

FOIA MARKER

This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

Folder Title:

South Korea

Staff Office-Individual:

Multilateral & Humanitarian Affairs-Naplan, Steven

Original OA/ID Number:

3039

Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:	Stack:
40	5	6	1	V

11/6/98

Soka Democ Initiative

Key purpose. POTUS + LBJ class of US-Rok effort
to set up a joint US-Rok inst. for
democ + open markets (other countries could
join). ^{Asia} Regional flavor.

US would designate a ^(partner) US + Rok NGO as
Secretariat → launch inst. in 2000.

pro Rok ^{govt.} \$ initial start-up \$.

training ground for young Asian leaders.
provide permanent forum for [training] democ leaders.

prof housed @ Rok university

⇒ Yang, Loh + Gensheimer satisfied ←



SUNTUM_M @ A1
06/09/98 11:21:00 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: 1998-6-9 remarks of Presidents Clinton and Kim at arrival

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 9, 1998

**REMARKS BY PRESIDENT CLINTON
AND PRESIDENT KIM DAE JUNG OF SOUTH KOREA
AT ARRIVAL CEREMONY**

The South Grounds

10:50 A.M. EDT

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I am proud to welcome President Kim Dae-jung, and the entire Korean delegation to the United States and to the White House.

We live in remarkable times. In the 1980s, some of the greatest heroes of freedom were the political prisoners of repressive regimes -- Lech Walesa in Poland, Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, Nelson Mandela in South Africa, and Kim Dae-jung, who faced a death sentence in South Korea after years of unjust and brutal treatment by the government.

How very different things are now. Lech Walesa was elected Poland's President; Vaclav Havel and Nelson Mandela are the Presidents of their countries; and Kim Dae-jung is here today as President, after the first ever democratic change of power from the governing party to the opposition in the 50-year history of the Republic of Korea. (Applause.)

The irresistible longing for freedom, human rights, and democracy has carried Kim Dae-jung to the presidency of his country and now back to America, where he once lived in exile and where there

has long been strong bipartisan support for Korean democracy.
(Applause.)

Mr. President, you have the admiration of the American people. We will work together to deepen democracy and economic opportunity.

President Kim has spoken of the powerful link between democratic governments and market economies. In the 21st century, nations will not be able to sustain great economic power unless their people are empowered, free to speak their minds and create their own futures; unless there is equal opportunity and the rule of law.

America strongly supports the economic reforms President Kim is pursuing -- opening markets, making financial institutions, businesses, and government more accountable. We will work with South Korea as it moves toward a full recovery and broader prosperity, with increased trade and investment that will benefit both our nations.

Mr. President, your leadership will guide Korea's economic recovery, but so will your example. If one man can triumph over such great adversity, then surely the Korean people can surmount their current challenges. The American people, including more than one million Korean Americans who contribute so very much to our country, stand with you.

~

Let me also reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to our security alliance. We will continue working together for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and across Asia.

~

As President, I stood on the Bridge of No Return, where I saw the sacrifices made by American and South Korean troops to protect freedom. I also saw the young North Korean soldiers on the other side and imagined a future where people from North and South could walk freely across that bridge.

We strongly support South Korea's efforts to find common ground with North Korea. The United States also will continue to participate with China in the four-party efforts to build a permanent peace. (Applause.)

Let me conclude by saying something to men and women all around the world who work to protect human rights: Your work matters. You help transform nations and end tyranny. You save lives. Standing with me today is living proof -- Kim Dae-jung, a human rights pioneer, a courageous survivor, and America's partner in building a better future for the world.

Today let us celebrate the freedom that has brought so much hope to the end of the 20th century. But let us also strengthen

our efforts to build even greater democracy and peace and prosperity for all our children in the 21st century.

Mr. President, again, welcome to the White House and welcome back to America. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT KIM: Mr. President and Mrs. Clinton, and distinguished guests, thank you for inviting my wife and me, and for your warm welcome. I would also like to express the gratitude of Koreans to the American people for your unswerving friendship.

After 50 years of consistent struggle for democracy, the Korean people won an historic victory by achieving the first peaceful transition of power from the ruling to an opposition party. I'm aware that behind this victory was the message of hope for freedom and democracy sent by the American people.

As I faced 40 years of persecution from dictators and authoritarian regimes, including death threats, imprisonment, house arrest, exile, and surveillance, the unwavering support from America was a source of encouragement and deliverance. Today the triumph of democracy in Korea is also a victory for the democracy-loving people of America.

Korea has begun a new struggle. It is a struggle to wipe out the legacy of dictatorship that suppressed democracy and a free market economy, and to promote the simultaneous development of these two, so that we can overcome the current national crisis and join the ranks of advanced nations in the 21st century. (Applause.) With the support of the Korean people, I will surely succeed in this struggle. And that victory will be a role model for many of our Asian neighbors.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I will never forget the support and encouragement you gave me last year when the foreign exchange crisis hit Korea. The day after I was elected President, you personally called me and extended your strong support. It was a deeply moving experience. It reminded me once again, a friend in need is a friend indeed.

Throughout history and throughout difficult times, the United States has been an unwavering friend. You liberated us from Japanese colonial rule. You helped us guard our nation against the communist aggression. You have given us on numerous occasions support and assistance.

For its part, Korea has been a faithful partner to the United States. We also did not spare our cooperation with the United States whenever it was necessary. Together we must protect the

values of liberty, democracy, and peace, which our two nations have jointly nurtured. (Applause.)

I intend to raise a spirit of peace on the Korean Peninsula by engaging North Korea in activities to promote reconciliation and cooperation, while maintaining a strong security posture and coordinating our North Korean policy with the United States. I believe U.S. cooperation is crucial for the success of this policy.

Mr. President, under your fine leadership the United States is enjoying a stability and prosperity unprecedented in history, and a decisive influence on world affairs. (Applause.) At the same time, nations in Asia are experiencing uncertainty and pain amid economic crisis. Never before has so much been expected of your leadership. Korea, for its part, faces its worst economic crisis since the Korean War. And so eyes and ears of the Korean people are focused on our meeting today.

I look forward to seeing great riches come from our meeting. It will give our people renewed hope. Our two nations must develop a higher level of partnership, a higher friendship, sharing the ideals of democracy and free market economy.

For the success of our meeting, I ask you and other American leaders for cooperation and support. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

11:10 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To: _____

Kim Dae-jung Peace Foundation-USA

Washington • 6110 Executive Boulevard #1000, Rockville, MD 20852 • Tel 301-231-5143; Fax 231-5276, 6537; E-Mail kimdj@crosslink.net

Kim Dae Jung: A Brief Biography

For almost four decades, Kim Dae Jung's name has been synonymous with South Korea's struggle for democracy and human rights. Under the successive dictatorial regimes of Generals Park Chung Hec and Chun Doo Hwan, Dr. Kim steadfastly called for greater freedom and respect for human rights. Government assassination attempts and kidnaping have left him physically scarred, but ever more dedicated to the cause of democracy. The Korean people elected Kim Dae-jung President on December 18, 1997. Since assuming office on February 25th, Kim is now facing his greatest challenge of his remarkable life with the Korean economy in crisis and the entire economic and political system in need of drastic and immediate overhaul.

Dr. Kim began his career as the head of a shipping concern and owner of a local newspaper. He soon entered politics, winning a seat in Korea's National Assembly in 1961. He rose quickly within the opposition New Democratic Party and, in his forties, became the party's standard-bearer against General Park Chung Hec in the 1971 presidential election. Despite rampant electoral fraud, Dr. Kim nearly defeated Park, garnering 46% of the vote. Shortly afterward, Mr. Park unilaterally suspended Korea's constitution, and Dr. Kim began his first foreign exile, gathering international support for the cause of Korean democracy.

Dr. Kim was imprisoned numerous times and spent over fifteen years under house arrest, in foreign exiles and in prison. In 1973, Dr. Kim was kidnaped in Tokyo by agents of South Korea's Central Intelligence Agency and narrowly survived a murder attempt as his abductors ferried him across the Sea of Japan. In 1980, following the death of Park Chung Hec, Dr. Kim's civil rights were restored - only to be revoked again just three months later. In May 1980, Dr. Kim was arrested by General Chun Doo Hwan, who ruled the nation with a strong arm for eight years until early 1988, and sentenced to death by a military tribunal. Presidents Carter and Reagan subsequently played pivotal roles in the effort to save Dr. Kim's life. As a result of intense international pressure, Dr. Kim's death sentence was eventually commuted.

Two years later, Dr. Kim's jail term was suspended and he embarked on his second U.S. exile. While in the United States, he founded the Korean Institute for Human Rights and co-founded the Council for the Promotion of Democracy. He was also a visiting guest scholar at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs (CFIA), where he authored the book, Mass Participatory Economy: A Democratic Alternative for Korea. An updated and revised edition of this book was published by CFIA in November 1996.

Despite the Chun regime's repeated threats to jail him, Dr. Kim returned home in 1985. He then led a non-violent pro-democracy struggle that forced Chun's military government to agree to democratic reforms two years later. Dr. Kim again ran for president in 1987 - losing to General Roh Tae Woo in a three-way race widely believed to have been tainted by fraud. As the head of Korea's largest opposition party, Dr. Kim continued to press the government for further democratic reforms, including curbing the government's much-abused National Security Law and fighting for the rights of labor, women and the economically disadvantaged.

After an unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 1992, Dr. Kim retired from politics. He

subsequently accepted a visiting fellowship at Cambridge University's Center for International Studies, where he devoted himself to studying the complex issues relating to reunification of the Korean peninsula -- an issue he has addressed seriously for over two decades.

In January 1994 Dr. Kim established the Kim Dae-jung Peace Foundation For The Asia-Pacific Region (KPF) in Seoul. Together with political, academic and spiritual leaders from Korea, Asia, Western and Eastern Europe and the United States, he has been developing new proposals for movement on some of today's most pressing issues in Korea and Asia.

Together with Corazon Aquino and Oscar Arias, Dr. Kim founded the Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific (FDL) in December 1994. The FDL is a membership organization of Asian and world democratic leaders dedicated to promoting pluralism and civil society in Asia. It has focused great attention on promoting peaceful democratic change in Burma.

Concerned about the deteriorating opposition structure following successful local elections in June 1995, Kim Dae-jung founded the National Congress for New Politics (NCNP) to be a reform opposition party with the broadest possible base. The new party is dedicated to practicing a new politics of openness, responsibility, and sound policy-making. Issues of economic reform and practical reunification were stressed. In April 1996, the NCNP won 79 seats in the new National Assembly, making it the main opposition party. In December 1997, Kim Dae-jung won the Presidency as the NCNP candidate. Now the party faces the challenges of implementing its ambitious reform agenda in the midst of the economic and political tumult of 1998.

Dr. Kim's devotion to peace, democratic change and the principles of human rights are well-known throughout Asia and the world. So too is his enormous effort to help bring democracy to Korea. As a statesman, Dr. Kim's sincere desire is to translate the experiences and lessons of his long career into a legacy in the service of reunification of Korea and democratization and peace in Asia and the world.

February 1998

###

KIM DAE-JUNG PEACE FOUNDATION-USA

DC Office • 6110 Executive Boulevard, Suite 1000, Rockville, MD 20852 • Tel 301/231-5143; Fax 301/231-5276; E-mail kimdj@crosslink.net

CURRICULUM VITAE

KIM DAE JUNG

POSITIONS CURRENTLY HELD

President-Elect, Republic of Korea: **Inaugurated 25 February 1998 for a single five year term**
President, National Congress for New Politics, South Korea: **Main Opposition (soon to be ruling) Party**
Chairman, Kim Dae Jung Peace Foundation for the Asian-Pacific Region, Seoul: **Public Policy Think Tank**
Co-President, Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific, Seoul: **Regional Democracy Network**
Honorary Chairman, Korean Institute for Human Rights, Rockville, MD: **Human Rights Institute**
Member, Board of Directors, LaRoche College, Pittsburgh, PA: **Catholic College**

EDUCATION

1949-1952	Studied Political Science at Kunkook University. Interrupted by the Korean War
1964	Completed one year of graduate program in Business Administration
1967	Completed one year program at the Institute of Industrial Management, Kyunghee University
1970	Completed two year graduate program in Economics, Kyunghee University
1983-1984	Visiting Fellow at the Center for International Studies, Harvard University
1992	Received Ph.D. in Political Science, Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Moscow
1993	Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University, UK

PERSONAL HISTORY

October 1948	President, The Mokpo Daily News
February 1950	Arrested by North Korean communists, narrowly escaped execution by breaking out of jail
March 1951	President, Mokpo Merchant Ship Co.
	President, Chunnam Shipping Union
May 1951	President, Dae Yang Shipbuilding Agents
October 1956	Member of the Standing Committee, The Democratic Party
November 1958	Spokesman, The National Alliance to Protect Human Rights
October 1960	Spokesman, and elected to the Planning Council, The Democratic Party
May 1961	Elected to the 5th National Assembly. Assembly aborted by May 16 coup
July 1963	Spokesman, The Democratic Party
November 1963	Elected to the 6th National Assembly
June 1965	Spokesman, The Minjung Party
January 1966	Visited U.S.A. at invitation of the U.S. State Department, made an around-the-world trip
August 1966	Elected Chairman of the Policy Council and member, Executive Board, The Minjung Party
February 1967	Spokesman, and elected to the Executive Board, The New Democratic Party
September 1970	Nominated for President at the New Democratic Party Convention
April 1971	Won 46% of the popular vote (5.4 million votes) in the 7th Presidential Election, despite extreme election corruption and rigging
May 1971	Elected to the National Assembly. Injured in the first assassination attempt by the Park regime. Walks with a distinctive gait as a result of the injury

October 1972	President Park Chung Hee suspended the Constitution a second time and declared the Yushin System. Kim Dae Jung started his first foreign exile and staged anti-dictatorship movements in Japan and the U.S.A.
August 1973	Kidnapped from Tokyo, Japan, by agents of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Two assassination attempts during the ordeal were foiled
March 1976	Arrested on charges of violating the Emergency Decree 9 by initiating "The March 1st Democratization Statement"
March 1977	Sentenced to a 5 year jail term and imprisonment in the Jinju Correctional Center (penitentiary)
December 1978	Jail term suspended, released from jail and put under house arrest
December 1979	House arrest was lifted following President Park's assassination
February 1980	Amnesty was granted and civil rights restored
May 1980	Arrested by Martial Law Command prior to Kwangju uprising, charged with sedition, plotting anti-government activity
November 1980	Sentenced to death at the final trial by court-martial. Accused of masterminding Kwangju uprising even though in prison at the time
January 1981	Death sentence was commuted to life in prison. U.S. presidents Carter and Reagan both involved in commutation of death sentence. Sentence later reduced to 20 years in jail
December 1982	The 20 year jail term was suspended, second foreign exile in U.S. began
July 1983	Founded the Korean Institute for Human Rights in Alexandria, Virginia
February 1985	Return home to Korea from U.S. exile, to immediate house arrest
March 1985	Co-Chairman, The Council for Promotion of Democracy
January 1987	Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his three-decade struggle for democracy and human rights
July 1987	Cleared of all outstanding charges and full political rights restored
November 1987	Founded the Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD)
December 1987	Ran for President of Korea, as nominee of the PPD. Lost to Roh Tae-woo
April 1988	Reelected to the National Assembly
March 1991	Achieved united opposition under name of New Democratic Party (NDP)
September 1991	Opposition further consolidated under the Democratic Party (DP)
September 1991	Accompanied President Roh to United Nations ceremony on the occasion of the entrance into the UN of the two Koreas. Visited the Soviet Union, Poland, and Germany, meeting with national leaders
March 1992	Reelected to the National Assembly. Led DP to major gains in Nat'l Assembly elections
May 1992	Nominated the DP candidate for President of Korea
December 1992	Retired from politics after his third bid for the presidency
January 1993	Accepted visiting fellowship at Cambridge University, UK
January 1994	Founded Kim Dae-jung Peace Foundation for the Asia-Pacific Region (KPF)
December 1994	Co-founded, with Corazon Aquino and Oscar Arias, the Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific (FDLP), a regional network of democratic leaders and young people.
September 1995	Reentered active politics in Korea and founded, with over 50 lawmakers, the National Congress for New Politics (NCNP)
April 1996	In National Assembly elections, NCNP won 79 seats, became main opposition party.
April 1997	Visited New York and Washington with NCNP delegation. Gave four major addresses in Washington on U.S.-ROK Security, The Korean Economy, The North Korean Situation, and Korea in a Regional Context. Met with officials, experts, legislators, press.
May 1997	Elected Candidate for President by NCNP at party convention, vows to change government.

MAJOR ESSAYS, ADDRESSES

North Korea: Where Do We Go From Here?, a luncheon address at the National Press Club on 10 April 1997. As the magnitude of famine in North Korea is becoming clear to the world, Kim urges the North's government to begin an honest dialogue with the South. He says South Korea, Japan and the U.S. should take the lead to do all that is possible to feed the hungry in the North, transcending diplomatic obstacles.

The U.S.-ROK Alliance and Security in Northeast Asia, an address at the National Defense University, Fort Leslie McNair, Washington on 11 April 1997. Kim stresses a joint U.S.-ROK approach to North Korea which maintains a strengthened deterrent while providing a avenue for improved relations. He calls for reform of the ROK military by ensuring its political neutrality, transparent personnel management, improved benefits and increased professionalism.

Reforming Korea's Economy, an address before the Center for International Private Enterprise at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington on 9 April 1997. Kim endorses the expansion of market mechanisms in the Korean economy and the country's responsibilities under the WTO. He asks for understanding as institutions struggle with an economic slowdown, and reaffirms the mutual advantages of close bilateral and regional U.S.-Korean economic cooperation.

Korea and the Future of the Pacific Basin, an address at Georgetown University on 8 April 1997. Before an audience of experts, students and professors, Kim strongly urges America to stay engaged in Asia in order to maintain peace and stability on into the 21st century. He predicts Korea will play an increasingly pivotal role in regional matters as its democracy matures and its economy adjusts to the WTO order.

An In-depth Interview with Kim Dae-jung, President, The National Congress for New Politics, (in English) an interview conducted by Cho Kap-jae for the *Wolgan Chosun* (Chosun Monthly) of September 1995, pp. 204-228. The offprint includes a table of contents by subject, including Government, North Korea, Politics, and Personal issues. This is one of the best guides to recent issues in Korea for English speakers.

Asians Must Take the Lead With Burma, Cover article in June/July 1995 issue of *Burma Debate*, a publication of the Burma Project of the Open Society Institute, New York. Kim argues for Asians, and specifically the ASEAN organization, to take the lead in pressing for an end to the continued oppression and illegitimate rule in Burma.

Announcement of Return to Politics, National Congress for New Politics (NCNP). (in English). Seoul, Korea, 18 July 1995, 4pp. The text of this announcement is very helpful in understanding why Kim Dae-jung returned to politics from retirement, and what the goals of the new party are.

Is Culture Destiny?, Essay in November/December 1994 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, published by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., New York. A response to the journal's previous interview with Lee Kwan Yew, Kim lays the foundation for the formation of the Asian democracy network, the Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific (FDL).

My Suggestions for U.S.-Asian Policies, Address to the National Press Club, 12 May 1994, Washington, DC. In this important speech, Kim Dae-jung lays out fundamental principles for successful U.S.-Asian diplomacy. He addresses the highly tense situation on the Korean peninsula, calling for a high-level U.S. envoy to visit North Korea to break the impasse. In the question and answer session following the speech (included) Kim Dae-jung suggests that Jimmy Carter would be a desirable person for such a mission. Carter decided to go to North Korea within several weeks of this speech, and began a dialogue which led to the Agreed Framework of October 1994.

Korean Reunification: A Rejoinder, an essay in the December 1993 issue of *Security Dialogue* (Volume 24, Number 4) a publication of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), published by SAGE Publications (ISSN 0967-0106). This was Kim Dae-jung's comment and assessment of the report by a High-level Group on "The Lessons of the German Reunification Process for Korea," chaired by Helmut Schmidt. Paris, 17-18 February 1993.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

Indignation Against Injustice (in Korean) 1967.

My Goals in the 1970s (in Korean) 1970.

Mass Participatory Economy (in Korean) 1970. Updated and revised in 1985.

Conscience in Action (in Korean), New York 1973, 1987, North American Diplomatic Association 360 pp.

Letters from Prison (in Korean and Japanese). The Galilee Moongo, Rego Park, NY, 1983.

The Challenge of Contemporary Korean History: How Shall We Live? (in English). An interview with Kim Dae Jung by Ryusuke Yasue, from *Sekai* monthly magazine, September 1983. Reprinted by the Korean Institute for Human Rights. A Korean translation was published by The Galilee Moongo in 1984. Also printed in Japanese.

Mass-Participatory Economy: A Democratic Alternative for Korea (in English). A publication of The Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1985. A Korean Translation published by The Galilee Moongo, 1985.

Prison Writings (English translation of Letters from Prison). University of California Press, June 1987.

Building Peace and Democracy (in English). Independent Monitor, New York, 1987. Also published in Chinese, Japanese and Russian

In the Name of Justice and Peace (in English). The New Democratic Party, Seoul, Korea, 1991. Major speeches of Kim Dae-jung, M.P., President of the New Democratic Party in 1991.

My Life, My Thoughts (in Korean). Collection of essays, poetry, 1994.

Kim Dae-jung's Three-Stage Approach to Korean Reunification - Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage, (in Korean). The Asia-Pacific Peace Press, Seoul, 1995, 416 pp. Also published in question-and-answer form (in English) 45 pp. Full text published (in English) in 1996 by Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 392 pp.

Mass-Participatory Economy (in English). Revised and updated edition published by the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, October 1996.

A New Direction (in English). Published by the University of California, August 1996.

###

LEVEL 1 - 1 OF 13 STORIES

Copyright 1998 The New York Times Company
The New York Times

February 23, 1998, Monday, Late Edition - Final

NAME: Kim Dae Jung

CATEGORY: Politics and Government (Foreign)

SECTION: Section A; Page 6; Column 4; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 843 words

HEADLINE: A Long Rise Over Perilous Hurdles

BYLINE: By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

DATELINE: SEOUL, South Korea, Feb. 21

BODY:

President-elect Kim Dae Jung was not born in a family of privilege, like many Asian politicians, but rather was raised on a poor island so remote it did not get electricity until 1988.

The island of Ha Eui, 30 miles off the southwest Korean coast, had fewer than 10,000 people and no paved roads or other signs of modernization, and Mr. Kim's early life is shrouded in mystery. Indeed, his enemies have said that he was born out of wedlock and that the man who raised him was not his real father, although there is no convincing evidence of this.

Mr. Kim has used various birth dates over the years, and at the moment -- after rivals accused him of being too old -- he has settled on Dec. 3, 1925. But in an unpublished biography, written in 1993 by a relative, Young Jack Lee, he is quoted as saying that he was actually born almost two years earlier, on Jan. 6, 1924, and that his parents later falsified his birth date so he could avoid Japanese military service during World War II.

Korean society has always been obsessed with education, and when Mr. Kim proved himself an excellent student as a small child, his parents abandoned their rice paddy on the island and moved to the mainland city of Mokpo so the boy could go to a good school beginning in the fourth grade. It was this sacrifice for a child's education, the kind still made by families across the country, that enabled Kim Dae Jung to get a first-rate schooling and later make a name for himself.

After graduation from high school, he worked for a Japanese shipping company -- and then, as the best-educated Korean on the staff, was chosen by his fellow workers to take charge of the company when Japan surrendered Korea at the end of World War II. He then started his own shipping company and quickly made a fortune, but when North Koreans seized Mokpo during the Korean War he was arrested as a capitalist and nearly executed.

The New York Times, February 23, 1998

In the 1950's, already a very successful businessman, Mr. Kim entered politics as an opposition figure and promptly lost four consecutive elections while also spending his fortune on the campaigning. In 1959, when he was virtually bankrupt and seemed to have little future, his wife died of an overdose of over-the-counter drugs. Mr. Kim's critics have long suggested that it was a suicide; Mr. Kim says the death was unintentional.

Mr. Kim, left with two small boys, persevered in politics and was introduced to Catholicism by his political mentor, John Chang, a future Prime Minister. Ever since then, Mr. Kim says, he has been profoundly comforted by his religious faith.

Finally elected to the National Assembly in 1961, Mr. Kim was unseated by a coup a few days later. But he rose in the opposition ranks and remarried in 1962, wedding Lee Hee Ho, one of South Korea's first women scholars and social activists. Mrs. Lee, who was educated in the United States, is the mother of a third son.

In 1971 Mr. Kim ran for President, and his spell-binding speeches almost won him the election even though the military dictator had thoroughly rigged the system. Later that year, a truck owned by a figure in the governing party crashed into Mr. Kim's car, killing several people and leaving him with a permanent limp. There is no firm evidence, but many Koreans regard that as a Government attempt to assassinate Mr. Kim.

Two years later, when he was in Japan, he was kidnapped from a hotel by South Korean intelligence officials, put on a ship and -- by his account -- tied to concrete weights and prepared to be thrown overboard. At the last minute he was spared, apparently because of vigorous intervention by American officials in Seoul, and Mr. Kim was instead released, battered and dazed, on the streets of Seoul. He walked home and stumbled into the arms of his wife.

His eldest son, crying in relief, rebuked him, saying: "Father, you're not the only one responsible for our country. Why do you have to take everything on yourself?" The words cut deeply, for Mr. Kim has acknowledged that his passion for politics cost his children enormously.

Then in 1980, the military Government sentenced Mr. Kim to death and came within a hair's breadth of hanging him. The military dictator, Chun Doo Hwan, finally agreed to spare his life in exchange for a lunch at the White House with President Ronald Reagan.

Mr. Kim was exiled to the United States, where he polished his English and wrote a book about the Korean economy. When democratic elections, more or less, finally came to Korea in 1987, he ran again -- but split the democratic vote with another ex-dissident, Kim Young Sam. In an interview, Kim Dae Jung said that his failure to bow out to Kim Young Sam was the biggest mistake he had ever made, and that a result was the election of a former general, Roh Tae Woo.

In 1992, Mr. Kim ran again for President but lost to Kim Young Sam, and he announced his retirement from politics. Widely regarded as a has-been, a tragic figure belonging to Korea's past, he seemed finished. But then he ran again for President in 1997 -- and won.

pressure for clemency, and thus sharply increasing the chances that Kim would be executed. The private assessment of some of Reagan's aids, matched by those of some of Carter's administration officials, was that Kim would not be put to death during the U.S. presidential transition period to spare the incoming administration embarrassment.

Shortly after the election, Muskie contacted both the Reagan foreign policy team and senior Republicans on Capitol Hill to make the case for clemency for Kim, and its importance to the U.S. national interest. The response from both quarters was positive.

Senate Republican leader Howard H. Baker Jr. (Tenn.) sent an emissary to Seoul in early December to ask that Kim's sentence be commuted. The same message bearer, staff aide Cran Montgomery, also carried a private message from Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.).

The most important message, without question, was from Reagan foreign policy adviser Richard V. Allen, now presidential national security adviser, saying that in the view of the incoming administration, Kim's execution would have serious consequences for Korea's bilateral relations with the United States as well as its relationship with Japan and other vital countries.

In a November conversation with Gen. Lew Byung Hyun, chairman of the Korean joint chiefs of staff, Allen discussed the possibility of a Washington visit by Chun at the time of the inauguration. The idea of a visit was refined and discussed at greater length by Allen later with Korean Ambassador Kim Yong Shik and embassy minister Shon Jang Rae, a confidant of Chun.

For some in the Reagan camp, dangling a trip to Washington was seen as a means of staving off Kim's execution long enough for the new administration, after taking office to make a plea for his life. Reagan's strong backing for Korean security as well as the outspoken opposition to U.S. troop withdrawals by his designated secretary of state, Alexander M. Haig Jr., made a compelling case for a reciprocal gesture by Chun to pave the way for improved relations with the United States in the Reagan era.

Washington was not informed before Jan. 20 that Chun would commute Kim's death sentence before setting forth on his official trip, which is to begin tomorrow in Los Angeles. But shortly after Reagan's official invitation was extended, Chun sent word of the action he was preparing to take.

Last Friday, shortly after it was announced, the Reagan State Department welcomed the clemency for Kim, calling it "a Korean decision" that will serve to "improve the atmosphere" of relations between Washington and Seoul.

Newsweek

December 15, 1980, UNITED STATES EDITION

HEADLINE: Reagan and Human Rights

BYLINE: TOM MATHEWS with JANE WHITMORE in Washington, WILLIAM E. SCHMIDT in Moscow, HOLGER JENSEN in Johannesburg, TESSA NAMUTH in New York and bureau reports

I think that all of us in this country are dedicated to . . . human rights.

But I think it must be a consistent policy. I don't think that you can turn away from one country because here and there they do not agree with our concept of human rights.

Ronald Reagan, Nov. 6, 1980

The Washington Post January 27, 1981, Tuesday, Final Edition
HEADLINE: Joint Carter-Reagan Effort Reportedly Helped Save Korean's Life
BYLINE: By Don Oberdorfer, Washington Post Staff Writer
An unusual cooperative effort by the Carter and Reagan administrations, including a series of private messages delivered in Washington and Seoul, was instrumental in saving the life of South Korean opposition political leader Kim dae Jung, according to sources in both the Carter and Reagan camps.

South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan commuted the death sentence against the opposition leader on Friday, three days after Ronald Reagan, in one of his first acts as President, signed an invitation for Chun to make an official visit to the United States.

Reagan administration aides denied that there was an explicit swap of Kim's life for the Washington visit. But they did not deny that the trip figured in important fashion in the discussions of Kim's fate. Seoul was told according to the sources, that there could be no trip to Washington by the new Korean leader if the opposition figure was executed.

Kim, among the most prominent and most controversial mainstream political leaders in South Korea since he came close to winning the presidency 10 years ago, was arrested in May as a military faction headed by Chun cemented its power in the face of widespread protests. Kim was sentenced to death by a military court Sept. 17 on sedition charges, which the State Department called "far-fetched."

The Carter administration was appalled by Chun's power play, which ended a fragile drive toward democratization in South Korea, but was unwilling or unable to exert enough leverage to force a change. Although the United States gradually accepted Chun as Korea's new leader, it continued to view the execution of Kim as a serious threat to U.S.-Korean relations.

Officials of the Carter and Reagan administrations, in similar words, said their concern about Kim was not just personal or humanitarian, but arose from the belief that his execution would be an event of large-scale symbolic and political importance throughout the world. This would make it much more difficult, Chun was told by both administrators, for the United States to work closely with Korea in the future.

After a major internal battle, the Carter administration decided to make most of its pleas for Kim's life in private rather than in public. For example, State Department legal officer Jeffery H. Smith spent 4 1/2 weeks in Seoul observing Kim's Court martial -- which was condemned by Amnesty International as "failing to meet internationally accepted standards of fairness" -- but Smith's report was never permitted to see the light of day, on grounds that it would complicate the task of winning clemency for the condemned leader.

Then-Secretary of State Edmund S. Muskie authorized several private messages telling Seoul that Kim's execution would risk "the abuse of the relationship" with Washington. Among those who sent strong messages to Seoul, in addition to the State Department, were then-Defense Secretary Harold Brown, who traveled to Seoul to discuss the Kim case with Chun, and Carter's CIA director, Stansfield Turner.

Reagan's election in November was widely seen as decreasing U.S. interest and

Hand

Africa, arguing that South Africa's blacks could benefit from such a stance. Human-rights advocates doubt it.

Dissidents: The Soviet Union also seems delighted with the passing of the Carter stress on human rights and the arrival of Reagan's new line. Given the Reagan position, there may be little pressure on Moscow to increase the trickle of Jewish emigration or to release political dissidents. And with Afghanistan still at arms and Poland boiling, it seems likely that there will be no improvement unless Reagan and Brezhnev manage to patch together the shreds of detente--and the Soviets conclude that it is to their advantage to barter human-rights for trade concessions.

Reagan himself has not announced a formal human-rights policy. Richard Allen, his chief foreign-affairs adviser, has directed the more talkative members of the transition team to keep quiet partly to reduce the risk of miscalculations by over-eager hard-line conservatives abroad. Reagan people contend that they are simply correcting the naivete of Carter's human-rights policy. "They were looking for Utopia," says Jeane Kirkpatrick of Georgetown University, a top Reagan adviser. "That resulted in a great deal of confusion, a lot of arbitrariness and a much lower degree of effectiveness than would a carefully drawn policy." Given a world in which human wrongs so often collide with human rights, Reagan will have to draw up and act on an effective policy soon after Inauguration Day. And the issue may yet come to bedevil him--in a different sense, but just as persistently--as it did Jimmy Carter.

The Washington Post January 27, 1981, Tuesday, Final Edition
HEADLINE: Joint Carter-Reagan Effort Reportedly Helped Save Korean's Life
BYLINE: By Don Oberdorfer, Washington Post Staff Writer
An unusual cooperative effort by the Carter and Reagan administrations, including a series of private messages delivered in Washington and Seoul, was instrumental in saving the life of South Korean opposition political leader Kim dae Jung, according to sources in both the Carter and Reagan camps.

South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan commuted the death sentence against the opposition leader on Friday, three days after Ronald Reagan, in one of his first acts as President, signed an invitation for Chun to make an official visit to the United States.

Reagan administration aides denied that there was an explicit swap of Kim's life for the Washington visit. But they did not deny that the trip figured in important fashion in the discussions of Kim's fate. Seoul was told according to the sources, that there could be no trip to Washington by the new Korean leader if the opposition figure was executed.

Kim, among the most prominent and most controversial mainstream political leaders in South Korea since he came close to winning the presidency 10 years ago, was arrested in May as a military faction headed by Chun cemented its power in the face of widespread protests. Kim was sentenced to death by a military court Sept. 17 on sedition charges, which the State Department called "far-fetched."

The Carter administration was appalled by Chun's power play, which ended a fragile drive toward democratization in South Korea, but was unwilling or unable to exert enough leverage to force a change. Although the United States gradually accepted Chun as Korea's new leader, it continued to view the execution of Kim as a serious threat to U.S.-Korean relations. t

It seemed a modest proposal, a break with Jimmy Carter's politics of moral witness in favor of a more practical view of America's friends and interests. But Ronald Reagan's signals may have gone awry. Encouraged by them, right-wing regimes as far afield as South Korea, South Africa and Latin America now seem eager to tighten the screws more relentlessly than ever on dissent. "They perceive it as open season," says Thomas Farer, president of the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights. "Rightly or wrongly, they believe they may be chided--but not opposed."

The impression has been fostered mostly by Reagan's loose-lipped transition team. In recent travels some Reagan emissaries have dropped hints that the President-elect might give support to right-wingers in Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia, provide military aid to conservatives in Guatemala and El Salvador and reduce U.S. support of the leftist Sandinista in Nicaragua. Others have said that he may upgrade America's Taiwan connection; still others, that he might send troops to conservative outposts in the Persian Gulf. And word leaked to The New York Times last week that a transitio squad headed by Pedro Sanjuan, a former John F. Kennedy protocol officer turned rightward, and John Carbaugh, an assistant to North Carolina's conservative Sen. Jesse Helms, had prepared a plan that would strip the State Department Bureau of Inter-American Affairs of human-rights advocates and "social reformers."

Conservatives in Latin America now count on Reagan to place regional security above human rights. The right-wing government in Guatemala is stepping up its offensive against Marxist-led Indians entrenched in several strongholds in jungle districts. Rightist groups in Costa Rica, Honduras and Panama have begun antiCommunist propaganda campaigns that include ^proof that Nicaragua is a "closet Cuba" with expansionist designs. Within Nicaragua itself, conservative voices, revived by Reagan's election, now say that the Sandinista government is fast developing a true Marxist state. And in El Salvador, the danger of a right-wing coup against the country's compromise-minded, increasingly rightist ruling junta is escalating.

Opposition: Reagan's election also has sheered the right in South Korea, the Philippines and Taiwan. South Korea's strongman Chun Doo Hwan was surprised when a Reagan aide warned him not to execute his politically bothersome opponent Kim Dae Jung; but South Korean dissidents say with alarm that Chun may now feel confident enough to execute Kim anyway. In the Philippines, former Sen. Gerardo Roxas, a leader of the always endangered opposition to President Ferdinand Marcos, has been worried enough by Reagan's views to warn the President-elect to "anchor his efforts on the moral principle of human rights" or risk a burst of underdog antiAmericanism among Filipinos. In Taiwan, where eight dissidents were found guilty last spring, government critics say bleakly that they can no longer count on the support of Washington. And the Nationalist government hopes that the Washington-Peking-Taipei triangle may work a bit better to their advantage.

South Africa now seems to be calculating that Reagan will dwell less on its miserable human-rights record than on its rich minerals, its economic strength and its strategic position guarding oil-tanker routes around the tip of Africa. After Reagan's election, Pretoria said it would not attend an allparties conference sponsored by the United Nations on the future of troubled Namibia until after Reagan took office. Supporters of Prime Minister Pieter Botha hope Reagan will show more sympathy for Botha, who risked an ultra-white backlash by advocating a few modest improvements in apartheid. They also hope the Reagan Administration will use less stick and more carrot in future dealings with South

deal with, who had time to care about a lone dissident in far-off Korea?

But U.S. officials had been debating Kim's plight for months. Some thought the U.S. should launch a public protest to Chun, asking him to prevent the execution, others argued such a move would be counterproductive. In early December, Gregg, then on the National Security Council staff, left for Seoul with Defense Secretary Harold Brown for a meeting with Chun that both men doubted would yield much. To their surprise, Chun got right to the point. Remembers Gregg: "The first thing he said was, 'I've got a terrible problem with Kim Dae Jung. Every single Korean military official wants me to execute him. If I do, I know I have trouble with you and in Europe. I do not know what to do.'" Yet Chun seemed inclined to go with his generals. "I left the meeting thinking that we failed and Kim Dae Jung was a dead man," recalls Gregg.

Meanwhile, State Department official Michael Armacost, among other policy-makers nervous over Kim's fate, contacted Richard Allen, a foreign affairs adviser to Reagan. Armacost warned Allen that a high-ranking Republican had told senior Korean officials that Chun should deal with Kim as he saw fit. If that message was not quickly disavowed, Chun was likely to consider it a green light to kill Kim. After seeking Reagan's support, Allen leaked news reports that the new administration would in fact not look kindly on an execution. The Koreans arranged a meeting in Washington with a Chun emissary--who said it was none of Washington's business. "I said if you [kill him] you will be struck by a lightning bolt from heaven," recalls Allen, who concedes he did not have a clue as to what Washington's policy would be.

The next day, Chun's emissary suggested a deal: if the Korean President were invited to Reagan's inauguration, they might consider a lesser penalty for Kim. Allen easily said "no" to that; heads of state do not attend presidential inaugurations. "They made a big mistake out of ignorance, and now I knew I had the leverage," Allen recalls. He pressed the Koreans to relent and, confident that Kim's life was saved, he discreetly arranged a "private" visit for Chun with Reagan in February 1981. Ironically, that helped earn Reagan the ire of Kim supporters in and out of Korea for "coddling dictators." Even Kim, whose life had been twice spared, learned only years later that it was the Republicans who bailed him out. "He has a very warm feeling for the U.S.," says former Congressman Stephen Solarz. "He knows if it wasn't for us, he undoubtedly wouldn't be here."

--By Stella Kim/Seoul. With reporting by Douglas Waller/Washington

The New York Times January 21, 1998, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final
HEADLINE: On the Korea Tightrope, 1980
BYLINE: By Richard V. Allen; Richard V. Allen was Ronald Reagan's first national security adviser.

The interesting account by Richard Holbrooke and Michael Armacost ("A Future Leader's Moment of Truth," Op-Ed, Dec. 24) of the 1980 rescue of Kim Dae Jung suggests that it is time to tell the full story of a distant drama that could have become a catastrophe.

During the Presidential transition from Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan in 1980, the news media's major foreign policy focus was on American hostages in Iran. In South Korea, the generals who had seized power in a coup in late 1979 were pondering how to carry out the death sentence they had imposed on Mr. Kim, Korea's perennial democrat and opposition leader. Korea had been a vexing problem for the Carter Administration.

his designated secretary of state, Alexander M. Haig Jr., made a compelling case for a reciprocal gesture by Chun to pave the way for improved relations with the United States in the Reagan era.

Washington was not informed before Jan. 20 that Chun would commute Kim's death sentence before setting forth on his official trip, which is to begin tomorrow in Los Angeles. But shortly after Reagan's official invitation was extended, Chun sent word of the action he was preparing to take.

Last Friday, shortly after it was announced, the Reagan State Department welcomed the clemency for Kim, calling it "a Korean decision" that will serve to "improve the atmosphere" of relations between Washington and Seoul.

Time

March 2, 1998

HEADLINE: Cloak-and-dagger games: Saving the life of a leader
BYLINE: Stella Kim/Seoul, With reporting by Douglas Waller/Washington
Kim Dae Jung had just finished a secret lunch with another Korean opposition leader at Tokyo's downtown Grand Palace Hotel on Aug. 8, 1973. As Kim stepped into a hallway, a group of men grabbed him, ordering him in Korean to keep silent. Beaten and smothered with a chloroform-soaked rag, Kim was bound, blindfolded and dumped into a waiting car. By the following night, he had been transferred to a Korean freighter at sea. There he was bound again, his face covered in tape with air holes around his nose. As the ship moved off into the darkness, his captors roped Kim to a traditional Korean funeral plank for burial; weights were attached to his wrists. A devout Catholic, Kim saw the end coming and began to pray.

Suddenly, as if in response, the rumble of aircraft engines swept over the ship. As crew members shouted "an airplane," Kim heard heavy objects falling into the sea. Then the ship turned so sharply Kim was thrown to the deck. "Are you Mr. Kim Dae Jung?" asked a voice, which Kim aides now believe belonged to the ship's cook. "I think the worst is over and you are alive." The fly-by had scared Kim's captors enough to save his life.

Only now are details of the kidnapping beginning to emerge. Last week, a top Korean official revealed that the KCIA had planned the abduction, but he failed to explain the mysterious appearance of the plane. Time has learned that Kim's savior was the United States. According to Donald Gregg, then chief of the Central Intelligence Agency's Seoul station, the U.S. swept into action immediately on hearing news of Kim's abduction. Ambassador Philip Habib called Gregg into his office. "I know how things work around here," said Habib. "They're going to wait 24 hours, and if we don't say anything Kim will be killed." As Gregg tells it, he called in as many favors as he could from among his Korean counterparts to verify the kcia's role in the kidnapping. The next morning, Habib went to the Blue House and warned President Park Chung Hge that Kim's murder would be a "terrible setback" for U.S.-Korea relations. The aircraft that buzzed the death ship that night was not American, says Gregg, but could have been Korean or, more likely, Japanese. In any case, its warning kept Kim from a horrible fate.

The next U.S. intervention on Kim's behalf was considerably more complicated. It was late 1980, and the dissident leader had been convicted of treason and was awaiting execution. Overseas Koreans, foreign leaders and human rights activists had called for his release, to no avail. In Washington, Jimmy Carter was in the process of turning over the White House to President-elect Ronald Reagan. With U.S. diplomats being held hostage in Iran and a still-intact Soviet Union to

discussions. Only my immediate staff would be involved, and a careful record would be kept. I then spread word informally and without direct attribution that South Korea would encounter great difficulties with the new Administration if Mr. Kim were harmed.

A few weeks later, Kim Yong Shik, the Korean Ambassador, called to say that an emissary, Maj. Gen. Chung Ho Yong, had arrived. To preserve security, the general and I met in my private offices, not the transition office. Ambassador Kim and an aide were there. My lifelong friend, Lieut. Col. Donald L. Johnson, took notes.

A tough and abrupt character, General Chung got right to the point, informing me that we had no business interfering in South Korea's domestic affairs and reciting the standard litany about Kim Dae Jung's "crimes." The talks, nasty and direct, nearly broke off. Seeing no flexibility in the Korean position, I made and refused to elaborate on a cryptic remark that killing Mr. Kim would result in an American reaction "like a lightning bolt from heaven striking you."

After the talks adjourned for the night, I told Mr. Reagan that the Koreans appeared determined to carry out the sentence on Mr. Kim. Mr. Reagan instructed me to let them know that he was intent upon Mr. Kim's sentence being commuted or dropped, and that any other outcome would have serious consequences. That had been the Carter Administration's message, too, but it seemed to be having no effect.

The next day, General Chung told me that if President Chun were offered an "official invitation" to the inauguration, he might consider another sentence. That was at once the Koreans' big mistake and our opportunity: they had revealed they were angling for something, and they had opened a path for us to save Mr. Kim and begin restoring the damaged American-Korean relationship.

I rejected the suggestion of an inaugural invitation (the Koreans did not know that protocol prohibits invitations to heads of state), instead offering the possibility of a meeting with President Reagan shortly after the inauguration, but not a state visit. That could be accomplished, however, only if Mr. Kim's sentence were drastically reduced and he would not be mistreated. Moreover, if word of this arrangement were to leak, I would deny that a deal had been struck. This gave us great leverage over Mr. Chun and made secrecy all the more vital. The Koreans eventually agreed.

To insure that we would not have a Korean coup leader as the President's first foreign visitor, we invited Prime Minister Edward Seaga of Jamaica to Washington before Mr. Chun. Then, to make the point about the level of the Chun visit, I issued an itinerary that was "out of protocol" with a state visit, requiring that he visit Los Angeles and New York en route and substituting a lunch for a state dinner.

Paradoxically, because of this early contact with Mr. Chun, Kim Dae Jung came to believe that the Reagan Administration placed its seal of approval on the Chun Government. He unfairly criticized the Administration for bolstering Mr. Chun. In the mid-1980's, I met with him and told him the full story. He was deeply impressed, and has since expressed his gratitude.

Mr. Kim's recent election as South Korea's President justifies the risks we took at a crucial and delicate moment. It was our good fortune, and his, that it turned out so well and that South Korea has become a democracy. The Carter

In December 1980 Secretary of State Edmund Muskie asked that I meet with him at his home. As Mr. Reagan's chief foreign policy adviser, I was responsible for national security transition issues. At the meeting, Mr. Muskie said he was convinced the Korean generals were intent upon executing Mr. Kim. He asked that I join him in a public denunciation of the Koreans. The State Department had already approached me during the campaign on the same subject.

I discussed the Muskie initiative with President-elect Reagan; we were deeply concerned by Mr. Kim's plight, but because of the delicate Iranian hostage situation, we decided not to assume joint responsibility for policy matters during the transition.

The unusual earlier contact had come on Oct. 12, when I was called by Mr. Armacost, then Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. He said that someone who had been very prominent in past Republican administrations had met a few days earlier with Ambassador Kim Yong Shik of South Korea and a visiting major general. Mr. Armacost said the high-profile Republican had told them that the Korean Government should "deal with Kim Dae Jung as it saw fit, taking into account domestic concerns without regard to international ramifications." Mr. Armacost feared that the Koreans might think the statement was ours.

Mr. Armacost said that it would be "unfortunate if the Koreans got the impression they could execute Kim before a new Administration takes office" and that an execution would cut military sales and force troop withdrawals, making "life in a new Administration miserable by the consequences."

When I told him that the individual he mentioned had no connection with Mr. Reagan's campaign and certainly did not speak for us, he seemed relieved. I had no way of determining the accuracy of what I had been told, but the exchange left me concerned: saving Mr. Kim's life was a worthy priority on humanitarian and political grounds. The Reagan camp certainly shared that objective, but Mr. Carter's disastrous 1979 visit to South Korea -- during which he suggested troop withdrawals -- had so chilled our relationship with Korea that effective dialogue seemed impossible.

After the second alert from Secretary Muskie, Gen. John Vessey Jr., then Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, invited me to a breakfast meeting "of great importance to our national security." I was surprised to encounter there the Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman, Lew Byong Hion.

General Lew said he wished to discuss the "Kim Dae Jung matter," informing me that South Korea was entitled to deal with insurrection as it saw fit and that Mr. Kim was responsible for much loss of life and should be executed. In this way, he said, relations with the Reagan Administration could start with a "clean slate."

General Lew said the Korean coup leader and President, Chun Doo Hwan, had sent him to me to convey the message. Unprepared to react to this life-and-death issue and stalling for time, I said that I did not believe he was an emissary from the Korean President, that he had no letter authorizing him to speak with me and that if he was an emissary, to return in two weeks with authorization or have someone sent who could be authenticated. That gave me time to discuss the matter with Mr. Reagan and formulate a response.

Mr. Reagan, who thought the execution of Mr. Kim would be a moral and political disaster, agreed that I would have full responsibility for the

unusual situation, however, required an exception.

With our encouragement, Mr. Allen contacted President Chun and told him that President-elect Reagan was opposed to Mr. Kim's execution. Mr. Allen held out the possibility of the first state visit of the Reagan Administration, but only if the sentence was commuted. Mr. Chun accepted, and he visited Washington and stayed at Blair House in February 1981.

Despite heavy press criticism of the Reagan Administration for "coddling dictators," this deal -- never made public -- saved Mr. Kim's life. Kim Dae Jung, the man whom the military considered a crypto-Communist and wanted to kill, took a fellowship at Harvard. As Korea moved slowly toward democracy, with American encouragement, Mr. Kim returned to his country. Now he is about to sit at its pinnacle of power -- something no one thought possible only a few years ago.

Meanwhile, history plays its astonishing tricks. Mr. Chun, the man who wanted to execute Kim Dae Jung, now sits in jail, having been condemned to death himself for corruption. And Kim Dae Jung's first act as President-elect was to ask the incumbent President of Korea, Kim Young Sam (himself a former dissident), to grant Mr. Chun amnesty and release him and another former President, Roh Tae Woo, also a general, from jail.

The Denver Post March 3, 1998 Tuesday 2D EDITION
HEADLINE: Special prosecutor is trying to put the wrong people in jail
BYLINE: Ed Quillen

Let me make it clear that this by no means is intended as a criticism of Whitewater Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr or anyone on his staff, and further, I have received no leaks or other communications from anyone in the White House.

I retain full confidence that, any millennium now, Starr will issue a complete and sensible explanation of how an investigation into a land development 15 years ago in Arkansas requires hauling executive-branch appointees before a grand jury to explain what public records they might have pointed out to reporters, or forcing parents to testify as to what their children might have told them.

So, please don't issue a subpoena to me, or anyone I know. We are not critics of the special prosecutor. We think he is just dandy. There must be a connection between Starr's current inquiries and the long-ago and faraway lending policies of a savings-and-loan, and if we can't see it at the moment, well, we have faith.

Now that the disclaimer is settled, we need to take a broader look at the whole process. It appears that the job of the special prosecutor, if he succeeds, is to put politicians in jail.

For bleeding hearts who often proclaim that America needs some prison reform, this should be a blessing.

As it is, we put people in office. They run the risk of failing re-election, losing a bid for higher office, or getting ousted by term limits (self-imposed term limits don't count, though, at least if you ask my congressman, the Honorable Scott McInnis).

Once out of office, they will need gainful employment, usually as a lobbyist

Administration deserves credit for trying to save Mr. Kim and highlighting the issue, and so does President Reagan, for authorizing an early risk to do what was right. Chalk up one for the Gipper!

The New York Times December 24, 1997, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

HEADLINE: A Future Leader's Moment Of Truth

BYLINE: By Richard Holbrooke and Michael Armacost; Richard Holbrooke was Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs in the Carter Administration. Michael Armacost, his deputy, later served as Under Secretary of State in the Reagan Administration.

The election of Kim Dae Jung as President of South Korea is as astonishing in its own way, as that of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. Each was labeled a dangerous subversive by his country's ruling establishment; each was jailed for years and faced death for his beliefs, and each survived to become his nation's leader.

Mr. Kim faced death several times in his remarkable life, but never more clearly than at the end of 1980, when he was in a South Korean jail with his health deteriorating. After a staged trial, the military regime of President Chun Doo Hwan sentenced him to death, claiming he was a traitor and a secret supporter of North Korea.

The Carter Administration informed the Korean generals that the execution of Mr. Kim would have disastrous consequences. Seoul delayed his execution while awaiting the results of the 1980 Presidential election in the United States. Their preference for a Reagan victory was clear; they expected that the Republicans would be more sympathetic than President Carter, who had lectured the Koreans about human rights during his trip to Seoul in 1979.

After Ronald Reagan's victory in November, Washington received solid information through several channels that the Korean generals now felt free to execute Mr. Kim, and planned to do so before Mr. Reagan's inauguration.

We were then Assistant Secretary of State and senior Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs, respectively. We knew that relations between the outgoing Administration and the Republicans coming to power were marked by suspicion and distrust, especially at the higher levels. Acting on our own, we requested a meeting with Richard Allen, who was set to become Mr. Reagan's national security adviser.

In late November we called on Mr. Allen in his temporary transition offices. Our message was simple. "The Carter Administration managed to keep Kim Dae Jung alive for the last few months," we said. "But we cannot do so any longer unless you send an immediate signal to Seoul in the name of President-elect Reagan. We are virtually certain Kim will be dead before the inauguration unless you act immediately." We shared with Mr. Allen sensitive intelligence information to show that we were not exaggerating the danger.

Mr. Allen, who knew Korea well, understood both the substance of the message and its political implications. He did not want the new Administration to begin with a crisis in Korea. In addition, Mr. Allen understood that if Mr. Kim were executed the incoming Administration would be blamed.

Traditionally, incoming administrations do not take any policy action during transitions. As the saying goes, "We only have one President at a time." This

Or so we would like to imagine. But sometimes our confidence in our knowledge is matched only by the disorientation that overwhelms us when what we know one year turns out to be wrong the next. Last year, the common wisdom held that the twenty-first century would be the "Asian century." Last month, the director of the International Monetary

Robert Kagan is senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Fund warned that the most salient issue of the next century would be the Asian financial crisis. Our trusty models turn out to be almost comically useless. They have proven unable to predict or to explain the most consequential events of our time, whether it is the collapse of Soviet communism or of Asian economies. They are like the flamingo mallets and the hedgehog balls of Alice's croquet game, which unfurl and pad away from us just when we feel confident enough to use them.

For more than a decade we were told that the "Asian model" of "guided capitalism," in which the state intervened heavily and strategically to support and to steer industry in the most promising directions, was probably superior to the American model, according to which the national economy unfolded without clear direction or sense of national strategy. Apostles of the Asian model, such as James Fallows and Chalmers Johnson, took evident pleasure in the way the Asian miracle, which seemed to depend on the limitation of individual freedoms in favor of the collective interest, pointed up the deficiencies of the American system. Rather than look for ways to remake other cultures in their own image, Fallows chided, "Western societies should first concentrate on whether and how to remake themselves." Many Americans, and their political leaders, took these warnings to heart and supported various forms of what was once known as "industrial policy."

For Samuel P. Huntington, the stunning success of the Asian model was the central pillar upholding the dubious thesis of *The Clash of Civilizations*, that the West was in decline relative to the rising power of the "Sinic" civilization of East Asia. Confidently projecting Asian growth rates in a straight line into the future, Huntington predicted that by 2020 Asia would contain "four of the five largest and seven of the ten largest economies," and would account for more than 40 percent of the world's economic output. And this astounding growth would have enormous geopolitical, cultural, and ideological ramifications--all of them bad from the standpoint of American power and Western principles. It would mean an ineluctable shift in the balance of international power away from an American-dominated West and toward a China-dominated East. It would mean that the "liberal" model of political and economic development--which assumed that economic growth had to be accompanied by political liberalization--could be challenged and even replaced by a new model, represented by the capitalist authoritarianism of China or Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore. "The mounting self-confidence of East Asia," Huntington argued, had given rise "to an emerging Asian universalism comparable to that which has been characteristic of the West."

Those fashionable theories had some important things in common: a tendency to deny the universality of such "Western" ideals as freedom, individual rights, and democracy; economicism, or the tendency to view political and social matters as determined by economic matters; and a tendency to dismiss as futile, arrogant, and undesirable any attempt by the United States to try to shape the

Three other congress leaders serving life sentences were moved with him: Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba and Andrew Mlangeni.

Prison officials have confirmed the move, saying only that it was for "administrative reasons." They added that Mandela was not moved for health reasons.

Mandela will be more comfortable physically in the mainland jail, although the separation from his fellow dissidents remaining on the island is a blow. Robben Island is a low-lying, damp, windswept place often lashed by heavy seas.

Some of the prisoners on Robben Island are young Soweto students who were jailed after the 1976 uprisings in that Johannesburg township. They will be released in a few years, and the authorities may have feared the influence the outspoken Mandela had on them.

Mandela's educational program began with about 40 prisoners, but he recently sent messages to friends to raise funds for nearly all the prisoners on the island.

The New Republic

MARCH 9, 1998

HEADLINE: What Korea Teaches

BYLINE: ~~Robert Kagan~~

HIGHLIGHT:

Models, principles, and the future of democracy in Asia.

BODY:

Korea's Place in the Sun:

A Modern History

by Bruce Cumings

(Norton, 527 pp., \$35)

The Two Koreas:

A Contemporary History

by Don Oberdorfer

(Addison Wesley, 472 pp., \$30)

I.

At the dawn of this century, Henry Adams, dazzled and humbled by "the acceleration of history," by the advances in science that were transforming his age, predicted that "every American who lived into the year 2000 would know how to control unlimited power. He would think in complexities unimaginable to an earlier mind. He would deal with problems altogether beyond the range of earlier society." Today we flatter ourselves that Adams was right. Our particular conceit as we enter the twenty-first century is that we know how things work. About new issues, such as the machinations of international financial markets and the revolutionary effect of computer technologies, and about old ones, such as questions of politics and international conflict, we tend to believe that, with enough information and the right methods, these can be measured, mapped, and manipulated. This is still the age of the social sciences, and we are particularly enamored of models. We have models for everything--for how economies grow, for how nations democratize, for how wars start. The Enlightenment dream of mastering nature and the complex interactions of mankind has been realized. Mr. Adams, meet Messrs. Rubin, Greenspan, and Camdessus.

matched only by the rather remarkable extent to which it seemed to illustrate the most popular theory of political development: call it the not-ready-for-prime-time theory of democratic development. Since South Korea had grown wealthy under Park's authoritarian regime, and had become democratic only after it became wealthy, many observers assumed that this sequence was not accidental. South Korea had passed through predictable and appropriate stages of development, and each of these stages was necessary for building the present happy outcome.

In South Korea, the authoritarian stage was necessary for two reasons: because it provided a period of stability and the firm dirigisme that made an economic take-off possible; and because, in the absence of that economic take-off the Korean people, lacking the strong middle class upon which successful democracies are presumed to rest, were not "ready" to sustain a popular form of government. Indeed, according to this general theory, if democracy had come to South Korea before economic development, it would have been premature, unstable, chaotic, unproductive. It would have been an "illiberal" democracy, and therefore a dangerous democracy. In this evolutionary view of political and economic development, nations are a little like people. They need to crawl before they can walk.

The sunnier side of this theory was that once a nation like South Korea did achieve a certain level of economic growth, it would be almost impossible for it not to become democratic. The most prominent spokesman for this have-a-nice-day economicism is Thomas L. Friedman. It was also the view of many conservatives both during and after the Cold War, who argued that capitalism was not only a necessary condition for democracy but also a sufficient condition. Political scientists today believe that they can demonstrate a direct link between a nation's average income levels and its form of government. Writing in *The National Interest* in 1996, Henry Rowen noted that "the transition to stable democracy correlates with mean incomes between \$5,000 and \$6,000, and becomes impregnable at the \$7,000 level." On the basis of such calculations, Rowen predicted that China would be a democracy by 2015, for that was when China's per capita GNP could be projected, given current growth rates, to cross the magic threshold. Or rather, that was the date as of the 1996 projections, before last year's Asian economic collapse forced so many recalculations and invited speculations about many different possible Asian futures. Now, presumably, China's emergence as a full-blown democracy will have to wait until 2019 or so.

This developmental model has also another important use. It serves as a weapon in the debate over American policy toward such Asian dictatorships as China and Indonesia. To those who have recommended that the United States use economic sanctions or other forms of pressure on these countries to compel a change in governance, the proponents of the "Korean model" have responded that, on the contrary, such intervention would only interrupt the natural evolution toward democracy. If you want freer governments in China or Indonesia, you need only to increase trade and thereby hasten the day when economic growth compels those nations to shed their authoritarian fins and gills, which no longer serve any useful purpose, and leave the water of dictatorship for the land of democracy. Eventually, growing wealth in the hands of an increasing number of people will naturally create the conditions for democracy. It will, in fact, necessitate democracy. After all, look at South Korea.

II.

Well, let's look at South Korea. Did it evolve from traditional

direction of history.

For many years South Korea served as a showcase for these notions. In the 1970s it was among the first of the Asian "miracles," an improbable economic success story that convinced many in the East and the West that extensive government involvement in guiding and subsidizing industries--the so-called "Asian model"--was a sound and even a critical ingredient for achieving rapid economic growth in developing nations. For three decades South Korea's GDP grew at an average rate of nine percent a year, despite periods of economic failure in the late 1960s and the early 1980s. Fulfilling the dream of General Park Chung Hee, who ruled South Korea with an increasingly strong hand from 1961 to 1979, South Korea became one of the world's leading exporters of steel, cement, electronics, automobiles, and ships. It managed to produce internationally-known brand names such as Daewoo, Samsung, and Hyundai. By the mid-'90s, South Korea boasted the eleventh largest economy in the world. It was a featured exhibit in the World Bank's publication, The East Asian Miracle. And nobody expected the miracle to end, in Korea or in any of the other exemplars of the Asian model. As recently as last fall, the International Monetary Fund declared the South Korean economy sound as a bell.

That was last year's wisdom. This year we know that the Korean model contained a flaw at birth, a flaw that was destined to bring the economy down in the absence of radical corrective surgery. It seems that precisely what made the South Korean economy great in the early stage of its economic development--state-directed lending at subsidized interest rates to favored industries undertaking high-risk ventures--is what most contributed to its collapse. "Suddenly it is clear," The Washington Post reported in December, that South Korea's huge conglomerates, the chaebol, "had run amok, relentlessly seeking bigger market shares and borrowing money without regard to profits, cash flow or potential failure." Suddenly, that is, they were doing what they had always been doing, ever since the 1970s. And suddenly this was a big mistake.

Now we know better. We know that the keys to economic success in the modern, globalized world are greater "transparency," better-regulated lending practices, and more market-driven investment, which is to say, less corruption, less cronyism, less backroom dealing between government and business, less "guided capitalism." We know this, of course, with as much confidence as we knew that the old Korean model was invincible. In newspapers and in journals around the world, commentators now note, as if it has always been perfectly obvious, that the chaebol system was all along riding for a fall, that the cozy relationship between government and industry had to be broken up, that what the South Korean economic system needed was more--would you believe it?--democracy. The model is dead, long live the model.

Several weeks ago, South Korea's president-elect Kim Dae Jung declared that "if we had true democracy in Korea, then the collusive intimacy between business and government and corruption would not have been as great here." (For Kim, of course, this was not instant wisdom. It was not necessary for the scales to drop from this former dissident's eyes.) He even had the temerity to claim that South Korea's current problems were the result of a long tradition of placing economic development ahead of democracy. And he made a direct attack on those "leaders of Asian society who have been saying that military dictatorship was the way and democracy was not good for their nations."

Asian leaders have not been the only ones making such arguments, of course. Until recently, South Korea's utility as a model for economic development was

prevented economic growth.

For Koreans, war was a great equalizer and, in its awful way, a great liberator. Before its twentieth-century disasters, Korea was characterized by an indolent aristocracy, the yangban, sitting atop an immobile population. After two wars and two foreign occupations, Cumings writes, the aristocracy's "capacity to control the people below them," ... and their continuous tendency to control markets and stifle enterprise, was blasted to smithereens. "A people that for centuries had been "frozen in place in rural settings" was suddenly and brutally thrust into a new age of social and spatial mobility. "What the Japanese had begun with their massive shifts of Korean population in 1935-45, what the national division after World War II had intensified, the Korean War completed: Koreans of all classes were now thoroughly displaced from their local roots. Everyone was jostled or pushed or thrown bodily out of his or her social niche."

War and occupation not only opened Korean society, it also provided the opportunity and the financial capital to fuel its development. During the long Japanese occupation, and during the American occupation that followed World War II, Koreans made their money almost entirely from the occupiers. Many a future tycoon who would later command one of Korea's powerful corporate conglomerates got his start serving the needs of occupying forces. As Cumings points out, these were hardly archetypal capitalist entrepreneurs looking for "the main chance." For the Kim Song-su group, Korea's first chaebol, "the main chance had been the Japanese regime and the opportunities that close alliance with it brought." Under the American occupation, Cumings argues, the true "creative enterprise" of South Korea in the 1950s "consisted of sucking the American teat for all it was worth." Chong Chu-yong, the chairman of the Hyundai Corporation, started on his path to billionaire status by carrying supplies to American bases on half-ton trucks. Cho Chong-hun, later to become the head of Korean Airlines, amassed his early fortune through lucrative American transport contracts.

South Korea's economic miracle, in short, could not have occurred without the American occupation and the billions of dollars it brought to a destitute people. After World War II, and even more so after the Korean war, American dollars poured into the Korean economy in an unimaginable deluge. Between 1945 and 1965, \$12 billion from the treasury of the United States was transferred to South Korea in the form of aid, and in the 1950s, according to Cumings, this aid accounted for 100 percent of Seoul's budget. By the end of that decade, direct grants from the United States accounted for five-sixths of all South Korea's imports. This does not include the money spent by Americans living in South Korea, or the dollars that flowed in through the underground economy.

Every stratum of the otherwise barren Korean economy was "fertilized," as Cumings puts it, "by the inconceivable amounts of American cash that flowed into the country, down from the presidential mansion, through the bureaucracies civil and military, coursing through the PXs and onto the black market, into the pockets of a horde of people who serviced the foreign presence: drivers, guards, runners, valets, maids, houseboys, black-market operators, money changers, prostitutes, and beggars." In describing the Korean "miracle," analysts usually start from a base of about \$100 per capita income in 1960 and marvel at its rise to more than \$10,000 over three decades. But Cumings, for good reason, considers the low estimates of South Korea's per capita income in the early decades after World War II "grossly uninformative." After all, according to one estimate that Cummings cites, American aid to South Korea between 1945 and 1976 added up to as much as \$600 every year for every Korean.

authoritarianism to modern democracy, as a consequence of economic growth? Did Korea's authoritarian governments prior to the late 1980s serve their teleological purpose of providing the stability to allow economic growth to proceed, a stability that would have been absent had democracy emerged too soon? And was it this economic growth, producing the necessary social conditions, such as a middle class, that finally compelled South Korea's traditional rulers to give up their hold on the political system and let democracy flower?

Two new books help to answer these questions. In *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Bruce Cumings, one of the last of the red-hot revisionist historians, has written a lively, contrarian, occasionally dyspeptic account of Korean history that ought to shake up some conventional thinking about the Korean "model." Don Oberdorfer, the retired reporter for The Washington Post, has written *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*, a less contentious but highly informative account of the past fifty years. Both books are well worth reading for the background to South Korea's current crisis, and for what it may portend in a part of the world where the United States has repeatedly, if unexpectedly, found itself entangled.

Reading Cumings's and Oberdorfer's accounts of the last half-century in Korean history, one is hard-pressed to find evidence that things unfolded in the smooth, organic evolution suggested by the popular models of development. Both the Korean economy and the course of Korean politics were shaped less by the broad, impersonal forces of economic growth or social and institutional change than by powerful individuals and unpredictable events. As Cumings notes, Korea "presents the Westerner not with a smooth narrative of progress . . . but with a fractured, shattered twentieth-century history," a history filled with accidents and miscalculations that defy political science modeling. And then there was that rather large external factor that shaped, often but not always for the better, the course of South Korean life: the United States.

What were the essential ingredients of South Korea's economic success? As Cumings points out, they are not to be found among the usual list of capitalist building blocks. In Korea before the "miracle," there were "no capitalists, no Protestants, no merchants, no money, no market, no resources, no get-up-and-go, ... no discernible history of commerce, foreign trade, or industrial development." Koreans did possess a high level of general education and a long tradition of bureaucratic governance by scholar-officials, which provided a pool of technocrats adept at managing a state-led development program. Average Koreans after World War II applied to most of the problems they encountered, at home and in the American diaspora, a remarkable willingness to work long and hard. But the work ethic that we associate with Koreans today may not always have been a notable national trait. The Japanese, who occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945, considered the Koreans lazy. In Cumings's view, "Confucianism" and other ingrained cultural traits "neither hindered nor helped" the economic progress of South Korea.

Far from being determined by any existing cultural, social, political, or economic preconditions, Korea's economic success came as a consequence of events that were (as the political scientists like to say) exogenous: world wars that had nothing to do with Korea; foreign occupations, first by Japan and then by the United States; a Cold War that divided the country and sparked a civil war in which huge foreign and Korean armies devastated Korean soil and society. In one of history's terrible but familiar ironies, these wars and occupations blazed the trail for South Korea's march to prosperity, by burning away institutional, social, and cultural obstacles that might have slowed or

Stalin," Park believed (according to Cumings) that "an industrial sovereign did not rely on foreigners for the guts of an industrial base." Thus many risky investment decisions were made by Park chiefly for reasons of national honor and national strategy.

Those decisions wound up scoring huge economic successes. As Cumings writes, "The Western economists' estimates of future demand should have been multiplied by the hairs on their legs." Over the course of the 1970s, Korea's steel capacity grew fourteenfold. "Who bought all this steel? Korean shipbuilders who had no factories in 1970, Korean automakers who weren't supposed to be needed by the world market, American manufacturers who bought Korean steel delivered to the Midwest well below the posted price in Pittsburgh or Gary." Although some of the new export industries launched by Park failed, enough of them succeeded to transform the South Korean economy.

It is amusing to read, these days, in *The Economist* that the big problem in the Korean economy these past few years has been the propensity of state-directed banks to throw "free money at the chaebol, which has allowed the chaebol to build recklessly huge factories, and to diversify into businesses in which they have no expertise." This was precisely Park's formula for success. Korean industries had no expertise in shipbuilding when Park thrust them into it, and the machine-tool industry was a wild venture at which he threw enormous quantities of "free money." He just rolled the dice and they kept coming up natural.

Even during the Park years, however, economic success depended to a substantial degree on non-economic factors, such as war. At Lyndon Johnson's request, South Korea contributed some 300,000 troops to the American war in Vietnam and, according to Cumings, received as much as \$7.5 million per division in compensation. Between 1965 and 1970, Seoul earned about a billion dollars this way, accounting for between seven and eight percent of its GDP, and for as much as 19 percent of its total foreign earnings. Korean industry also benefited enormously from the war. Vietnam, Cumings writes, "became a frontier for Korean enterprise, as many firms, especially construction companies, got contracts to support the American effort." For several years the war absorbed more than 90 percent of South Korea's steel exports and more than 50 percent of all exports of transportation equipment. "Warfare in East Asia," Cumings notes, "was handmaiden to economic growth."

To note this fact is not to deny Park's achievements nor those of his successors, but it does place them in a larger context. And it raises a number of questions, some of which are especially pertinent now that the Korean "model" has come a cropper. There is the question raised by Kim Dae Jung, for instance, of whether Korea's economy would have been healthier all along had it expanded in a freer political atmosphere. Indeed, the collapse of the Korean economy, coinciding as it did with the third consecutive free election held in South Korea since 1987, provides an opportunity to reflect once more on the complex relationship between economic development and political development.

III.

As with economic development, South Korea has for many years been the model for a host of theories about political development. Since South Korea became democratic in the late 1980s, it has provided a showcase for those who claim that economic growth and industrial and technological modernization lead inexorably to democracy. Since South Korea's most stunning economic growth

The Korean economy also benefited, if that word is not too obscene, from the utter devastation meted out during the Korean War. As in Japan during World War II, obsolete industrial plants were destroyed, making room for an otherwise impossible modernization of technology. In both North and South, "the war renovated plant and industry in the flash of phosphorus." According to Cumings, the war and its aftermath also had a big effect on the South Korean character by increasing the size and the influence of the South Korean military, which from the rubble of war emerged as the "strongest, most cohesive, best-organized institution in Korean life." Since just about every Korean male had to go through the military's vigorous form of education and training, Cumings speculates that the military may have provided a "school for industrial discipline" that served the burgeoning industries of postwar Korea well.

Korea's devastation also affected the culture in another important way. The stunning success of South Korean businessmen in the '60s, '70s, and '80s owed much to their unusually high propensity to take risks, a propensity that was born in the desperate circumstances of the wars of the mid-century. As the Harvard business economist Michael E. Porter has pointed out, "everyone had to start from scratch, motivated by a sense of crisis, a lingering resentment of the Japanese, and the feeling that there was nothing to lose. The competitive spirit that has resulted is perhaps the single greatest source of advantage that Korean companies have possessed."

From the Japanese occupation, then, Koreans got "foreign" investment and learned the style of state-directed capitalism that later made the chaebol famous, benefiting from what Cumings calls Japan's "developmental" colonialism. From the American occupation, the South Koreans got money-making opportunities and steady flows of financial sustenance and seed capital to see them through the early phases of industrialization. In between, awful wars wiped out stultifying social hierarchies and a flaccid aristocracy, creating mobility, fluidity, and a hard-scrabble style of individual entrepreneurship. Some model!

These were all essential preconditions for the glory years of South Korea's economy under the direction of President Park Chung Hee, who presided over astonishing growth from the 1960s until his assassination in 1979. It was Park who single-handedly created the Korean economic model that we know today, ordering the establishment practically overnight of new export industries in steel, electronics, chemicals, shipbuilding, automobiles, and machine tools, and subsidizing them with special low-interest loans in what became known as the "big push."

Still, looking back on Park's success from the perspective of today's economic calamity, one gets the sense of a man--and a nation--on a long winning streak that depended, as such streaks usually do, on a fair amount of luck. At the time, American advisers and economists at the IMF believed that Park's grand plans made no economic sense. The heavy industries that Park wanted Korea to compete in suffered from overcapacity. Korea's domestic market was too small to absorb the new goods he wanted to produce, and there was no demand in the world market for most of these products. The American advisers in their wisdom had always envisioned South Korea as best suited to light industry.

But Park ignored the economists' advice. The reason was that he had his sight on more than economics. A serious country, he believed, engaged in heavy industry. "Steel," he once declared, "is national power." Park's demand for rapid development of a machine-tool industry was especially reckless, but "like

by the mammoth power of Washington.

For most of the first two decades after World War II, the United States handled the politics of South Korea with a predictable blend of ambivalence, confusion, good will, and hypocrisy. For most of this century, Washington viewed Korea almost entirely as a strategic issue, and an ancillary one. Theodore Roosevelt gave Korea over to Japanese colonialism in 1905 with nary a thought, and four decades later Dean Acheson unintentionally made it seem that the United States would not fight to defend it. After the World War II, strategists such as Acheson and George Kennan saw Korea as important only in their effort to restore Japanese strength as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. Kennan thought that South Korea should be kept nominally independent until Japan could reestablish its suzerainty there. After the Korean War, Americans seemed to believe that the chief role of the South Korean government was to be protected against a North Korean attack.

American officials understandably put a high premium on stability in South Korea, and therefore they were willing to tolerate some measure of deviance from the democratic forms that they had helped to erect. Reinforcing that toleration was the American-manufactured fiction, not exclusive to Korea, that Washington had to respect the sovereignty of other nations and not meddle in their internal affairs. This was at once noble and hypocritical, idealistic and irresponsible; and it was very American. Only Americans could claim that they did not wish to manipulate the politics of a country in which tens of thousands of American troops were stationed and in which the home country's army was directly under American command. And only Americans could make that claim with a measure of sincerity.

But Koreans were baffled whenever American officials insisted that their hands were tied regarding "internal" Korean matters. Oberdorfer recounts that in 1979, after the military coup by Chun Doo Hwan, a Korean academic asked an American official why the United States did not simply "nullify what General Chun did and kick him out." Why not "teach Koreans a lesson that the United States does not support just anyone"? The American ambassador responded tersely: "Cannot act as a colonial governor." This was nonsense. Koreans knew perfectly well that American officials could act and did act as colonial governors.

In the late 1950s, in fact, the Americans, tiring of Syngman Rhee, began actively pushing South Korea toward a truer version of democracy. The American embassy took an increasingly favorable view of Rhee's opponents in the Democratic Party--the party that eventually produced Kim Dae Jung--even arguing that an opposition electoral victory "would require and hold great potential for the exercise of American influence to effect a basic improvement in government in Korea." When Rhee clung stubbornly to power, and when mass student protests in April 1960 resulted in the killing of over 100 unarmed civilians by Rhee's palace guard, Washington decided that enough was enough. The ambassador and the commander of U.S. forces asked Rhee to resign, and three days later Rhee and his wife were off to Hawaii. The Second Republic established after Rhee's departure was South Korea's first full-fledged democracy. It sported a bicameral legislature, a new and stronger National Assembly, a free press, and, Cumings relates, "sophisticated schemes for building the economy." And the Korean response to this colonial interventionist behavior by the Americans? They laid a wreath at the statue of General MacArthur.

Unfortunately, the Americans were inconsistent in their colonialism. The very next year, when the Korean military and the right wing, fearing a drift to the

occurred under authoritarian rule, however, it has also been a useful example for those (most recently Robert D. Kaplan and Fareed Zakaria) who maintain that, at a certain stage in the development of most nations, a "traditional" authoritarian government may be preferable to a "premature" transition to democracy. These theories take as their assumption that some nations are "ready" for democracy and some nations are not.

The problem with applying Korean history to illustrate these theories is that Korean history does not illustrate them. For a start, there was no evolution from a "traditional" authoritarian regime to a more modern style of democracy, for the simple reason that the political system established in South Korea in the late 1940s was not a "traditional" authoritarian regime at all. It was born under a foreign occupation--specifically, an American occupation--and so it was not an organic product of Korean culture. Its institutions were not rooted in Korean soil, nor had acquired over the centuries the Burkean legitimacy so revered by American conservatives. If it is true, as Jeane Kirkpatrick wrote in 1979 in "Dictatorships and Double Standards," that traditional autocracies "worship traditional gods and observe traditional taboos," that they are characterized most by their contentment to leave things in nation and society as they have always been, then there was nothing at all "traditional" about the Republic of Korea. Owing to war and to foreign occupation, little in Korea was as it had been before. Social and economic hierarchies, usually preserved by "traditional" autocracies, had been shaken before Syngman Rhee took power; and they were shattered by the Korean War.

Even in the 1940s, politics in Korea did not follow "traditional" patterns. As Cumings explains, Korea after 1945 already had a "modern" politics in which charismatic leaders of left and right developed huge mass constituencies. At the birth of the South Korean republic, there was a political opposition, albeit a tepid one, and a National Assembly in which that opposition could express itself. Cumings rarely has a kind word to say about the United States or the governments it supported in South Korea, but he agrees with the CIA's view at the time that the National Assembly, though weak, was "the locus of democratic spirit" in South Korea. Rhee "tolerated a good bit of noisy debate and interpellation." Intolerance, persecution, and torture were aimed at the communists and the left. The more moderate Korean opposition escaped some of the worst horrors of Rhee's semi-authoritarian rule.

Perhaps the biggest flaw in most theories of political development, when applied to Korea, is their omission of the role of the great "exogenous" factor, the United States. That Korea's politics should have been heavily influenced by an outside power should come as no surprise. Any nation that moved from occupation to war to occupation to war over the course of a few decades could hardly be expected to shape its own political institutions free from outside influence. And Korea, despite its reputation as "the hermit kingdom," was especially susceptible to such influences. "It is a curiosity of Korean politics going back several centuries," Cumings writes, that the yangban, though internally strong, was "weak and brittle when faced with external challenge." As a consequence, Korean history has always been characterized by "indigenous stasis and exogenously induced change."

Enter the United States. South Korea was born under the shadow of American power. When the Republic of Korea was inaugurated on August 15, 1948, General Douglas MacArthur was on the podium. When South Korean elections were held that same year, they were sponsored by the United Nations, which is to say, by the United States. And when South Korea's first president, Syngman Rhee, came to power, the emigre who had spent much of his life in the United States was backed

time to be bothered." Park could have predicted as much: three weeks before he made his move, Oberdorfer notes, Park had watched closely as Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines declared martial law and overthrew his country's political institutions--to silence in Washington.

As always, it was a little hard to credit American professions of helplessness, what with 40,000 American troops in Korea, many billions of dollars in direct American aid, and an American general in titular command of the Korean military. When Washington really wanted something, it got it. When Henry Kissinger ordered Park to cease his nuclear development program, Park obeyed. In 1973, after the KCIA tortured a professor to death, the CIA station chief said that he could no longer work with the head of the KCIA. The official was fired a week later.

Still, an ever-shifting combination of fear, timidity, laziness, and inattention, especially in the wretched decade of the 1970s, made American officials reluctant to engage themselves consistently and effectively in Korean politics. In justifying their passivity, they hid behind the skirts of non-intervention and, worse still, fell into endorsing the very rationalization. Korean dictators used to justify their misrule: that the Korean people were not ready for democracy.

The Carter administration, for all its chatter about human rights, was not very different from the Nixon and Ford administrations in this respect. Waves of student protests, growing political opposition, and persecution by the Park regime of Kim Dae Jung and other dissidents led to ritualistic denunciations by Carter officials; but in Korea, as elsewhere, Carter's devotion to the principle of non-intervention trumped his devotion to human rights. Carter's primary goal in Korea, based on a promise that he made rather flippantly during his presidential campaign, was to withdraw all American forces. (Asked later by Oberdorfer why he thought withdrawal was a good idea, Carter wrote back that "the origin of my position is not clear to me.")

When Park was assassinated in 1979, when the brief political opening that followed was slammed shut by another military coup, when in the following year a popular rebellion in Kwangju was brutally repressed by the Korean army, Carter officials were paralyzed. The conspirators, led by Chun Doo Hwan, knew, as Park had known in 1972, that the Americans were preoccupied, this time with the hostage crisis in Iran. According to Oberdorfer, they also "sensed, correctly, that Washington ... felt under great pressure not to push so hard in Seoul that they created another Iran." General John Wickham, Carter's commander in Korea, declared in the midst of the Korean crisis that "national security and internal stability surely come before political liberalization"--an observation that could have earned him a Ph.D. from the Harvard government department. In any case, Wickham opined, "I'm not sure democracy the way we understand it is ready for Korea, or the Koreans ready for it."

1980 189
Seven years after this sagacious judgment, South Koreans took part in the first open elections since Park's crackdown in 1972. The rival opposition leaders Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung split the antigovernment vote in 1987 and handed the election to the military candidate Roh Tae Woo--but the long era of military rule was ending. Kim Young Sam won the next election in 1992. And five years later Kim Dae Jung capped a remarkable career in opposition--a career in which he was run over by a truck, kidnapped, arrested, and almost executed--by being elected President in South Korea's third free election.

left and talk of reunification with the North, decided to stage a coup, the Americans retreated helplessly into their non-interventionist pose. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations, after blinking at the coup, did manage to put enough pressure on Park Chung Hee to force him to hold repeated elections, one of which he nearly lost to Kim Dae Jung. But in 1972, when Park transformed his partly democratic, partly authoritarian regime into a rigid tyranny, the Americans turned a blind eye again. In the early 1970s South Koreans entered an era of authoritarianism more brutal and complete than any they had known since their liberation from the Japanese. Park declared himself president for life, outlawed his opposition, reconstituted the National Assembly to assure his control, and set the Korean intelligence service, the KCIA, loose on all political opponents, not just suspected communists.

There was nothing natural, "traditional," or inevitable about South Korea's turn to rigid authoritarianism in the early 1970s. It was the consequence of the usual confluence of unrelated events that so often shapes the course of history, combined with the decisions of a single individual with the power to turn desires into deeds, and with the conscious inaction, justified as "realism," of the outside power capable of stopping him.

In 1969, South Korea's economy hit a snag, causing political and union turmoil, and leading to the bankruptcies of some 200 Korean firms by 1971. That year Park had his political near-death experience, when Kim Dae Jung ran, neck-and-neck, with him in national elections. Those events alone might have persuaded Park to call a halt to democracy, but his decision to impose a strict tyranny may have been shaped even more by developments outside Korea. And chief among them was the rapidly deteriorating strategic position of the United States in East Asia. With the war in Vietnam going badly, the Nixon administration was retrenching, withdrawing, searching for help from such unlikely sources as Communist China, and, in the view of some Asian allies of the United States, like Park, systematically selling out the anti-Communist forces in the region, from Saigon to Taipei. To make matters worse, Nixon announced the withdrawal of a full division of American troops from Korea. As Cumings writes, "a sense of crisis afflicted Seoul within and without, and the regime reacted with a complex mixture of rigid authoritarianism, dramatic change in the political economy the "big push", and some quick footwork in foreign policy."

But Park justified his turn to strict authoritarian rule in terms familiar to us today. Long before "Asian values" became fashionable, Park declared that he was establishing "Korean-style democracy." Koreans were a family with collective responsibilities, he claimed--and so he eviscerated the National Assembly so as to permit a more "organic cooperation" among the governing bodies. Most Koreans saw through the rhetoric, and so did the Nixon administration. It took 20 years for such rationalizations of dictatorship to be dignified as high theory by Western scholars and policymakers.

As Oberdorfer records, Nixon's ambassador to Korea, Philip Habib, cabled Washington that Park's measures aimed simply at keeping him in office for at least twelve years without opposition. Park was clearly abandoning the course "which we have been advocating and supporting in Korea for 27 years." The only question was what did Washington intend to do about it. The answer was, nothing. As the State Department cabled Habib, "We agree that Park's contemplated measures are unnecessary, and have grave reservations about the course he has embarked upon." But it was "an internal matter.... It is up to him to decide." As then-Assistant Secretary of State Marshall Green later told Oberdorfer, the Nixon administration, thoroughly preoccupied by the war in Vietnam, "didn't have

Jeane Kirkpatrick's highbrow defense of authoritarian allies, and as preoccupied with the threat of communism, Reagan could have been expected to back Chun no matter what he did. Oberdorfer reports that in 1980, when Alexander Haig was asked by a Korean official about Kim Dae Jung, then under arrest and threatened with execution, Haig said the Seoul government should feel free to make any decision it chose about Kim.

But there was another side to Reaganism; and in South Korea, as in the Philippines, Chile, and El Salvador, the Reagan administration confounded the critics and, for that matter, its own ideologists, by acting far more energetically on behalf of democracy than the Carter administration--and far more effectively. As Oberdorfer tells the story, which has never been adequately told before, Reagan officials began early on to box Chun in by praising his "far-sighted" commitments to turning over power, even though they suspected that he would abandon those commitments if given the chance to do so. As the then-Secretary of State George P. Shultz later told Oberdorfer, "Chun Doo Hwan had made a commitment, and we wanted him to realize that the United States expected him to keep it."

The mastermind of the strategy to compel Chun's compliance was Assistant Secretary of State Gaston Sigur, whose speech in February 1987 calling for "a new political framework" in South Korea tolled the death knell for Korean authoritarianism. Sigur called for the "civilianizing" of Korean politics, which meant an end to military rule. Reagan and his aides, prompted by Richard Holbrooke and other Carter officials, even saved Kim Dae Jung's life, bartering it for a state dinner for Chun early in Reagan's first term. That turned out to have more than symbolic value. It was the opening move in a new American policy that ultimately brought down Korean dictatorship.

World events also conspired to weaken authoritarian rule in South Korea, though some of those events, too, were shaped by Washington. By the mid-1980s, democracy had come to a number of countries in Latin America; it was stirring in parts of Eastern Europe; and it was beginning to reshape the politics of Asia, once thought to be impervious to democratic governance. In 1986, as the end of Chun's seven-year term was approaching, the Marcos regime in the Philippines was toppled by a combination of "people power" and the American demand that Marcos respect the results of the elections it had forced him to hold. Events in the Philippines rippled northward to Korea. There was, to use the poli-sci term, a "demonstration effect." Just as the Nixon administration's acquiescence to Marcos's imposition of authoritarian rule in 1972 had emboldened Park to do the same, so in 1986 the American-backed democratic revolution in the Philippines emboldened opposition leaders in Korea and gave Chun and his clique a strong sense that they were not on the right side of history. As one Chun loyalist told an American official in the midst of the crisis, "There's a fever going on and that fever is democracy. And we cannot turn it back."

In truth, they could have turned it back; except that the Reagan administration acted to prevent them. In 1987, when Chun made it clear that he intended to hand power over to Roh Tae Woo without a free election, thus extending military rule for another seven years at least, massive demonstrations erupted throughout the country. South Korean history was repeating itself. Faced with another uprising, this time even more widespread than the Kwangju disaster in 1980, Chun took the usual steps to put it down by force. He drafted an order to the military to prepare to deploy troops on campuses and in cities throughout South Korea. He prepared an emergency decree dissolving the opposition political parties and establishing military courts to deal with dissidents.

Seven years after the Carter administration pronounced South Koreans "not ready" for elections they were suddenly "ready." What had happened? Had South Korean society undergone some remarkably swift evolution and "maturation" between 1980 and 1987? Did the rise of a hitherto unknown middle class make dictatorship suddenly unsustainable? Had the many years of dictatorship under Park and Chun provided the necessary period of stability in which liberal juices could ferment and eventually produce this democratic wine?

The common wisdom holds that the answer to all these questions is yes, that South Korea was "ready" for democracy in the late 1980s but not before. And so will Indonesia eventually be "ready," and so will China, if we just give them time in which economic growth and domestic stability can perform their politically transforming (and, for American business, economically bountiful) magic. But again the common wisdom has elevated theory over facts, and broad economic and social trends--the stuff of political science--over events and people, the stuff of history. And again the models have omitted from their calculations that most critical factor in South Korean politics: the United States.

The first place to begin to understand what happened in South Korea in the 1980s is not the Korean economy but the Korean military, the men who took power in the coup that followed Park's assassination. Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, the same generals who brutally crushed the uprising in Kwangju in 1980, proved a good deal less ruthless in their determination to hold power than Park. This was not because they were great believers in the theory that a growing middle class is the midwife of democracy, or because they were carefully watching the mean income levels to determine the moment at which democracy would become "impregnable." They were aware, instead, of the dangers of hanging on to power--dangers, that is, to their own health.

According to Oberdorfer's account, Chun had drawn "a profound lesson from watching the regime of his mentor, President Park, decline, decay, and collapse in a hail of gunfire when its leader stayed on too long." Chun and Roh also shared what had become a nationwide sense of embarrassment at Park's style of rule. Before taking power, Chun told an American visitor that "if I were to become president, I would like the history books to say that I was the first one in Korea to turn over power in a legitimate and constitutional manner." Chun's wife wanted him to be South Korea's George Washington. Once in power, Chun publicly declared that he was committed to establishing in South Korea "a tradition of peaceful transfer of power" and would step down after completing a seven-year term.

Critics greeted Chun's announcement skeptically, and they doubted the sincerity of the elaborate preparations Chun made for his post-presidential life. Cumings, less credulous than Oberdorfer, suggests that Chun's real plan was to set himself up as a power behind the facade of a parliamentary government. In fact, whatever Chun's original intentions may have been, as the date of his departure from office drew nearer he was less and less inclined to retire. As he told reporters, "In a country like ours, it requires a lot more courage to give up power than to grab it."

But Chun's ambivalence offered an opportunity for the United States to steer South Korean politics away from authoritarianism--if the United States was ready to seize it. One would not have expected the Reagan administration to do so. Openly disdainful of Jimmy Carter's campaign for "human rights," in thrall to

values in Korean words. And the current crisis is now in his hands. It may well be that Korean democracy provides more stability than Korean tyranny.

There is no Korean model. There is only Korean history, and it was a history shaped by individuals, by combinations of causes too complicated to predict or to control, by accidents, by wars, and by American intervention. This historical truth is unsettling for American policymakers and policy intellectuals. To understand this history is to feel the burden of responsibility. Models, by contrast, are far more comforting than history, even if they fail to capture and to explain reality, especially the 50-year-old reality of American global influence. (The universal demonstration effect of America's existence, you might call it.) Models also absolve us of responsibility. They do not call for sacrifices. They encourage us to drift along and let events take their predictable and inevitable course.

One wonders whether we will ever come to realize how enervating the escape from responsibility can be, politically, morally, and spiritually; whether we will ever recognize that our nation's ability to do some good now and then is a rare gift, and that this gift benefits the giver as well as the recipient. "Realism," and its cousin economicism, has no room for such sentiments. But perhaps we can put ourselves less in thrall to the pseudo-science of politics at the end of this most bloodied and scientific of centuries. "Although modern man has produced a dazzling array of scientific achievements and professional accomplishments," Kim Dae Jung wrote in 1981, "in terms of reflections on truth and happiness in life, he is as dim as a candle before the sun." Modern scientists, "including political scientists, economists, and sociologists, have not been able to offer any meaningful solutions to our problems." That is the observation of a man who may fairly claim to have been a victim of the models of Western science. Perhaps we, too, can be guided in the next century by something a bit closer to faith--faith in the few fundamental principles that our nation embodies, not least that all peoples are "ready" for freedom and for the only form of government that can reliably provide it. That faith has served us well in the past. It has undergirded all of our most successful foreign policies, from Truman to Reagan. Faith and foreign policy? Maybe even in this life.

(Copyright 1998, The New Republic)

Time

March 2, 1998

HEADLINE: Cloak-and-dagger games: Saving the life of a leader

BYLINE: Stella Kim/Seoul, With reporting by Douglas Waller/Washington

Kim Dae Jung had just finished a secret lunch with another Korean opposition leader at Tokyo's downtown Grand Palace Hotel on Aug. 8, 1973. As Kim stepped into a hallway, a group of men grabbed him, ordering him in Korean to keep silent. Beaten and smothered with a chloroform-soaked rag, Kim was bound, blindfolded and dumped into a waiting car. By the following night, he had been transferred to a Korean freighter at sea. There he was bound again, his face covered in tape with air holes around his nose. As the ship moved off into the darkness, his captors roped Kim to a traditional Korean funeral plank for burial; weights were attached to his wrists. A devout Catholic, Kim saw the end coming and began to pray.

Suddenly, as if in response, the rumble of aircraft engines swept over the ship. As crew members shouted "an airplane," Kim heard heavy objects falling into the sea. Then the ship turned so sharply Kim was thrown to the deck. "Are you Mr. Kim Dae Jung?" asked a voice, which Kim aides now believe belonged to the ship's cook. "I think the worst is over and you are alive." The fly-by had

The pattern was by now thoroughly familiar. But this time the United States stepped in, demonstrating what Koreans had always known: that American influence was decisive in Korea if American leaders chose to wield it. Reagan sent a letter to Chun calling upon him to honor his promises for a peaceful transition to democracy. Then, in a meeting with Chun, Ambassador James Lilley, a hard-nosed former CIA official, "went beyond the gentle language of the Reagan letter to warn that intervention by the Korean military would stretch the U.S.-Korean alliance in dangerous fashion." Lilley's threats, backed by the U.S. military commander, broke Chun's will. An hour after Lilley's meeting with the Korean general, the mobilization order and emergency decree were suspended. Ten days later, General Roh Tae Woo announced direct presidential elections for December 1987, promising an open campaign, amnesties for political prisoners, including Kim Dae Jung, freedom of the press, and guarantees of basic human rights. "By the end of 1987," Oberdorfer writes, "South Korea had taken a new road from which there was no turning back."

It is hard to read Oberdorfer's account of events in 1987 and still believe that the critical factor in Korea's transition to democratic government was the Korean economy. The Korean middle class, after all, was not very different in size or political significance when it succumbed rather quietly to dictatorship in 1980 than when it refused to succumb in 1987. In the end, it was not the existence of a middle class that made the difference, it was the decision by some members of what Oberdorfer calls "usually conservative middle-class Koreans" to go into the streets--and the equally important decision by Korea's military leaders not to slaughter them when they did. Those decisions were shaped chiefly by non-economic factors, such as events in the Philippines, the anticipated American response, and the less tangible but no less significant feeling among a broad cross-section of Koreans, also within the leadership itself, that they had had enough of brutal military rule. Even so, had the United States reacted in 1987 the way it did in 1980 and in 1972, we might still be talking about an authoritarian South Korea, instead of watching Kim Dae Jung take the presidential sash. The point is simple enough. Economic prosperity and a growing middle class may help to sustain a democracy, but they do not create one. What creates a democracy is a moral will, in individuals and in societies, backed by the power to implement it--in this case, the power of the United States.

What of the assertion that an authoritarian phase was necessary in South Korea to provide a period of stability for economic growth to take off? This is even less persuasive, for the very simple reason that South Korea's authoritarian regimes did not provide much stability. As Cumings points out, "every Korean republic until the one elected in 1992, under Kim Young Sam, began or ended in massive uprisings or military coups." Park's Third Republic began with a coup and ended with Park's murder at the hands of his own intelligence chief. Chun's regime "began and ended with popular rebellions that shook the foundations of the system." One could just as easily argue, as Cumings does, "that South Korea has had one of the most unstable political systems in the world."

Writing from his prison cell on the day before his release at the end of 1982, Kim Dae Jung implored God to "grant that democracy can take root firmly in this country, so the happiness of the people and stability of the nation can be achieved." Democracy alone, he wrote, "is the road for the people of the Republic of Korea to feel purposeful and proud." He was expressing universal

President Kim's self-proclaimed vision is for a kinder, gentler Korea that balances market economics with the kind of democracy he has fought for decades to install. "If we had had greater democracy in this country we could have avoided the present crisis, because the government would not have controlled banks and finance," Kim told Time. To put Korea back on track, the country's durable dissident will have to convince a legion of longtime opponents that he can change the system from within. "He'll want to show past Korean leaders that you don't need totalitarian rule to expand economic growth," says economist Kim Jong In. "Mr. Kim understands the problems we face, he has the right set of solutions and if he sticks to them, we will be able to overcome this crisis."

By any measure, Kim has been running Korea since the day after his Dec. 18 election--with impressive results. Briefed on the economy shortly after his victory, he conceded he had vastly underestimated the scope of Korea's woes and, discarding his initial hesitance, vowed to follow the IMF's structural reform program to the letter. He sought advice from international financiers like George Soros. And his early statements on the need for reform were encouraging enough that foreign bankers tentatively agreed Jan. 28 to reschedule \$ 24 billion of Korea's short-term debt. Most important, Kim began negotiating with powerful labor unions and business leaders to accept a downsizing of vast, inefficient corporate empires--a process that inevitably will lead to massive layoffs. Those talks resulted in historic legislation that will give Korean companies the discretion to fire large numbers of workers, allow substantial foreign ownership of securities and permit hostile corporate takeovers.

Part of the secret to Kim's early success has been the public response to the crisis. Militant labor union officials admit that they canceled plans to launch a strike against the new layoff legislation after a barrage of letters from ordinary citizens pleading with them to cooperate. Storefronts throughout the capital sport signs citing the IMF and offering Korean goods at deep discounts. Many Seoul residents have stopped driving to work, easing the city's legendary traffic jams. Expense accounts have been curbed. Teachers are imploring elementary school students to use their pencils until they are mere stubs. In some Seoul neighborhoods, street-lamps have been extinguished and apartment building elevators are stopping at every other floor to save energy. And there is the now-legendary effort by Koreans to refill the government's foreign exchange coffers by donating gold jewelry and hard currency.

Such patriotic fervor will do little to solve Korea's financial problems. But in combination with Kim's early administrative moves, the enthusiasm for reform has helped draw support from investors and international financial experts. For the time being, the won has halted its freefall, and the financial markets, while by no means vibrant, are at least showing signs of life. IMF managing director Michel Camdessus has publicly saluted Korea's efforts, in contrast to Indonesia's. Last week, credit rating agency Standard & Poor's upgraded Korea's foreign currency credit from B-plus to double B-plus. The real test, however, is yet to come. Says Kim: "It is not true to say that the worst is over."

The near-consensus in Korea is that if anyone can pull off such a monumental rescue, it is Kim Dae Jung. Born the second son of a farmer on the tiny island of Ha Eui, Kim grew up with his father's passion for books and philosophy, though without formal schooling until his parents moved to Mokpo, on the mainland, in 1937 so that Kim could get an education. Initially a devoted student, Kim grew increasingly rebellious toward Korea's Japanese occupiers. (Korean was banned in schools, and Kim's father refused to learn Japanese.) As

with Reagan in February 1981. Ironically, that helped earn Reagan the ire of Kim supporters in and out of Korea for "coddling dictators." Even Kim, whose life had been twice spared, learned only years later that it was the Republicans who bailed him out. "He has a very warm feeling for the U.S.," says former Congressman Stephen Solarz. "He knows if it wasn't for us, he undoubtedly wouldn't be here."

--By Stella Kim/Seoul. With reporting by Douglas Waller/Washington

Time March 2, 1998

HEADLINE: Destiny's Choice; Jailed, beaten, marked for death. To Kim Dae Jung, it was all preparation for this moment

BYLINE: Frank Gibney Jr./Seoul, With reporting by Stella Kim/Seoul

Opposition candidate Kim Dae Jung was on his way to a rally in Seoul a month after his first unsuccessful run for the presidency. Suddenly, a 14-ton truck headed deliberately into the path of Kim's car. His driver swerved off the road, and the truck hit another vehicle, killing two people. But Kim was left with a broken arm and a limp that dogs him even now. That 1971 incident set the tone for a presidential quest unmatched in modern democratic politics. Two years later, Kim was kidnapped and almost drowned. He has been jailed, beaten, exiled and marked for execution. But on Wednesday, in a star-studded ceremony in Seoul, the 73-year-old Catholic from a remote island off Korea's southwestern coast will be inaugurated as his country's eighth President. "Throughout my life I have faced death five times. For six years I was in prisons, and for 10 years I was in exile or under house arrest" Kim told TIME last week. "I never lost hope that someday there would be something like this."

Kim's arrival at Seoul's presidential Blue House this week is the beginning of another journey for which he will need every ounce of strength. Since the fateful car accident--which most Koreans suspect was no accident--the country's spectacular rise from the ruins of war boosted incomes by more than 300%, before the won began to depreciate in October. Military rule has been replaced by the rough-and-tumble of democracy. Yet Kim steps into the presidency only to find South Korea's economy in deep trouble. The Asian financial crisis engulfed the country in November, and on Dec. 3, just a day away from a default on Korea's short-term debt, the government of outgoing President Kim Young Sam signed a \$58.5 billion bailout agreement with the International Monetary Fund. Korea's giant conglomerates, the chaebol, have lost their credibility, if not their credit. And the country's annual growth rate, which hummed for so long at well over 6%, now looks as if it might slip to zero.

The Korea that Kim Dae Jung inherits is a paradoxical study in success and failure: having achieved a prosperity Kim himself once could not have imagined, the country now faces the task of wholesale reorganization. "Never have Korea's institutions--the military, labor, business, students--been so weak," says Kim Jong Hwi, a national security adviser to former President Roh Tae Woo. "This is a challenge, but it is an opportunity as well." Yet Kim--who is known as "D.J." to distinguish him from the multitude of Korea's political Kims--faces a long list of other challenges. They range from stabilizing relations with the United States and Japan to forging a new blueprint for coexistence, if not reunification, with deteriorating North Korea. Last week, North Korea made a surprising overture of cooperation to Seoul. How Kim responds will depend largely on whether the man who for decades was branded a communist sympathizer can win the support of would-be opponents in the National Assembly, where his fragile coalition remains greatly outnumbered by conservative lawmakers from the former ruling party.

visiting fellow at Harvard University, he attracted a coterie of influential friends: the late scholar and ambassador Edwin Reischauer, Senator Edward Kennedy, Congressman Stephen Solarz, Philippine dissident Benigno Aquino. But the pull of his homeland remained strong. In 1983, fellow dissident Kim Young Sam staged a month-long hunger strike to protest Chun's heavy-handed rule. Then Aquino was murdered stepping off a plane in Manila. (Kim still has Aquino's manual typewriter, a gift from the Filipino just before his ill-fated departure.) Although U.S. officials accompanied Kim on his own return to Seoul in 1985, Korean security officers brutally dragged him out of Kimpo airport--and back to house arrest.

Nonetheless, Kim resumed his quest for the presidency. When Chun stepped down in 1987, Kim contested and lost what analysts widely agree was a rigged presidential election. Five years later, after his old colleague Kim Young Sam broke with him to join President Roh Tae Woo's ruling Democratic Liberal Party, Kim lost again--and vowed finally to quit politics. As he confided to his wife: "Maybe my role was meant to end here."

Yet by 1994, Kim was back. North Korea was threatening nuclear war--a crisis he helped defuse by suggesting that former President Carter travel to Pyongyang for a talk with the North's "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung. At home in Seoul, the opposition had fallen into disarray, and President Kim Young Sam's bumbling had begun to lead South Korea downhill, damaging relations with the U.S. and pitching the country into a frantic bid to expand its economic reach beyond its means. Kim Young Sam's last year was blighted by allegations of mismanagement and the conviction of his son Kim Hyun Chul for bribery. Today "Y.S.," as the outgoing President is known to distinguish him from the incoming "D.J.," is so unpopular that bypassers tell of a sign hung in his old Seoul neighborhood: "Don't come home." Says Kim Yoon Hwan, majority leader of the opposition Grand National Party: "It is fair to say that Kim Young Sam's reform completely failed."

That sense of failure reverberates among Korea's increasingly desperate citizens. Kang Ho Sung, a general manager at Daewoo Electronics, was earning enough to own a car and a house and send his daughter to college in the U.S. Then Daewoo cut white collar salaries by 15% and increased working hours. His daughter returned to Korea prematurely, and now the family scrimps, rarely using the car to save on fuel. "We always had plenty of hope and confidence," says Kang. "Now there is the feeling that no matter what we do we cannot reverse this national crisis." Namkoong Hyun would agree. A salesman of Kia cars, he was well on his way to the middle-class dream: a house, plenty of meals out and tutoring for his two children. Then Kia became Korea's best-known business failure. In December, Namkoong lost his job. He is now divorced and living in a friend's basement.

Long before this week's inauguration, Kim Dae Jung was scrambling to set things right. Two weeks ago, he forged what has been called a "Grand National Compromise" involving government, labor and big business in which all parties agreed to legalize mass layoffs by employers, in return for only the vaguest of rehiring guarantees. The government pledged to create a \$3.2 billion unemployment fund. And the chaebol, whose heavy debts and overblown expansion plans are widely viewed as a major source of Korea's woes, have been ordered to clean up their balance sheets or face extinction. As incentive, the new legislation allows foreign investors to buy up to one-third of a listed company, whether management likes it or not.

Japan grew more desperate toward the end of World War II, schools were closed and Kim started a career in the shipping business. But the young rebel was already dabbling in anti-establishment politics. On a business trip to Seoul during the Korean War, Kim's future materialized when, as he says, "I saw the suffering of the people caused by bad politics." In early 1961, a popular uprising felled Republican President Syngman Rhee. Kim was elected to the National Assembly, a job that lasted just one month, until General Park Chung Hee took over in a coup.

Since then, Kim has led Korea's political opposition. He had been flirting with anti-establishment views even before the outbreak of the Korean War; once the armistice was signed, he plunged ever deeper into politics, educating himself with long hours in the stacks at the National Assembly library. With 13 speeches during his first six months as a legislator, Kim made his mark as a fiery anti-Park orator. The more Kim was persecuted, the more popular he became. In 1970, against the backdrop of the Vietnam War, he announced his liberal views on North-South reunification. The government propaganda machine responded with a campaign to brand the young politician a communist outcast. Still, his first bid for the presidency won him a remarkable 46% of the vote, though he lost out to Park Chung Hee.

Kim's real troubles began when Park scrapped Korea's constitution and declared himself the country's dictator-in-chief. It was 1972, and Kim was on a trip to Japan for medical treatment. Rather than face arrest, he decided to proselytize abroad against the Park regime. In retaliation, Park confined Kim's family to their modest Seoul home. Kim's aides in Korea were subjected to interrogation and often torture. In August 1973, Kim was kidnapped by unidentified Koreans from Tokyo's Grand Palace Hotel and readied for execution. Only American intervention saved his life: learning of the abduction, U.S. Ambassador Philip Habib bluntly warned Park of the repercussions for relations with the U.S. if Kim were killed. In an interview with Seoul's Dong A newspaper last week, former Korea Central Intelligence Agency assistant director Lee Chul Hee admitted for the first time what many have long assumed: that the kidnapping was ordered by the head of the KCIA.

Kim was returned bruised and exhausted to his Seoul home, where he was confined for much of the next nine years--when not in jail or exile. President Park was assassinated in late 1979. As General Chun Doo Hwan moved to consolidate his control over the country, anti-government protests spread through the city of Kwangju in the south, the heart of Kim's support. He was jailed again, and Chun ordered troops into the city, where by some estimates they killed at least 200 people. In June, Chun gave Kim an ultimatum: cooperate with us or face death. Kim refused. In September, after a trial that lasted a mere six minutes, he was sentenced to death for treason.

Once again, the U.S. came to the rescue. Ronald Reagan had just won the presidency, and members of his transition team joined with officials from the outgoing Jimmy Carter Administration in putting pressure on Chun to spare Kim. His sentence was commuted to life in prison and, two days before Christmas 1982, he was put on a plane for the U.S.

As difficult as it was, life in exile transformed Kim from a provincial dissident to a worldly political leader. During his years in jail, Kim had become an avid botanist and reader--devouring the works of Mencius and Plato, Bertrand Russell and Abraham Lincoln--and taught himself English. (Kim still carries a pocket dictionary, say aides, and constantly looks up new words.) As a

~~investigate and perhaps prosecute Kim Young Sam~~, who deserted him 11 years ago, for his mismanagement of the economy.

The problem is that in the tough months ahead, such magnanimity will only become more difficult. First, Korea may face another debt crisis: billions of dollars in short-term corporate debt comes due at the end of March. Even if the country squeaks past that deadline, the economy will probably get worse before it gets better, as companies and banks fail and layoffs increase. "In one sense, we have turned the corner," says economist Yoo. "That doesn't mean we are out of the woods." Growing unemployment will increase the prospect of social unrest--for which Korea is already well-known, particularly during the spring, when students regularly hit the streets in anti-government protests. And the clamor for someone to take the blame for Korea's economic plight may make it impossible to avoid a public bloodletting.

In the beginning, such criticism will be directed, no doubt, at outgoing President Kim Young Sam. But if the new President is unable to keep a balance between reform and retribution, he could soon feel the backlash, and hard. Says Kim Jong In, a former presidential economics adviser: "If he wants to succeed, Mr. Kim will have to realize that he doesn't have that much time." This week, as luminaries from George Soros to Michael Jackson to Corazon Aquino descend on Seoul for his inauguration, Kim is doubtless aware that the real celebration will have to come later.

USA TODAY

December 19, 1997, Friday, FIRST EDITION

HEADLINE: S. Korea turns to outsider Opposition leader Kim wins in fourth attempt

BYLINE: James Cox

SEOUL -- Kim Dae Jung completed a 51-year journey Thursday from the political wilderness to the presidency of South Korea. Kim won election by the slimmest of margins on his fourth attempt to become the country's leader.

Horrified by the collapse of their economy, South Koreans turned against the ruling party for the first time since 1948 to hand power to an opposition candidate. "The ruling party ruined this country. How can I vote for them?" said Seoul cabbie Kim Jung Shik.

Kim, 73, edged out the ruling party's Lee Hoi Chang, 63, in a race that was a dead heat as ballots were counted through the night and into this morning. With 98% of votes counted, Kim won 40.3% to Lee's 38.7%.

Former ruling party politician Rhee In Je hurt Lee by defecting to make his own run. Rhee, 49, attracted young voters and got 19.2% of the tally. Four minor candidates accounted for the rest. President Kim Young Sam, -whose five-year term ends in February, is barred by law from re-election.

Kim won't be sworn in until Feb. 25, but he will wield power almost immediately. The outgoing president, a one-time ally and now bitter rival, will leave office in disgrace over his handling of the economy and a scandal involving his son.

The chaebol represent one of the new President's biggest problems. Even as Kim warns them to shape up, some of the giant firms are resisting demands to publicize their corporate restructuring plans. They argue that they are indeed reforming but that a public announcement to that effect would invite chaos. "If a business conglomerate says we'll just duck it and wait for the lapse of time to go back to the old ways of managing, I'm sure they will perish," says Samsung group treasurer Kim Suk, adding that Korea's largest company has already targeted ways in which it can downsize. "What we are saying is we'll do it, please trust us."

The chaebol may have gotten the message, but change will come hard. Two weeks ago, for example, at a glitzy cocktail bash in Seoul's luxurious Shilla Hotel, Samsung unveiled its new line of sedans--the electronics giant's first foray into the automobile business. Analysts slammed the company's plans to produce 80,000 cars this year in a market already plagued by overcapacity. Tacitly acknowledging such concerns, Samsung this month began talking with Ford Motor Co. about selling a stake in the company.

As he threads through Korea's economic mess, Kim will have to juggle tough diplomatic problems. Although he has pledged that he will not be "soft" on North Korea, Pyongyang's peace initiative last week may force some early decisions on how to keep talks going between the two Koreas. In the meantime, a scuffle with Japan over fishing rights threatens to develop into a full-blown diplomatic tussle. Says outgoing Foreign Minister Yoo Chong Ha: "In one way or another, our relationship with Japan portends a lot of trouble in the future."

The real trouble, however, remains at home. For all his early progress, Kim leads a fragile parliamentary coalition in which his chief ally, Kim Jong Pil, is a conservative establishment pol. (Ironically, he is also the founder of the KCIA, which was responsible for the 1973 kidnapping in Tokyo.) To win his support, Kim not only agreed to nominate "J.P." to the prime ministership, but also to adopt a parliamentary system, which would give the Prime Minister more power. The opposition Grand National Party, which controls the National Assembly, has already voiced disapproval of those plans. And although its leaders have pledged "not to attack" Kim Dae Jung for the time being, the party is unlikely to make life easy for the new President. "I've been at the opposite end of the political spectrum for 25 years," says party leader Kim Yoon Hwan. "It's possible but it isn't going to be easy to change that."

In hopes of defusing that tension, Kim has pledged to form a coalition cabinet made up of talent from all leading parties. Though detractors claim he lacks a competent brain trust, Kim has already succeeded in luring some of Korea's best and brightest away from their conservative roots. Several of his top deputies served under Chun and Roh. The President's famous all-night talk sessions have left skeptics impressed with his "vast pool of knowledge," as one convert puts it--and his willingness to change his mind when presented with a thoughtful argument.

What is most remarkable about Kim's resolve to tackle Korea's problems is the former dissident's patience, infused with a surprising willingness to forgive. "He is a man who would not let the past interfere with the future," says Yoo Jong Keun, a provincial governor and one of Kim's key economic advisers. Even Kim's supporters once feared he might use his presidency to settle old scores with those who persecuted him for so many years. Yet no sooner had he won election than he agreed to pardon former presidents Chun and Roh from their lifetime jail sentences for corruption. He has so far resisted calls to

But South Koreans got few clues from Kim Dae Jung about what will be done to fix their economy. Nervous global financial markets are expected to look to Kim for strong reassurances that he will live by the terms of the country's \$ 57 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund. Investors want South Korea to open its economy, break the grip of the mighty chaebol conglomerates and make way for business failures and layoffs.

Kim, a lifelong populist with support from labor unions and students, created chaos in Korea's stock and currency markets during the campaign by saying he would re-open talks with the IMF. He also proposed a six-month ban on layoffs. "He played to nationalism," said David Steinberg, a Korea expert at Georgetown University.

Most have strong feelings about Kim. Some might find it tough to rally to his side as he mends the economy. "He elicits extreme emotions. It's almost frightening," says Hahm Chai Bong, politics expert at Seoul's Yonsei University.

Kim needs to reach out to old rivals to build a broad coalition if he is to get Koreans to accept the pain of economic restructuring, says Lho Kyongsoo also of Yonsei. "He has the necessary magnanimity. But if he appoints only (his own) people, he'll fail before he starts."

Kim, a Catholic, used peppy campaign songs and dyed his hair to combat the impression he was too old. He negated his reputation as a pro-labor radical, soft on communist North Korea. Kim's aides accused Lee's campaign of playing the North Korea card with election-day pamphlets warning voters of a "red government."

Lee, a colorless former judge, aroused little passion among voters, but was seen by many in elite business and academic circles as a more solid, conservative choice than Kim.

Business leaders were staunchly against Kim when he ran in 1971, 1987 and 1992. He argued then that the country should not rely on a handful of conglomerates to build its economy.

He portrayed himself this time as a business-friendly moderate. "He softened his views so much to appear middle-of-the-road," Hahm said.

Kim's followers worship him with an almost messianic fervor. He puts himself in the same league as South Africa's Nelson Mandela, the Czech Republic's Vaclav Havel, Poland's Lech Walesa and slain Philippine democracy champion Benigno Aquino.

Like them, he is a wily survivor. He escaped a firing squad after North Korea invaded the south in 1950. Thirty years later, he avoided the hangman's noose when the U.S. pressured South Korea's military regime not to execute him for sedition.

His repeated confrontations with the country's harsh military regimes landed him in prison five times.

~~Kim survived two government-sponsored assassination attempts.~~
~~South Korean secret police tried to kill him by engineering a~~
~~car accident in 1971. A year later, they abducted him from a Tokyo~~
~~hotel room and whisked him out to sea, where they planned to drown~~
~~him by tying weights to his body and tossing him overboard. U.S.~~
~~intelligence agents rescued him.~~

Democrats Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy are close to Kim, who was exiled in December 1982 to the USA for two years.

Despite his fondness for the United States, which has 37,000 troops stationed in South Korea, he has criticized Washington in the past for backing authoritarian regimes in the name of anti-communism.

Kim is likely to leave one final act to lame-duck Kim Young Sam: pardons for former military rulers Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, imprisoned for taking bribes during their presidencies.