

Australia and the Republic of Korea: Still allies or just good friends?

Andrew Selth

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Research Paper

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'Australia and the Republic of Korea: Still Allies or Just Good Friends?'

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Andrew Selth is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Griffith Asia Institute. He has been studying international security issues and Asian affairs for 45 years, as a diplomat, strategic intelligence analyst and research scholar. During this time, he has been an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs at the Australian National University (ANU), a Visiting Fellow at the ANU's Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, a Chevening Scholar at St Antony's College, Oxford University, an Australian Research Council Fellow at Griffith University and a Harold White Fellow at the National Library of Australia. Dr Selth has published six books and more than 50 peer-reviewed works, most of them about Myanmar (Burma) and related subjects.

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Abbreviations

AFAR	Australian Foreign Affairs Record
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
ANU	Australian National University
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand and United States
CFC	Combined Forces Command
CINCUNC	Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command
CSAAR	Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations
DMZ	Demilitarised zone
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
GAI	Griffith Asia Institute
GNP	Gross National Product
IIS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
MAC	Military Armistice Commission
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PDR	Pacific Defence Reporter
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
RSL	Returned Services League
SDSC	Strategic and Defence Studies Centre
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNC	United Nations Command
UNC (Rear)	United Nations Command (Rear Echelon)
UNCOK	United Nations Commission on Korea
UNCURK	United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNTCOK	United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea
US	United States (of America)
USN	United States Navy
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

Preface to the Second Edition

Between September 1977 and April 1981, I was posted to the Australian Embassy in Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea (ROK). My first year in country was spent as a Second Secretary studying Korean at Yonsei University's Korean Language Institute. I then joined the embassy proper, where I worked for the following two and a half years. As a First Secretary, I helped monitor international and domestic political issues and managed the bilateral cultural relations program. These diverse duties brought me into contact with a wide spectrum of the Korean population, as well as Korean officials and members of the foreign diplomatic community in Seoul. It did not take long for me to realise that, almost without exception, they expected that, in the event of a renewed outbreak of the Korean War (which had never formally ended), Australia's armed forces would once again become involved.

This expectation was based mainly on the fact that Australia had played a prominent role in the 1950–53 Korean conflict, and was still a member of the United Nations Command (UNC), which had been formed in 1950 to counter the North Korean (and later Chinese) invasion of the ROK. As I discovered, Australia was one of the few original members that still played an active role in the UNC in the ROK and, through the UNC's Rear Echelon, in Japan. It was also assumed by most people to whom I spoke that Australia would respond immediately to any attack against the United States (US), which had ground forces deployed along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas, as well as air force units based south of Seoul. This assumption sprang from Australia's historically close relationship with the US, including the bilateral ANZUS Treaty, which most people believed was a binding mutual defence agreement.

This expectation was occasionally put on public display. Whenever a delegation of Australian officials or veterans visited the ROK, both their Korean hosts and the Americans they met made a point of reminding them about their shared experience in the Korean War. They invariably thanked Australia for its continuing support, as evidenced by its active involvement in the UNC. Visits to the so-called 'truce village' at Panmunjom in the DMZ, the Kapyong memorial to fallen Australians and the UN memorial cemetery in Pusan were all obligatory inclusions on any itinerary.¹ The clear implication of all these activities was not only that Australia's contribution to the Korean War was appreciated, but also that it was still seen as an ally in the continuing confrontation with North Korea. Either deliberately or incidentally, by their words and actions most Australian visitors encouraged this view.

On returning to Canberra at the conclusion of my posting, I was assigned to the Department of Foreign Affairs' North Asia Branch, where I was able to continue following developments on the Korean Peninsula. On asking around, however, I found that little serious thought had been given to Australia's possible military commitments to the ROK, either by colleagues in my own department or in the Department of Defence. Few of those with whom I discussed this issue saw another Korean War as likely. Those who did consider such matters, however briefly, took it for granted that any decision regarding Australia's future participation would be decided by the government of the day, according to the circumstances prevailing at the time. That said, most analysts assumed that, as had occurred so often in the past, Australia would simply follow the lead of its great and powerful friend the United States.²

Not being content with this explanation, I decided to investigate the issue further, drawing where possible on the expertise of colleagues in Australia, and by seeking the views of fellow Korea-watchers in the ROK and the US. As far as my official position permitted, I spoke to members of the Canberra diplomatic community, mainly from the ROK and US embassies, to get their views. I consulted an expert in international law at the Australian National University (ANU), who was kind enough to provide me with advice relating to the original United Nations decision to go to war in Korea, and the UN's continuing formal obligations. To help put all these views into broader perspective, I also read a range of documents and books on the subject that were held by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Australian National Library. One vital source was Robert O'Neill's masterful official history of Australia's involvement in the Korean War, which had just been published.³

The monograph that follows was the result of that research. After being vetted by the Department of Foreign Affairs (mainly to ensure that I had not inadvertently revealed any classified information), an early version was published as a working paper by the ANU's Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) in 1984.⁴ With the encouragement of Denis Warner (an eminent journalist who had covered the Korean War for the London *Daily Telegraph* and several Australian newspapers), a short version of the SDSC paper was later published as an article by the *Pacific Defence Reporter*, under the title 'Australia's Korean Dilemma'.⁵ Finally, a revised and expanded version of the SDSC paper was published in March 1985 as a research paper by the Centre for the Study of Australian–Asian Relations (CSAAR) at Griffith

University in Brisbane.⁶ As was the usual practice in those days, only a small number of hard copies were produced, mainly for Australian libraries.

In November 2010, when heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula led to speculation in the news media about the renewal of open conflict, and Australia's possible involvement, I posted a short summary of the CSAAR paper on *The Interpreter*, the blog of the Lowy Institute for International Policy, based in Sydney.⁷ Another round of sabre-rattling by the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the US in 2017, and some highly contentious remarks by the Australian Prime Minister regarding Australia's obligations to the US under the ANZUS Treaty, prompted the editor of *The Interpreter* to re-post that item.⁸ These two blog posts, and the different views on the subject expressed by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, prompted several requests for copies of the original CSAAR paper. Unfortunately, those requests could not easily be met, as neither the SDSC working paper, nor the CSAAR research paper, had ever been posted online.

The CSAAR paper is now being re-issued in response to that public demand. It has been slightly edited and a few minor corrections have been made, but no attempt has been made to update it, or to allow for the lapse in time since its publication by the CSAAR in 1985. It is true to the original, with two exceptions. The first is this preface, which aims to let readers know the background to the paper's initial publication and how it has come to be reissued. The second, and most significant, difference is that it now carries a foreword by Andrew O'Neil, Dean (Research) and Professor of Political Science at Griffith University. Professor O'Neil is an editorial board member of the *Korean Journal of International Studies* and the *North Korean Review* and is an internationally recognised Korea-watcher. He has written widely and spoken often about the continuing tensions on the Korean Peninsula and Australia's possible future role.

I am very grateful to Professor O'Neil for his interest in, and contribution to, this project. I should also like to express my appreciation to the Director and staff of the Griffith Asia Institute for making the online version of my paper possible. It should also be noted that I took full responsibility for the contents of the paper in 1985, which was published without any official input or endorsement.⁹ That remains the case.

Preface Notes

- ¹ The Kapyong memorial commemorates all Australians who fell in the Korean War, but focuses on the battle of 22–25 April 1951 in which Australian and other Commonwealth forces, against enormous odds, managed to stall a major Chinese offensive against Seoul.
- ² This apparently remains the case. See, for example, 'Australia not automatically at war with North Korea if fighting breaks out', *Financial Review*, 10 August 2017, at <http://www.afr.com/news/australia-not-automatically-at-war-with-north-korea-if-fighting-breaks-out-20170810-gxtb1k>
- ³ Robert O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War, 1950–53*, 2 volumes (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981).
- ⁴ Andrew Selth, *Australia and the Republic of Korea: Still Allies or Just Good Friends?*, Working Paper No. 84 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1984).
- ⁵ Andrew Selth, 'Australia's Korean Dilemma', *Pacific Defence Reporter*, vol. 11, no. 4, October 1984, pp. 20–24.
- ⁶ Andrew Selth, *Australia and the Republic of Korea: Still Allies or Just Good Friends?*, Australia-Asia Papers No. 30 (Brisbane: Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, March 1985).
- ⁷ Andrew Selth, 'Australia and Korea's Wars', *The Interpreter*, 29 November 2010, at <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2010/11/29/Australia-and-Koreas-wars.aspx>
- ⁸ Andrew Selth, 'Australia and Korea's Wars', *The Interpreter*, 14 August 2017, at <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/australia-and-koreas-wars>. See also Fergus Hunter, 'Australia will join the conflict if North Korea attacks the US: Malcolm Turnbull', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 August 2017, at <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/australia-will-join-the-conflict-if-north-korea-attacks-the-us-malcolm-turnbull-20170810-gxty5f.html>
- ⁹ In fact, the Department of Foreign Affairs was rather uncomfortable about a serving officer, recently returned from Seoul, writing about this subject for public release. Because of these sensitivities, an article I wrote in 1983 about other developments in the ROK was published under a pseudonym. See Frank Downs, 'Letter from Seoul: A Hermit Still Emerging: The Republic of Korea', *Quadrant*, November 1983, pp. 43–7.

Foreword



by

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For those with an enduring interest in the Korean Peninsula, the overused phrase *plus ça change* captures the essence of geopolitics in this part of the world. The entrenched cycle of crisis–dialogue–negotiations–crisis has permeated all interactions between the two Koreas since the end of the Korean War. Breakthroughs such as the 2000 inter-Korean leadership summit and the 2018 'One Korea' Winter Olympics have increased hopes of a lasting reconciliation between Seoul and Pyongyang, but these surges of optimism have been evanescent. Inter-Korean relations since 2000 are analogous to a rollercoaster ride: surges of high-level adrenaline accompanied by anticipation of a dangerous, and potentially fatal, climax.

For their part, the major powers have sought to exert influence over North and South in pursuit of geopolitical goals in Northeast Asia, with mixed success. The geopolitical designs of the two key patrons, China and the US, have frequently been confounded by the independence of the two Koreas. Indeed, at the time of writing, Beijing's capacity to influence the regime in Pyongyang is arguably at an all-time low, while Seoul continues to carve out a foreign policy marked by independence from Washington. The advent of the Trump administration has only served to reinforce this.

But the acutely intractable nature of inter-Korean relations is not merely an issue for the two Koreas or the major powers. Middle powers in Asia and Europe also have a key stake in what happens on the Korean Peninsula. For Australia, which fought as part of the US-led United Nations Command force from 1950–53, the Korean Peninsula is a major strategic interest. Over half of the country's exports are destined for Northeast Asia and Australian business investment is increasing year-by-year. Any armed conflict between the two Koreas, no matter how limited, would have a significant adverse impact on Australia's balance of trade and broader economic interests.

The US alliance with South Korea means that, in practical terms, both sides would be automatically committed militarily in any conflict with the North Korea, irrespective of whether it was initiated by Washington or Pyongyang. For Australia, the reality is that it too would be locked in to supporting the US and South Korea politically and militarily; the only question would be the nature and scope of the Australian Defence Force's contribution. Malcolm Turnbull's statement in 2017 that Australia is committed under ANZUS to make such a contribution simply acknowledged this reality.

Yet, the Trump administration has changed the dynamic of potential crisis escalation on the Korean Peninsula. Senior US officials – including the President himself – have openly canvassed 'limited' military strikes against North Korea's WMD assets. This rhetoric has been overlaid by the heroic assumption Kim Jong-un would not retaliate for fear of inviting the end of his regime. Notably, Australia has avoided endorsing this approach, with Canberra doubling down on efforts to achieve a diplomatic resolution as the risk of a US first-strike grew throughout 2017. Today, Australia's policy in dealing with Pyongyang is closer to that of South Korea than it is to the US and Japan.

Against this background, it is extremely timely that Andrew Selth's excellent analysis of the Australia–ROK relationship should be 're-launched' in 2018 by the Griffith Asia Institute. Detailed high quality analysis of bilateral ties between Canberra and Seoul are rare, and Andrew's track record as a senior government official and first-class scholar means that he brings to bear unique insights into the relationship. I have had the privilege of working with Andrew in government and in academia. He is rightly renowned for his path-breaking work on Burma/Myanmar, but what is perhaps less well-known is Andrew's deep expertise on Northeast Asian strategic issues. This has itself been a major resource for government and academia in equal measure since Andrew took up his diplomatic post in Seoul in the late 1970s. This updated paper provides a strong testament to the ongoing impact of his contribution in this area.

Andrew O'Neil
Brisbane, February 2018

Executive Summary

Australia's participation in the Korean War of 1950–53 had more to do with domestic factors and wider international considerations, than with any feelings of affinity with the Korean people. Circumstances have greatly changed since then, but some remnants of that military involvement still survive in the form of the United Nations Command (UNC) and the Sixteen Nations Declaration of 1953. While tensions between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) remain high, the possibility of the UNC becoming involved in a fresh outbreak of hostilities will always remain. Prime Minister Bob Hawke has clearly stated that Australian security interests are not directly engaged in the Korean peninsula, but considering the growth in Australia's bilateral relationship with the ROK since the war and the alliances both countries now share with the United States (US), Australia would face a difficult decision should there be another security crisis in Korea, and Australian assistance once again be sought.

1. Introduction

We never find that a State joining in the cause of another State takes it up with the same earnestness as its own. An auxiliary Army of moderate strength is sent: if it is not successful, then the Ally looks upon the affair as in a manner ended, and tries to get out of it on the cheapest terms possible.

Carl von Clausewitz
On War (1814)

For centuries the strategic importance of the Korean peninsula has been recognised by those powers with interests in the North Asian region. While the Koreans themselves have never launched a war against another country, their own has been a battleground for the Chinese, Mongols, Manchus, Japanese, Russians and, under American leadership, the 16 states which contributed combat forces to the United Nations Command (UNC) in 1950. The peninsula is now as tense as ever, a potential flashpoint with global implications. It is the only place in the world where the direct interests of all four major powers (the United States, Soviet Union, China and Japan) intersect. All have large conventional forces in the area and three are armed with nuclear weapons. On the peninsula itself, over one million Koreans, armed with increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, face each other across a demilitarised zone (DMZ) in an uneasy truce. While all of the great powers wish to avoid another war there, the strength of feeling between the two Korean regimes is such that the possibility of a renewed outbreak of hostilities can never be entirely discounted.

Following the division of the peninsula in 1945, Australia played an active role in debates on the Korean question, making significant contributions to consideration of the issue both in the councils of the newly-formed United Nations (UN) and on the peninsula itself. Yet Australia's participation in the Korean War of 1950-53 had more to do with domestic factors and wider international considerations than with any feelings of affinity with the Korean people. In particular, the decision to take part reflected Australia's desire to negotiate a security pact with the United States (US) – the pact which became known as the ANZUS Treaty. In some respects, the situation on the peninsula in the years that followed underwent little change, but Australia's bilateral relationship with the Republic of Korea (ROK) grew and matured. As broader political and commercial ties between the two countries became stronger, so purely military factors became less important. Some remnants of Australia's earlier military involvement in Korea remain, however, in the form of the United Nations Command and the Sixteen Nation Declaration of 1953. For reasons of their own, the UNC connection in particular is one which the US and ROK have been anxious that Australia maintain.

While tensions between the ROK and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) remain high, the possibility of the UNC becoming involved in a fresh outbreak of hostilities will remain. Prime Minister Bob Hawke has clearly stated that Australia's security interests are not directly engaged in the Korean peninsula, but given Australia's continuing membership of the UNC it would be difficult to argue that it no longer felt any responsibilities toward it. In addition, there have been a number of suggestions that under the terms of the ANZUS Treaty Australia would be obliged to assist the US if American forces in the ROK came under attack. Other factors would have to be taken into account, but given the close ties that Australia now shares with both the ROK and the US, Australia would face a difficult decision should there be another security crisis in Korea, and Australian assistance once again be sought.

2. Australia and the Korean Question

Although Australian Christian missionaries were in Korea as early as 1897, the roots of Australia's relationship with the ROK lie in the Korean War of 1950–53. The ties forged then, both official and personal, have not disappeared and considerable efforts have been made by the ROK to keep alive a spirit of comradeship and a sense of shared endeavour. Despite the many changes which have taken place over the past 30 years, the ROK still seems to view Australia's part in the Korean War as the basis for continuing Australian membership of an alliance against the DPRK.

There were a number of reasons why Australia agreed to participate in the war. Despite all the political rhetoric since,¹ these reasons were clearly related more to domestic factors and wider international considerations than to the interests of the Koreans themselves. At one level, the commitment of Australian forces to the conflict was described as a necessary response to the threat posed by an expansionist communist menace. In June 1950, shortly after the DPRK in the north of the peninsula invaded the ROK in the south, the Australian Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender, issued a statement in which he said:

It is proper that the Australian people should understand that, if southern Korea falls under the domination of Communist imperialism, the strategic picture of Asia as it affects Japan and the whole of the area of the North-West Pacific will undergo a radical change and will increase the dangers to the whole of South and South-East Asia.²

Two months later, after Australian troops had been committed to Korea, the Prime Minister, then R.G. Menzies, made a radio broadcast in which he stated his belief that:

Korea is not an isolated affair. It fits into a world pattern ... Aggressive international communism moves to a set plan.³

Although the 1951 referendum to ban the Australian Communist Party failed, the apparent division of the world into two opposing camps, the communist bloc and the 'free world', looked realistic to many sober observers in Australia at the time. The threat described by Spender and Menzies was made more credible by developments in Europe and, closer to home, in China, Indochina, the Philippines and Malaya, where Australia's old wartime allies had all faced, or were facing, communist military forces.

Australia's commitment to the UN force in Korea was also presented by the Menzies Government as a response, under the collective security provisions of the UN Charter, to a clear case of aggression by the DPRK. Since the inception of the UN in 1945, Australia had played a prominent role in its councils. Australia was a founder member and the first President of the Security Council.⁴ In 1947 Australia became a member of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK), established to observe elections on the peninsula. Australia remained a member when the Commission became more permanent (and was renamed the UN Commission on Korea – UNCOK) following the formal division of the peninsula in 1948. The UN resolution endorsing the establishment of a separate state in the southern half of Korea was drafted by the Australian delegate, James Plimsoll. Another Australian, Dr H.V. Evatt, was President of the General Assembly at the time. The two UNCOK Observers on whose report the Security Council subsequently based its actions against the DPRK, were also Australians.⁵ As Gavan McCormack has suggested:

Between [late 1947] and the commitment of Australian forces to fight in Korea under the UN flag in June 1950 Australia was more involved in Korea than any other single country save the two great powers.⁶

Australian representatives continued to play a significant role in the UN and UN-related activities in Korea during the war. When the UN established a Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) after the spectacularly successful amphibious assault on Inchon in September 1950, Australia was again a member. It is generally agreed that Australia's representative on UNCURK for over two years, James Plimsoll, was the most effective member of the Commission.⁷ In addition, after it voted for the Uniting for Peace Resolutions on 3 November 1950, Australia became a member of the Collective Measures Committee, formed to study collective methods to 'maintain and strengthen international peace and security', i.e. to pursue the war despite the return of the Soviet Union to the Security Council.⁸ Australia's part in UN efforts to resolve the Korean question undoubtedly contributed to its decision to take an active part in military operations there. It was not, however, the main reason.

Since the end of the Second World War there had been elements within the Australian Parliament hoping to conclude a security pact with the US which had clearly demonstrated that it, and not the United Kingdom (UK), was then better able to underwrite Australia's future security. It seems unlikely that such a pact would have been possible, had not the Korean War broken out and the US become so heavily involved. Australian naval and air force units were made available to the UNC almost immediately, but Menzies remained firmly opposed to the commitment of land forces. On hearing in late July that the UK was about to make such a commitment, however, the Australian Government, in Menzies' absence overseas, announced that it would send ground troops to Korea. Members of the government, most notably Spender, were anxious that Australia be seen as the first country after the US to do so, in anticipation of American favour and the opportunities such favour might bring.⁹ As Robert O'Neill has written:

Ostensibly the main reason for their commitment to the desperate struggle then taking place in South Korea was to support the cause of collective security through the United Nations. It probably would have made little difference to these regulars to know that, in reality, their commitment had been made primarily in the interests of Australian-American diplomacy.¹⁰

A second infusion of Australian troops was reluctantly made in 1951, after General Douglas MacArthur publicly charged in the US Senate that America's allies in Korea were not doing enough to assist the US.¹¹ The commitment of Australian troops was not enough in itself, however, to persuade the US to agree to a security pact. As Dr T.B. Millar has pointed out:

The lever which Australia was able to use was the American desire for a 'soft' peace treaty with Japan which would concede the latter's right to rearm, with no restraints assumed other than the presence in Japan, for a period, of American forces and bases.¹²

The US wanted Japan to be in a position to carry some of the burden of the fight against communism, a burden greatly increased by the war in Korea. For this it needed the support of Australia and New Zealand, both of which were very chary of any Japanese rearmament. It was no coincidence that both the peace treaty with Japan and the ANZUS Treaty were signed in San Francisco in September 1951.

As the Korean War progressed, Australia's interests and involvement in the peninsula grew, yet they remained subordinate to wider geo-political concerns, particularly the alliance with the US. Operational control over Australian forces had been surrendered to General MacArthur (as the Supreme Commander of United Nations Forces) in 1950 and was only recovered from his successor, in part, late in the war. In order first to secure a security pact and then to win US Senate ratification for the ANZUS Treaty, Australia courted US approval in the UN and elsewhere, trying to impress upon the Americans Australia's status as a trustworthy ally.¹³ Malcolm Booker has argued that in fact the US cared little for Australia, which was 'deliberately and repeatedly misled by General MacArthur and the American Government'.¹⁴ Recent research has revealed that Australian counsel held little sway over such crucial issues as the crossing of the 38th parallel by UN troops in October 1950, the naming of China as an aggressor by the UN in February 1951 and the bombing of installations on the Yalu River in June 1952. Nor does it appear that Australia's opinions counted for much regarding the possible bombing of Chinese bases in Manchuria or the threatened use of nuclear weapons.¹⁵ In this, however, Australia was not alone. Few countries contributing to the UNC were taken into the US's confidence or were able markedly to affect American policy. There was no provision made for continuing UN supervision of military operations in Korea other than that which the Security Council might provide.¹⁶ All the political advisors attached to the UNC were Americans and no other UN member took part in the drawn-out negotiations with the communist side at Kaesong and Panmunjom. The Armistice Agreement in 1953 was signed only by American officers, on behalf of the UN.

In the years that followed, Korea appears to have been largely forgotten by most Australians, whose security concerns were diverted further south to Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam. Australia continued to be a strong supporter of the ROK in the UN, where each year a debate was held on the Korean question, and Australia remained a member of UNCURK. The UN debates were sterile exercises, however, and while some useful work was done, scope for action within UNCURK was severely limited both by its UN role and by the ROK Government. For a period, UNCURK served as a useful basis for contacts between Australia and the ROK but here too there was a limit to what could be achieved. When UNCURK was finally dissolved in 1973 it had clearly outlived its usefulness. As Robert O'Neill has pointed out, the decision to close it down had a certain symbolic significance:

With the passing of the Commission, twenty-seven years of direct Australian involvement in United Nations attempts to reunify Korea ... were ended.¹⁷

It was not until 1962, almost 10 years after the Armistice Agreement was signed and a year after Major-General Park Chung Hee had seized power in Seoul, that formal diplomatic representation was exchanged between Australia and the ROK. For the most part, bilateral exchanges over the next 10 years were quite modest. The one major exception was in the trade field, where the ROK's extraordinary growth under the 'developmental authoritarianism' of President Park saw a commensurate increase in commercial relations with Australia. Between 1961/62 and 1971/72 bilateral trade increased more than 12-fold, from A\$3,598,000 to A\$44,343,000.¹⁸ A trade agreement was signed in 1965, followed in 1968 by an agreement to hold annual trade talks at Ministerial level, Australia's first such agreement with any country. An Australian Trade Commissioner was appointed to Seoul in 1972 and the bilateral trade agreement renegotiated in 1975. An agreement on nuclear cooperation and the transfer of nuclear materials was concluded in 1979 and regular meetings begun on resources and raw materials processing. In the 10 years to 1981/82 Australian exports to the ROK grew on average by 33 per cent per year.¹⁹ By then, total bilateral trade had reached A\$982 million and the ROK had become Australia's fifth largest market, taking 3.5 per cent of its exports. The ROK in turn provided Australia with 1.3 per cent of its imports.²⁰

As commercial ties expanded, so too did other areas of the relationship, though not nearly to the same degree. By 1972/73, 25 years after being declared an independent state, the ROK had received only A\$3,700,000 in official development assistance (ODA) from Australia. Ten years later, total ODA to the ROK had risen to A\$7,102,000²¹ yet from that peak it began to be phased out as the ROK became prosperous and the bilateral relationship matured. Project aid formally ceased in 1978. As attention turned to other areas contacts slowly grew and became more diverse. A cultural agreement was signed in 1971 and since 1975 (when separate immigration records began to be kept) an increasing flow of visitors between the two countries had become apparent.²² Over the past 10 years Australia has become more popular as a target for Korean emigration and although there have been some problems of migrant control it is likely that the Korean community in Australia will continue to grow.²³ Yet despite the efforts of both governments to broaden the base of the relationship over recent years, it has remained centred on trade.²⁴ If Australia holds any real political interest for the ROK outside this field then it would appear mainly to be as an ally in its continuing struggle against the DPRK.

To a large degree, the foreign policies of both Koreas are distorted by their shared perception of the world as a stage on which to pursue their own particular dispute. Both the ROK and DPRK tend to measure their relationships with other countries in terms of the support those countries give to their rival and the willingness such countries show publicly to speak on their behalf. This approach injects a sensitivity and volatility into bilateral relationships with the Koreas which leaves few states unaffected.²⁵ Australia, as a member of the UNC during the Korean War and a staunch ally in the anti-communist camp in the years that followed, enjoyed a relatively untroubled relationship with the ROK. Australia consistently supported the ROK's gradualist approach to the issue of reunification, which has been to seek the unification of the peninsula in the long term but to aim for the peaceful coexistence of the two Koreas in the short term. The ROK's confidence in Australia was badly shaken, however, by the recognition of the Kim Il Sung regime by the Whitlam Government in 1973. The DPRK established an Embassy in Canberra in 1974 and Australia opened its own in Pyongyang the following year. These developments caused consternation in Seoul, feelings barely allayed by the abrupt closure of the DPRK Embassy in 1975 and subsequent expulsion of the Australian diplomatic staff from Pyongyang. Australia still recognises the DPRK but relations are currently 'interrupted'. Despite several attempts over the past decade to reopen contacts with Australia, the DPRK has not been permitted to do so. The Hawke Government now adopts a policy in some respects stronger than that of its predecessor. Speaking after the DPRK attack on the ROK Presidential party in Rangoon last October, the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that Australia was not prepared even to contemplate the restoration of relations with the DPRK:

This will remain the case until we are satisfied that the DPRK is prepared to abide by internationally accepted norms of behaviour and renounce such hostile activities against the ROK.²⁶

The bomb attack in Rangoon was indicative of the renewed tensions on the Korean peninsula over recent years, tensions made more worrying by the continued arms race between the two regimes there.

3. The Confrontation on the Peninsula

The Korean peninsula is currently one of the most militarised places on the globe. Of the total population of some 60 million people, in an area smaller than the State of Victoria, over 1 million are under arms. There are some 622,000 men and women in the Republic of Korea's armed forces, of whom 540,000 are in the ROK Army. In addition, nearly 4,500,000 South Koreans are members of the paramilitary Civilian Defense Corps.²⁷ Since the end of the Korean War the ROK has vigorously pursued a force expansion and modernisation program with the assistance of the US and now boasts a wide range of highly sophisticated weapons systems in all services, including nuclear-capable delivery systems. The ROK annually spends approximately 6 per cent of its gross national product (GNP) on defence, in 1984 about US\$4.5 billion.²⁸ The DPRK forces numbers around 784,000, 700,000 of whom are in the army. Paramilitary forces include 38,000 security forces and border guards, as well as a civilian militia of 1,760,000.²⁹ While accurate estimates of defence spending in the North are difficult to obtain, it would appear that the DPRK allocates from 15–20 per cent of its GNP to defence in a year, in 1982 about US\$2 billion.³⁰ At present the DPRK's forces are in a number of key areas numerically superior to those of the ROK (for example, fighter aircraft, tanks, armoured vehicles, self-propelled guns and submarines) and without question pose a formidable military threat. The North's weapons systems, however, tend still to be inferior to those of the ROK and neither side is strong enough alone to overwhelm the other.³¹

The ROK is the only place on the Asian mainland where the US still maintains land forces. There are currently about 40,000 US service personnel in South Korea, made up of one infantry division, two tactical fighter wings and a small navy support group.³² In one sense, there is little military justification for American ground troops in the ROK but they serve a clear political purpose as concrete evidence of the US's firm commitment to assist the ROK in the event of renewed hostilities. Since 1971, or possibly even earlier, they have also served as the custodians of approximately 700 tactical nuclear weapons, which both the ROK and the US seem to feel are essential to the security of South Korea.³³ All but a few hundred of the US forces are in the ROK under the terms of the US-ROK Mutual Security Treaty signed in 1953. Those few hundred are officially part of the UNC, which until 1978 was still formally responsible for the defence of the ROK. The Commander-in-Chief United Nations Command (CINCUNC), an American General with a staff composed entirely of Americans, reported directly to the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. Six years ago the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) was created, ostensibly to permit joint planning for the ROK's defence but also to reflect more closely the political and military situation in the country, in which the ROK forces outnumbered those of the US, that is the UNC, by 15 to 1. The CINCUNC also became Commander-in-Chief CFC, under which title he remained responsible for the ROK's defence, while his formal UNC duties were restricted to those required under the Armistice Agreement.³⁴ In practice, however, the two roles are still combined and to all intents and purposes any conflict on the peninsula in which either the US or ROK forces were involved would almost certainly be seen to include action by the UNC under the terms of the 1953 Armistice Agreement. In this regard, it is significant that a peace treaty has never been signed between the protagonists in the Korean War and, technically at least, a state of war still exists on the peninsula.

It is difficult to argue with Robert Scalapino that, despite all the developments which have taken place since, 'the fundamental issues separating North and South Korea today are essentially the same as those plaguing the unification question since the 1940s, that is, what political and economic structure would be assumed by a unified Korea'.³⁵ To this, he might perhaps have added 'under whose leadership', as the personalities of DPRK President Kim Il Sung and successive leaders of the ROK have also played a significant role. The lines initially drawn as a temporary measure between the Soviet system in the north and the American system in the south were immeasurably hardened by the conflict of 1950–53, in which each nascent Korean Government was nearly destroyed and the peninsula became the bloody battleground for two major powers and their allies. Civilian casualties alone exceeded 2 million and much of the Korean countryside was devastated.³⁶ The rigidity of the political divisions was increased by the large refugee exchanges which took place, mainly from the north to the south, and the controversy which ensued in 1953 over the ROK's refusal to repatriate thousands of DPRK prisoners of war. The Korean War produced a bitterness between the two regimes on the peninsula that has scarcely been matched anywhere since and bequeathed to Korea 'two badly battered but heavily militarised states, with the military as well as the political psychological barriers between them enormous'.³⁷

In the years immediately following the Armistice Agreement, relations between the two Koreas were frigid but without major incident. Towards the end of the 1960s, however, the level of hostility greatly increased, with numerous attempts by the DPRK to establish subversive cells in the ROK and to infiltrate agents and guerrillas into the South. In 1968 an attempt was made to attack the Presidential mansion in Seoul. At the same time, it would appear that the

ROK was attempting to send spies and saboteurs to the North. By the early 1970s, international trends such as the United States' rapprochement with China, as well as domestic pressures in both the ROK and DPRK, demanded a new approach by both sides to the reunification issue. Secret meetings held in 1972 resulted in a joint communique which for a while seemed to promise meaningful discussions between the two rivals. Both Koreas were determined to pursue fundamentally different policies on the question of a reunified peninsula, however, and talks were broken off the following year.³⁸ Since then there have been sporadic contacts but no appreciable progress on the issue. Various proposals have been made by the two sides from time to time but generally speaking they have been more interested in making propaganda gains than in serious discussions. Kim Il Sung's adamant refusal to accept the current reality of two states on the peninsula is a major obstacle to progress. For a very brief period, after Park Chung Hee's assassination in October 1979, it appeared that useful talks with the DPRK might be possible, but these hopes dissolved with Lieutenant-General Chun Doo Hwan's coup in Seoul two months later. Relations between the two Koreas now match the bellicosity of the late 1960s and are a cause for concern among all countries with interests in the peace and stability of the North Asian region.

It is widely accepted that the Korean peninsula is a peculiarly sensitive part of the region, and indeed of the world. As Richard Sneider has stated:

Unless agreements are negotiated, the DMZ [between the two Koreas] will remain one of the most dangerous borders on the globe, with increasing risk that renewed conflict will be difficult to localise.³⁹

Tensions are high and provocations are commonplace. Claims and counterclaims are regularly made by both sides. Broadly speaking, the DPRK's complaints over recent years have been that the US is arming the ROK 'puppet army' in direct violation of the Armistice Agreement and turning the ROK into a nuclear base,⁴⁰ that it is conducting manoeuvres in a threatening manner and using armed ships and aircraft to spy in and around North Korean territory. The ROK and US side in return charge the DPRK with digging tunnels under the DMZ in preparation for an invasion of the south, the intrusion of spy ships and aircraft into ROK territory and attacking fishing vessels in international waters. Most recently, the ROK has accused the DPRK of the assassination of a number of its most senior officials, including four Cabinet Ministers, in Rangoon on 9 October 1983.⁴¹ There would appear to be substance in the charges of both sides.

Major violations of the Armistice Agreement are not common but when they occur the level of tension on the peninsula is quick to rise. This happened in 1968, for example, when the DPRK seized the US electronic intelligence vessel *USS Pueblo*, landed 120 agents on the ROK's east coast and sent a suicide force of 21 men to assassinate President Park. When a US Navy EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down by the DPRK in 1969 Henry Kissinger apparently recommended to President Nixon that the US destroy two or three airfields in North Korea in retaliation.⁴² In 1974 a member of the *Chochongyon*, a pro-DPRK Korean organisation based in Japan, made another attempt on President Park's life and succeeded in killing Mrs Park. The murder of two American officers by DPRK security guards at the Panmunjom Joint Security Area in 1976 prompted the despatch of a US Navy carrier force into Korean waters, F-4 fighters from Okinawa and other air force units from Guam and the continental US.⁴³ When a missile was fired at a US SR-71 high altitude reconnaissance aircraft by the DPRK in 1981 the US exercised restraint but issued a strong warning that any repetition of the incident would immediately bring 'an appropriate response'. Most recently, the apparent defection of a Soviet tour guide at the Panmunjom Joint Security Area on 23 November 1984 resulted in a gun battle in which four soldiers, three from the DPRK and one from the ROK, were killed. One American serviceman was wounded. The US and ROK have raised the level of military alert at other times, such as when Saigon fell in 1975 and when there has been internal unrest in the ROK. When President Park was murdered in 1979 another US carrier force was stationed in Korean waters and in 1980 precautions were taken in case the DPRK should try to take advantage of the popular uprising against the ROK Government in the provincial capital of Kwangju.

While tensions on the peninsula remain high and each provocation by either side has the potential to flare up into a more serious incident, the likelihood of another major war in Korea remains reasonably small. Neither the ROK nor the DPRK could sustain an attack for very long without the support of their allies and, while a short blitzkrieg with limited objectives is always possible, there is ample evidence to suggest that the major powers would prefer to see the status quo on the Korean peninsula remain, rather than support any attempt at reunification by force of arms. The danger of a war between the two Koreas escalating into a nuclear confrontation between the superpowers is too high, and the advantages to them of a unified Korea too slight by comparison, to risk such an adventure. That having been said, however, the possibility cannot be discounted that, either through miscalculation or design, one side might precipitate a war. Despite some recent rhetoric, President Kim Il Sung appears still not to have abandoned military action as an option for reunifying the peninsula and, now aged 72, cannot have too much time left to realise his dream of a unified communist Korea. His heir apparent (and son), Kim Jong-il, has yet to prove his revolutionary credentials and may feel that in the context of a power struggle in the North an assault on the South would strengthen his hold on the leadership.

It has been a constant fear in the ROK that internal unrest there might invite intervention from the DPRK.⁴⁴ More recently, concern has been growing that the ROK's increasing political and economic lead over the DPRK might drive the latter to an act of desperation before it falls too far behind.⁴⁵ For its part, the North has long been concerned that the ROK may in a bout of hubris seek to overwhelm it, counting on the US to follow.

While firmly opposed to another war on the peninsula, both China and the Soviet Union have mutual security treaties with the DPRK and have publicly stated on numerous occasions their intention to support it, if it was attacked. Although there are differing opinions about the strategic value of the Korean peninsula to the US,⁴⁶ and while the US's capacity and inclination to intervene militarily in the Asian-Pacific region have markedly declined over the past decade, there is little doubt that in the event of an attack on the ROK the US would honour its treaty commitments and respond quickly and massively on the ROK's behalf. It would appear that US strategy in such an eventuality would be to destroy the DPRK's war-fighting capabilities, possibly using tactical nuclear weapons, before the Soviet Union or China could intervene.⁴⁷ Seoul is only some 30 kilometres from the DMZ, however, and it is possible to envisage a situation in which the US's superior firepower could not be brought to bear, for example if DPRK forces were able to invest the heavily populated area of the ROK capital and its environs. Should the US and ROK be faced with a protracted conflict, it is possible also that Australia may be requested once again to become involved.

4. Still Allies or Just Good Friends?

During his visit to the ROK last February, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke made a speech in which he told President Chun Doo Hwan that Australia remained interested in the resolution of the Korean question:

not as a country with interests directly engaged in the Korean peninsula, but as one strongly mindful of the risks posed to regional peace and stability by continued tension and conflict between the protagonists.⁴⁸

This statement would seem clearly to indicate that in the event of any fresh outbreak of major hostilities in Korea, Australia would be very concerned, but would not see itself as bound to contribute to any renewed Western effort. It is possible, however, that despite this attitude Australia would find itself drawn into such a conflict in one form or another. It might be argued, for example, that Australia retained residual commitments to the defence of the ROK as a member of the UNC and as a signatory to the Sixteen Nation Declaration of 1953. In addition, there have been a number of suggestions over the years that, under the terms of the ANZUS Treaty, Australia would be obliged at least to consult with the US, should American troops in or around Korea come under fire.

Australia became a member of the UNC when it provided air, naval and land forces for the prosecution of the Korean War in response to Security Council Resolutions 82 of 25 June and 83 of 27 June 1950, which determined that the armed attack on the ROK by the DPRK constituted a breach of the peace and recommended that:

the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area.⁴⁹

Security Council Resolution 84 of 7 July 1950 subsequently recommended that all members of the UN providing military forces and other assistance pursuant to these earlier resolutions make such forces and assistance available to a unified command under the US, which was requested to designate the UN Commander.⁵⁰

There were immediate accusations from the communist bloc that these steps by the Security Council were invalid, even illegal. The Soviet Union, for example, forcefully argued that the ROK had begun the war and that the Council's decisions constituted unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of Korea. The obligation to respond to a call for assistance applied only in the case of aggression by one state upon another, not in the case of an essentially civil conflict between 'two parts of the Korean people temporarily split into two camps under two separate authorities'.⁵¹ More recently, Malcolm Booker has argued that:

Korea had been a united country for thirteen centuries and the 38th Parallel could not in any sense be regarded as a national boundary: it was a military demarcation line agreed upon as a matter of convenience between the Allied Supreme Commander at the time of the Japanese surrender ... The situation was thus not one of aggression by one state against another but of civil war. This is not to say that it was of no concern to the United Nations, but the Charter makes no provision for the use of the peace *enforcement* powers of the Security Council in internal conflicts. Action could have been taken under the provisions of the Charter calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes: but in this case there would have been no possibility of setting up a United Nations Command, or of introducing forces except at the express wish of the disputants.⁵²

Booker did not go as far as the Soviet delegate in 1950, however, and declare that under international law the US should be declared an aggressor, for sending troops to assist the ROK and thus 'invading' Korean territory.

The resolution by which the Security Council called upon the UN to assist the ROK with armed forces was also made in the absence of the Soviet delegate, who since January 1950 had been boycotting Security Council sessions in protest over the continuing allocation of China's seat to the Nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek.⁵³ According to the communist bloc at the time and later commentators such as Malcolm Booker and Gavan McCormack, the Council was thus acting in direct contravention of Article 27(3) of the UN Charter, which stated;

Decisions of the Security Council on all other [than procedural] matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of seven members including the concurring vote of the permanent members.⁵⁴

McCormack has also pointed out that under Article 32 of the Charter:

any member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council or any state which is not a member of the United Nations, if it is party to a dispute under consideration by the Security Council, shall be invited to participate without vote in the discussions relating to the dispute.⁵⁵

Clearly, this was not done in the case of the Security Council's debates on the Korean question in 1950. A representative from the ROK attended but despite pleas from the Yugoslavian delegate that the DPRK be invited to attend and give its version of events, this was not permitted. For reasons such as these, it has been claimed that under international law the UNC had no legitimate basis for its existence – and still does not.

The US and its supporters were quick to reply to these accusations. Since 1950 they have consistently claimed that the ROK had already been recognised and declared a lawful state by the UN when invaded by the DPRK. In addition, under Article 2(7) of the UN Charter the UN could lawfully intervene in the internal affairs of the country 'if this is necessary for the purposes of enforcing its decisions as regards the maintenance of international peace and security'.⁵⁶ The determination of a breach of the peace did not, in any event, require formal or even informal aggression by one state upon another. The fact that some US initiatives on Korea at the time preceded UN action, and were thus without the UN's formal authority, was justified by the need for a speedy response if collective measures, once organised, were to have any chance of success. They were later given UN sanction.⁵⁷ With regard to the absence of the Soviet delegate, it was argued that:

the principle was well established that the abstention of a permanent member did not constitute a 'veto' under Article 27 of the Charter, that an absence should have effects analogous to an abstention, and that in any case [under Article 28] the Soviet Union was obliged to have a representative present so that the Council could continuously perform its functions.⁵⁸

As Leland Goodrich points out, however, the Soviet Union had recognised the principle that abstention was not equivalent to a veto, but had never agreed that an absence was the same as an abstention.⁵⁹ The failure of the Security Council to invite the DPRK to participate in the debate was also difficult to justify. The issue of an invitation would have been consistent with normal practice and need not have delayed the measures necessary to meet the attack on the ROK 'since the response to the request for the cessation of hostilities could still be treated as conclusive for this purpose'.⁶⁰ It is unlikely that the DPRK's attendance, if it chose to go to New York, would greatly have altered matters, but the failure of the Security Council even to seek the DPRK's views gave the communist bloc a propaganda advantage which it was quick to exploit.

The international legal aspects of US actions in the UN during 1950–53 are very complex and still highly controversial. As suggested by Malcolm Booker's treatment of the subject and Gavan McCormack's recent reiteration of Booker's views, no clear resolution of the questions raised in 1950 seems likely in the near future. If it could be demonstrated, however, that there was no legal basis for the establishment of the UNC, then presumably it would have to be dissolved. At the very least its members, including Australia, would be in no way bound to support the rump of the UNC which still exists in the ROK and Japan. The continuing existence of the UNC itself seems to be justified on the grounds that, in the terms of the original Security Council resolution, 'international peace and security' has still not been completely restored to the area, despite the signing of an Armistice Agreement in 1953. The US apparently still sees justification for its continuing leadership role in Security Council Resolution 84.⁶¹ Such an open-ended commitment by the UN can no longer be considered unusual, given its subsequent inconclusive peace-keeping efforts around the world, but it is certainly curious that Australia has been prepared to maintain its formal association with the UNC in a part of the world where Australia has no direct security interests, yet where a state of war has existed for over 30 years and may again erupt into open conflict.

When the main body of Australian forces withdrew from the ROK in 1955,⁶² against the express wishes of the US and, no doubt, the ROK,⁶³ an Australian commissioned officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) remained in Korea as the Liaison Officer and his Assistant with a residual Commonwealth Group. In 1966 they joined the staff of the Australian Embassy in Seoul as the Defence Attaché and his Assistant, but retained their membership of the Commonwealth Liaison Mission with the UNC. As such, and in addition to their regular Embassy duties, they formed part of the Advisory Group which nominally assisted the UNC component of the Military Armistice Commission (MAC). The MAC was established under the 1953 Armistice Agreement to supervise the implementation of the Agreement and settle any questions of violations.⁶⁴ Of the original 16 members of the UNC, seven (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, the UK and the US) are still formally accredited to it in Korea, but only the US provides other than liaison or ceremonial forces.⁶⁵ In addition, the Australian Defence and Service Attachés assigned to the

Australian Embassy in Tokyo are also accredited as Liaison Officers to the United Nations Command (Rear Echelon) (UNC (Rear)), which still preserves a largely paper existence in Japan.

Although the Security Council was able to do so under Articles 41 and 42 of the UN Charter, its resolutions recommending assistance to the ROK in 1950 were not made binding and it has always been open to any member of the UNC to withdraw at any time. Having been established by Security Council resolution, with the US specifically designated to provide its Commander, however, the UNC itself can only be dissolved by the Council. For this to occur, the affirmative votes of all permanent members would be necessary, in accordance with standard procedures. In 1975 the US notified the Council that, if certain conditions could be met, it was prepared to accept the dissolution of the UNC. Two resolutions were subsequently put before the General Assembly. While essentially contradictory, they both made provision for the UNC's dissolution.⁶⁶ The so-called pro-ROK resolution (3390A XXX) favoured the dissolution of the UNC provided the DPRK agreed to alternative arrangements to preserve peace on the peninsula. It reiterated that until such arrangements were made the 1953 Armistice Agreement was essential. The DPRK, however, refused to give the assurances sought. The pro-DPRK resolution (3390B XXX) sought in particular the inclusion of a peace treaty with the US (from which the ROK would be excluded) and the withdrawal of all American troops from Korea. In the vote on the two resolutions in the First Committee, Australia voted for the pro-ROK resolution and abstained on the pro-DPRK resolution, hoping in this way to help achieve a compromise between the two sides that would permit an agreed resolution on the dissolution of the UNC, which Australia apparently saw no special reason to retain. The final vote in the General Assembly on 18 November, however, demonstrated that all attempts at achieving a consensus had failed. Both resolutions were adopted, effectively cancelling each other out. The UNC remained. Australia voted in the UNGA for the pro-ROK resolution only,⁶⁷ prompting the later speculation that this vote precipitated the sudden closure of the DPRK Embassy in Canberra and the expulsion of Australia's diplomatic staff from Pyongyang.

As Morton Abramowitz remarked as early as 1971, 'the UN presence [in Korea] is little more than a hollow shell',⁶⁸ a legal fig leaf to cover the continuing operation of the Armistice Agreement which is now, as indeed it has always been, an American and ROK arrangement with the DPRK. Although the Agreement was also signed by the Chinese⁶⁹ and a Chinese representative has attended MAC meetings in the past, the Chinese withdrew all their troops from the DPRK in 1958 and have since sought to distance themselves from the continuing struggle by the North Koreans against the ROK. Australia's residual connections with the UNC are largely nominal and do not entail any duties of consequence. As long as the UNC survives, however, and continues to serve as the formal basis for Australia's concern with the security of the ROK through its Liaison Officers in Seoul and Tokyo, then it must be expected that in the event of another outbreak of major hostilities on the peninsula Australia would in some fashion become involved. Already, as a member of the MAC Advisory Group, Australia is associated with the US and ROK protests, and in some cases their military responses, to the DPRK after North Korean attacks on navy vessels, aircraft or personnel. It is likely too that Australia is seen by the DPRK as being party to US and ROK violations of the Armistice Agreement. As an accredited member of the MAC it is conceivable that the Australian Defence Attaché in the ROK (who also carries diplomatic status and therefore possible additional symbolic importance) may come under fire or be drawn formally at least into the planning of some military action taken in the name of the UNC.⁷⁰ Similarly, Australian Liaison Officers accredited to UNC (Rear) in Japan would be automatically associated, formally at least, with any logistical or support operations carried out in Japan under the UN flag. Given the organisation of the UNC it is possible that such actions may be initiated without prior consultations with Australia.

The UN flag has long been used in the public presentation of US and ROK policies on the Korean peninsula and in order to preserve at least the appearance of substance to the UNC these two countries will no doubt continue to seek Australia's membership of it. Similarly, Australia's nominal involvement in UNC activities is likely to be encouraged for the political benefits it bestows on the US and ROK. This formal association with the UNC, however, would appear to carry the risk of Australia becoming involved in a future conflict on the peninsula. Given that Australia has always accepted the validity of the Security Council's resolutions in 1950, loudly denouncing those who criticised them, and long supported the legitimacy of the UNC, Australia is not likely to question its role now. Australia is not bound to remain a member of the UNC, nor does it appear to have any binding obligations to it. Yet, given that Australia remains one of the few countries still accredited to the UNC and active within it in both the ROK and Japan, the Australian Government would find it difficult to argue that it felt no responsibilities toward it in times of crisis. The UNC may only have a hollow, formal status, and Australian duties in the UNC may only be nominal, but such symbols can be important in diplomacy and if used by the ROK or US in an attempt to put pressure on Australia they could cause real embarrassment. At such a time the US and ROK would lose nothing by reminding Australia also of its participation in the signing of the Sixteen Nation Declaration (sometimes called the Joint Policy Declaration) of 27 July 1953.

At the same time as the Armistice Agreement was signed at Panmunjom, the 16 nations which had contributed combat forces to the UNC in Korea issued a statement in Washington which declared their support for the Agreement and affirmed that:

in the interests of world peace, that if there is a renewal of the armed attack, challenging again the principles of the United Nations, we should again be united and prompt to resist. The consequences of such a breach of the armistice would be so grave that, in all probability, it would not be possible to confine hostilities within the borders of Korea.⁷¹

As Robert O'Neill has pointed out in his official history of *Australia in the Korean War 1950–53*, Australia has never repudiated any of the obligations accepted through this document some 30 years ago and to all intents and purposes it still stands as evidence of the willingness of the 16 nations involved, including Australia, to return to defend the ROK should circumstances demand.⁷² Conditions have greatly changed since 1953, however, outside Korea as well as within it, and it is unlikely that any of the signatories of the Declaration still feel bound by it – least of all the nine countries which are no longer members of the UNC. In any case, the document itself is very vague – the kind of assistance to be provided is not spelt out, for example – and its legal status is open to question. It could easily be argued that the Declaration is not binding in the way that a treaty is. Rather, it might be seen simply as a statement of intent, and like all such documents is likely to be reviewed in the light of circumstances at the time it becomes relevant.⁷³

There is a third way in which pressure could be put on Australia, should the US and ROK want Australian support in another major conflict in Korea. This is the ANZUS Treaty, itself ironically the main reason for the commitment of Australian ground forces there in 1950. In June 1975, shortly before the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Don Willessee, was due to leave for an official visit to both Seoul and Pyongyang, the Department of Foreign Affairs reviewed the various interpretations which had been given to the ANZUS Treaty over the years, to determine if it could impose obligations on Australia to participate in another armed conflict in Korea involving US forces. The Department reportedly decided that the question hinged on whether or not Korea, a part of the Asian mainland, was included in the 'Pacific' area covered by the treaty. It firmly concluded that it was not. Although the treaty had its origins, in part, in Western reaction to DPRK aggression in 1950, the treaty area was never meant to extend to the Asian mainland. The intention had been to establish an 'off-shore' commitment only.⁷⁴ This conclusion had in fact been reached 10 years before by the eminent Australian jurist J.G. Starke, in his detailed examination of the treaty⁷⁵ and has been confirmed in general terms since by a Parliamentary enquiry into the Australia–American relationship.⁷⁶ The exact area covered by the ANZUS Treaty has always been deliberately left imprecise, but it is clear that there was never any intention to include Korea in it. This seems to have been recognised by the ROK as early as 1952, before it had secured its own security pact with the US. In that year, the government of President Syngman Rhee unsuccessfully made a formal application to join the alliance, in order to extend the scope of the treaty to include the Korean peninsula. The Department of Foreign Affairs' brief reportedly stated that the US had never suggested that Australia should consider American forces in the UNC in Korea as being automatically covered by ANZUS.⁷⁷

Despite these conclusions, the limits on the range of the ANZUS Treaty seem to have remained unclear to some politicians and senior military officials in Washington and Canberra. Reporting from Seoul in 1981, for example, the Editor of the *Pacific Defence Reporter*, Denis Warner, wrote that:

The Australian Embassy in Seoul, for example, is very careful to avoid giving any impression that we would do more than deplore a Northern invasion of the South ... It appears to be the official Australian view that Korea really isn't in the Pacific and that therefore Washington could not expect to invoke the ANZUS Treaty and ask us to 'consult' about what we might do if US forces came under attack there. That is not the view of the top US military, who have been at pains to explain to Congressional committees that the mutual defence pact with Japan and ANZUS are entirely different kettles of fish. The Japanese are under no obligation, moral or practical, to do anything if the United States or its forces are attacked. We are.⁷⁸

In Denis Warner's opinion:

an attack on American ground forces would cause the US to invoke the ANZUS Treaty.⁷⁹

In a seminar at Penn State University last June, Ian Sinclair discussed Australia's treaty arrangements and noted with regard to ANZUS in particular that:

should tensions between the two Koreas again lead to the outbreak of hostilities, apart from Australia's own interests, the inevitability of US involvement would probably see strong claims being made for Australia to advance military assistance of some type, reinforced by the certainty that the current situation in the United Nations would preclude the type of international reaction of the 1950s to the Korean War.⁸⁰

This sort of confusion between the wider ANZUS alliance and the actual treaty relationship, as well as the frequent loose association in public statements of the ANZUS Treaty with past or future conflicts, have greatly clouded the issue. Australia did not take part in the Korean War or later Vietnam War because of the ANZUS Treaty, but politicians from both Australia and the US are fond of citing these examples of joint military action as evidence of strong ANZUS ties. The implication is usually that, because of the ANZUS Treaty, such involvement might be possible again.⁸¹

Consideration of this matter is complicated too by the presence of US forces and bases in Japan. Speaking to the US Senate in 1952, when the ANZUS treaty was being ratified, John Foster Dulles declared that ANZUS would be invoked in the event of attacks on US bases in or near Japan. In 1965, in his examination of the treaty, J.G. Starke stated quite categorically that:

It is clear that an armed attack upon American units stationed or mobile ... in and about Japan, or in the waters of these territories, and for the purpose of American strategical dispositions and security arrangements with ... Japan, is one to which Article V of ANZUS applies.⁸²

Yet it is difficult to imagine another war in Korea without Japan in some manner becoming involved. The Nixon-Sato Communique in 1969 explicitly stated that the security of the ROK was 'essential' to the security of Japan.⁸³ The use of US bases in Japan for staging purposes and logistical support would be almost automatic and, if necessary, could be given the formal cover of the UNC (Rear). In the event of another armed conflict on the Korean peninsula it would probably be very difficult to differentiate clearly between those threats to US forces in Korea (which appear not to be covered under the ANZUS Treaty) and those support units based in Japan (which could be). In such a situation, it is unlikely that the American Government would be inclined to spend too much time examining the precise legal position of US aircraft flying missions over Korea from Japan, or supply ships sailing to the ROK from Japanese ports, to see whether or not they would be covered under the deliberately vague provisions of the ANZUS agreement. Depending on the nature of the conflict, there could also be the question of threats to naval vessels and civilian ships en route to Korea from the continental US. Under Article V of the treaty any attacks on such vessels in the Pacific would be grounds for joint action.

For a number of reasons, however, all these considerations are largely academic. Even if it was agreed that sufficient grounds existed to invoke the treaty, the obligations assumed by the three treaty partners are in fact very limited. As described in 1981 by the Australian Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, they are no more than:

self help to develop the capacity to resist armed attack; cooperation to develop individual and joint military capacity; consultation when any party considers its own or another party's security to be threatened in the Pacific; and action in accordance with constitutional processes to meet an armed attack on any of the partners in the Pacific area.⁸⁴

In a US State Department press release issued after the ANZUS Council meeting in Washington in July 1983, the US Secretary of State extended the ANZUS commitment to 'the Indian Ocean approaches and waters adjacent to Australia',⁸⁵ but the essential point remains that none of these obligations imply an automatic commitment of any resources by any of the treaty partners. As the Foreign Affairs Department's 1975 study apparently concluded, the ANZUS Treaty could, in the event of renewed hostilities in Korea, provide a basis for the US to seek consultations with Australia (as indeed it could do without a treaty) but Australia's response would depend entirely on the circumstances at the time.⁸⁶ The treaty is individual as well as collective. This approach has recently been confirmed in general terms by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Speaking in September 1983, after the first review of the ANZUS Treaty in over 30 years, Bill Hayden told Parliament:

The Treaty relationship is, of course, between sovereign, independent nations and should thus be the expression of each party's national interests ... the obligation to respond and assist would not automatically involve the provision of military forces in support of the country subjected to threat or attacks ... A range of responses might be available, and it would be up to the other partners to judge which response would be appropriate in a given situation.⁸⁷

In this regard, after all the political rhetoric and press speculation has been discounted, interpretations of the treaty over the past 30-odd years have been surprisingly consistent.

The arguments canvassed above can be considered academic for another reason. Regardless of any possible formal or legal commitments which Australia might have to assist the ROK or US forces in Korea, it is difficult to envisage an armed conflict of significant proportions there in which Australia was not asked to make a contribution of some kind. The ROK already seeks Australian support in its diplomatic struggle with the DPRK and has been assiduous in preserving at least the semblance of a continuing military relationship with Australia. This has been partly for propaganda reasons, but is also doubtless in anticipation of another outbreak of hostilities in which the help of other countries might again be required. The ROK has also made efforts to cultivate Australian pressure groups sympathetic to its interests, for much the same reasons. For its part, the US has consistently sought to act in the company of others in situations similar to those which might arise on the Korean peninsula. This possibility seems already to have been considered by Australia's defence planners. The *National Times*, purportedly quoting the most recent *Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy*, stated that if there was a fresh outbreak of hostilities in Korea, and it could not be contained, 'the US would want Japan to assist and would probably also seek assistance internationally, including from Australia'.⁸⁸ Australia's contribution in such a situation would necessarily be limited, but:

would have more political value to the US than the military worth of the contribution made. The US prefers to act as a member of a group and a contribution from Australia can assist the US to avoid the impression of acting unilaterally. It can also assist in demonstrating to Congressional and public opinion that the objectives sought are significant enough to attract broad allied support.⁸⁹

Although Australia may not be legally bound by the ANZUS Treaty to do more than 'consult', its longstanding security relationship with the US would make it very difficult for Australia completely to stand back from a situation in which US forces in Korea were under overt and substantial attack. This is not to suggest that, as appears may have been the case with the Vietnam War, Australia would feel obliged to take part simply in order to maintain the credibility of the ANZUS Treaty or American interest in the region,⁹⁰ but as a recent study has pointed out the ANZUS Treaty is only one element in a much broader alliance structure linking Australia with the US.⁹¹ There is a host of obvious defence ties, exchanges, shared facilities, joint exercises and agreements. In addition, the Australian Government would be bound to consider what Harry Gelber has called the 'intangibles' of its relationship with the US, significantly touched upon by the Prime Minister during his visit to Washington in June 1983:

Specifically, we are linked with the US through the ANZUS Treaty ... but beyond that, we are indissolubly linked with the US by a whole range of common interests, attitudes, aspirations, perceptions, institutions, traditions and associations in war and peace ...⁹²

Australia would have to consider its political standing 'as a nation of substance in its own right', making its own decisions in terms of its own national interests and not always at the behest of the US.⁹³ Yet the moral ties inherent in the ANZUS alliance are stronger than the treaty itself and for Australia to remain completely aloof at a time when the US was in real difficulty could risk a public breach of faith that would have long term consequences.⁹⁴

In weighing its decision whether or not to contribute to another Western effort in Korea, the Australian Government would need to consider many other diverse factors. Of critical importance would be the circumstances in which the outbreak of hostilities occurred, the nature of the fighting, the kind of Australian support sought, whether or not other countries were asked to assist and the reaction of the international community in general. Perhaps more importantly, and as the ROK has sought to emphasise for years, the security situation on the Korean peninsula is inextricably bound up with that of the region as a whole and could not be considered in isolation from the position of the great powers. As an earlier Australian *Strategic Basis* assessment is reported to have noted:

War in Korea is a contingency of serious concern to Australia's strategic interests. It would introduce problems of escalation and nuclear conflict, and major instabilities for North-East Asian and global equilibrium.⁹⁵

It has primarily been in this wider context that successive Australian Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers have expressed concern about the continuing tensions in Korea.

There are other factors to be considered. Another major conflict in Korea could seriously damage Australia's economic and development interests. Depending on the nature and scope of the hostilities, international sea and air transport might be disrupted, severely affecting Australia's trade with the ROK, valued last year at over A\$1 billion.⁹⁶ As Harry

Gelber in particular has emphasised, such a conflict could also seriously affect Australia's trade with Japan and the People's Republic of China. In 1982/83 these three Asian countries together accounted for some 34 per cent of Australian exports and 23 per cent of its total imports.⁹⁷ Some analysts have seen possible commercial advantages to Australia from another war in the Asian-Pacific region but if it broke out in Korea the net result would almost certainly be to Australia's disadvantage.⁹⁸ Australian assistance to the ROK and its allies would probably have little effect on the military outcome of such a conflict, but it could add political weight to the non-communist side and in the event of a Western victory (or a return to the *status quo ante bellum*) ensure a return to the highly profitable trading partnership now enjoyed. Not to assist would risk the possible loss of markets in the ROK once a settlement had been reached. Even if only for a short period, the economic impact on Australia could be severe.⁹⁹ In the face of such imperatives 'Australia might find it as difficult to abstain [from another Korean conflict] as to be drawn in'.¹⁰⁰

Australia's own military capabilities would also need close examination. The 1968 *Strategic Basis* assessment was apparently the last to predicate Australian strategic policy on the maintenance of a 'forward defence posture'.¹⁰¹ By 1976, when the last Defence Department White Paper was produced, the emphasis was clearly placed on 'increased self-reliance' as 'in our contemporary circumstances we no longer base our policy on the expectation that Australia's Navy or Army or Air Force will be sent abroad to fight as part of some other nation's force, supported by it'.¹⁰² Contributions to operations elsewhere, should a requirement arise, were not ruled out but the primary areas of Australia's strategic concerns were, and still are, the Southeast Asian and Southwest Pacific regions. The White Paper stated that 'events in distant areas such as Africa, the Middle East and North Asia (assuming there were international sanction for Australian involvement) are beyond the reach of effective defence activity by Australia'.¹⁰³ The conclusion of Australia's defence planners seems to be that war in Korea was too remote a contingency to be a determinant of the Defence Force's structure. In the 'unlikely event' of an Australian contribution being required for such an eventuality, only a 'token force' would be necessary and that could be drawn from the Defence Force 'in being'.¹⁰⁴ The US has already indicated that it recognises Australia's limited abilities to project its military power and would not expect Australia to play a substantial role beyond its immediate region.¹⁰⁵

All these factors would have to be considered against public opinion in Australia. A large number of people appeared to welcome Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's statement in 1973, when he said that 'Australia shall not again send troops to fight in Asian mainland wars',¹⁰⁶ yet a McNair opinion poll taken in May 1975 suggested that the outcome of the Vietnam War had barely affected the willingness of Australians to intervene militarily in Asian conflicts.¹⁰⁷ Popular feeling on the prospect of another expedition to Korea is difficult to gauge. The long history of autocratic rule and human rights violations in the ROK has alienated a number of important groups in Australian society. Public opposition in Australia to participation in another Korean conflict could have the effect of undermining wider public acceptance of other forms of cooperation with the US, something that the government would wish to avoid. The reaction in Australia would be particularly strong if the US used its tactical nuclear weapons against the DPRK. On the other hand, during the 1950s Korea attained a symbolic significance in the East-West struggle which, to a degree, it retains today. There are powerful lobby groups like the Returned Services League (RSL) (which includes many veterans of the Korean War) which would react strongly to another communist attack on the ROK. While it agrees with the regional focus of Australia's current defence effort, the RSL has also advocated an option for Australia:

to contribute to situations beyond our Neighbourhood which could have long term implications or potential benefits for Australian security.¹⁰⁸

Korea would most probably be seen in that light. Others, who favour a widening of ANZUS to include North Asia, would probably agree with Denis Warner who wrote in 1981 about the possibility of another major conflict in Korea:

No doubt we could find a convenient way out, or seek to [pay] our insurance premium by hoisting the smallest of flags. But ANZUS is no different from any other sort of insurance policy. What you hope to get out of it in time of trouble, or loss, depends on what you are prepared to pay in the way of premiums.¹⁰⁹

It must be remembered too that there is already a significant (approximately 6,000) community of Korean migrants in Australia who, with active ROK Government encouragement, retain strong links politically and emotionally with their homeland. They would doubtless constitute a vocal ethnic minority in favour of Australian support for the ROK and US in the event of another Korean conflict. Support for the DPRK in Australia is extremely small.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to look at possible ways in which an Australian contribution could be made, if it was decided that Australia could not stand back from a new Korean conflict without prejudicing its national interests as it saw them. The Minister for Foreign Affairs outlined some of the options that are available during his speech to Parliament last September, reporting on the review of the ANZUS Treaty. These ranged from diplomatic action, political

or economic sanctions, the supply of equipment or provision of military logistical support. Direct military action was recognised as a final option. It is perhaps worth emphasising that, in the context of the ANZUS Treaty at least, this last alternative is by no means incumbent on Australia.¹¹⁰ If the *National Times* can be believed, the recent *Strategic Basis* papers saw Australia's response in terms of a token military force to be sent to Korea, but there are other avenues open to the government, even if it chose a military option. As Michael O'Connor has suggested recently, there may be scope for Australia to play a greater part in the protection of sea lanes of communication with North Asia, which currently fall outside the 1951 Radford–Collins Agreement.¹¹¹ By increasing its patrols in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, Australia has already been able to release US vessels for redeployment elsewhere and in the event of another Korean conflict could no doubt do the same, given the naval and air capability required.¹¹² Coupled with an active diplomatic campaign, both responses could be presented in terms of Australia's own vital interests, while satisfying the political demands of the US and ROK. Such compromises would be more likely to find domestic public acceptance than direct military involvement, or a complete refusal to act. In any event, as Harry Gelber has said, the decision whether or not to take part in another major conflict in Korea would be an exceptionally difficult one for any government to make. So would the choice of any response made.¹¹³

5. Conclusion

It is ironic that, in an examination of Australia's possible involvement in a second Korean War, so many of the issues which were considered relevant to the first should reappear – the threat of communist aggression, the role of the superpowers, the position of the UN, the security of other areas of the Asian-Pacific region and Australia's relationship with the US. Yet, if in some respects the confrontation on the Korean peninsula appears not to have changed, much else has. The balance of political forces in the world, not least the region, are now much more complex and economic interests are more pronounced. The level of military capabilities both in North Asia generally and in Korea in particular are considerably higher. The UN could no longer be expected as a matter of course to endorse the actions of the US. Nor is the Soviet Union likely to absent itself from the Security Council at a crucial time. Australia's relationship with the ROK is now a great deal more developed than it was and in that sense it could be argued that it has a greater interest in the ROK's security than it had in 1950. Yet as Australia's political and economic ties with the ROK have grown, so its military ties have weakened significantly. Certain historical remnants of its earlier military involvement in Korea remain and the ROK persists in its attempts to portray itself as an ally of Australia, but it is clear that Australia does not share this view and sees itself rather as just a good friend. Another Australian military action in Korea cannot be ruled out, should hostilities resume there, but it is much more likely that Australia would act as a result of its wider relationship with the US, than out of any particular legal commitment or feeling of affinity with the Korean people – just as was the case in 1950. The historical precedent which is likely to weigh most heavily on the minds of most Australians at such a time, however, would not be Korea, but Vietnam. The Western defeat there only 10 years ago would no doubt make the Australian Government and people a great deal more wary of another military engagement in Asia than the qualified success of the UN forces in Korea more than 30 years ago.

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Notes

- 1 During his visit to the Republic of Korea in February 1984, for example, the Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, made a speech in which he told President Chun Doo Hwan: 'When, in 1950, we contributed forces to the United Nations Command in Korea, we did so out of a firm resolve to support your sovereign rights'. *Australian Foreign Affairs Record (AFAR)*, vol. 55, no. 2, February 1984, p. 2.
- 2 Quoted in R. O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War 1950-53*, vol. 1, 'Strategy and Diplomacy' (Canberra: The Australian War Memorial and Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981), p. 47.
- 3 Quoted in M. Booker, *The Last Domino: Aspects of Australia's Foreign Relations* (Sydney: Collins, 1976), p. 116.
- 4 For a concise account of this period, see A.C. Castles, *Australia and the United Nations* (Melbourne: Longmans, 1974), pp. 13-18.
- 5 As with so many aspects of the Korean War, there is some controversy over the actual findings in, and implications of, the report prepared by the two Australian field observers. See for example, O'Neill, p. 12, et seq. and, for an alternative view, G. McCormack, *Cold War Hot War: An Australian Perspective on the Korean War* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1983), p. 75 et seq.
- 6 McCormack, *Cold War Hot War*, p. 21.
- 7 O'Neill, pp. 137 and 403.
- 8 T.B. Miller, *Australia in Peace and War: External Relations 1788-1977* (London: Hurst and Co., 1978), p. 392.
- 9 Spender was also anxious that Australia not appear to have sent troops because the UK had done so. In the event, British ground troops were the first to arrive in Korea (on 27 August 1950) after those of the US. Prime Minister Menzies was in mid-Atlantic, on his way to the US, when the decision was taken to send Australian ground troops, but was informed of the *fait accompli* by telephone. See A. Watt, *Australian Diplomat: Memoirs of Sir Alan Watt* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1972), pp. 173-6.
- 10 O'Neill, p. 76.
- 11 While Australia was not specifically named by MacArthur as one of the offending countries, the US press subsequently singled out Australia and New Zealand as the allies to which the General had referred. Neither had the military capabilities to contribute much more but were apparently expected to do so as the US's former allies in the Pacific during World War II, and regional countries with shared traditions and perceptions. See A. Renouf, *The Frightened Country* (Melbourne: MacMillan, 1979), p. 78. Australia's military contribution to the UNC during the period 1950-53 was two infantry battalions (as part of the First Commonwealth Division), two destroyers or frigates, one aircraft carrier and a fighter squadron (O'Neill, p. 462). Australian casualties were 261 killed, 1,034 wounded, 37 missing in action: a total of 1,332. D. Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1970), p. 460.
- 12 Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, p. 206.
- 13 J.G. Starke, *The ANZUS Treaty Alliance* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), p. 51.
- 14 Booker, p. 232.
- 15 O'Neill, p. 153 et seq. and Renouf, pp. 79 and 83-6. See also T.B. Millar (ed.), *Australian Foreign Minister: The Diaries of R.G. Casey 1951-1960* (London: Collins, 1972), p. 84.
- 16 The Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1950, Trygve Lie, initially proposed that a Committee on Coordination of Assistance for Korea be established 'to stimulate and coordinate offers of assistance and to promote continuing United Nations participation in, and supervision of, the military security action in Korea'. Australia was to be a member. This proposal was rejected, however, by the United States. See L.M. Goodrich, *Korea: A Study of US Policy in the United Nations* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979), pp. 119-20.
- 17 O'Neill, p. 389.
- 18 Source: Department of Trade and Resources. (These figures do not, of course, make allowances for inflation.)
- 19 W.G. Hayden, 'Australia and the Asian Region', *Australian Outlook*, vol. 37, no. 3, December 1983, p. 151.
- 20 Source: Department of Trade and Resources. See also H.G. Gelber, 'Australia and East Asia', in P. Dibb (ed.), *Australia's External Relations in the 1980s: The Interaction of Economic, Political and Strategic Factors* (Canberra: Croom Helm, 1983), pp. 113 et seq.
- 21 Source: Australian Development Assistance Bureau.
- 22 Records of movements by people claiming (South) Korean citizenship, or giving Korea as their birthplace, were only begun in 1975. In 1975/76, however, there were 1,244 Korean visitors to Australia. Except for a slight drop in the number in 1980/81, this figure rose steadily to 3,056 in 1982/83. Source: Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
- 23 In 1975/76, 95 Korean adults were permitted to settle in Australia. The next year the figure jumped to 798 and has remained roughly between 400 and 600 per annum since (Source: Department of Immigration and Ethnic

- Affairs). There have been a number of reports of Koreans forging documents or bribing people (both in Australia and the ROK) to obtain migrant visas, as well as cases of Korean visitors and students overstaying their temporary entry permits. See for example the *Bulletin*, 19 August 1980, p. 35 and the *National Times*, 12–18 August 1983.
- 24 'Australia and the Koreans', *AFAR*, vol. 53, no. 8, August 1982, pp. 505–09.
- 25 At present 121 countries and entities (including Taiwan) recognise the ROK, while 101 (including the Palestine Liberation Organisation) recognise the DPRK. Several countries recognise neither.
- 26 News release issued by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Bill Hayden, on 20 November 1983 (*AFAR*, vol. 54, no. 11, November 1983, p. 749).
- 27 *The Military Balance 1983–1984* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1983), p. 194. While it is not possible to elaborate here on the military capabilities of the states with armed forces on the Korean peninsula, it should be remembered that here, as elsewhere, numbers alone do not tell the complete story. Other factors such as morale, training and motivation are also important. In addition, and as Michael Underdown has recently noted, the figures given in the IISS publication *The Military Balance* sometimes need to be treated a little carefully. (M. Underdown, 'South Korean Defence Capability', *Australian Outlook*, vol. 35, no. 2, August 1981, p. 156.)
- 28 J.H. Cushman, 'South Korea: The ROK/US Partnership for Peace', *Pacific Defence Reporter (PDR)*, May 1984, p. 40. See also *World Military and Social Expenditures 1983: An Annual Report on World Priorities* (Washington: World Priorities, 1983), p. 194.
- 29 *The Military Balance 1983–1984*, p. 194.
- 30 Ibid. See also *Asian Security 1983* (Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, 1983), p. 153 and *Expenditures*, p. 34. Cushman's figure of 25 per cent of the DPRK's GNP devoted to defence is almost certainly too high ('South Korea', p. 41).
- 31 *Asian Security*, pp. 153–4. See also R.N. Clough, *Deterrence and Defense in Korea: The Role of US Forces* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1976), p. 14.
- 32 *The Military Balance 1983–1984*, pp. 103–10.
- 33 The figure of 700 tactical nuclear weapons in Korea is the most often quoted. See for example M. Caldwell, 'The Roots of Intervention', in G. McCormack and M. Selden (eds), *Korea North and South: The Deepening Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), p. 153; and V. Vrevskiy and S. Kulidzhanov, 'A nuclear bridgehead in the far east', broadcast in Russian by Moscow radio on 25 May 1984. The figure is also used by authors and commentators more sympathetic to the US–ROK position. The US unofficially admitted the presence of nuclear weapons in the ROK in 1972. It has sought to prevent the ROK from acquiring its own nuclear weapons. See Underdown, p. 155; L.H. Brown, *American Security Policy in Asia*, Adelphi Paper No. 132, IISS, London, 1977, p. 31; and M. Parker, 'One of Four', *Foreign Policy*, no. 20, Fall 1975, p. 215.
- 34 Cushman, p. 42. See also 'Korea: UN Presence and Armistice Arrangements', *AFAR*, vol. 47, no. 9, September 1976, pp. 499–500.
- 35 R.A. Scalapino, 'The Two Koreas: Dialogue or Conflict', in W.J. Barnds (ed.), *The Two Koreas in East Asian Affairs* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 60.
- 36 Rees, pp. 460–61. See also the excellent R.A. Scalapino and Lee Chong-sik, *Communism in Korea*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), vol. 1, pp. 282–462.
- 37 Scalapino, in Barnds, p. 62. See also Frank Downs [Andrew Selth], 'Letter from Seoul: A Hermit Still Emerging: The Republic of Korea', *Quadrant*, November 1983, pp. 43–7.
- 38 'The Two Koreas', *AFAR*, vol. 51, no. 7, July 1980, p. 252.
- 39 Quoted in E. Higgins, *Options and Constraints for US Far Eastern Policy: Five Issue Areas*, Working Paper No. 53, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, 1982, p. 36.
- 40 The 1953 Armistice Agreement (Article II A 13d) prohibits the renewal or increase of equipment stocks. In 1957 the UNC declared that because of the continuing increase in communist military strength in the DPRK, it no longer considered itself under any obligation to observe this part of the Agreement. (O'Neill, p. 399.)
- 41 Scalapino, in Barnds, pp. 81–3.
- 42 This was revealed in Nixon's interviews with British television figure David Frost. See Caldwell, in *Korea North and South*, p. 159.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 See Downs, pp. 45–6.
- 45 The bomb attack on the ROK Presidential party in Rangoon in October 1983, for example, has been interpreted in this light.
- 46 See, for example, E.O. Reischauer, 'Back to normalcy', *Foreign Policy*, no. 20, Fall 1975, p. 207. See also C.E. Morrison and A. Suhrke, *Strategies of Survival: The Foreign Policy Dilemmas of Small States* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1978), p. 30.

- 47 This is strongly suggested by official Australian documents apparently 'leaked' and later published in *Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy 1968-1975* (Sydney: Walsh and Munster, 1980), p. 364. Although this book was withdrawn from sale as the result of a legal action brought by the Australian Government in 1980, a detailed analysis of these documents was given in *Secrets of State* (Sydney: Walsh and Munster, 1982), p. 135. See also Cushman, pp. 43-6 and D. Warner, 'Korea's Continuing Dangers', *PDR*, October 1978, pp. 18-19. It should be noted that 'leaked' documents cannot be verified as genuine, or read in their proper context, and must therefore be treated carefully.
- 48 *AFAR*, vol. 55, no. 2, February 1984, p. 73.
- 49 *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council 1950*, Security Council Official Records: Fifth Year (New York: United Nations, 1965), pp. 3-7.
- 50 Between 25 June and 7 July 1950, the Secretary-General sent cablegrams to all UN members, asking what assistance could be provided to the ROK. He received 53 'favourable' replies, yet in the event only 16 states contributed combat forces to the UNC. They were Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, the Union of South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. In addition, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Italy and India sent medical units. Except for the US, all these contributions were small compared to the total UN-ROK effort. The United States provided 50.32 per cent of the ground forces, 85.89 per cent of the naval forces and 93.38 per cent of the air forces. The ROK (which was not a member of the UN Command) still provided 40.10 per cent of the total ground forces, 4.45 per cent of the total naval forces and 5.65 per cent of the air forces. See Goodrich, pp. 116-17.
- 51 The Soviet delegate's speech in the Security Council on 31 July is reproduced in full in L.B. Sohn, *The United Nations in Action: Ten Cases from United Nations Practice* (Brooklyn: Foundation Press, 1968), pp. 66-8.
- 52 Booker, p. 115.
- 53 At the time, the Nationalist Chinese representative's vote was of some importance. Without it, the adoption of the 27 June resolution would have been in some doubt and consideration of the matter would have been delayed until the Indian representative had received his instructions (Goodrich, p. 114).
- 54 McCormack, *Cold War Hot War*, p. 109.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Sohn, p. 70.
- 57 Goodrich, pp. 114-15.
- 58 Ibid, pp. 113-14.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Goodrich, p. 106.
- 61 Cushman, a retired Lieutenant-General in the US Army, states categorically that the original Security Council resolutions passed in 1950 remain in force today and that the CINCUNC title 'and the authority provided by the United Nations resolution of July 7, 1950, have been one consistent feature of the Korea military command setup in the past three decades' (p. 42).
- 62 Dates for the withdrawal of Australian troops from Korea differ between sources. Dr Millar cites 1955, the *AFAR* (in September 1976) cites 1957. The authoritative source is Dr O'Neill's official history, which shows that the 'withdrawal took place over the period 1955-57 (O'Neill, pp. 374 et seq.).
- 63 The Australian Foreign Minister at the time, R.G. Casey, confided to his diary on 19 May 1953 that:
'We are asked by the Americans to allow a small Australian military and naval force to remain in Korea - for international purposes, and no doubt to make slightly easier the political decision that American forces in Korea should be maintained'.
Australian Foreign Minister, p. 211. See also Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, p. 286.
- 64 *AFAR*, vol. 47, no. 9, pp. 499-500.
- 65 Cushman, p. 42.
- 66 Neither the ROK nor DPRK have ever been admitted as members of the UN. In 1973 President Park Chung Hee announced that the ROK would be prepared to see the admission of both Koreas to the UN, pending the eventual reunification of the peninsula. President Kim Il Sung has consistently opposed this move, as perpetuating the artificial division of the country. Both Koreas, however, now have Observers permanently based in New York.
- 67 *United Nations General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, 16 September 1975-17 December 1975. Report of the Australian Delegation*, Parliamentary Paper No. 234/1976 (1976), p. 7.
- 68 M. Abramowitz, *Moving the Glacier: The Two Koreas and the Powers*, Adelphi Paper No. 80, IISS, London, 1971, p. 23.
- 69 A complicating factor in negotiations between the two sides over the years has always been the fact that the Armistice Agreement was signed by Kim Il Sung (for the DPRK), Peng Teh-huai, the Commander of the Chinese

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- People's Volunteers (for China) and Mark Clark, the CINUNC (for the UN side). No representative from the ROK took part in the signing ceremony.
- 70 This would be more likely if, as Gavan McCormack has suggested, the UK ever decided to increase its contribution to the Commonwealth Group. It must be said, however, that this is a very remote possibility. G. McCormack, 'Britain, Europe and Korea', in *Korea North and South*, p. 189.
- 71 *The Record on Korean Unification 1943–1960: Narrative Summary with Principal Documents* (Washington: US Department of State, 1960), pp. 132–3.
- 72 O'Neill, p. 398.
- 73 Gavan McCormack has suggested that the US in some manner sought to use the Sixteen Nation Declaration as a means of persuading other countries to join it in Vietnam. This is highly improbable. *Cold War Hot War*, p. 18.
- 74 *Documents*, p. 19 and *Secrets of State*, p. 2. Interestingly, the apparent earlier intention that the treaty not apply to the Asian mainland did not obviate the need for further discussions, and a secret record of understanding regarding Australian forces in Malaysia in 1963. *Documents*, p. 20.
- 75 Starke, p. 127.
- 76 *The ANZUS Alliance and Australia–United States Relations*, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Parliamentary Paper No. 318/1982, 1982.
- 77 *Documents*, p. 21.
- 78 D. Warner, 'What Are the Interests We Have to Defend', *PDR*, June 1981, p. 16.
- 79 D. Warner, 'The World Around Us: A Strategic Overview', *PDR*, March 1979, p. 12.
- 80 Statement by Mr Ian Sinclair, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in a seminar at the Australian Studies Centre, Penn State University, June 1984, and in a letter to the editor, *PDR*, November 1984, p. 5.
- 81 See, for example, the statements by Australian politicians and officials over the past 30 years reproduced in J.A. Camilleri, *An Introduction to Australian Foreign Policy* (Milton: Jacaranda Press, 1979).
- 82 Starke, p. 140.
- 83 Quoted in Brown, p. 31.
- 84 *Threats to Australia's Security: Their Nature and Probability*, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Parliamentary Paper No. 349/1981.
- 85 US State Department press release, Washington, 19 July 1983.
- 86 *Documents*, p. 21 and *Secrets of State*, p. 4.
- 87 Statement to Parliament by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Bill Hayden, on 15 September 1983 (*AFAR*, vol. 54, no. 9, September 1983, p. 515).
- 88 Quoted in the *National Times*, 30 March–5 April 1984, p. 28. While the documents published in this weekly newspaper were apparently 'leaked' and therefore warrant careful handling, the Minister for Defence, Mr Gordon Scholes, has admitted that they are genuine. See the *National Times*, 6–12 April 1984, p. 6.
- 89 *National Times*, 30 March–5 April 1984, p. 28.
- 90 This is the thesis, for example, of M. Sexton, *War for the Asking: Australia's Vietnam Secrets* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1981). See also G. Clark, 'Vietnam, China and the Foreign Affairs debate in Australia: A personal account', in P. King (ed.), *Australia's Vietnam: Australia and the Second Indochina War* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1983), pp. 18–35.
- 91 M.G. Smith et al., *The ANZUS Alliance: A Military Perspective*, a Research Project of the Australian Army Command and Staff College, Fort Queenscliff, September 1983 (unpublished), pp. 11 et seq.
- 92 'Hawke's Pro-US stand', *The Australian*, 17 June 1983. Also, H.G. Gelber, *The Australian–American Alliance: Costs and Benefits* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 21.
- 93 *Strategic Basis* papers, quoted in the *National Times*, 30 March–5 April 1984, p. 28.
- 94 T.B. Millar, *Australia's Defence* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1969), p. 47.
- 95 Quoted in the *National Times*, 12–18 August 1983, p. 25. See also *Australian Defence*, White Paper presented to Parliament by the Minister for Defence, November 1976, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1976, p. 4.
- 96 Source: Department of Trade and Resources.
- 97 Source: Department of Trade and Resources. See also Gelber, in Dibb, pp. 110 et seq.
- 98 R. Babbage, *Rethinking Australia's Defence* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980), p. 60. The Australian economy received a handsome boost from the Korean War of 1950–53, but since then the volume and nature of trade (as well as the likely nature of the conflict) has changed sufficiently to make the benefits of another war much more problematical.
- 99 This is not forgetting the fact that, despite their mutual security pacts with the DPRK, the ROK has managed to increase its trade over recent years with China, the Soviet Union and even Libya.
- 100 Gelber, in Dibb, pp. 112–13.
- 101 R. Babbage, D. Ball and J.O. Langtry, *The Development of Australian Army Officers for the 1980s*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 17, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, 1978, p. 5.

- 102 *Australian Defence*, p. 10.
- 103 *Australian Defence*, p. 6.
- 104 *Strategic Basis* papers, quoted in the *National Times*, 12–18 August 1983, p. 25.
- 105 This was made clear by the Americans at the ANZUS Council meeting held in Washington 18–19 July 1983, but has been apparent for some years. See for example the annual testimony of the US Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, Admiral Robert Long USN, to the Senate and House Armed Services Committees.
- 106 Roy Milne Lecture given by the Prime Minister, Mr Gough Whitlam, on 30 November 1973, quoted in *Documents*, p. 21 (*Secrets of State*, p. 4).
- 107 M. Goot and R. Tiffen, 'Public Opinion and the Policies of the Polls', in King, p. 156.
- 108 *RSL Defence Paper 1984* (Canberra: Returned Services League, 1984), p. 18.
- 109 Warner, *PDR*, 1982, p. 16. Robert O'Neill refers to this school of theorists in *Australia's Strategic Options in the 1980s*, Working Paper No. 30, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, 1980, pp. 7–9.
- 110 Hayden, *ANZUS*. See also *The ANZUS Alliance*, p. 59.
- 111 M. O'Connor, 'Security Cooperation in the Western Pacific: An Australian View', *Asian Defence Journal*, June 1983, pp. 84–88. The Radford–Collins Agreement, according to the *National Times* of 30 March–5 April 1984, was concluded between the RAN and USN in 1951 and was last reviewed in 1978. It 'provides for the implementation of Allied Naval Control and the Protection of Shipping in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The Australian areas of responsibility lies generally south of the equator between mid-Pacific and mid-Indian Oceans, with the area east of New Zealand sub-allotted to New Zealand'.
- 112 See, for example, the testimony of Admiral Long to the US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Military Posture and DOD Appropriations for Financial Year 83*, on 16 February 1982.
- 113 Gelber, in Dibb, p. 113.

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