true crisis.

As if to emphasise the connection, one of South Korea's most prominent political figures – a minister in the current Moon cabinet – recently got the red-carpet treatment from the Rand Corporation. One of America's most famous think tanks laid out for her a buffet of policy briefings by its razor-sharp experts.

Park Young-sun returned the favour with pointed insights about the two Koreas. Invited to sit in, I tried to keep a low profile – not my greatest talent. I was struck by her admission that her country's rising material success has not lifted all Koreans and that Korea must count for something far more special than kimchi and K-pop.

Thoughtful visions from Koreans like her – north and south of the DMZ alike – is the best remedy for the perpetually tense Korean peninsula. It is by going deep within itself that Korea will find its way out. That is well beyond the ken of Beijing and Washington.

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Asia Media International at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) launches a Books Review Section, edited by LMU English Major graduate Ella Kelleher '21, the review emphasizes works of new fiction about or from Asia.

To read the latest book review, please visit:
<https://asiamedia.lmu.edu/bookreview/#>

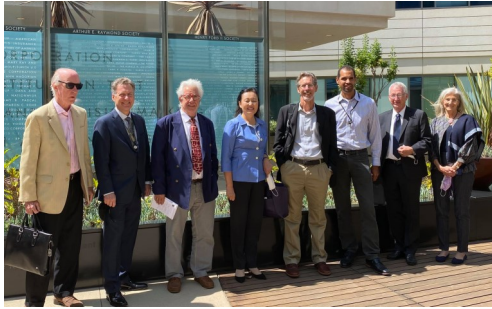


The Pacific Century Institute has recently partnered with the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft (Qi) to take on anti-Asian racism through a video currently in production on this topic. This is an issue of huge concern to people in both the US and in Asia.

The Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft promotes ideas that move U.S. foreign policy away from endless war and toward vigorous diplomacy in the pursuit of international peace.



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(Former Minister Park Young-Sun with PCI board members, Greg Treverton, Tom Plate, Lynn Turk, PCI co-founder Spencer Kim, and RANDites at RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA)

Former RoK Minister of SMEs & Startups Young-Sun Park was invited as PCI Senior Fellow to conduct research from May to September 2021. Among many meetings and visits to various



(Former Minister Park Young-Sun with PCI board member, Dr. William Overholt and Harvard scholars, Boston, MA)

institutions, Minister Park visited the RAND Corporation and Harvard University with PCI board members Tom Plate, Greg Treverton, Lynn Turk, Dr. William Overholt, and co-founder Spencer Kim.



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