IN THE SHADOW OF THE UMBRELLA: U.S. EXTENDED DETERRENCE AND NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN EAST ASIA, 1961-1979

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

To the extent that such they serve as effective nonproliferation tools, security guarantees are designed to put the junior ally's mind at ease about its own survival, since that is now ensured by its senior ally. Overall, such security guarantees have been remarkably useful in mitigating undesirable junior-ally behaviors and thus preventing proliferation. However, three important cases defy both historical trends and the dominant theories: Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, each of which, despite having a bilateral security guarantee from the United States during the Cold War, went down the nuclear weapons path to some degree.

Relying on an exhaustive examination of declassified U.S. archival records and utilizing qualitative process-tracing, within-case analysis, and cross-case comparison techniques, this dissertation seeks to understand what compelled these three states to venture down the nuclear weapons path, despite being under the protective wing of the United States. In the case of Japan, a deep-seated fear that the United States would abandon Japan upon the anticipated expiration of the Mutual Security Treaty in 1970, and a resurgent nationalism that invigorated a national debate on how to increase Japan's prestige in international politics, combined to compel the Japanese to conduct nuclear weapons feasibility studies in the late 1960s and then leak these studies to their American counterparts, in order to secure an extension of the Mutual Security Treaty. In the case of South Korea, a fear that the United States would fulfill its promise to remove all U.S. troops and nuclear weapons stationed on the Korean peninsula motivated Park Chung-hee to first seek a nuclear weapons arsenal and, after his efforts were discovered, then to seek a latent capability. Finally, in the case of Taiwan, the efforts of the United States to normalize relations with China and recognize Beijing, rather than Taipei, as the representative government of all of China incentivized Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo to seek a latent capability rather than a functional arsenal, in order to avoid losing U.S. support altogether.

At a broader level, this research finds that, consistent with more recent scholarship on alliance dynamics, junior allies can often wield outsized bargaining leverage vis-à-vis their patrons, often exploiting their senior allies' worst fears in order to advance their own self-interests. Specifically, one of the cornerstones of U.S. foreign policy since the end of World War II has been advancing the nonproliferation imperative, and U.S. allies can, under the right circumstances, win concessions from Washington by playing on its fear of horizontal proliferation. Finally, this research finds that, where a senior ally may hope to employ the security guarantee as a nonproliferation tool in the present day or in the future, there are key steps it can take to maximize its chances of success. Likewise, for a junior, non-nuclear-armed state seeking to maximize its security and ensure its survival, there are certain actions it can take with respect to its senior ally in order to achieve these self-driven interests.

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DEDICATION

To Nashila:
It really should be you who gets hooded.
Thank you. I love you.

To Safiya:
So that you can create a better tomorrow.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been asked, over the years, what it is like to pursue a PhD. I think my undergraduate professor at Georgia Tech, Adam Stulberg, said it best when he once told me embarking on the doctoral path constitutes nothing more than "a series of gut-check moments strung together over a half-decade." I must admit he was right. I also have been told along the way that a doctoral program is a profoundly solo effort; here, however, I have learned that it is anything but. In fact, if it were not for the invaluable mentorship, support, and guidance of numerous individuals, I would not be committing these words to paper. Of the many people who have been so helpful to me along this journey, a select few deserve special recognition.

First and foremost is the late William C. Martel, Professor of International Security Studies at The Fletcher School. When I started as a MALD student at Fletcher in 2010, Professor Martel was my faculty advisor. He then supervised my thesis and supported my application to the PhD program at Fletcher; later, when I was accepted into the program, he kept me under his wing as a doctoral student. He was my advisor and committee chair until his untimely passing. His work in proliferation, space studies, cyber threats, and grand strategy has prepared and inspired generations of leaders, and his absence will always be deeply felt.

My committee chair, Professor Antonia Handler Chayes, has been my champion since I first took a class with her in the fall semester of 2010. In bringing me on as her teaching assistant, allowing me to co-teach with her, supporting my doctoral ambitions, and most notably filling the void left by Professor Martel, she has been unwavering in her commitment to me and in her support of my academic and professional aspirations. The other two professors on my committee have likewise been steadfast supporters. Professor Ian Johnstone has reinforced in my mind the importance and necessity of legal frameworks governing the proliferation, control, and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, and I have carried this lesson forward in my research and writing. Professor Vipin Narang at MIT has been an excellent sounding board, enthusiastically supporting my ideas and appropriately pushing back on those that were half-baked. He has been an invaluable fount of knowledge on all things nuclear, and I am humbled to call him an advisor and friend.

Along the way, numerous people have provided input on the evolution of this dissertation, and I have benefited enormously from their advice. Specifically, I thank Joe Cirincione at Ploughshares Fund, Jim Walsh at MIT, former IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei, and numerous members of the International Security Program and the Project on Managing the Atom at the Harvard Kennedy School, including Steven Miller, Matt Bunn, Martin Malin, Mariana Budjeryn, Eliza Gheorghe, Liviu Horovitz, Yeon-jung Ji, Lami Kim, Viet Phuong Nguyen, Nickolas Roth, Mahsa Rouhi, and others.

I would have been unable to stay in the doctoral program and live the life of a poor graduate student without the support, financial and otherwise, of the following institutions: the Fletcher School's International Security Studies Program; the Fletcher School PhD Program; the Roome Scholarship fund; the Bradley Fellowship fund; the Tufts Institute for Global Leadership; the Carnegie Corporation of New York; the Richard and Mary Blake PhD Grant; the LBJ Foundation; and the Moody Foundation. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the archivists and specialists at the Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter Presidential Libraries for their expertise, insight, and encouragement. Special thanks also go to the International Security Program and the Project on Managing the Atom at the Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School, for providing space, funding, and a supportive community of brilliant minds in my final year so that I could complete my dissertation. And big kudos to Jenifer Burckett-Picker, PhD Program Director at the Fletcher School, for all that she does behind the scenes.

My family and friends have provided moral support throughout my program. My parents, Rajabali and Farida, along with my sister Farah and her fiancé Hassan, have been unwavering, allowing me to prioritize my dissertation research over spending quality time with them, and reminding me that the time and effort spent as a doctoral student will be well worth it. My mother-in-law, Ezzat, my sisters-in-law, Zaynah and Aisha, and my wife's grandmother, Ashraf, live by example in showing me that, while we can reach for the stars, we must always remain exceptionally humble. My dearest friends, both at Fletcher and elsewhere, have been sources of inspiration, and seeing them do amazing things continues to inspire me to do my best as well. And, over the past five years, our adopted and very extended family in Blakeley Hall and at Fletcher has continued to make me feel warm and connected to this place. Fletcher will always hold a special place in my heart as my true academic home.

Last, and most certainly not least, I owe this journey and its outcome to my best friend and wife, Nashila, for supporting me in every way throughout our relationship, as I transitioned from one job to another, then to graduate school, and then on to the PhD program. She lifted me up when I was in the depths of doctoral despair, cheered the loudest in my moments of triumph, and always remained by my side. Now that we have welcomed our first child, Safiya, into the world, I've realized a simple yet profound truth: Forget the PhD — marrying Nashila has been, by far, my single biggest accomplishment and my greatest joy.

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CHAPTER 1 — INTRODUCTION

Speaking in July 2009 on the security of the Middle East, then-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton commented that, should Iran continue work on its nuclear program, the United States would extend a "defense umbrella" over the region.[1] While a State Department spokesperson later clarified that Secretary Clinton did not necessarily mean a "nuclear umbrella," the implication of her remarks was two-fold: first, that this umbrella could very well encompass the extended nuclear deterrence capabilities of the United States; and second, that by receiving such an assurance from the United States in the face of a nuclear-armed Iran, Tehran's neighbors would feel secure enough to not follow Iran down the nuclear path. But is it a foregone conclusion to assume that this latter objective would be achieved through extended deterrence? In the interest of the United States in preventing regional and global nuclear proliferation, would such a policy move be a wise one? And would it increase or decrease stability and security in the Middle East?

These and other related questions inspire the central focus of this dissertation. Broadly speaking, as a tool of U.S. nonproliferation policy the nuclear umbrella has been extensively leveraged over the past seven decades, and with a fairly high degree of success, to convince U.S. allies not to start their own

[1] Mark Landler and David E. Sanger, "Clinton Speaks of Shielding Mideast From Iran," *The New York Times*, July 22, 2009, accessible at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/23/world/asia/23diplo.html.

military nuclear programs.[2] However, that record has not been perfect. By examining the outlier or failure cases, wherein U.S. allies initiated nuclear weapons programs despite enjoying the protection of the United States, this dissertation hopes to contribute one important lesson to the debate on the role of nuclear weapons in international politics, which is that a nuclear "defense umbrella," as Secretary Clinton called it, is not always guaranteed to prevent nuclear proliferation; in fact, in some cases it may actually provide a state sufficient cover under which it can safely explore the nuclear weapons option without incurring severe penalties.

THE PUZZLE

In the academic literature on the causes of nuclear proliferation, a strong tradition emphasizing the primacy of security concerns argues that a state seeks nuclear weapons when it faces an existential threat from an adversarial state that enjoys conventional military superiority and/or possesses its own nuclear arsenal. However, according to this same tradition, where a state confronted by a security threat does not pursue nuclear weapons, it is because the state enjoys the protection of a nuclear-armed ally. Fortunately, it appears that for the most part this theory has held up, but four states — China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan — defied these trends between 1945 and 1991. This is puzzling because, while all four of these states did at different times receive bilateral security commitments

[2] Bruno Tertrais, "Security Assurances and the Future of Proliferation," in *Over the Horizon Proliferation Threats*, ed. James J. Wirtz and Peter R. Lavoy (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 240.

from the United States or the Soviet Union during the Cold War, it was only after receiving such assurances that they began their military nuclear programs. Thus, if the conceptual argument is that security assurances prevent proliferation by mitigating junior allies' security concerns, then how can we explain these outlier cases, wherein military nuclear programs were started only after a nuclear-armed superpower extended a security guarantee?

This dissertation will proceed as follows. The remainder of Chapter 1 lays out the research agenda, focusing on case selection, hypotheses development, and research methodology. Chapter 2 will survey the extant literature on the causes of nuclear proliferation, focusing specifically on the relationship between security commitments and nuclear proliferation. Chapters 3 through 5 will test the dissertation's hypotheses through three country case studies, before Chapter 6 concludes with the findings, contributions, policy implications, and recommendations from this research.

RESEARCH AGENDA

As Chapter 2 below demonstrates, the extant literature on the causes of nuclear proliferation is insufficient in explaining why the utilization of security assurances does not universally prevent nuclear proliferation; examining the outlier cases of states that initiated nuclear weapons programs under the protection of a security guarantee can thus be useful in identifying the conditions under which such assurances are effective, as well as in demarcating the limits on the applicability of such assurances.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

While most of the scholarly works discussed in Chapter 2 find that security guarantees prevent the protégé's successful acquisition of nuclear weapons, there is less confidence in whether security guarantees prevent the junior ally from conducting any nuclear weapons activities at all. The cases of China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in particular demonstrate that states sometimes do initiate nuclear weapons programs after having received a security guarantee. Thus, the central research question motivating this agenda is: *Why would a state conduct nuclear weapons activities after having received a security commitment?*

Possible hypotheses to this question would turn on the strategic relationship between the junior ally and the nuclear-armed senior ally, wherein the dependence of the protégé on its ally's nuclear weapons is expected to provide some deterrent benefit to the client that it could not otherwise provide for itself. In turn, this discussion is based on two related aspects of alliance theory: (1) the level of threat posed by the junior ally's adversary; and (2) the credibility of the senior ally's commitment.[3] First, the security threat posed by the junior ally's adversary would be presumably be serious enough that, in the absence of a security commitment, the protégé would feel compelled to initiate a nuclear weapons program in order to provide for its own security and defense. The seriousness of the threat could be measured in a number of ways: (1) the adversary may have an overwhelming conventional superiority and/or possess its

[3] For a fuller discussion of alliance dynamics, see Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 461-495.

own nuclear arsenal; (2) the adversarial state might make the security threat very clear; and (3) the adversary and the protégé may be in the same region, as proximate threats tend to be taken more seriously than ones made from the other side of the world.

Second, the senior ally's commitment to its junior ally, vis-à-vis the security threat posed by the protégé's adversary, can always be called into question. On the one hand, the patron state could reassure its client of the robustness of its extended deterrence commitment, perhaps by signing a defense pact, or by deploying nuclear weapons or troops to the protégé's territory, in order to preclude the junior ally from seeking its own independent nuclear arsenal. On the other hand, the client may not be fully confident that, in its time of greatest need, the patron will absolutely be committed to its defense and survival.

Thinking through the relationships between the state and its adversary, on the one hand, and the state and its senior ally, on the other hand, the following two preliminary hypotheses are put forward:

H1. A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the security threat posed by its adversary is sufficiently overwhelming, acute, and urgent, and the senior ally is not perceived to be covering all of its security needs.

H2. A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the credibility of the senior ally is questionable, and the junior ally is hedging against possible abandonment in its moment of greatest need.

A derivative of Hypothesis 2 would be that the junior ally, already doubtful of the sincerity and extent of its patron's security commitment, seeks to keep its ally fully and unambiguously committed to its defense; to do so, it begins

a modest nuclear weapons program to maintain the focus and attention of its senior ally on its security concerns and defense needs. As Glenn Snyder writes in his treatise on alliance dynamics, "bargaining power over the ally is enhanced to the extent he [the ally] doubts one's commitment because one can then make credible threats of nonsupport."[4] Further, "states usually want to keep their commitments tentative or vague … to maximize bargaining leverage over the current partner by showing that they have alternatives."[5] If one objective of the senior ally in extending a security assurance is to use the security commitment as a tool of nonproliferation,[6] then, by pursuing nuclear weapons in the face of an explicit security commitment, the junior ally can threaten the senior ally by leveraging its nuclear activities to exploit the senior ally's proliferation concerns. This leads to Hypothesis 3:

H3. A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the credibility of the senior ally is questionable, and the junior ally is exploiting the senior ally's proliferation concerns to keep the latter fully committed.

Alternately, could the senior ally extending the security commitment actually want the junior ally to develop a military nuclear program, if even only a nascent one? This may be a feasible situation when considering the relationship between the patron state and the client state's adversary: The senior ally may find

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[4] Ibid., 467.
[5] Ibid., 468.
[6] Philipp C. Bleek and Eric B. Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 3 (April 2014): 429-430; Richard K. Betts, "Pygmies, Pariahs and Nonproliferation," *Foreign Policy* 26 (Spring 1977): 157-183; Mitchell B. Reiss, "Prospects for Nuclear Proliferation in Asia," in *Strategic Asia 2005-2006: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005), 336.

it strategically advantageous for its protégé to begin work on a nuclear weapons program, in order to create coercive leverage on the ally's adversary over a separate issue. However, the senior ally must be able to deny knowledge of, or involvement in, any such nuclear weapons development. This notion is akin to Vipin Narang's hypothesis on the "sheltered pursuit" strategy of nuclear proliferation.[7] For example, the United States might secretly encourage Japan or South Korea to begin investing in military nuclear programs, in order to convince China to work with the United States on resolving the North Korean nuclear challenge. This leads to Hypothesis 4:

H4. A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because its senior ally tacitly encourages such development, in order to create coercive leverage on the state's adversary over a separate issue.

Observations and Case Selection

This dissertation seeks to understand the causes of nuclear proliferation vis-à-vis the role of security assurances. As such, this section identifies the universe of states that most scholars agree have conducted nuclear weapons activities, and then compares that universe to states that are the recipients of a security assurance. First, by cross-referencing four of the most recent latitudinal studies on state-level nuclear proliferation efforts, we can identify those states that

[7] Vipin Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation: How States Pursue the Bomb," *International Security* 41, no. 3 (Winter 2016/2017): 122-123.

made significant investments in indigenous military nuclear programs.[8] To ensure high confidence in the codings, a state should be on at least three of these four study lists. Table 1 summarizes the comparison of these four studies.

Table 1. States that Conducted Nuclear Weapons Activities, 1945-Present

(A) Included in all four studies	(B) Included in three studies	(C) Included in two studies	(D) Included in only one study
Argentina	Algeria[2]	Egypt[1, 2]	Belarus[1, 2, 3]
Brazil	Australia[2]	Indonesia[1, 2]	Canada[1, 2, 3]
China	Japan[1]	Italy[1, 2]	Chile[1, 2, 3]
France	Libya[2]	Norway[1, 2]	Kazakhstan[1, 2, 3]
India	North Korea[1]		Nigeria[1, 2, 3]
Iran	Sweden[3]		Spain[1, 2, 3]
Iraq	Switzerland[2]		Syria[1, 2, 3]
Israel	West Germany[1]		Ukraine[1, 2, 3]
Pakistan	Yugoslavia[1]		West Germany[1, 2, 4]
Romania			
South Africa			
South Korea			
Taiwan			
United Kingdom			
USSR / Russia			
United States			

[1] Case not counted by Singh & Way, 2004.
[2] Case not counted by Jo & Gartzke, 2007.
[3] Case not counted by Bleek, 2010.
[4] Case not counted by Müller & Schmidt, 2010.

Based on Columns A and B of this chart, we see there is a high degree of agreement amongst scholars that twenty-five states have conducted nuclear weapons activities over the past seven decades. By comparison, there is less

[8] See: Sonali Singh and Christopher R. Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 2004): 859-885; Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, No. 1 (February 2007): 167-194; Philipp C. Bleek, "Why Do States Proliferate? Quantitative Analysis of the Exploration, Pursuit, and Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: The Role of Theory*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 159-182; and Harald Müller and Andreas Schmidt, "The Little Known Story of Deproliferation: Why States Give Up Nuclear Weapons Activities," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: The Role of Theory*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 124-158.

confidence that, according to our collective historical knowledge, the thirteen states in Columns C and D conducted nuclear weapons activities.

Second, by relying on the latest version of the Correlates of War dataset on international military alliances,[9] and by filtering the dataset to count only the nuclear-armed states from 1945 onwards as the patron ally, as well as including only bilateral defense pacts while excluding multilateral, neutrality, nonaggression, and entente agreements, we find that four nuclear-armed states (China, Russia / Soviet Union, United Kingdom, and United States) formed defense pacts with twenty-four distinct non-nuclear allies.[10] This information is captured in Table 2 below.[11]

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[9] Douglas M. Gibler, *International Military Alliances, 1648-2008* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009). An online version of the dataset presented in this book can be found on Gibler's website, accessible at http://dmgibler.people.ua.edu/alliance-data.html.

[10] China and Russia are co-coded as having formed a mutual defense pact; this is the only example of a defense pact signed between two nuclear-armed states, at least after 1964. The first agreement, which lasted from 1945 to 1949, existed when neither state had yet tested its first nuclear device; the Soviet Union tested its first bomb on August 29, 1949, and the defense pact between China and the Soviet Union ended one month later, on October 1.

[11] One critical caveat from Table 2 is that it is difficult to distinguish in the Correlates of War dataset between defense pacts that are bilateral and those that are multilateral. Bleek and Lorber claim in their study that they focus only on bilateral agreements, but they rely on the same Correlates of War dataset. Their coding rules cannot be found, and further clarification is needed. To remedy this shortcoming in the meantime, the Gibler dataset has been cross-checked against information available from the U.S. State Department, which applies only to bilateral alliances made with the United States. See "U.S. Collective Defense Arrangements," U.S. Department of State, accessible at https://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/collectivedefense/.

Table 2. States that Received Security Assurances, 1945-Present

Recipient State of Security Assurance	Provider State of Security Assurance	Years of Security Assurance
Russia	China	1945-1949, 1950-1980
Armenia	USSR / Russia	1992-
Azerbaijan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Belarus	USSR / Russia	1992-
Canada	United States	1958-
China	USSR / Russia	1945-1949, 1950-1980
East Germany	USSR / Russia	1964-1989
Georgia	USSR / Russia	1992-
Iraq	United Kingdom	1955-1959
Japan	United States	1951-
Kazakhstan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Kyrgyzstan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Moldova	USSR / Russia	1995-
Pakistan	United States	1959-
Philippines	United States	1951-
Poland	USSR / Russia	1945-1989
South Korea	United States	1953-
Taiwan	United States	1954-1980
Tajikistan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Turkey	United States	1959-
Turkmenistan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Ukraine	USSR / Russia	1995-
Uzbekistan	USSR / Russia	1992-
Yugoslavia	USSR / Russia	1945-1949

Comparing Tables 1 and 2, we can see that nine states stand out as both having conducted nuclear weapons activities and having received a security assurance from a nuclear-armed ally; this observation is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Security Assurances and Nuclear Weapons Activities, 1945-Present

Junior Ally (Recipient of Security Assurance)	Senior Ally (Provider of Security Assurance) and Dates	Nuclear Weapons Activities
China	USSR / Russia (1945-1949, 1950-1980)	1956-Present
Iraq	UK (1955-1959)	1976-1991
Japan	USA (1951-Present)	1967-1970
Pakistan	USA (1959-Present)	1972-Present
South Korea	USA (1953-Present)	1970-1975
Taiwan	USA (1954-1980)	1967-1976, 1987-1988
United Kingdom	USA (1949-Present)	1940-Present
USSR / Russia	China (1945-1949, 1950-1980)	1942-Present
Yugoslavia	USSR / Russia (1945-1949)	1949-1962, 1974-1987

A few observations should be made here. First, Pakistan is coded in the Gibler dataset as being in a defense pact with the United States, due to the 1959 Agreement on Cooperation between the two countries.[12] This agreement was a mutual security pact, but the text has nothing to say on the obligation of the United States to come to the aid of Pakistan if it is attacked. As a result, Pakistan is dropped from the list.[13] Second, four states — China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan — received a security guarantee from a nuclear-armed state prior to conducting nuclear weapons activities, and that form of security assurance was

[12] "Agreement of Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Pakistan, March 5, 1959," in *United States Treaties and Other International Agreements*, Vol. 10, part 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1959), 317-319.
[13] Additionally, if Pakistan is included on this list, by the same logic Iran should also be coded as having signed a defense pact in the same year with the United States, yet it is not. See "Agreement of Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Imperial Government of Iran, March 5, 1959," in *United States Treaties and Other International Agreements*, Vol. 10, part 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1959), 314-316.

still in effect at the time nuclear weapons activities began. In addition to Pakistan, the other four states that do not follow this convention (Iraq, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia) are also excluded from further consideration, since the provision of a security guarantee did not predate nuclear weapons activity.

After these exclusions are made, the remaining four states — China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan — qualify as having conducted nuclear weapons activities after having received a bilateral security assurance from a nuclear-armed state. Due to the limited availability of information on security guarantees vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and a lack of access to Russian-language primary sources, China is excluded from this research study as well,[14] leaving the final three states — Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, all vis-à-vis the United States — as the cases to be examined in this dissertation.

RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

In the social sciences, research usually takes the form of either the "logic of discovery" (theory building) or the "logic of confirmation" (theory testing).[15] Like much of the scholarly research in proliferation studies, this dissertation is an exercise in theory testing and seeks to explain the limits on the efficacy of the

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[14] This exclusion from the universe of states that had a security agreement with the Soviet Union/Russia obviously deserves further analysis but is outside the scope of this research design. I hope to follow up on the case of China after having completed my dissertation, although Fiona Cunningham has encountered initial success in her analysis of Chinese archives on this question. See Fiona Cunningham, "Calculating Dependence: Soviet Security Guarantees and China's Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons," paper presented at the ISAC-ISSS Joint Annual Conference, Austin, TX, November 2014. Paper cited with author's permission.

[15] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 12.

positive security assurance as a commonly used tool of nonproliferation policy. The dissertation examines each of the three cases under review in a structured, focused manner,[16] also employing within-case analysis across different time periods in a given case.[17] Case studies are particularly useful for examining situations of "complex causality," which is ideal in proliferation studies since, as noted earlier, multicausality "lies at the heart of the nuclear proliferation problem."[18] The process-tracing method is used to describe "how the independent variable leads to the outcome of the dependent variable,"[19] focusing on "sequential processes within a particular historical case, not on correlations of data across cases."[20] Process tracing will be especially useful in any potential within-case analysis, as with this method "the cause-effect link that connects the independent variable and outcome is unwrapped and divided into smaller steps; then the investigator looks for observable evidence of each step."[21]

For the three cases chosen for analysis, much has been written on these countries' nuclear histories, and the secondary literature contains the general accounts of nuclear decisions taken by leaders. However, since the central research question is about the conditions under which a security commitment by a

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[16] According to George and Bennett, "the method is 'structured' in that the researcher writes general questions that reflect the research objective and that these questions are asked of each case under study to guide and standardize the data collection, thereby making systematic comparison and cumulation of the findings of the cases possible. The method is 'focused' in that it deals only with certain aspects of the historical cases examined." See Ibid., 67.
[17] Gerring writes, "Each case may provide a single observation or multiple (within-case) observations." John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 19-20.
[18] Scott D. Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996/1997): 85.
[19] Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 183.
[20] Ibid., 13.
[21] Ibid., 64.

nuclear-armed ally affects the likelihood that a junior-ally state would begin its own military nuclear program, one must question exactly how this relationship exists, as well as the mechanisms by which the independent variable may affect the outcome of the dependent variable. Here, issues of the credibility of the nuclear-armed ally's security commitment, fear by the junior ally of entrapment or abandonment, and other related alliance-dynamic factors may play a role in protégé nuclear decision making, and uncovering the details of deliberations and discussions leading to key decisions is necessary in order to construct appropriate timelines and apply process tracing to the selected cases. Especially when the details of those deliberations leading up to key nuclear decisions are not always clear, much can be learned from declassified intelligence estimates, memoranda, telephone transcripts, meeting minutes, cables, and telegrams.

Because all three of the states to be analyzed had a security commitment from the United States, the overwhelming bulk of my research is conducted in the U.S. National Archives and Record Administration's (NARA) network of presidential libraries. I supplement the existing secondary literature on my selected cases' nuclear histories with extensive material pulled from the archives of these presidential libraries. While the period of examination for each of these states varies, the overall time period is roughly from 1961 to the end of the 1970s, which spans five U.S. administrations, beginning with John F. Kennedy and ending with Jimmy Carter. I also rely on additional primary-source repositories, including: the National Archives in College Park, Maryland; the Nuclear Proliferation International History Project archives at the Woodrow Wilson

Center; the National Security Archive at George Washington University; and the U.S. State Department's Foreign Relations of the United States series. To be sure, the credibility of this research design, and of the findings contained in this dissertation, would be significantly enhanced through additional research in Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese archives, which I hope to conduct in the future; nonetheless, the work below represents a first cut at the research question and is strengthened by the extensive material discovered in U.S. archives.

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CHAPTER 2 — THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

It is curious that, despite the preponderance of nuclear weapons in security studies and international relations since the end of World War II, we still lack a unified theory of nuclear proliferation.[22] Such a theory should be able to explain and predict why states seek nuclear weapons, why states refrain from such pursuit, and why they make choices that fall in between these two decision points; in addition, it should be able to account for how and why the nuclear decisions of states can change over time. In other words, proliferation should best be understood as a dynamic process, with plenty of fluidity and movement along the spectrum between the two ends of "no nuclear weapons" and "nuclear weapons." This conceptualization of nuclear proliferation as a non-binary process was best articulated by Stephen Meyer in his 1984 book, *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation*.[23] In it, he writes that the propensity of a state to acquire nuclear weapons can change over time, but laments that "the dynamic aspects of the nuclear proliferation process … are often missed in more traditional analyses."[24]

Indeed, and despite this recognition in the literature over three decades ago that nuclear proliferation is not a binary phenomenon, today's scholarship

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[22] Tanya Ogilvie-White, "Is There a Theory of Nuclear Proliferation? An Analysis of the Contemporary Debate," *Nonproliferation Review* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 43-60.
[23] Other notable early works on the dynamism of nuclear proliferation include: William Epstein, *The Last Chance: Nuclear Proliferation and Arms Control* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1976); and Benjamin Frankel, ed., *Opaque Nuclear Proliferation: Methodological and Policy Implications* (London, UK: Frank Cass, 1991).
[24] Stephen M. Meyer, *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 113.

contains competing explanations that seek to address different pieces of the proliferation puzzle without explicitly considering the dynamism inherent to nuclear proliferation and, therefore, to nonproliferation. Recent quantitatively oriented scholarship has sought to rectify this oversight by introducing distinct categories of proliferation behavior along a spectrum,[25] but even this improved approach, of segmenting the proliferation process into stages, is not without its shortcomings. Namely, it is difficult, if not usually impossible, for scholars to categorize into neat and discrete analytical boxes the various steps a state can take towards nuclear weapons acquisition.[26]

In addition to this important issue of how to measure nuclear proliferation behavior, there is broad consensus amongst scholars that nuclear proliferation is not monocausal: Sonali Singh and Christopher Way argue that it is "likely that there are multiple determinants and combinations of factors responsible for decisions to pursue nuclear arms,"[27] and Erik Gartzke and Matthew Kroenig similarly write that "the causes and consequences of nuclear proliferation are multicausal."[28] Furthermore, scholars agree that each case of nuclear proliferation

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[25] Sonali Singh and Christopher R. Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 2004): 859-885; Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, No. 1 (February 2007): 167-194; Philipp C. Bleek and Eric B. Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 3 (April 2014): 429-454.

[26] It is perhaps for this reason that, in their 2010 study, Müller and Schmidt chose to employ the blanket term "nuclear weapons activities." See Harald Müller and Andreas Schmidt, "The Little Known Story of Deproliferation: Why States Give Up Nuclear Weapons Activities," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: The Role of Theory*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 124-158.

[27] Singh and Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation," 861.

[28] See, for example: Erik Gartzke and Matthew Kroenig, "A Strategic Approach to Nuclear Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 2 (April 2009): 151-160; Peter R. Lavoy, "Nuclear Proliferation Over the Next Decade: Causes, Warning Signs, and Policy Responses," *Nonproliferation Review* 13, no. 3 (November 2006): 433-454.

is unique, and that there is no single theory that can explain every instance of proliferation: Leonard Beaton and John Maddox argue that any state that decides to pursue nuclear weapons will do so for its own unique combination of reasons and that, therefore, this tendency makes it difficult to develop "a simple rule" of proliferation and nonproliferation.[29] "Multicausality," Scott Sagan writes, "lies at the heart of the nuclear proliferation problem. Nuclear weapons proliferation and nuclear restraint have occurred in the past, and can occur in the future, for more than one reason: different historical cases are best explained by different causal models."[30]

Traditional Explanations of Proliferation Behavior

As a result, one of the all-important aims of theory, which is to be generalizable, is difficult to achieve in the nuclear proliferation field because of the uniqueness of each case, and because there are relatively few cases to begin with. Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, there are fewer attempts today at unified theories of the dynamics of proliferation as there are refinements on previous scholarship. As a consequence, the extant literature can be divided into two distinct categories of causes of nuclear proliferation: opportunity causes and

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[29] Leonard Beaton and John Maddox, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1962), 185.
[30] Scott D. Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996/1997): 85. William Epstein also makes a parallel argument; see William Epstein, "Why States Go — and Don't Go — Nuclear," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 430, no. 1 (1977): 17.

willingness causes. Put simply, writes Mitchell Reiss, "Nuclear proliferation is a function of two variables: technological capability and political motivation."[31]

THE TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM HYPOTHESIS

The first category, of capability or opportunity, emphasizes the role of technology in nuclear proliferation; this hypothesis states that the acquisition of nuclear and related technology makes the acquisition of nuclear weapons not only more likely, but practically inevitable. This line of reasoning on the inexorability of technological outcomes argues that, simply by virtue of their capability to manufacture the bomb, states that could acquire nuclear weapons would do so.[32] It claims that the appeal of converting technical possibilities into real weapons would be irresistible; as a result, writes Peter Lavoy, "countries *will* acquire nuclear weapons if they are capable of doing so" [emphasis added].[33] This "technological determinism" hypothesis further argues that, with the global diffusion of technology and technical expertise and know-how, widespread proliferation would be inevitable. As Ralph Lapp wrote, "when technology

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[31] Reiss continues, "Both must be present for a country to acquire nuclear weapons. The capability without the motivation is innocuous. The motivation without the capability is futile." See Mitchell B. Reiss, *Without the Bomb: The Politics of Nuclear Non-proliferation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988), 247.

[32] Kegley's capabilities model was based on the assumption that states develop nuclear weapons when they have the technological and economic capability to do so. See Charles W. Kegley, "International and Domestic Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Comparative Analysis," *Korea and World Affairs* 4 (Spring 1980): 5-37.

[33] Peter R. Lavoy, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," *Security Studies* 2, no. 3-4 (Spring/Summer 1993): 194.

beckons, men are helpless … If a thing was technically possible, then it had to be done."[34]

In its purest form, this hypothesis leaves no space for political or non-technical motivations; access to technology is the only driver of proliferation. But even in its more diluted versions, political factors play at best a superfluous role. As a result, a lack of proliferation can be explained primarily, if not exclusively, by a lack of technological resources. "According to this view," writes Mitchell Reiss, "nuclear proliferation could be prevented or forestalled only by erecting technical barriers and restricting the dissemination of sensitive technologies."[35]

While compelling, the technological determinism hypothesis has difficulty explaining why states like Japan and South Korea, which have developed advanced nuclear and related technologies and sustain a vibrant industrial base, have resisted the "technological pull" of the bomb.[36] These states have achieved what most scholars and analysts agree is a latent capability, but they have not exercised the nuclear option. Perhaps, then, the technical ability to build the bomb alone does not cause nuclear proliferation, and some other explanation or set of explanations, rooted in non-technological motivations, can be more useful in helping us understand why some states pursue nuclear weapons while others do not. In other words, technological capability may be a necessary but insufficient

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[34] Ralph Lapp, *Arms Beyond Doubt: The Tyranny of Weapons Technology* (New York, NY: Cowles, 1970), 178.
[35] Reiss, *Without the Bomb*, 247.
[36] Lavoy, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," 195.

condition of nuclear proliferation.[37] If so, what other factors increase the likelihood of proliferation?

To answer this question, scholars as well as policy analysts have concluded that some combination of technological and political factors can help explain proliferation behavior. For example, in the opening pages of a 1977 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate, the CIA wrote, "Measures aimed solely at curbing the *ability* of additional states to develop nuclear weapons, such as technical and commercial controls, very likely will do no more than slow the process of nuclear proliferation. Unless measures are also taken to curb the *motivations* for attaining nuclear status … the prospects are strong that over the next decade a number of additional countries will either fabricate nuclear devices or develop the capacity to assemble them on very short notice."[38] Indeed, scholars have developed models that attempt to isolate non-technological variables in explaining the motivations behind state nuclear behaviors. Unsurprisingly, those frameworks map approximately onto the dominant international relations paradigms of realism, constructivism, and liberalism. Each of these models is examined in turn below.

THE SECURITY IMPERATIVE

The paramount lens through which proliferation behavior has been understood is a "security model" paradigm,[39] which maps closely onto neorealist theories of international relations and which was developed and refined during the

[37] Gartzke and Kroenig, "A Strategic Approach to Nuclear Proliferation,"153.
[38] National Intelligence Estimate, "Political Perspectives on Key Global Issues," CONFIDENTIAL, March 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-31-46-8-1-8, Staff Material - Defense/Security Files (NSA 31), Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (hereafter JCL), 16-17.
[39] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?," 57-61.

Cold War.[40] From this perspective, all international politics is viewed as taking place in an anarchic international system, in which every state is left to fend for itself. The purpose of the existence of the state thus becomes to ensure its survival against the threat or use of force by other states, which likewise seek only to provide for their own security. Therefore, every state's own survival is threatened by the existence of other states in the international system.

Of course, there is nuance to this argument: Two important variants of neorealism, aptly named "defensive neorealism" and "offensive neorealism," make different claims on whether or not the neorealist baseline assumption, of an anarchic international system in which every country must fend for itself, translates into a world in which states actively seek to conquer other states in the system. Defensive neorealists, on the one hand, subscribe to the belief that all states, fearing aggression from other states, will develop defensive capabilities to ensure their survival but will not actively seek to conquer neighboring states and expand their territory; in other words, they will seek to maintain the status quo at all costs, even using force if necessary.[41] Offensive neorealists, on the other hand, argue that the only way a state can ensure its survival is to maximize its power relative to the power of other states in the system; therefore all states must actively seek to expand territorial control by conquering other states.[42]

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[40] Kenneth Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 39-52; Robert Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1986).

[41] For the seminal text on defensive neorealism, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, NY: Random House, 1979).

[42] For the authoritative text on offensive neorealism, see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2001).

However, this distinction between offensive and defensive neorealism becomes somewhat diluted when three additional key classical realist maxims are considered. First, any military capability can be seen as inherently offensive because all weapons have the power to inflict damage. Even if the state possessing a military capability has no intention to use it in any context except for one of self-defense, an adversary will always see that capability as potentially offensive in nature. This leads to the second maxim, which is that state intentions are not always clear, so one cannot be certain about the plans or designs of other states, whether they are allies or adversaries. Third, and flowing from the first two tenets, what matters most to the state is relative, not absolute, power. If a state has more power than other states in the system, it is in a more advantageous position from the perspective of state survival and security, even if its absolute power has declined.[43]

Thus, when the possibility of nuclear weapons is introduced into the picture, the security model argues that a given state must acquire nuclear weapons because any other state that poses an existential threat to the state in question would also be trying to acquire nuclear weapons, if it does not already possess them.[44] If taken to its logical conclusion, it is hardly surprising that this line of

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[43] These three arguments are presented succinctly in John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter1994/95): 5-49.
[44] Brad Thayer, "The Causes of Nuclear Proliferation and the Utility of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime." *Security Studies* 4, no. 3 (Spring 1995): 463-519; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 5-56; Benjamin Frankel, "The Brooding Shadow: Systemic Incentives and Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," *Security Studies* 2, no. 3/4 (Spring/Summer 1993): 37-78; Benjamin Frankel and Zachary S. Davis, eds., *The Proliferation Puzzle: Why Nuclear Weapons Spread and What Results* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993); T.V. Paul, *Power versus Prudence: Why Nations Forgo Nuclear Weapons* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press,

thinking predicts a world in which states continue to proliferate.[45] This model has been used to explain the pattern of behavior in Pakistan, which developed the bomb in response to the acquisition of nuclear weapons by India, which in turn built the bomb partly in response to China's 1964 nuclear test.

To explain a lack of nuclear weapons proliferation, the security model relies on one of two arguments. The first is that a reduction in or elimination of the external security threat that motivated a state to pursue nuclear weapons in the first place would cause the state to cease its activities. The experiences of Brazil and Argentina in the 1970s are used to make this case; as Scott Sagan writes, "from a realist's perspective, nuclear restraint is caused by the absence of the fundamental military threats that produce positive proliferation decisions."[46] The alternate explanation is that, where some states faced a security threat but did not build the bomb anyway, it was because of the presence of a positive security assurance from a nuclear-armed great power: As T.V. Paul explains, a threatened state that exercises nuclear restraint "does so largely as a function of [a] countervailing deterrent capability" provided by a nuclear-armed senior ally.[47]

2000); Siegfried S. Hecker, "Lessons Learned From the North Korean Nuclear Crisis," *Daedalus* 139, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 44-56.

[45] As George Shultz once summed up this argument, "Proliferation begets proliferation." See George Shultz, "Preventing the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," *Department of State Bulletin* 84, no. 2093 (December 1984): 17-21.

[46] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?," 61.

[47] T.V. Paul, *Power versus Prudence: Why Nations Forgo Nuclear Weapons* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 22. Also see Frankel, "The Brooding Shadow," 46; Thayer, "The Causes of Nuclear Proliferation and the Utility of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime;" Richard K. Betts, "Paranoids, Pygmies, Pariahs and Nonproliferation Revisited," *Security Studies* 2, no. 3/4 (Spring/Summer 1993): 100-124; Michael J. Mazarr, *North Korea and the Bomb: A Case Study in Nonproliferation* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

This relationship between security assurances and nuclear proliferation will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

While the security model makes a compelling case for why some states pursue nuclear weapons, it is not as robust as expected when applied to a number of other nuclear proliferation cases from history. First, the core prediction, of a world of many nuclear weapons states, has not come true.[48] For many states that did face an acute security threat, nuclear proliferation has not occurred, even where those states lacked a great-power security commitment;[49] furthermore, some states that did fall under a nuclear-armed state's "umbrella," including a number of NATO states, pursued the bomb anyway. This in turn is linked to a second weakness in the security model, which is that the null hypothesis has not always been validated. That is, if states will pursue nuclear weapons when facing an external security threat, then the null hypothesis is that states not facing a security threat will not pursue nuclear weapons. Yet the pursuit and acquisition of nuclear weapons by states like France, the United Kingdom, and South Africa demonstrate that, in some cases, states whose survival arguably was not being directly and overtly threatened developed the bomb anyway.

THE NORMS IMPERATIVE

Why, then, would a state like France or South Africa pursue nuclear weapons? A second model has been developed to explain the role nuclear

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[48] Paul, *Power versus Prudence*, 12; Peter R. Lavoy, "Nuclear Proliferation Over the Next Decade: Causes, Warning Signs, and Policy Responses," *Nonproliferation Review* 13, no. 3 (November 2006): 434.
[49] Ogilvie-White, "Is There a Theory of Nuclear Proliferation?"

weapons play in enhancing the prestige of states in the international community. This model maps onto constructivist notions of the role of norms in shaping state behavior. The "prestige model" argues that, like airlines and Olympic teams, a nuclear weapons program is a symbol of a state's technical prowess and status in the world. After all, this argument goes, it is no coincidence that the five nuclear weapons states officially recognized as such by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) are also the same five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The well-documented case of France describes that state's nuclear weapons aspirations as a function of the French desire to remain an important player in international politics following the end of World War II, rather than being driven by external security threats.[50]

What would explain a lack of nuclear proliferation under the prestige model? One important answer is that the creation of the NPT in 1970 was a watershed moment for shifting the symbolic significance of nuclear weapons from something that was desirable to something to be shunned. Prior to the NPT, states wanted to join "the nuclear club," but after the NPT, states wanted to be seen as "good international citizens" who "do not build nuclear arsenals."[51] The norm of nuclear weapons possession, in other words, shifted from "good" to "bad" and, consequently, states that did pursue nuclear weapons in light of this new global

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[50] Lawrence Scheinman, *Atomic Energy Policy in France Under the Fourth Republic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965); Wilfred L. Kohl, *French Nuclear Diplomacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971).
[51] Jacques E.C. Hymans, "Theories of Nuclear Proliferation: The State of the Field," *Nonproliferation Review* 13, no. 3 (November 2006): 458.

norm would be seen as "rogue" states.[52] The development of this stigma reinforces what Maria Rost Rublee and Nina Tannenwald call the "nuclear taboo"[53] and finds support in Philipp Bleek's conclusion that states party to the NPT that explore nuclear weapons "are less likely to pursue or acquire them."[54] As Jacques Hymans sums up, "few state leaders have desired the things it [the NPT] prohibits."[55] These arguments have been used to explain why Japan, a state with full nuclear weapons capability that has toyed with the idea of building the bomb, has nonetheless chosen to remain non-nuclear.[56]

While it may provide a compelling explanation for the overwhelming majority of states that never expressed any interest in nuclear weapons, the prestige model falls short in explaining why it is that, in light of the new global norm created by the NPT, some states party to that treaty decided to conduct nuclear weapons activities anyway, and why most of those aspirants did not get the bomb in the end. Similarly, it does not answer the question of why most states did not pursue nuclear weapons prior to the drafting of the NPT. Finally, the prestige model encounters challenges in pointing to the exact mechanisms by which new norms are internalized and operationalized by decision makers; in

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[52] Miroslav Nincic, *Renegade Regimes: Confronting Deviant Behavior in World Politics* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2005).
[53] Maria Rost Rublee, *Nonproliferation Norms: Why States Choose Nuclear Restraint* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009); Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005): 5-49.
[54] Philipp C. Bleek, "Why Do States Proliferate? Quantitative Analysis of the Exploration, Pursuit, and Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: The Role of Theory*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 180.
[55] Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7.
[56] Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobui Okawara, "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms, and Policies," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (Spring 1993): 84-118.

other words, as William Potter writes, this approach is often criticized for its lack of clarity "in explaining how, when, and why norms influenced nuclear weapons decisions."[57]

THE BUREAUCRATIC IMPERATIVE

Partly to address this final challenge of the prestige model, and partly as a way to disaggregate the state as a unitary actor as understood by the security model and to open up the "black box" of national nuclear decision making,[58] a third model has been developed to focus on the role of the internal politics and bureaucracies of a state in developing nuclear weapons programs. This "domestic politics" model, which maps approximately onto liberal theories of international relations, adopts a "bottom-up" approach, in contrast to the realist "top-down" understanding of the state as a unitary actor. It argues that important actors within the state, such as the nuclear energy establishment, the military, and politicians, drive national decision making as much as, and in some cases more than, external security threats. Scott Sagan writes that when these groups of relevant actors "form coalitions that are strong enough to control the government's decision making process … nuclear weapons programs are likely to thrive."[59] Therefore, the relevant domestic-level actors who can influence the development of a nuclear weapons program consider not only whether the state faces external security threats or whether nuclear weapons would enhance or lower prestige, but also

[57] William C. Potter, "The NPT and the Sources of Nuclear Restraint," *Daedalus* 193, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 72.
[58] See, for example: Steven Flank, "Exploding the Black Box: The Historical Sociology of Nuclear Proliferation," *Security Studies* 3, no. 2 (Winter 1993/1994): 259-294.
[59] Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?," 64.

whether a nuclear weapons program would affect or be affected by such factors as the state's international trade activity, level of economic liberalization, and regime type. Etel Solingen, for example, finds that inward-looking, nationalist states are less likely to sign up to nonproliferation commitments;[60] and Sonali Singh and Christopher Way, as well as Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, find that regime type may influence proliferation decisions.[61]

The domestic politics model explains a lack of nuclear proliferation by arguing that, as states open up their economies to international markets, they are less likely to engage in nuclear weapons activities; this is because, as the benefits of economic integration and interdependence rise, the chance of placing those trading and investment ties at risk also increases if the state attempts to proliferate or is perceived to be doing so.[62] Likewise, as democratic regimes are less likely than autocratic regimes to pursue nuclear weapons in the first place, similarly states that move towards democratization while conducting nuclear weapons activities are more likely to curtail those efforts, in part because of the reduced authority and autonomy of those internal actors who otherwise could have pursued nuclear weapons for their own parochial reasons.[63]

As with the other two models, the domestic politics model has its own shortcomings. First, it has a harder time explaining behavior that deviates from its

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[60] Etel Solingen, The Political Economy of Nuclear Restraint," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 126-169; Etel Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century's Dawn: Global and Domestic Influences on Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).
[61] Singh and Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation;" Jo and Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation."
[62] Paul, *Power versus Prudence*.
[63] Michael Barletta, "Nuclear Security and Diversionary Peace: Nuclear Confidence-Building in Argentina and Brazil," *National Security Studies Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 19-38.

predictions; for example, why did India and Pakistan conduct nuclear tests in 1998, when both countries were already democracies and engaged in modest levels of bilateral trade? Second, it is difficult to find ways to scientifically measure the key concepts of this approach and understand how it is exactly that internal pressures shape national decisions.[64]

Security Assurances and Proliferation

What exactly is the relationship between security guarantees and nuclear proliferation? The consensus in the neoclassical realist strand of the academic literature on the causes of nuclear proliferation is that security concerns, at least as perceived, assume primacy in a state's nuclear decision making.[65] This is not to say other factors, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are irrelevant, but for nuclear decision making those considerations may be secondary. However, in the spirit of the claim that proliferation is truly multicausal, this dissertation creates space for multiple models, especially normative and domestic political frameworks, to potentially play as much a part in decision making as security motivations.

As discussed above, the traditional security-oriented literature tells us that an existential security threat is balanced either by the acquisition of nuclear weapons or by the extension of positive security assurances by nuclear-armed allies.[66] Typically given by a nuclear-armed state to a non-nuclear weapons

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[64] However, this is not to say we should shy away from further developing and relying on the domestic politics model. Hymans, "Theories of Nuclear Proliferation," 460.
[65] See, for example, Paul, *Power versus Prudence*.
[66] Writing on the relationship between arms control and nonproliferation, Robert L. Gallucci writes, "Substantial disagreement exists over whether or not the policies of the superpowers on the

state,[67] security guarantees can serve multiple purposes and typically are meant to accomplish one or both of two objectives. First, they seek to deter an adversary from attacking the junior ally and may also intend to dissuade that adversary from pursuing nuclear weapons; second, they intend to prevent the protégé from developing its own nuclear weapons.[68] In the first instance, the promise of a guarantor to come to the defense of a protégé, or junior ally, sends a strong signal to states adversarial to the junior ally that attacking the state would incur significant costs in the form of then having to deal with a militarily superior patron state that is armed with nuclear weapons.[69] Colloquially labeled "extended deterrence,"[70] the security commitment here targets the protégé's adversary. In the second instance, the promise of a guarantor state to come to the defense of a protégé state in the event of an attack is expected to lower the likelihood of junior-ally nuclear weapons pursuit and acquisition, since the nuclear deterrent of

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negotiation of arms-control and disarmament agreements will affect other states' decisions whether or not to acquire nuclear weapons. There is also no clear consensus on the circumstances under which the transfer of conventional arms to a country contemplating nuclear-weapons acquisition will have the desired effect of discouraging such acquisition. … Another view [on this question] either disparages the connection between arms control and proliferation, or suggests that the relevant connections between the two imply quite different prescriptions. It says that decisions whether or not to acquire nuclear weapons will be made in the future as they always have been in the past—on the basis of national security. … Those who take this position see arms control as connected to proliferation only by its impact on alliance relations, which in turn directly affect the security calculations of some states having the capability to produce nuclear weapons. In short, any superpower arms-control agreement that causes an ally to question the credibility of the nuclear umbrella could contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons rather than its prevention." See Robert L. Gallucci, "Factors Influencing the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *Strategies for Managing Nuclear Proliferation*, ed. Dagobert L. Brito, et al. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1983), 215-216.

[67] For stylistic purposes, I will interchangeably use the terms "guarantor," "patron," and "senior ally" to refer to the nuclear-armed state that extends a security commitment to another state. I will use the terms "protégé" and "junior ally" to refer to the recipient state of a security commitment.

[68] Bleek and Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," 429-430.

[69] Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York, NY: Pearson Press, 1974); Paul Huth, *Extended Deterrence and the Prevention of War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988).

[70] Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).

the guarantor should now suffice in ameliorating the security concerns of the protégé.[71] As Benjamin Frankel writes, "If a state's belief that its great-power ally is not sure to retaliate on its behalf is an important reason for it to build nuclear weapons, it follows that the strongest means by which the superpower can persuade a country to forego nuclear weapons is to guarantee its security," because security commitments "obviate the minor partner's need to develop independent nuclear forces."[72] Here, the security commitment targets the junior ally, by serving as a nonproliferation mechanism, and intends to influence its behavior in a manner conceptually separate from any possible effect the security commitment may have on the protégé's adversary. Simply put, write Philipp Bleek and Eric Lorber, "a security guarantee serves as a substitute for a state obtaining nuclear weapons."[73]

In theory, these assumptions make logical sense; further, the establishment and maintenance of security commitments by the United States are frequently cited to explain why some states have not developed their own nuclear arsenals. Yet, interestingly, other states, such as France and the United Kingdom, acquired nuclear weapons despite belonging to the NATO alliance; likewise, China developed its nuclear weapons despite being the beneficiary of a security

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[71] Mitchell B. Reiss, "Prospects for Nuclear Proliferation in Asia," in *Strategic Asia 2005-2006: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005), 336; Kenneth N. Waltz, "What Will the Spread of Nuclear Weapons Do to the World?" in *International Political Effects of the Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, ed. John Kerry King (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1979), 167; Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better*, Adelphi Paper no. 71 (London, UK: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), 28; and Gerard C. Smith and Helena Cobban, "A Blind Eye to Nuclear Proliferation," *Foreign Affairs* 68, no. 3 (Summer 1989): 69.

[72] Frankel, "The Brooding Shadow," 46.

[73] Bleek and Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," 432.

commitment from the Soviet Union.[74] Even more curiously, these and other states that have initiated military nuclear programs while under the protection of a nuclear-armed guarantor states have done so only after receiving a security commitment. Thus, as Solingen notes, the historical record on key case studies does not support the argument, as put forward by the security model, that security guarantees can be counted on to prevent junior-ally proliferation.[75]

The following survey of scholarship demonstrates that the relationship between security commitments and proliferation is not as straightforward as the conventional wisdom suggests, and these puzzling observations deserve closer scrutiny. Do security commitments prevent nuclear proliferation after all? The literature examining this link between security commitments and proliferation is significant but, given the widely held underlying assumptions regarding the utility of security assurances in allaying the security concerns of junior allies and thereby preventing nuclear proliferation, there is a surprising amount of disagreement. The following studies employ different techniques for operationalizing "security commitment" as the independent variable and "proliferation" as the dependent variable. The disparity in findings may be a function of these differences in research design; nonetheless, the following is a useful starting point for understanding how scholars have approached the subject.

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[74] Fiona Cunningham, "Calculating Dependence: Soviet Security Guarantees and China's Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons," paper presented at the ISAC-ISSS Joint Annual Conference, Austin, TX, November 2014.

[75] Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 12-14, 25-27, 256; see also Jeffrey W. Knopf, "Security Assurances: Initial Hypotheses," in *Security Assurances and Nuclear Nonproliferation*, ed. Jeffrey W. Knopf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 18.

Stephen Meyer, one of the first scholars to include the variable of "security commitment" in his research, found no significant connection between that variable and proliferation outcomes; as Jacques Hymans summarized in his survey of Meyer's work, "having a nuclear ally might calm states down about needing to deter others themselves, but it might also cause states to seek the bomb to escape sinking into the status of a semi-independent protectorate."[76] On the other hand, wrote Joseph Nye in 1985, "the credibility of the nuclear umbrella extended by Washington and Moscow over their allies is a *major* reason why proliferation has been much slower than Kennedy feared" [emphasis added].[77] From the outset, then, there has been clear disagreement on this question amongst scholars.

Decades later, there has been a renewed interest in examining the link between security guarantees and proliferation outcomes, though often as part of large-N latitudinal studies on the multivariate causes of nuclear proliferation. For example, Sonali Singh and Christopher Way in their 2004 analysis developed a "security guarantee" independent variable based on version 3.0 of the Correlates of War dataset. From this data, they excluded any bilateral relationships categorized as "ententes" or "neutrality treaties" and counted only "defense pacts" with a nuclear-capable, great power ally as a significant security guarantee.[78] Qualifying the United States, the Soviet Union/Russia, the United Kingdom from

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[76] Jacques E.C. Hymans, "The Study of Nuclear Proliferation and Nonproliferation: Toward a New Consensus?," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: The Role of Theory*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 20.
[77] Joseph Nye, Jr., "NPT: The Logic of Inequality," *Foreign Policy*, no. 59 (Summer 1985): 126.
[78] Singh and Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation," 869.

1952, France from 1960 and China from 1964 as such great powers, they found using an event history statistical model that there is "little support for the claim that great-power alliances provide threatened states with a substitute for nuclear arms."[79] Re-running the model using multinomial logistic regressions, they found that a security guarantee makes a state less likely to "explore" or "acquire" nuclear weapons, but no less likely to "pursue."

Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, writing in 2007, took a similar approach to coding for security guarantees in their model. Also relying on the Correlates of War dataset and counting only nuclear "defense pacts" as reliable indicators of a security assurance, they found using probit analysis that, contrary to Singh and Way's findings, "the nuclear umbrella provided by nuclear patrons dissuades potential nuclear contenders from acquiring nuclear weapons," but has no impact on whether a state will initiate a nuclear weapons program.[80]

In 2009, two researchers took to the task of examining the link between access to nuclear technology and proliferation outcomes. Matthew Fuhrmann employed the same approach as Singh and Way in coding "security guarantee," but used the Jo and Gartzke approach of utilizing probit analysis. Interestingly, he found that "the coefficient on the variable measuring whether a state shares a military alliance with a nuclear-armed power is statistically insignificant … suggesting that nuclear protection has no effect on whether a country pursues the

[79] Ibid., 873.
[80] Jo and Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," 176.

bomb or successfully builds it."[81] Matthew Kroenig, also writing in 2009, constructed two variables to measure a non-nuclear weapons state's dependence on a nuclear-armed superpower. Similarly relying on the Correlates of War dataset and borrowing from Singh and Way's coding of nuclear weapons states, but unlike Fuhrmann, he found that "states that are dependent on a superpower patron are less likely to receive sensitive nuclear assistance" from other states, suggesting that such recipient states, by virtue of being unable to acquire weapons-usable fissile material, are less able to successfully build nuclear weapons.[82]

In 2010, Harald Müller and Andreas Schmidt examined the role of both bilateral and multilateral alliances on junior-ally proliferation behavior, finding that "there appears to be no correlation between the strength of the guarantee and nuclear weapons activities … [suggesting] the causal relationship is not as straightforward as often suggested."[83] Philipp Bleek, on the other hand, found using a hazard model that, in keeping with conventional wisdom, "states with security guarantees are less likely to explore, pursue, or acquire nuclear weapons."[84]

Fresher studies on the relationship between security guarantees and nuclear proliferation have introduced important nuance to the different forms a security commitment can take in the real world. First, Dan Reiter has focused on

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[81] Matthew Fuhrmann, "Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements," *International Security* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2009): 35-36.
[82] Matthew Kroenig, "Exporting the Bomb: Why States Provide Sensitive Nuclear Assistance," *American Political Science Review* 103, no. 1 (February 2009): 125.
[83] Müller and Schmidt, "The Little Known Story of Deproliferation," 145.
[84] Bleek, "Why Do States Proliferate?," 179.

the deployment by the nuclear-armed ally of nuclear weapons to the territory of the junior non-nuclear ally as a sign of the credibility of the security guarantee, finding that even in cases where a formal defense pact did not exist, the basing of nuclear weapons on the junior ally's territory "reduces the likelihood that a state will acquire nuclear weapons."[85] However, the record on whether foreign nuclear weapons deployments decrease the likelihood that the junior ally will begin a nuclear program is less clear; Reiter suggested that "because the diplomatic and geopolitical costs of nuclear weapons pursuit are lower [relative to acquisition], states may be more open to nuclear pursuit short of acquisition, even if American nuclear forces have been deployed."[86]

Second, Philipp Bleek and Eric Lorber have focused only on bilateral security commitments, excluding multilateral alliances from their analysis because "bilateral guarantees should be perceived as more robust [than multilateral guarantees] and therefore more likely to affect recipients' proliferation activity."[87] They are "extremely confident that security guarantees will make states that have not yet launched their own nuclear weapons programs less likely to do so. But given data constraints, we can be only moderately confident that once states have launched indigenous nuclear weapons programs,

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[85] Dan Reiter, "Security Commitments and Nuclear Proliferation," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10, no. 1 (January 2014): 70.
[86] Ibid., 72. According to Reiter, this may have been the case in particular for Taiwan and South Korea.
[87] Bleek and Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," 434.

the extension of security guarantees will make them less likely to see these through to acquisition."[88]

Like their quantitative counterparts, qualitative studies have yielded mixed results on the efficacy of security assurances in preventing proliferation. Bruno Tertrais, in his 2012 chapter, creates a typology of positive and negative security assurances and finds, through examination of historical evidence vis-à-vis select cases, that for the most part, positive security assurances "can play a critical role in preventing WMD proliferation." However, he continues, only strong security guarantees have been successful nonproliferation tools: "Vague promises of 'assistance' are not enough to prevent proliferation. … Most important, the recipient state must be convinced that the assurances given meet its security needs."[89] He arrives at this conclusion in part by pointing to the validity of the null hypothesis: "The lack of a strong security guarantee, or doubts about the scope and value of an existing one, have been key drivers of nuclear proliferation since 1945. In fact, an absence of positive security guarantees is a good starting point for telling the history of many national decisions to acquire nuclear weapons."[90]

Finally, in his 2015 article, Gene Gerzhoy examines the conventional wisdom on the utility of security guarantees in stymieing junior-ally proliferation behavior. The standard line of thinking suggests that, as long as the commitment

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[88] Ibid., 447.
[89] Bruno Tertrais, "Security Assurances and the Future of Proliferation," in *Over the Horizon Proliferation Threats*, ed. James J. Wirtz and Peter R. Lavoy (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 247-248.
[90] Ibid., 242.

of the patron state to the client state is credible, the junior ally will have no reason to develop its nuclear program. This approach is flawed, according to Gerzhoy, because it dismisses an important lever of pressure that the senior ally can apply to its junior ally: Namely, threats of abandonment can discourage junior allies that otherwise would seek nuclear weapons from doing so. However, this coercive behavior on the part of the senior ally only works if two conditions are met. First, the junior ally must be completely militarily dependent on its nuclear-armed patron. Second, where the senior ally does make threats of abandonment, it must do so conditionally: those threats must be tied intimately, and exclusively, to the junior ally's nuclear program. To test his theory, Gerzhoy examines the case of West Germany from 1954 to 1969.[91]

In short, the above record of scholarship demonstrates that the relationship between security guarantees and proliferation is not clear-cut. The conventional wisdom, derived from a realist security-oriented model of proliferation, on the utility of security assurances in preventing allied proliferation must now be weighed against more recent studies suggesting, as Nuno Monteiro and Alexandre Debs write, that in fact "security guarantees extended by a powerful ally may *give* a state the opportunity to nuclearize" [emphasis added].[92]

Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan all were the beneficiaries of an explicit alliance commitment and security guarantee from the United States, yet each state tinkered with the idea of acquiring its own independent nuclear weapons

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[91] Gene Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint: How the United States Thwarted West Germany's Nuclear Ambitions," *International Security* 39, no. 4 (Spring 2015): 91-129.
[92] Nuno P. Monteiro and Alexandre Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," *International Security* 39, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 10.

capability in the 1960s and 1970s. As a nonproliferation tool, the security guarantee from a nuclear-armed state to a non-nuclear state has been remarkably effective, but these three states bucked the trend. Even though none actually acquired nuclear weapons in the end, the very fact that all three took even one step down the indigenous nuclear path makes Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan clear outliers and excellent test cases for understanding the limitations of the security guarantee as a nonproliferation mechanism. Each country is examined separately in the following chapters.

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CHAPTER 3 — PROLIFERATING FOR PEACE: JAPAN, 1961-1976

Long considered a "virtual" nuclear weapons state, Japan is a unique case in proliferation studies for two reasons: First, it has the most advanced indigenous nuclear fuel cycle of any non-nuclear weapons state in the world; and second, it is the only country in human history to have witnessed firsthand the horrors of nuclear destruction.[93] Following its defeat in World War II, Japan signed the 1951 Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan, which permitted the United States to deploy air, land, and naval assets in and around Japan for the purposes of "the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack from without."[94] The follow-on agreement to this treaty, signed in 1960, replaced the 1951 agreement and deepened cooperation between the United States and Japan by committing both states to "the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations" through the strengthening of institutions and the promotion of trade and economic well-being.[95] Crucially, the 1960 Security Treaty also acknowledged that "an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety," and, arguably most importantly,

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[93] Yuki Tatsumi, "Maintaining Japan's Non-Nuclear Identity: The Role of U.S. Security Assurances," in *Security Assurances and Nuclear Nonproliferation*, ed. Jeffrey W. Knopf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 140-141.
[94] "Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan, September 8, 1951," Yale Law School, accessible at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/japan001.asp.
[95] "Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America, January 19, 1960," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessible at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html.

guaranteed that the United States would have continued access to "facilities and areas" in Japan for its military assets.[96]

As a result, and in part due to its experiences during the Second World War, Japan also adopted a largely pacifist posture in international politics, introducing in 1967 the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" (whereby Japan commits not to manufacture, possess, or permit onto Japanese soil nuclear weapons) and even going so far as to incorporate its broader policy position on non-acquisition of offensive weapons into Article 9 of its post-war Constitution. At the same time, however, Japan is known to have flirted with a nuclear weapons program from roughly 1967 to 1970. Despite being an ally of the United States and party to a Mutual Security Treaty since 1951, and thus under the protection of the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" since the Truman administration, Japan on multiple occasions examined the technical and political feasibility of acquiring its own indigenous nuclear force, while making simultaneous investments in advanced nuclear energy technologies that could also be used, potentially, for military purposes.

Of course, Japan never did acquire nuclear weapons, but the fact that the bomb was even considered is intriguing. Why did Japan's decision makers feel it necessary to embark on the nuclear path, no matter how tentatively, and in spite of the military, political, and economic support of the United States as enshrined in the Mutual Security Treaty?

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[96] Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Security Agenda: Military, Economic and Environmental Dimensions* (London, UK: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 140.

1961-1967: Public Confidence, Private Doubts

The Mutual Security Treaty between Japan and the United States encountered few challenges in the first decade of its existence, but geopolitical events beginning in the 1960s would come to test the strength of the alliance. The first challenge to the strength of the treaty came in the early 1960s, as China was developing its military nuclear program.[97] In response to these early developments, and in the lead-up to the first Chinese nuclear test, high-level Japanese officials emphasized the importance of the U.S.-Japanese alliance, stressing to their American counterparts that the shock of a Chinese nuclear test would be counterbalanced by Japan's reliance on the United States for extended deterrence. In December 1962, for example, Secretary of State Dean Rusk met with his Japanese counterpart, Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira, to discuss the threat posed by the Chinese nuclear weapons program. The two men agreed that the threat was serious, but the perceived level of threat differed between Japan and the United States. As Secretary Rusk noted, "the development of a Chinese Communist nuclear capability is of little concern to the United States … for the United States possesses a surplus capacity of nuclear weapons that could devastate Communist China. However, nuclear weapons could be used by China for propaganda purposes to enhance its prestige or to threaten or blackmail its neighbors," including Japan.[98] Rusk's point to Ohira was that, while China might

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[97] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[98] Memorandum, "Chinese Communist Nuclear Explosion," U.S. State Department to multiple recipients, SECRET, December 4, 1962, folder: Japan, General, 12/17/62-12/31/62, box 124a, National Security Files — Countries, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (hereafter JFKL), 1-2.

use its nascent nuclear capabilities as a political chip to intimidate its neighbors, the United States would never allow China to take actual action against any of America's allies in East Asia.

The Japanese, at least in their public rhetoric, seemed reassured by this U.S. promise. In a May 1963 meeting with U.S. National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, the Secretary-General of the Japanese Nuclear Data Committee, Takashi Kitamura, laid out the likely Japanese reaction to a Chinese nuclear test, saying, "There would certainly be forces in Japan favoring Japan's obtaining a nuclear capability, but … Japanese policy would still be opposed to nuclear weapons for Japan. Consequently Japan would have to rely on the United States' nuclear arms."[99] When Kitamura met with officials from the State Department two days later, he again assured the Americans "of what the Japanese government reaction would be: to reiterate Japan's policy of not possessing nuclear weapons itself, and of seeking a reaffirmation from the United States of U.S. willingness to supply the nuclear deterrent."[100]

Indeed, as China came closer to testing its first nuclear device in October 1964, the Japanese continued to emphasize, at least publicly, their confidence in the U.S.-Japan security treaty. In a late 1963 meeting with Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda, Secretary of State Rusk assured the Japanese leader that the alliance between the two countries was "utterly fundamental" and "essential to the United

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[99] Meeting Minutes, "U.S.-Japan Mutual Defense Planning," CONFIDENTIAL, May 10, 1963, folder: Japan, General, 5/12/63-5/31/63, box 124a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 3.
[100] Meeting Minutes, "Probable Japanese Reaction to Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation," CONFIDENTIAL, May 12, 1963, folder: Japan, General, 5/12/63-5/31/63, box 124a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 2.

States in its own defense and in relation to the defense of the Free World." Rusk continued, "If there is any anxiety in Japan about the strength of our commitments in the event of aggression in that part of the world [East Asia,] we can promptly take steps to clarify the strength of our determination." In response, Ikeda assured Rusk that "Japan did not doubt at all the intent of the U.S."[101] Even just two days before the first Chinese nuclear test, Japanese government spokesmen were still pointing to the Security Treaty "as the best basis for Japan's defense against a Chinese Communist nuclear threat."[102]

These high-level Japanese reassurances were corroborated by a June 1964 study conducted by the U.S. State Department's Bureau for Far Eastern Affairs, which found that a Chinese nuclear test would not have "a radical or dramatic effect on Japanese public opinion or Governmental policies, and will not thought to have much altered Japan's real strategic situation." After all, the Bureau wrote, "Japan has lived with a nuclear capability in the Soviet Union as a greater potential threat than Communist China."[103]

Consistent with the secondary literature, this research shows that, after China conducted its first nuclear test on October 16, 1964, the Japanese in their public statements continued to express their belief, shared by the Japanese

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[101] Memorandum of Conversation, "U.S.-Japan Relations; Japan-ROK Settlement Prospects," CONFIDENTIAL, November 26, 1963, folder: Japan - Cables - Volume I - 11/63-4/64, box 250, National Security File — Country File, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library (hereafter LBJL), 3.
[102] Intelligence Note, "Japanese Response on Chinese Nuclear Testing Generally Helpful," Thomas L. Hughes, Director of Intelligence and Research, U.S. State Department to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, October 14, 1964, folder: Nuclear Testing - China, Vol. I [2 of 2], box 31, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 1.
[103] Study Paper, "The Future of Japan," U.S. State Department Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, SECRET, June 26, 1964, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume II - 5/64-11/64, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 70.

leadership and populace alike, that even with nuclear weapons China did not pose a direct military threat to Japan. This confidence was due in large part to the sustained trust of the Japanese in the U.S. security alliance.[104] In the days immediately following the Chinese nuclear test, newspapers in Japan were expressing no surprise over this news, and "most editorials opened on the calm note that this development does not give Peking an immediate military advantage in the area … [and that] the Chinese achievement is of little immediate military significance."[105] Similarly, in a December 1964 study paper, the interagency Committee on Nuclear Proliferation in Washington noted that "few Japanese discern any clear and present danger to Japan's security, and of those who do most are content to rely on the United States to protect Japan's interests." According to the study, China was "simply not recognized as a threat," and as a result "the Chinese Communist nuclear detonation *per se* is not likely to alter basic attitudes in Japan."[106] Even at the highest level of decision making, the Japanese and the Americans expressed great confidence in the U.S. commitment to Japan's security. In a meeting between President Lyndon Johnson and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in mid-January 1965, Sato "stated that Japan's basic policy is to maintain firmly the United States-Japan Mutual Cooperation and Security

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[104] John Welfield, *Japan and Nuclear China: Japanese Reactions to China's Nuclear Weapons* (Canberra, Australia: Australian National University Press, 1970).
[105] Study Paper, "Foreign Media Reaction to Communist China's Nuclear Device," U.S. Information Agency, Unclassified, October 18, 1964, folder: Nuclear Testing - China, Vol. I [1 of 2], box 31, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 1-2.
[106] Study Paper, "Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions Concerning Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons," SECRET, December 12, 1964, folder: Problem 2: Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions re: Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons (Garthoff), box 1, National Security File — Committee File — Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, LBJL, 11, 13.

Treaty arrangements." Johnson, in response, "reaffirmed the United States determination to abide by the commitment under the Treaty to defend Japan against any armed attack from the outside."[107]

Even one year after the first Chinese nuclear test, Japanese and American officials were still stressing the importance of, and their sustained mutual confidence in, the U.S. security umbrella. For example, when Masao Kanazawa of the Japanese Embassy in Washington met with U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency official Richard Freund in July 1965, he noted that the Chinese nuclear program "does not really concern Japan too much, especially since the U.S. has satisfactory treaty obligations with respect to Japan."[108] In a meeting the following week with his Japanese counterpart, Foreign Minister Etsusaburo Shiina, Secretary of State Rusk made it clear that "the United States in no sense limits its commitment to Japan," and that "it would be literal madness for anyone to contemplate the use of nuclear weapons or nuclear blackmail against Japan."[109] A U.S. intelligence estimate in late 1965 confirmed this sentiment, with Director of Central Intelligence William Raborn noting that "most Japanese still cannot take seriously the thought of China as a direct threat" and that "there is a strong tendency to feel that the security treaty with the U.S.

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[107] Press Release, "Text of Joint Communique Between President Lyndon B. Johnson and His Excellency Eisaku Sato, Prime Minister of Japan Following Talks in Washington, January 12 and 13, 1965," Office of the White House Press Secretary, Unclassified, January 13, 1965, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2.

[108] Memorandum of Conversation, "Non-Proliferation," CONFIDENTIAL, July 6, 1965, folder: Japan - Memos [1 of 2] - Volume III - 9/64-10/65, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 3.

[109] Memorandum of Conversation, "United States-Japan Security Arrangements," SECRET, July 12, 1965, folder: Japan - Memos [1 of 2] - Volume III - 9/64-10/65, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.

provides ample insurance against both Peking and Moscow." Raborn concluded, "The Japanese Government will almost certainly continue to rely upon the U.S. for military protection under the terms of the Security Treaty."[110]

However, while these sorts of public overtures in the early to mid-1960s were expected and, indeed, welcomed, in private there were occasional but strong Japanese doubts about the true strength of the bilateral alliance between Tokyo and Washington; these uncertainties, in turn, led to serious deliberations in Japan on whether Japan should develop its own nuclear weapons. The archival evidence suggests that Japan's early deliberations on the nuclear question were driven not by a perceived external security threat in the form of a militarily superior, nuclear-capable China, but rather by a combination of decreasing confidence in the future of the U.S.-Japan security alliance and increasing confidence in Japan's growing importance in global affairs.

Japanese doubts about the U.S. security commitment were, in a sense, baked into the foundation of the alliance, as reflected in the 1960 Mutual Security Treaty, which contained a key temporal clause: At the time of its signing, the agreement was only to remain in force for a fixed ten-year period, after which it could be subject to termination. As a result, even as they made public statements about their confidence in the U.S.-Japan security alliance in the immediate years after the signing of the 1960 treaty, Japanese leaders began to express private doubts about the future of the agreement, fearing that by the end of the decade the

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[110] National Intelligence Estimate Number 41-65, "Japan," William F. Raborn, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, November 26, 1965, folder: Japan, box 6, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 13-14.

United States would surely abandon Japan once it was no longer legally bound to protect it. For example, in 1963, Admiral Harry Felt, the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, recalled a meeting with his Japanese military counterparts, who expressed their unease "about [the U.S.] concept and willingness to defend Japan in accordance with [the] treaty. They are wondering what U.S. posture and intentions will be by 1970 when the treaty can be terminated on [a] year's notice." The Chairman of the Japanese Joint Staff Council, General Keizo Hayashi, had also shared with Admiral Felt his concern that "by [1970, the] U.S. would be ready to withdraw entirely from Japan."[111]

In their own analyses, U.S. officials were divided internally over whether the Japanese were truly committed to the U.S.-Japan alliance, or whether they were simply paying lip service to the security treaty for broader strategic purposes. In a top secret 1962 paper, a high-level Department of Defense study group concluded that "Japan, in her own self-interest, must necessarily consider whether continued alignment with the U.S. is a profitable course of action,"[112] suggesting there could be incentives for Japan to disentangle itself from its superpower ally and establish its own independence. And an October 1963 U.S. study conducted by the Interagency Policy Planning Council affirmed that Japan's national security decision making would be "related less to a Chinese nuclear capability than to the evolution of the Japanese political situation and to the

[111] Telegram, "U.S.-Japan Military Relationship," Harry Felt to Joint Chiefs of Staff, SECRET, October 19, 1963, folder: Japan, General, 9/63-10/63, box 124a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1-2.
[112] Study Paper, "A Political-Military Study of South Korean Forces," ISA Special Study Group to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, April 16, 1962, folder: Korea: A Political Military Study of South Korean Forces, 4/62 (Cary Report), plus Annexes A-H, box 431, National Security Files — Robert W. Komer, JFKL, 51.

debate over defense and alignment likely to be precipitated by the question of renewal of the security treaty in 1970."[113] Thus the question became whether, as a result of a possible loss of faith in the U.S. security guarantee, the Japanese would consider going down the nuclear path, especially as China prepared for its first nuclear test in 1964.

This question was raised both in Washington and in Tokyo. On the U.S. side, a 1963 CIA estimate determined that, in anticipation of the eventual expiration of the Mutual Security Treaty, "Japan's military can also be expected to make steady, if slow, progress in various aspects of advanced weaponry," and that Japan might "opt for developing its nuclear program to the threshold of a weapons capability."[114] Further exploring this link between the U.S.-Japan security alliance and Japan's nuclear weapons decision making, a June 1964 paper written by the Far East Bureau of the U.S. State Department argued that the fate of Japan's nuclear ambitions rested squarely with the United States, pointing out that, "if U.S. deterrent and defense power in the Western Pacific remains undiminished, and if U.S. determination to use this power under our U.S.-Japan Security Treaty commitments remains clear, Japan may forgo nuclear weapons for its own forces indefinitely."[115] Therefore, the report's implication was that, if

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[113] Study Paper, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability," Interagency Policy Planning Council, SECRET, October 7, 1963, folder: China, General, 11/63-12/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 27-28.
[114] National Intelligence Estimate Number 41-63, "Japan's Problems and Prospects," John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, October 9, 1963, folder: Japan, box 6, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 16.
[115] Study Paper, "The Future of Japan," U.S. State Department Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, SECRET, June 26, 1964, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume II - 5/64-11/64, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 72.

U.S. strength in East Asia were to decline or even to be perceived as declining, then Japan might consider investing in its own nuclear weapons program.

Indeed, the Prime Minister of Japan himself, Eisaku Sato, indicated as much during these years. Having taken office just a few weeks after China's first nuclear test, he was seen by the U.S. National Security Council to be "hot for proliferation."[116] Likewise, a paper from the State Department's Director of Intelligence and Research to Secretary of State Dean Rusk referenced multiple reports that Sato was in favor of the development of a Japanese nuclear weapons program.[117] Even Sato himself, in a December 1964 meeting with U.S. Ambassador Edwin Reischauer, said that it made "common sense" for Japan to have nuclear weapons,[118] and, in a private meeting with President Lyndon Johnson one month later, commented, "If [the Chinese] had nuclear weapons, the Japanese also should have them."[119]

Thus, these statements indicate that, for Eisaku Sato — the same Prime Minister who in an apparent about-face a few years later would introduce the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" and then go on to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974 — the drive to acquire nuclear weapons seemed, at least in 1964-1965, to be

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[116] Memorandum, Robert W. Komer to McGeorge Bundy, SECRET, October 26, 1964, folder: Nuclear Weapons - Japan, Vol. I, box 34, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 1.
[117] Memorandum, "Prospects for New Japanese Prime Minister," Thomas L. Hughes to Dean Rusk, SECRET, November 10, 1964, folder: Japan - Memos [2 of 2] - Volume II - 5/64-11/64, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2.
[118] Telegram, "Sato Visit," Edwin O. Reischauer to State Department, SECRET, December 29, 1964, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-68* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v29p2/d37. Reischauer, who before becoming the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, was a renowned scholar of Japanese studies at Harvard University. See Edwin O. Reischauer, *My Life Between Japan and America* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1986).
[119] Memorandum, "Your Meeting with Prime Minister Sato," Dean Rusk to President Johnson, SECRET, January 9, 1965, box 2376, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, MD.

a serious personal endeavor.[120] Soon, however, it became apparent that Sato's strategy was more nuanced than earlier analyses had suggested; for example, an April 1966 CIA estimate determined that, while Sato had publicly embraced the U.S. nuclear defense commitment to Japan, he also had "been careful not to close the door to a future nuclear weapons program."[121] This assessment, therefore, represents the earliest suggestion that Sato was looking to develop a nuclear hedging strategy, not necessarily chart a course to acquire the bomb as quickly as possible, and that Japan might use the protection afforded it under the U.S. nuclear umbrella to reach nuclear latency.

The impetus thus was on the United States to reassure the Japanese that, in the wake of the first Chinese nuclear test, the strength of the U.S. commitment to Tokyo would be unshakeable. An October 1963 study paper by the high-level U.S. Interagency Policy Planning Council determined that the United States should "reaffirm its existing defense commitments to allies" in East Asia by reassuring those countries that the "existing [U.S.] defense commitment covers deterrence of and response to a nuclear attack [from China]."[122] A landmark December 1964 study paper by the interagency Committee on Nuclear Proliferation found that, if and when confronted by an increasingly powerful and nuclear-capable China, "the obvious choice, and the one we assume Japan will

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[120] For a comprehensive analysis of Eisaku Sato and his leadership with respect to national security and nuclear matters in Japan, see Fintan Hoey, *Sato, America and the Cold War: US-Japanese Relations, 1964-1972* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
[121] Intelligence Estimate, "Japan Rethinking Security Policy," CIA Office of Current Intelligence, SECRET, April 29, 1966, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 4.
[122] Study Paper, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability," Interagency Policy Planning Council, SECRET, October 7, 1963, folder: China, General, 11/63-12/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 60-63.

take, is the continuation of its cooperative security arrangements with the U.S. and its reliance on the U.S. nuclear 'umbrella.'" However, "there will also be some fairly strong support for the creation by Japan of a nuclear deterrent of its own."[123]

However, as nuclear analysts Mark Fitzpatrick and Fintan Hoey argue, these Japanese intimations at building an indigenous nuclear capability likely were not serious promises, but rather were semi-empty threats that constituted, as Fitzpatrick writes, "a diplomatic ploy designed to strengthen Washington's deterrence promise."[124] Indeed, the ruse seemed to work: The Japanese, always with an eye to the nominal end of the Mutual Security Treaty in 1970, began sending signals to their American counterparts regarding their potential interest in acquiring a nuclear weapons capability, which would run counter to U.S. interests in Asia, if the U.S. commitment to Japan were to end. Internally, high-level interagency decision makers in Washington were aware of this link between the MST and potential Japanese nuclear behavior, and they sought to provide clear reassurances to Japan that, irrespective of whether the MST would be allowed to formally expire in 1970, the U.S. commitment to Japan's security remained as strong as ever.

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[123] Study Paper, "Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions Concerning Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons," SECRET, December 12, 1964, folder: Problem 2: Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions re: Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons (Garthoff), box 1, National Security File — Committee File — Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, LBJL, 13.

[124] Mark Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 67; Fintan Hoey, "Japan and Extended Nuclear Deterrence: Security and Non-proliferation," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 4 (2016): 491.

For example, the 1964 Committee on Nuclear Proliferation study found that domestic support in Japan for nuclear weapons would not be driven by the Chinese military threat in and of itself, but, instead, would "depend on the credibility of the U.S. deterrent as it relates specifically to the defense of Japan." The study concluded by arguing that the "doubts which may arise over the U.S. deterrent will not involve its strength, but rather our willingness to use it in defense of Japan." Therefore, in order to prevent Japan from going down the nuclear path, the Committee underscored the need for the United States to provide regular reassurances to Japan, and recommended that American officials keep up "efforts to convince the Japanese that we can be relied upon to assist them if a crisis should arise."[125]

As the Committee correctly anticipated, Japanese officials expressed their potential interest in nuclear weapons acquisition should they perceive the U.S. security commitment to be eroding. In early 1966, for example, the Japanese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Takeso Shimoda, met with National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer in Tokyo. During that meeting, Shimoda made it very clear that "Japan did not want … nuclear weapons," and that the United States was still a "greater nuclear power" than the USSR or China. However, Shimoda said, if the U.S. security

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[125] Study Paper, "Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions Concerning Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons," SECRET, December 12, 1964, folder: Problem 2: Background Paper on Factors Which Could Influence National Decisions re: Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons (Garthoff), box 1, National Security File — Committee File — Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, LBJL, 13-15.

commitment were to be perceived as waning, this would be cause for great concern in Tokyo:

> *Japan may still be under [the] U.S. umbrella but will also be under [Soviet] and [Chinese] 'nuclear influence'. In 30-50 year terms one can not say how far [the] U.S. umbrella will extend. This is a grave problem.*

To Shimoda's veiled suggestion of a future Japanese interest in nuclear weapons, Bundy replied by saying he "believed [the] U.S. nuclear umbrella over Japan would extend as far into [the] future as he could see."[126] While this response was meant to put Shimoda's mind at ease, the tenor of the Japanese public rhetoric only shifted further away from unshakeable confidence in the U.S. security commitment as both countries came closer to 1970. By China's third nuclear test a few months later, the Japanese press was reported to have been "preoccupied with Japan's own peril and security in light of Peking's nuclear capacity,"[127] and in their public statements Japanese leaders were beginning to express "doubts about their national security and to feel that Communist China poses a threat to Japan."[128] American officials, convinced that the growing power of China would not provoke Japan to go nuclear as long as the U.S. security commitment to Japan remained firm, picked up on this consistent theme in their

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[126] Telegram, Edwin O. Reischauer to Dean Rusk, SECRET, February 24, 1966, folder: Japan - Cables [1 of 2] - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.
[127] Study Paper, "Worldwide Reaction to Communist China's Third Nuclear Explosion," U.S. Information Agency, Unclassified, May 12, 1966, folder: Nuclear Testing - China, Vol. I [1 of 2], box 31, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 1.
[128] Intelligence Memorandum, "World Reaction to Communist China's Third Nuclear Explosion — A Preliminary Survey," CIA Office of Current Intelligence, SECRET, May 13, 1966, folder: China - CODEWORD - Volume I [3 of 3], box 244, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1, 6.

policy planning talks with Japanese counterparts. In particular, following a series of meetings in with high-level officials in Japan in mid-1967, the U.S. State Department's Director of Policy Planning, Henry Owen, noted that, while the Japanese seemed sensitive to China's growing nuclear capability, they were more focused on how the United States would continue to maintain its security commitment to Japan. In his memo to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Owen wrote, "The Japanese indicated that if the U.S. seemed to be 'withdrawing' from Asia, pressures to create a national [nuclear] deterrent would probably emerge in Japan."[129]

Based on Bundy and Owen's experiences, the signal from the Japanese to the Americans seemed to be less of a genuine desire to acquire nuclear weapons in response to an existential threat in the form of a nuclear-armed China, and instead more of a tactic designed to put pressure on the United States to double down on its security commitment to Japan past 1970. To that end, a classified CIA briefing revealed that "top [Japanese] Foreign Ministry officials welcomed [China's third nuclear test] as an aid in preparing public opinion for the extension of the US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty after 1970."[130] And when President Johnson and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato met in November 1967, Sato reminded Johnson that the United States must keep the promises it had made to Japan:

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[129] Memorandum, "US-Japan Planning Talks," Henry Owen to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 5, 1967, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume VI - 2/67-10/67 [2 of 2], box 252, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 3.
[130] Intelligence Memorandum, "World Reaction to Communist China's Third Nuclear Explosion — A Preliminary Survey," CIA Office of Current Intelligence, SECRET, May 13, 1966, folder: China - CODEWORD - Volume I [3 of 3], box 244, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1, 6.

> *At present Japan is secure under the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which provides that the United States will defend Japan against external attack. However, … more than two years ago, the President assured the Prime Minister that the United States would live up to her commitment to defend Japan 'against any form of attack'.*

Sato then asked Johnson to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to Japan, to which Johnson responded that "that the United States is committed [to Japan] and as long as he is President we would carry out this commitment."[131]

Thus, as the archival record shows, to the extent that nuclear decision making in Japan was driven by China's increasing nuclear capabilities, the Japanese sought to leverage those Chinese developments as a bargaining chip to commit the United States to Japan's defense after 1970, and adjusted their rhetoric to achieve this objective. Japanese officials in the 1960s, even at the highest levels of government, repeatedly expressed their private reservations about the endurance of the U.S.-Japan alliance, especially as the years progressed and the number of years during which the Mutual Security Treaty would remain in effect dwindled. Still open to interpretation is the question of whether these Japanese doubts about the U.S. security commitment were genuine, or whether Japan simply sought to exploit U.S. fears of threats to its regional and global interest to achieve Tokyo's clear objective of securing the extension of the MST past 1970.

At the same time, in inverse proportion to this apparent decline in Japanese confidence in the United States was an increase in Japan's confidence in

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[131] Memorandum of Conversation, "U.S.-Japanese Relations and Security Problems," SECRET, November 15, 1967, folder: Japan - Filed by the LBJ Library [1 of 2], box 295, National Security File — Country File — Addendum, LBJL, 4.

its own place in international politics. As the below record demonstrates, this factor had a strong effect on overall Japanese attitudes regarding matters of national pride, militarization, and nuclear weapons. Unlike other scholars, who have argued that Japan's defeat at the end of World War II created a strong national culture of anti-militarism that persisted through subsequent decades,[132] this research indicates that, in fact, Japan's rekindled nationalism in the 1960s actively encouraged an open national discussion on renewed military investments, and even a debate on whether Japan should pursue an independent nuclear weapons capability.[133]

This vigorous debate was sustained through the 1960s. For example, a 1961 U.S. CIA intelligence estimate postulated that, while Japan "will continue to depend almost entirely upon U.S. deterrent strength for its defense" and "will almost certainly remain aligned with the U.S. over the next year or so," Tokyo would "continue slowly to grow more assertive of its own independent interests and more active in world affairs."[134] A follow-on intelligence estimate in 1963 concurred, noting that a strong sense of nationalism in Japan would lead to a

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[132] See, for example: Glenn D. Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan* (London, UK: Routledge, 1996); Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Robert Johnson, "Japan Closes the Nuclear Umbrella: An Examination of Non-Violent Pacifism and Japan's Vision for a Nuclear Weapon-Free World," *Asia-Pacific Law and Policy Journal* 13, no. 2 (May 2012): 81-116.

[133] Indeed, as researchers Christopher Hughes and Bert Edström find, as early as the end of the Second World War, the Japanese government through the promulgation of the Yoshida Doctrine had acknowledged the potential the need for Japan to rearm. See Hughes, *Japan's Security Agenda*, 123; Bert Edström, *Japan's Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine: From Yoshida to Miyazawa* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1999), 169-179.

[134] National Intelligence Estimate Number 41-61, "Prospects for Japan," Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, February 7, 1961, folder: Japan, box 6, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 5-6.

Japanese desire to be seen as more of an independent actor in its international relations: "In the next few years, Japan will probably move gradually away from its postwar insularity and toward a greater involvement in world affairs. … At the same time, *there will be a trend towards greater independence of posture and less inclination to follow the U.S. lead on outstanding international questions*" [emphasis added].[135]

The "greater independence of posture" which the CIA discussed in its estimate would, almost necessarily, include a Japanese reassessment of its security and military policies. A 1964 study paper from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs made an explicit connection between a resurgent Japanese nationalism and the resultant difficulties the United States could face in developing a deeper relationship with Tokyo. In particular, the study noted the connection, in the minds of Japanese decision makers, between taking an active lead in global affairs and developing a robust, independent military:

> *The Japanese public is viewing Japan less and less as a helpless poor relation of the great powers and more and more as a middle power on about the level of Britain or France, with a real role to play. Total reliance on the U.S. ... for Japan's security is inconsistent with this new role and with Japan's reviving national pride. ... There are already signs of growing realization that a respectable independent military capability is an essential element in the international stance of a middle power.*[136]

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[135] National Intelligence Estimate Number 41-63, "Japan's Problems and Prospects," John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, October 9, 1963, folder: Japan, box 6, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 12.
[136] Study Paper, "The Future of Japan," U.S. State Department Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, SECRET, June 26, 1964, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume II - 5/64-11/64, box 250, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 69-70.

Similarly, in a telegram to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Ambassador Reischauer in Tokyo noted "the rapid increase in national pride which is being shown by the Japanese people … [who] are awakening from their postwar dream of a neutralist, de-nationalized, neutered sort of Japan and are feeling [a] strong need for national assertion and for a position of equality among first-rank nations." Reischauer, as a former professor of Japanese studies at Harvard University, added that in his view "the willingness of Japan to look at matters of defense realistically is also on the increase. Because of the rise in nationalistic feeling … the Japanese people, government leaders and info media are discarding the inhibitions they have previously felt about security matters and are beginning to consider their own problems of defense from the point of view of national interest. … This would tend to increase the influence of those who call for Japan to go its own way … and to develop its own national nuclear capability."[137]

In short, Japanese decision making in the early to mid-1960s, especially after the first Chinese nuclear test, was propelled not by a purely security-oriented worldview in which a nuclear-armed China was perceived to be an overwhelming and existential threat to Japan, but rather by a lack of confidence in the strength and duration of the U.S. security commitment, especially given that the statute of limitations on the Mutual Security Treaty would expire in 1970. Combined with an increasing surety of Japan's place in the post-Second World War international political structure and a willingness to examine the issue of Japanese military rearmament with fresh eyes, Japanese leaders took a careful approach to securing

[137] Telegram, Edwin O. Reischauer to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 26, 1966, folder: Japan - Cables [1 of 2] - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1, 5-6.

a stronger U.S. commitment, expressing in private their fears over a possible U.S. withdrawal from East Asia while hinting, from time to time, that a drawdown in the U.S. security commitment could lead to a Japan with more than just a passing interest in acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.

1967-1970: Matters of Prestige and Japan's Feasibility Studies

This resurgent Japanese nationalism of the mid-1960s continued to drive Japanese strategic and security decision making towards the end of the decade, and also influenced American perceptions of Japanese thinking on these questions. In the words of David Osborn, the Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy Tokyo in 1968, "Japan is moving toward a serious reappraisal of our relationship … [and will be] taking a fresh critical look at the validity of past practice under which the US-Japan relationship was the cornerstone and major determinant of Japanese positions in every field of international activity."[138] More to the point, U.S. State Department officer Richard Sneider told National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, "There has been continuing revival of Japanese national pride and self-consciousness, [and] a renewed desire to preserve the traditional Japanese culture." Sneider added, "The big Japan we end up with would then more likely be an independent Japan with its own nuclear muscles."[139]

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[138] Memorandum, "US-Japan Relations, Status and Prospects," David L. Osborn to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 5, 1968, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume VII - 10/67-12/68 [1 of 4], box 252, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1, 6.
[139] Memorandum, "Trip Report," Richard L. Sneider to McGeorge Bundy, SECRET, October 15, 1968, folder: Jenkins Memos [Alfred] [1 of 2], box 5, National Security File — Name File, LBJL, 3-4.

As this section demonstrates, Tokyo's nuclear deliberations in the late 1960s were being driven not only by fears of U.S. abandonment after the formal termination of the Mutual Security Treaty, but also by concerns over the shifting norm of nuclear weapons possession. Specifically, the prestige that in Japan's eyes was associated with China's first nuclear test in 1964 prompted Japanese officials to consider whether, for prestige purposes, they also should develop the bomb; at the same time, as global momentum on a multilateral nonproliferation treaty picked up and the norm of nuclear weapons possession changed, Japan sought to establish its bona fides as a champion of the new nonproliferation norm. Indeed, it appears that the inherent inequity built into the draft NPT frustrated the Japanese to such a great extent that they felt the only way to correct this imbalance was to cast a global spotlight on the matter by demonstrating the dangers of proliferation, using themselves as a test case; thus, Japan's start down the nuclear weapons path can be equally seen as a nonproliferation clarion call, a drive to elevate Japan's position in global affairs, and a hedging strategy against a possible reduction in the U.S. security commitment after 1970.

For the Japanese, nuclear weapons and status in international affairs had been intimately connected since the end of World War II. Even the first Chinese nuclear test in 1964 had not represented an overt security threat to Japan but rather, as the high-level U.S. Committee on Nuclear Proliferation wrote to President Johnson, had "reinforced the belief, increasingly prevalent throughout

the world, that nuclear weapons are a distinguishing mark of a world leader."[140] As the Committee reported to Johnson in January 1965, the Chinese nuclear weapons program was putting pressure on Japan to develop its own nuclear weapons for the purpose of elevating its international standing and that, in the interest of preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons around the world, the United States should "attempt to help the Japanese with appropriate prestige alternatives."[141] An early 1966 CIA intelligence estimate concurred: "If Communist China demonstrates a developing weapons capability, … the feeling is likely to grow in Japan that it too, *as a major Asian power*," not necessarily for security reasons, "should have a nuclear capability" [emphasis added].[142]

Since by the late 1960s China had conducted multiple nuclear tests and firmly established itself as a member of the nuclear club, the Japanese became preoccupied with this matter of nuclear weapons as a symbol of prestige, and they debated whether, as a natural extension of their resurgent Japanese nationalism, Tokyo should acquire nuclear weapons as well. In addition to drawing comparisons to China, the Japanese also likened themselves to India, another middle-power nation that at the time was working to develop a robust national nuclear program, ostensibly as a point of national pride. In policy planning meetings between American and Japanese diplomats in the summer months of

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[140] Study Paper, "A Report to the President by the Committee on Nuclear Proliferation," Committee on Nuclear Proliferation to President Johnson, SECRET, January 21, 1965, folder: Presidential Task Force Committee on Nuclear Proliferation [1 of 2]], box 35, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 3.
[141] Ibid., 12.
[142] National Intelligence Estimate Number 4-66, "The Likelihood of Further Nuclear Proliferation," Richard Helms, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, January 20, 1966, folder: Arms and Disarmament, box 1, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 10.

1966, the Japanese provided some insight into these attitudes on the role of prestige in nuclear weapons acquisition. In June, "senior Japanese officers made it clear that they expected there would be a strong demand in Japan for acquisition of nuclear weapons, as a matter of national pride," especially if other nations like India were to acquire nuclear weapons first.[143] The following month, Japanese officials reiterated to the Americans that "their immediate concern in the nuclear field … was not so much in meeting the Chinese threat as in narrowing the gap between Japan and other free world countries — countries which they considered no more prestigious than themselves and to whom they were unwilling, therefore, to grant pride of place in matters nuclear." The Japanese officials were especially quick to compare themselves to India, claiming that, "if India went nuclear, pressures in Japan for such a program would mount rapidly." As the State Department's Director of Policy Planning, Henry Owen, reported, "The Japanese thought it would be the height of folly for a country as burdened by economic problems as India to go nuclear," thus suggesting that for Japan — with its relatively booming economy, robust international trade ties, and skilled workforce — to not do the same would be indeed ironic and thus unacceptable.[144]

This sense of Japanese national pride, and the prestige that nuclear weapons possession would confer upon Japan, was so strong in the Japanese zeitgeist that, by 1968, roughly one-quarter of the Japanese population in a survey

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[143] Telegram, Edwin O. Reischauer to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 26, 1966, folder: Japan - Cables [1 of 2] - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 6.
[144] Memorandum, "Japanese Attitudes on Non-Proliferation," Henry Owen to unknown recipient, SECRET, July 12, 1966, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.

openly desired nuclear weapons for Japan, while one-half of the respondents in the same poll predicted Japan would, at some point, acquire the atomic bomb.[145] A follow-on survey one year later saw this latter statistic rise significantly, with 77% of respondents believing Japan would have nuclear weapons by the year 2000.[146] Even Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, who had publicly announced the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" on the floor of the Japanese Diet in December 1967, believed in private that Japan should have nuclear weapons,[147] and once confessed to U.S. Ambassador Alexis Johnson that the Principles were "nonsense."[148] In a May 1969 memorandum, the U.S. State Department corroborated this uptick in Japanese national pride and willingness to openly discuss nuclear matters, pointing out that "the rising force of [Japanese] nationalism is beginning to assert itself, especially in the younger generation," and that the "widening [Japanese] debate on military security policies, including nuclear strategy and ownership, shows the stirrings of a great-power orientation."[149]

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[145] George H. Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," *Asian Survey* 10, no. 9 (September 1970): 772. See also Yasumasa Tanaka, "Japanese Attitudes toward Nuclear Arms," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Spring 1970): 26-42.

[146] Cited in Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 66.

[147] Fintan Hoey writes that Sato was speaking "off the cuff" when he announced the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, and that afterwards he complained to an aide, "I should just declare that Japan needs nuclear weapons and then resign." See Hoey, "Japan and Extended Nuclear Deterrence," 492. For more, see Kusuda Minoru, *Kusuda Minoru Nikki, Sato Eisaku Sori Suseki Hishokan No 2000 Nichi* [Diary of Kusuda Minoru: 2000 Days as Prime Minister Sato Eisaku's Private Secretary], ed. Makoto Iokibe and Wada Jun (Tokyo, Japan: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2001), 159.

[148] Telegram, U. Alexis Johnson to U.S. State Department, SECRET, January 11, 1969, fn. 2, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXIX, Part 2: Japan* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2010), accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v29p2/d140.

[149] Memorandum, "An overview of the world situation," Robert Osgood to National Security Council, SECRET, May 21, 1969, folder: NSSM-9 (1 of 6) [3 of 4], box H-129, National Security

At the same time that the Japanese people were slowly warming to the norm of nuclear weapons possession as a sign of international prestige, the international community was coalescing around a different set of principles in the form of a draft nonproliferation treaty, which would establish a new norm, of *non-possession* of nuclear weapons, as an alternate and competing symbol of prestige. As negotiations over the NPT progressed through the mid-1960s, there were indications that Japan's initial recalcitrance to endorse and become party to the treaty was based in large part on the draft document's division of signatories into two classes of states, and that Japan, unprepared to close the door on its nascent nuclear ambitions just yet, was unwilling to accept a relegation to the lower class of states. There also is evidence to support the argument that, in the interest of nonproliferation, Japan sought to exploit its potential to become a nuclear weapons state as a bargaining chip to extract stronger nonproliferation commitments from the international community.

To be sure, the Japanese were in favor of universalizing the NPT, but took umbrage at the proposed division of signatories into the nuclear "haves" and the "have-nots." For example, Japanese Foreign Minister Takeo Miki, in an official 1967 statement, made it clear that, "in order for this treaty to fully achieve its objective, … it is necessary that as many countries as possible, both those countries which possess nuclear weapons and those which do not, participate in the treaty." However, "the treaty should not discriminate between the countries

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Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library (hereafter RMNL), 40-42.

which possess nuclear weapons and those which do not."[150] Miki's remarks were backed up by comments made by Japanese officials on a separate occasion, when they said Japan "would object to being formally consigned to 'second class status'" in a nonproliferation treaty.[151] These statements indicated that the division of NPT signatory states into two unequal classes would be a problem for Japan, and that, more importantly, the Japanese did not believe they should be relegated to the latter, lower tier of signatories. As Secretary Rusk warned Reischauer, Japan could play the role of spoiler in NPT deliberations by exploiting its nascent nuclear weapons potential, writing, "There would appear to be [the] possibility that [Japan] may be considering [a] more assertive voice in nonproliferation talks, using as leverage Japan's potential to become [an] independent nuclear power."[152] And in his 1967 analysis, the new U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Alexis Johnson, confirmed that the Japanese were indeed experiencing a "hypersensitivity to any suggestion that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. are moving toward a kind of 'super-powers' club from which Japan will be forever excluded." As Johnson wrote to Secretary of State Rusk:

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[150] Telegram, "Non-Proliferation Treaty," U. Alexis Johnson to Dean Rusk, Unclassified, March 14, 1967, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume VI - 2/67-10/67, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.
[151] Memorandum, "Japanese Attitudes on Non-Proliferation," Henry Owen to unknown recipient, SECRET, July 12, 1966, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2.
[152] Telegram, Dean Rusk to Edwin O. Reischauer, SECRET, February 24, 1966, folder: Japan - Cables [2 of 2] - Volume IV - 7/65-9/66, box 251, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 4.

> *In spite of its present attitudes on military and nuclear affairs, an implied relegation of Japan to second-class status because of her non-possession of nuclear arms would ultimately constitute a powerful incentive to go after an independent nuclear capability.*[153]

Rusk and Johnson's analyses are critical to understanding Japan's nuclear behavior during the late 1960s. Prestige, not security concerns, motivated any notions Japan was entertaining during this period on acquiring nuclear weapons. And, as would become evident in the coming years, the Japanese indeed sought to reach a certain threshold of nuclear capability by building up a minimum level of technical capacity; however, by doing so, the Japanese believed they could both keep their nuclear option open *and* convince other states to strengthen their commitment to nonproliferation by demonstrating how easy, and how dangerous, it could be to acquire nuclear weapons. As nuclear scholar George Quester writes, by holding out on approving the NPT immediately in 1968 and demonstrating the dangers of nuclear proliferation, Japan "clearly signalled that concessions might be required" on both the form and the substance of the draft treaty as it was being negotiated.[154]

JAPAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS STUDIES

The predictions that Rusk and Johnson made in 1966 and 1967 would prove to be timely and prescient, as Japan took its first steps down the military nuclear path in the late 1960s. During these years, as the Japanese continued to

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[153] Memorandum, U. Alexis Johnson to Dean Rusk, SECRET, March 1, 1967, folder: Japan - Memos - Volume VI - 2/67-10/67 [2 of 2], box 252, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2-3.
[154] Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," 771.

assert themselves increasingly in global affairs while putting pressure on the United States to extend its security commitment to Tokyo beyond 1970, they also advanced their domestic nuclear fuel cycle infrastructure through the acquisition and development of nuclear facilities, technologies, and know-how. Since 1956, the Japanese Atomic Energy Commission had established the goal of acquiring uranium enrichment and spent-fuel reprocessing technologies as critical to Japan's overall efforts to develop a national nuclear fuel cycle,[155] and in 1957 the Japan Atomic Power Company was formed to import natural-uranium, graphite-moderated reactors from the United Kingdom.[156] By the time the first such reactor came online in 1966, at a site in Japan called Tokai,[157] a fuel fabrication facility had already been constructed by American firm NUMEC,[158] and Tokyo contracted the same year with SGN, a French company, to also build a pilot reprocessing plant.[159] Construction on the reprocessing facility, which began in 1971,[160] was completed by 1975, but the Ford administration, citing proliferation concerns over the amount of plutonium coming out of the Tokai reactor, would

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[155] Japan Atomic Energy Commission, "Basic Long Term Program for Development and Utilization of Atomic Energy," September 6, 1956; JAEC, "Long Term Program for Development and Utilization of Atomic Energy," February 8, 1961; both cited in Eugene Skolnikoff, Tatsujiro Suzuki, and Kenneth Oye, "International Responses to Japanese Plutonium Programs," Center for International Studies (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1995).
[156] Ichiro Ishikawa, "Present Status of the Development of Atomic Energy in Japan (Especially of Nuclear Power Developments)," *in Proceedings of the Anglo-Japanese Nuclear Power Symposium*, Tokyo, Japan, March 1963; cited in James E. Platte, "National Decision Making and Nuclear Fuel Cycles: An Analysis of Influences" (Ph.D. diss., Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 2013), 130.
[157] Richard J. Samuels, *The Business of the Japanese State: Energy Markets in Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 234.
[158] Skolnikoff, Suzuki, and Oye, "International Responses to Japanese Plutonium Programs," 4.
[159] Ibid.,10.
[160] Platte, "National Decision Making and Nuclear Fuel Cycles," 137.

not allow the facility to commence operations.[161] In the meantime, Japan began construction on a pilot uranium enrichment facility in 1977,[162] which by December 1979 was operational and producing enriched uranium.[163]

In tandem with these strategic nuclear *technology* acquisitions, the Japanese government also sought to understand the feasibility, from a cost-benefit perspective, of nuclear *weapons* acquisition. To be sure, this foray into nuclear investments was not Japan's first, as the Japanese under Yasuhiro Nakasone had believed that "mastery of the nuclear fuel cycle was necessary."[164] Indeed, the Japanese had tried to acquire nuclear weapons during World War II and, although this earlier attempt was unsuccessful due to an underdeveloped national industrial base and a lack of access to fissionable materials,[165] Japanese leaders' interest in an independent Japanese nuclear capability had nevertheless been sustained through the early post-war years. For example, Nobusuke Kishi, Japan's Prime Minister in the late 1950s, believed Japan needed nuclear weapons to strengthen its presence on the global stage.[166] Even certain segments of the Japanese military

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[161] Keichi Oshima, et al, *The Future of U.S.-Japanese Nuclear Energy Relations* (New York, NY: Rockefeller Foundation, 1979), 101. As a result of the U.S. refusal to allow reprocessing activities to commence at Tokai, Japan turned to French firm COGEMA and UK firm British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) to reprocess Japanese spent fuel and ship the plutonium back to Japan. See Frans Berkhout, Tatsujiro Suzuki, and William Walker, "Surplus Plutonium in Japan and Europe: An Avoidable Predicament," MIT-Japan Program (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990).
[162] Roger W. Gale, "Nuclear Power and Japan's Proliferation Option," *Asian Survey* 18, no. 11 (November 1978): 1129.
[163] Platte, "National Decision Making and Nuclear Fuel Cycles," 147.
[164] Jacques E.C. Hymans, "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb," *International Security* 36, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 163.
[165] Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers*, 66; see also Walter E. Grunden, *Secret Weapons and World War II: Japan in the Shadow of Big Science* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 48-82.
[166] Richard Samuels and James L. Schoff, "Japan's Nuclear Hedge: Beyond 'Allergy' and 'Breakout,'" in *Strategic Asia 2013-2014: Asia in the Second Nuclear Age*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis, et

had advocated for Japan to develop its own independent nuclear deterrent capability. As Shigeru Fukutome, a former Japanese vice admiral, put it rather pithily in July 1966, "The nuclear umbrella held by the U.S. must surely be useful, but for complete faith there is the nuclear umbrella opened by oneself."[167]

However, the Japanese did not take their first real steps down the military nuclear path until the late 1960s, when the first semi-official government study on the feasibility of nuclear weapons acquisition was carried out. In 1967, a high-level group of Japanese government experts called the Research Commission on National Security conducted a detailed technical analysis of how Japan might go about building the bomb, should it make the political decision to do. The resultant study indicated that: (1) a plutonium-based bomb would be easier to produce than a uranium-based bomb; (2) twenty bombs' worth of weapons-grade plutonium could be produced annually; and (3) Japan already possessed the private industrial base to support such bomb-making efforts.[168] These findings were in line with Japan's nuclear technology acquisitions to date, which had focused entirely on the natural uranium reactor, plutonium reprocessing plant, and fuel fabrication facility at Tokai.

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al (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2013), 237; Kurt M. Campbell and Tsuyoshi Sunohara, "Japan: Thinking the Unthinkable," in *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why Some States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, et al (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 221; John Swenson-Wright, *Unequal Allies? United States Security and Alliance Policy Toward Japan, 1945-1960* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 150-159.

[167] Quoted in John E. Endicott, *Japan's Nuclear Option: Political, Technical, and Strategic Factors* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1975), 63.

[168] See: Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapons: A Historical Perspective," *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics, and Strategic Studies* 37 (2010): 19-20; Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers*, 67.

Ultimately, however, the 1967 study argued against making the political decision to build the bomb, citing the tremendous negative externalities Japan would incur in the forms of economic costs and damage to its diplomatic relations in the international community. Yet the fact that the study was conducted in the first place is of tremendous significance, because it suggested that there was at least some interest, at the highest levels of Japanese decision making, in backing up earlier rhetoric and developing a nuclear weapons capability. And that interest was sustained in the coming years, because the 1967 study would not be the only one of its kind: Over the next three years, various Japanese government agencies and ministries conducted four more feasibility studies on the question of nuclear weapons acquisition. The Cabinet Information Research Office's "1968/1970 Report," a 1969 study by the Japanese Defense Agency, a concurrent analysis by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a second JDA study in 1970 all reached the same conclusion, which was that, while Japan had the necessary technology, industrial base, and financial wherewithal to build nuclear weapons, it should refrain from doing so because the costs of going nuclear would outweigh the benefits.[169]

Through these studies, the Japanese government internalized both the risks and the political implications of acquiring nuclear weapons. On the matter of risk,

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[169] For detailed information on these studies, see: Yuri Kase, "The Costs and Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization: An Insight into the 1968/70 Internal Report," *Nonproliferation Review* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 55-68; Michael J. Green and Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Japan: New Nuclear Realism," in *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 351-352; and Nobumasa Akiyama, "The Socio-political Roots of Japan's Non-Nuclear Posture," in *Japan's Nuclear Option: Security, Politics and Policy in the 21st Century*, ed. Benjamin Self and Jeffrey Thompson (Washington, DC: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003), 82.

it became manifestly evident that, while Japan had the technical capability to produce nuclear weapons, embarking on such an endeavor would consume a significantly large portion of the national budget, thereby tying up funds that could be used for other important endeavors, such as economic development. On the matter of political implications, there was a sustained recognition that a Japan with nuclear weapons would invite criticism and scorn from the international community. Yet, despite the fact that all five studies between 1967 and 1970 reached the same conclusion, why these studies were conducted in the first place is of great significance. The archival record shows that Japanese decision makers commissioned and carried out these studies not only in anticipation of a possible need to hedge against a loss of the U.S. security guarantee, but in fact as a way to prevent proliferation.

On the first point, the Japanese took their first tentative steps down the nuclear path in the late 1960s not due to the perception of an overwhelming external security threat from China, but rather in response to a waning confidence in the continued commitment of the United States to Japan's security. As analyst Mark Fitzpatrick writes, "The purpose [of these studies] was to take stock at times of a new security environment and, by quietly leaking the assessments, to reassure concerned neighbours and friends of Japan's steadfast non-nuclear-armed posture while also reminding them of Japan's nuclear potential. This typically served to encourage the U.S. to reaffirm its extended-deterrence commitment."[170] Similarly, argues nuclear scholar Etel Solingen, "the [U.S.-Japanese] alliance was a useful

[170] Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers*, 70.

instrument for Japanese leaders to extract [security and defense] commitments" from the United States.[171] Tokyo achieved this objective by occasionally and quietly sharing with U.S. officials that nuclear weapons feasibility studies had been conducted in Japan, thus exploiting Washington's great fear of proliferation and getting the United States to reaffirm its commitment to Japan's security.

The second, and truly fascinating, factor driving Japan's nuclear weapons activities in the late 1960s was a deep and sincere desire to actually *prevent* proliferation. Seemingly counterintuitive at first glance, this logic was in fact based on a rational and careful analysis of the costs and benefits to Japan of supporting a draft nonproliferation treaty that would elevate, to the greatest extent possible, Japan's standing in international politics by ensuring it remain on the right side of history with respect to the question of nuclear weapons possession. At a more tactical level, there were concerns that the nonproliferation treaty would keep Japan out of the higher tier of states — the nuclear "haves" — and thus limit Japan's future control over its national nuclear fuel cycle. There is also some evidence that Japan was concerned with losing the bomb option altogether and so sought to develop a nuclear-hedging strategy, so that it could reduce breakout time to the bomb should it make the political decision to acquire an independent arsenal.[172] Last, there is a strong argument to be made that, consistent with the Yoshida doctrine, Japan determined that the cost of developing an

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[171] Etel Solingen, "The Perils of Prediction: Japan's Once and Future Nuclear Status," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 135-136.
[172] Taka Daitoku, "The Construction of a Virtual Nuclear State: Japan's Realistic Approach to an Emerging Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime, 1964-1970," unpublished manuscript, October 2014. I thank the author for sharing his work and granting me permission to cite and quote it here.

independent nuclear weapons capability both far outstripped its attendant benefits and would be more expensive than relying on a stronger and sustained security guarantee from the United States, which could shoulder the burden of extending the nuclear umbrella over Japan, thereby freeing up Tokyo to invest its limited resources in economic development. Indeed, as Japanese scholar Yuri Kase writes, the 1968/70 Report concluded that Japan's security "would best be attained through a multi-dimensional approach including political and economic efforts, and not through a traditional militaristic, power-based approach." Solingen confirms that the nuclear umbrella "obviated spending too many resources on security while facilitating access to global markets, natural resources, and international institutions."[173] This strategy, according to analysts Kurt Campbell and Tsuyoshi Sunohara, worked so well that "by the late 1960s Japan had the second-largest economy in the free world."[174]

By conducting these nuclear-weapons feasibility studies and quietly leaking both their technical findings (that Japan could produce nuclear weapons) and their policy recommendations (that Japan should not produce nuclear weapons), the Japanese attempted to achieve multiple objectives: First, to strengthen the U.S. security commitment to Japan after 1970, when the Mutual Security Treaty would end; second, to put pressure on the international community to take the threat of the spread of nuclear weapons more seriously and strengthen its commitment to nonproliferation; and third, to maintain a "back-door" option for bomb acquisition by establishing a latent threshold. Thus, as the

[173] Solingen, "The Perils of Prediction," 137.
[174] Campbell and Sunohara, "Japan: Thinking the Unthinkable," 220.

historical record suggests, a declining Japanese confidence in the credibility of the U.S. security guarantee, combined with a recognition that Japan could strengthen international commitments to nonproliferation in the draft NPT discussions taking place during this time, contributed to a decision at the top-most levels of the Japanese government to conduct nuclear weapons feasibility studies and invest in the development of an advanced indigenous nuclear fuel cycle.

1970-1976: The U.S. Security Commitment and NPT Ratification

Similar to Japan's actions in the 1960s, Japanese nuclear decision making in the 1970s was animated by two concurrent concerns. The first was regarding the maintenance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella over Japan after 1970, as well as the concurrent change in the conduct of U.S. foreign affairs in East Asia, and the second was the ongoing debate over Japan's ratification of the NPT. On the first point, President Nixon had decided in May 1969 to allow the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty "to continue without amendment after 1970,"[175] and similarly Prime Minister Sato had approved "automatic extension of the treaty" past its expiration date of June 22, 1970.[176] However, even though the agreement was extended, it was still believed that Japan's "continuing confidence in the U.S. nuclear umbrella" would be paramount to efforts to prevent Japan from going

[175] Memorandum, "NSDM 13: Policy Toward Japan," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, May 28, 1969, folder: NSDM 1 — NSDM 50 [originals], box H-208, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Policy Papers (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 1.
[176] Kei Wakaizumi, *The Best Course Available: A Personal Account of the Secret U.S.-Japan Okinawa Reversion Negotiations* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 41, 324.

nuclear.[177] Indeed, as the coming years would show, the extension of the MST past 1970, in and of itself, was insufficient to allay Japanese fears of U.S. abandonment, due to larger geopolitical shifts in East Asia that were taking place concurrently. Senior Japanese officials acknowledged that exploiting these U.S. concerns over Japanese confidence in the U.S. security guarantee would prove to be useful. For example, a senior official in the Japanese Defense Agency, Takuya Kubo, contended in 1971 that Japan could hold its threat of nuclear weapons development against Washington's concerns over global proliferation to extract stronger U.S. security guarantees, writing, "If Japan prepares [a] latent nuclear capability by which it would enable Japan to develop significant nuclear armament at any time … [then] the United States would hope to sustain the Japan-U.S. security system by providing a nuclear guarantee to Japan, because otherwise, the U.S. would be afraid of a rapid deterioration of the stability in … international relations triggered by nuclear proliferation."[178]

The second factor in Japanese nuclear decision making during this period was tied to the debate over ratification of the NPT and whether the benefits to the international community of Japanese accession to the treaty would come at a steep cost to Japan itself. Despite signing the NPT in February 1970, the Japanese Diet did not ratify the agreement until 1976,[179] and the historical evidence suggests this

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[177] Memorandum, "Japan NPT Ratification," U. Alexis Johnson to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, June 7, 1972, folder: Japan March 6 - June 8, 1972 [2 of 5], box 102, National Security Council Files — Henry A. Kissinger Office Files — Country Files-Far East, RMNL, 1-2.
[178] Takuya Kubo, "Boueiryoku Seibi no Kangaekata [A Framework to Consider the Arrangement of Japan's Defense Capabilities], University of Tokyo Oriental Culture Research Institute, February 20, 1971; cited in Hajime Izumi and Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Not Going Nuclear: Japan's Response to North Korea's Nuclear Test," *Arms Control Today* 37, no. 5 (June 2007): 9.
[179] Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," 765.

six-year delay was due more to domestic political battles and international prestige debates, rather than to genuine security concerns. That is, Japan sought to toe the line between championing the cause of global nonproliferation, on the one hand, and completely closing the door on its own nuclear weapons option, on the other.

Beginning in 1970, as the United States implemented the Nixon Doctrine and became embroiled in Vietnam, Japanese officials privately expressed concern over the implications of these policy shifts for U.S.-Japan relations, especially if the eventual normalization of U.S. relations with China would lead to a reduction or withdrawal of the U.S. presence from the region. Within Washington, multiple high-level U.S. officials cautioned against taking too aggressive of a tack with China and advocated for the provision of firm reassurances to Japan on the question of Washington's continued commitment to Tokyo. For example, U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird wrote to President Nixon in October 1970 that it was crucial that the United States reassure Japan, arguing that any Japanese decision to pursue nuclear weapons would depend "primarily on Japanese confidence in our strategic deterrent and our commitment to defend Japan against nuclear aggression" from China and the Soviet Union.[180] The high-level U.S. Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC) came to a similar conclusion, arguing that the United States "has furthered the understanding that *Japan's potential need for nuclear weapons is obviated by U.S. preparedness to come to*

[180] Memorandum, "U.S. Troop Levels in Europe and Korea," Melvin Laird to President Nixon, SECRET, October 14, 1970, folder: NSSM-27 (2 of 2) [3 of 3], box H-139, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 3.

her defense in a situation involving such weapons" [emphasis added].[181] A follow-up 1971 study by a DPRC working group that reported directly to President Nixon stressed that this continued preclusion was central to the maintenance of peace and stability in East Asia at a time when the United States was developing closer relations with China, and that upsetting this delicate balance could incentivize Japan to go down the nuclear path:

> *Given our post-WWII ties to Japan and our major economic and security interests there at present and in the future, the major U.S. interest in the Pacific Region is to maintain close and continued cooperation with Japan. … A re-orientation of Japan away from close ties with the U.S. [given implementation of the Nixon Doctrine] could create great uncertainties in the region and cause dramatic changes in the structure of power in Asia … and could lead to Japan's acquiring nuclear weapons.*[182]

In National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 122, released in July 1971, an interdepartmental group of high-level U.S. officials noted that, "at present, Japan is critically dependent on us, politically, economically and militarily, but the U.S. also has a major stake in preserving the relationship." NSSM-122 emphasized that "Japan's policy of rejecting nuclear weapons rests in large part on Japan's faith in the U.S. deterrent,"[183] therefore implying that Japan's non-nuclear position would likely change immediately if its confidence in

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[181] Study Paper, "National Security Interests and Commitments Study for the Defense Program Review Committee," SECRET, June 26, 1970, folder: Defense Program Review Committee - National Security Interests and Commitments Study, 6/26/70, box B1-B3, Melvin R. Laird Papers, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (hereafter GRFL), 14.
[182] Study Paper, "U.S. Strategy and Forces for Asia (NSSM-69)," Defense Program Review Committee Working Group, TOP SECRET, July 29, 1971, folder: US Strategy and Forces for Asia 7-29-71 [1 of 2], box H-103, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Defense Program Review Committee Meetings, RMNL, 7-9.
[183] Study Paper, "NSSM-122: Policy Toward Japan - Summary," SECRET, August 2, 1971, folder: NSSM-122 [2 of 3], box H-182, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 3-4.

the United States were to erode. Theodore Eliot, the State Department's Executive Secretary, concurred with this assessment, telling National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger that, for the moment, Japan did not "view its security as being threatened in a military sense, partly due to confidence in the relationship with the United States."[184] And in an April 1972 letter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, then a professor of Columbia University and Kissinger's close personal friend, wrote, "The [Japanese] nuclear option will be exercised if there is some basic deterioration in the international situation, with a more isolationist United States … prompting the Japanese to assume their own strategic defense."[185]

In his own analysis to Kissinger, Winston Lord, then the State Department's Director of Policy Planning, added important context to this claim, pointing out that "the questions are often asked whether Japan will go on relying on the U.S. for protection." So far, Lord argued, "the Japanese have answered yes," but he cautioned that this confidence in the U.S. security guarantee had the potential to erode quickly and significantly:

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[184] Study Paper, "Paper for SRG Meeting on Japan - August 27, 1971," Theodore Eliot to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, August 24, 1971, folder: NSSM-122 [1 of 3], box H-182, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 2.
[185] Memorandum, "Brzezinski Concerning U.S.-Japan Policy," Zbigniew Brzezinski to Henry Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, April 11, 1972, folder: Japan March 6 - June 8, 1972 [4 of 5], box 102, National Security Council Files — Henry A. Kissinger Office Files — Country Files-Far East, RMNL, 7.

> *The one factor that could impel the Japanese to alter their defense policy would be a precipitate U.S. withdrawal of forces from East Asia, especially if this were done at a time of continuing tension in the region. The Japanese might then feel compelled to adopt a more independent defense policy.*[186]

Defense Secretary Laird, for his part, reminded President Nixon that the U.S. interest in East Asia was "to avoid the twin specters of a defenseless Japan in the face of a nuclear threat, or a necessity for a nuclear armed Japan. In this respect," he argued, "the U.S. and Japan must convince China that the [U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty] does not constitute a threat to China and that there is no necessity for Japan to produce a nuclear deterrent."[187]

Clearly, then, decision makers at the highest levels of the U.S. foreign policy and national security apparatus were advising Nixon to make explicit overtures to Tokyo and allay Japanese concerns over the possible loss of the U.S. security guarantee, in order to prevent Japan from considering the nuclear weapons path. But by no means were these debates over Japan's faith in the U.S. nuclear umbrella confined to the elite foreign policy circles in Washington, for even the Japanese government and people themselves had their doubts. For example, an opinion poll conducted in Japan showed that while 29% of those surveyed in Japan had trust "in the U.S. to help in Japan's defense in event of an

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[186] Study Paper, "Directions Japan's Foreign Policy Might Take," Winston Lord to Henry Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, May 24, 1974, folder: NSSM-172 [1 of 3], box H-196, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 10-11.
[187] Memorandum, "Meeting with Prime Minister Tanaka," Melvin Laird to President Nixon, SECRET, August 21, 1972, folder: NSSM-122 [3 of 3], box H-182, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 1-2.

external threat to their security," 46% had no such trust at all.[188] Likewise, as Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Alexis Johnson confided in Kissinger, "there have been recurring indications of uncertainty on the part of the Japanese Government and general public with respect to how firmly the U.S. Government is committed" to Japan's defense.[189] And a high-level 1974 study by a special National Security Council working group on East Asia issues found that, because this Japanese fear of a growing gap between Tokyo and Washington was becoming increasingly tangible, Japan would do what it felt necessary to maintain the U.S. security commitment: "Japan's interest is to preserve the U.S. strategic deterrent … [and Japan] will also seek to ensure the retention in Japan of those U.S. Forces essential for the maintenace [sic] of a credible strategic deterrent and to the defense of Japan itself."[190]

In a 1975 memorandum, Kissinger reminded President Ford that U.S. interventions overseas, particularly in Vietnam, were having significant effects on Tokyo's assessment of the U.S. capacity to provide for Japan's defense. Kissinger wrote, "Recently Japan's security interests and policies have been the subject of an unprecedented public discussion … [due to] the failure of U.S. policy in Indochina -- a development which served to remind the Japanese that the East

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[188] Study Paper, "Japanese Opinion Polls," Henry Loomis to Alexander Haig, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE, April 26, 1972, folder: Japan March 6 - June 8, 1972 [4 of 5], box 102, National Security Council Files — Henry A. Kissinger Office Files — Country Files-Far East, RMNL, 2.
[189] Memorandum, "Japan NPT Ratification," U. Alexis Johnson to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, June 7, 1972, folder: Japan March 6 - June 8, 1972 [2 of 5], box 102, National Security Council Files — Henry A. Kissinger Office Files — Country Files-Far East, RMNL, 1.
[190] Study Paper, "NSSM 172: US Policy Toward Japan," National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for East Asia and Pacific Affairs to multiple recipients, SECRET, June 29, 1974, folder: NSSM-172 [1 of 3], box H-196, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Study Memorandums (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 4-5.

Asian political environment is not immutable. This has made them more attentive to other features of the landscape and raised questions in Japan about U.S. staying power in the Pacific."[191] Indeed, witnessing the American experience in Vietnam seemed to have such a strong impact on Japanese decision makers that by 1976 confidence in the U.S. commitment to Japan had hit an all time low. According to an unmarked U.S. analysis that captured the Japanese attitude towards the U.S. at the time, "moderate, cautious [Japanese] Foreign Office and Defense Agency officials, media specialists on foreign and defense policy, and a growing number of foreign policy intellectuals have a substantially different perception of Japan's security environment than they did a year or two ago." This change in attitude was driven by external shifts, such as the U.S. rapprochement with China and the "debacle in Vietnam," and was feeding "doubts about American determination and reliability as a guarantor of Japan's security." If Japan were to view the U.S. as "an irresolute, declining power," then it would "undermine Japanese confidence in the US, will emasculate the Security Treaty, and … is likely to produce an unstable, and perhaps eventually, a nuclear-armed Japan.[192] As foreign policy expert and former National Security Council staffer Morton Halperin concurred in 1974, if the Japanese were to conclude that "they could no longer rely on American security guarantees," then they might undertake "a vastly increased defense effort, including the procurement of nuclear weapons." Such a

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[191] Memorandum, "The Visit of Japanese Prime Minister Miki," Henry A. Kissinger to President Ford, SECRET, July 1, 1975, folder: Japan (7), box 7, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 2-3.
[192] Study Paper, "Japanese Perceptions of the Asian Military Balance," Classification Unknown, June 23, 1976, folder: Japan (11), box 7, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-4.

development would, according to Halperin, "be a substantial setback to American nonproliferation efforts."[193]

Thus, from the U.S. perspective, the provision and maintenance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella to Japan was crucial to efforts to reassure Japanese leaders that their perceived need for an independent nuclear deterrent would be unwarranted, thereby freeing up Japan to ratify the NPT with a clear conscience.[194] Moreover, because Japan thus far had been a holdout on ratifying the NPT, ratification was a top U.S. priority for the purposes of achieving broader international nonproliferation objectives. In a 1974 study, the U.S. National Security Council made it clear that Japanese ratification "would renew international confidence in the NPT system and prospects for preventing further proliferation, and reinforce Japan's non-nuclear policy."[195]

According to other scholars, however, the delay in ratifying the NPT was due more to domestic political constraints in Japan than to security considerations and the ongoing debate over Japan's future nuclear status. For example, scholar Christopher Hughes writes, "Japan's delayed ratification was a result of domestic

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[193] Morton H. Halperin, "U.S.-Japanese Security Relations," in *United States-Japanese Relations: The 1970s*, eds. Priscilla Clapp and Morton H. Halperin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 217.

[194] A 1970 U.S. study paper stated, "The primary meaning and major benefit of the Mutual Security Treaty for Japan is the provision of the U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent against nuclear intimidation or attack from the USSR or Communist China. Further, in seeking to induce Japanese signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty the U.S. has furthered the understanding that Japan's potential need for nuclear weapons is obviated by U.S. preparedness to come to her defense in a situation involving such weapons." See Study Paper, "National Security Interests and Commitments Study for the Defense Program Review Committee," SECRET, June 26, 1970, folder: Defense Program Review Committee - National Security Interests and Commitments Study, 6/26/70, box B1-B3, Melvin R. Laird Papers, GRFL, 14.

[195] Study Paper, "NSSM 210 - Review of Policy Toward Japan," National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for East Asia and the Pacific to Brent Scowcroft, SECRET, October 21, 1974, folder: SRG, November 11, 1974, Japan (NSSM 210) (2), box 24, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 47.

dissatisfaction with the fact that the NPT legitimized the right of the United States and other nuclear states to preserve their nuclear arsenals and avoid disarmament, as well as by the concerns of Japan's nuclear industry that the NPT would bar Japan from developing peaceful nuclear technologies."[196] Similarly, analyst Mark Fitzpatrick argues the delay in ratification was due to resistance to the treaty from both the right and left sides of the Japanese domestic political spectrum.[197]

The archival record supports these claims.[198] Significant opposition to the NPT existed within the Japanese Diet, and Prime Minister Takeo Miki worked hard to overcome this resistance and ratify the treaty. While the treaty encountered some hostility on the far left of the political spectrum,[199] the principal source of opposition came from within Miki's own party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).[200] A small subset of national security "hawks" in the LDP had first argued against the NPT on the grounds that the treaty would establish two classes of states, the "haves" and the "have-nots," which then would be treated unequally by the IAEA and nuclear supplier states.[201] However, following successful

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[196] Hughes, *Japan's Security Agenda*, 199.
[197] Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers*, 74.
[198] For example, in a telegram to Henry Kissinger, U.S. Ambassador to Japan James Hodgson wrote, "Failure to ratify [the nonproliferation] treaty stems more from domestic political issues than Japan's attidude [sic] toward nuclear weapon proliferation." See Telegram, "Miki Visit Paper: NPT," James D. Hodgson to Henry A. Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, July 11, 1975, folder: Prime Minister Miki of Japan, August 6-7, 1975 (2), box 22, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 2.
[199] Quester, "Japan and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," 773.
[200] Study Paper, "NSSM 210 - Review of Policy Toward Japan," Interdepartmental Group for East Asia and the Pacific to Brent Scowcroft, SECRET, October 21, 1974, folder: SRG, November 11, 1974, Japan (NSSM 210) (2), box 24, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 47.
[201] As Vice Foreign Minister Takeso Shimoda argued in 1966, "Japan cannot agree to such a big power-centered approach, implying as it does that the nuclear powers would not be required to reduce their capabilities or stockpile, while the non-nuclear powers would be barred … from

negotiations with the IAEA, which would see Japan accorded an equivalent status to major nuclear weapons states with respect to access to nuclear energy technologies, the LDP switched tactics and argued instead that "Japan's national security would be jeopardized by early ratification of NPT ([thereby] foreclosing [the] nuclear option)."[202]

The task therefore fell to Prime Minister Miki to reassure his party members that the NPT would not jeopardize Japan's security. For Miki, the NPT was of great personal importance, and his sense was that members of his own party mistakenly believed that the United States actively wanted Japan to not ratify the treaty. As a result, he asked to have the United States intervene. In a 1975 memo to Kissinger, the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, James Hodgson, wrote, "[The] Prime Minister feels, therefore, that some strong indication of U.S. interest [would be] essential to achieve ratification during this session … What [the] Prime Minister has in mind is some personal message either from President Ford or from you urging Japan's ratification."[203]

Coordinating with the State Department and White House, the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo provided such reassuring language to Diet members, affirming that the U.S. security commitment to Japan would continue even after the Diet ratified the NPT. In an April 1975 meeting with the U.S. Deputy Secretary of

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having nuclear weapons." Quoted in Selig Harrison, *Japan's Nuclear Future* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996), 7.

[202] Telegram, "Japan's Ratification of NPT," James D. Hodgson to Henry A. Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, February 20, 1975, folder: Japan - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), box 8, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.

[203] Telegram, "Japan and NPT," James D. Hodgson to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, February 24, 1975, folder: Japan - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - NODIS (4), box 8, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.

State, Robert Ingersoll, Japanese Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa expressed "gratitude for the assurances which had been conveyed by the Embassy in response to questions from Diet members," and said he was "satisfied with the language provided him … on the U.S. commitment under the Security Treaty," which would remain in effect after NPT ratification. Because Miyazawa's biggest challenge with getting the Diet to ratify the NPT had ben "to assure LDP members that Japan's safety was secured," this language from the United States sufficed in convincing Japanese legislators that ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty would not erode Japan's security.[204] These reassurances were then backed up by the results of the first quinquennial NPT Review Conference in May 1975, which "incorporated Japanese desires into its final declaration."[205] While Tokyo had ceased its nuclear weapons activities after signing the NPT in 1970, it took another six years of debate and dispute before the Japanese Diet gave its approval to ratify the NPT in June 1976. Thus, according to academic Llewelyn Hughes, it was not until the very moment of NPT ratification that Japan's effort to keep open "the option of developing an indigenous nuclear deterrent was discarded."[206]

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[204] Memorandum of Conversation, "Overall View of US-Japan Relations and Global Situation," SECRET, April 10, 1975, folder: Japan (5), box 4, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 9-10.
[205] John E. Endicott, "The 1975-76 Debate Over Ratification of the NPT in Japan," *Asian Survey* 17, no. 3 (March 1977): 291.
[206] Llewelyn Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan," *International Security* 31, no. 4 (Spring 2007): 73.

CONCLUSION

With ratification of the NPT in 1976, Japan cemented its formal commitment to forego nuclear weapons. However, to this day it has kept the "nuclear option" open by acquiring and developing advanced nuclear fuel cycle technologies, including uranium enrichment and spent fuel reprocessing capabilities. The archival record demonstrates that Japan's nuclear decision making between 1961 and 1976 was driven by a combination of factors, some of which fit with existing theories of proliferation, and some of which are surprising.

First, when viewed through the lens of the security model, Japan's decision making, at least in the early 1960s, was driven not by the perception of an existential threat in the form of a rising and nuclear-capable China, but rather by a fear that the strength of the U.S. security commitment to Japan might wane after 1970. Thus, while making public statements expressing their unwavering confidence in the U.S.-Japan alliance, in private Japanese leaders sought to secure, at the earliest possible date, the extension of the Mutual Security Treaty past June 1970, when it was set to expire. They did so in part by sharing with American officials that there was serious interest in Japan for acquiring nuclear weapons of its own; even at the highest levels of government, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, who had put forward the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" which would later win him the Nobel Peace Prize, had opined to President Lyndon Johnson that Japan should have nuclear weapons. By playing on fears in Washington of nuclear proliferation in Japan, Tokyo was able to secure regular reassurances through the early to mid-1960s of the U.S. commitment to Japan's

security, while setting the stage for an extension of the Mutual Security Treaty past 1970.

In the second half of the 1960s, as the United States and Japan approached the date of the formal termination of the Mutual Security, the Japanese government floated multiple trial balloons on launching a national nuclear weapons program, conducting five feasibility studies in three years and concluding every time that Japan would be better off without nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, the reason Japan conducted these studies was partly to use them as leverage in putting additional pressure on the United States to extend its commitment to Japan beyond 1970, by quietly sharing with American officials that, should the U.S. nuclear umbrella be retracted, Japan already had the technical wherewithal, and a latent political desire, to go nuclear itself. This tactic seemed to work well, as evidenced by the fact that Japan successfully secured an extension of the U.S. security guarantee when President Nixon and Prime Minister Sato agreed to renew the Mutual Security Treaty in 1970.

Even after the formal extension of the treaty, however, Japanese concerns over U.S. abandonment were not completely mitigated, due to the significant changes that were taking place in East Asia during the early 1970s. As the United States implemented the Nixon Doctrine, worked to fight its way out of Vietnam, and reassessed its overall role in East Asia, especially with respect to the structure of its treaty alliances, Japanese decision making continued to be motivated by larger strategic questions of whether changes in U.S. policy in East Asia would lead to a withdrawal of the nuclear umbrella over Japan. Unlike in the previous

decade, however, Japan did not conduct any additional nuclear weapons studies in the 1970s, instead seeking additional reassurances from the Nixon and Ford administrations that the U.S. commitment to Japan would remain stable, despite larger regional shifts in U.S. strategy and policy. The Japanese ratification of the NPT also helped in this regard, as the Japanese sought and received explicit assurances from Washington that NPT ratification would not erode Japan's security, but in fact would enhance it.

Second, from the prestige perspective, Japan wrestled internally with the question of whether nuclear weapons would enhance or erode Japan's standing in the international politics community, especially as global deliberations over the draft NPT picked up in the late 1960s. Some Japanese, obsessed with international prestige, and citing China and India as examples, argued they should have nuclear weapons because of the attendant benefits they believed they would gain in international politics. Although by the late 1960s China had become an established nuclear weapons state and conducted multiple tests, Japan did not seem to regard China as an existential security threat; rather, as the NPT was finalized and opened for signature, Japan's serious interest in nuclear weapons was driven by prestige considerations. Specifically, the debate over the structure of the NPT, whereby signatory states would be divided into two unequal classes, resulted in a consensus view in Japan that Tokyo should not be relegated to a lower, "second class" status, and the Japanese worked hard to ensure that their standing in international politics would not be hurt by signing the NPT. After signature, however, it took another six years for Japan to ratify the treaty, during

which Japanese decision makers actively internalized the global shift in the norm of nuclear weapons possession. Recognizing that it was now undesirable to acquire nuclear weapons, Japan sought to be on the right side of history by championing the cause of nonproliferation, while simultaneously securing its right to access to nuclear technology, thereby cementing its future place in international politics as a technologically advanced state with mastery over the full nuclear fuel cycle, while also preventing a complete and irreversible foreclosure of its own nuclear option.

Third, from the perspective of the domestic politics model, Japan's regular engagement with the nuclear weapons question was motivated by a combination of nationalism and internal politicking. From the early 1960s onwards, the Japanese people, showing strong signs of a renewed nationalism and a desire to take an active lead in global politics, spurred Japanese government decision makers to debate the future of Japan's military and security policy, including whether any evolution of this policy could accommodate a fresh look at nuclear weapons acquisition. Later in the 1970s, once Japan had signed the NPT, the debate over ratification was driven by tensions between, on the one hand, the far left and, on the other hand, Prime Minister Takeo Miki's own party, the LDP, which argued for Japan to reject ratification because it would constrain Japan's future military and nuclear options. However, once these concerns were addressed, the Japanese Diet approved ratification of the NPT in June 1976, thus bringing Japan firmly into the nonproliferation regime.

Finally, from the perspective of alliance dynamics, the case of Japan from 1961 to 1976 highlights the danger in reducing alliances to simple one-time transactional relationships. That is, the simple signing or extension of a security treaty does not always suffice in addressing the junior ally's concerns over the possibility of abandonment, and larger geopolitical and international motivations can and do play an important factor that can offset the confidence a security treaty instills in both parties. More importantly, this case demonstrates that, contrary to the conventional logics of alliance dynamics, the junior partner in an asymmetric alliance can often wield significantly and disproportionately more power vis-à-vis the senior ally. By continuously clamoring for renewed guarantees from Washington and using its nuclear weapons potential as a bargaining chip, Japan was able to ensure that the U.S. security commitment to Japan would not evaporate after the formal termination of the Mutual Security Treaty, and again as U.S. strategic priorities began to shift in East Asia in the 1970s.

CHAPTER 4 — TRY, TRY AGAIN: SOUTH KOREA, 1961-1979

A small country of less than 39,000 square miles, South Korea finds itself in a tough neighborhood. With a belligerent North Korea along its northern border, separated from the South only by a demilitarized zone, as well as a resurgent China with regional power projection ambitions, the Republic of Korea has relied on the United States to provide for its defense for more than six decades. After the 1953 armistice to the Korean War, the United States signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of Korea; in addition, the United States has maintained a large troop presence, and even stationed tactical nuclear weapons, on Korean soil. Yet, on two separate occasions during the Cold War, the South Korean government flirted with developing nuclear weapons of its own. Of course, these efforts were ultimately unsuccessful, but they still raise an important question regarding the impetus for these ambitions: What prompted Seoul to embark on the nuclear path, not once but twice?

At the outset, the alliance between South Korea and the United States, which began in 1953-1954, was based on a shared vision of stability on the Korean peninsula. However, whereas Washington's interest in stabilizing the peninsula was as a means to preventing the further spread of Communism, Seoul was motivated by its desire to reunite the two Koreas under one banner; to wit, even immediately after the 1953 armistice, President Syngman Rhee undertook a

military campaign to annex the North, although it ultimately failed.[207] This potential for further military conflict prompted President Eisenhower to send U.S. troops to the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and, since then, writes analyst Se Young Jang, "the U.S. armed forces stationed in South Korea have increasingly served as a tripwire guaranteeing U.S. involvement in the event of armed attack by North Korea," while simultaneously curbing "South Korea's military adventurism."[208]

The secondary literature indicates the primary motive driving South Korea's nuclear decision making was a deep-seated fear that the United States would withdraw its commitment to the security and stability of the Korean peninsula. While corroborating and strengthening this predominant argument, this research also provides a counterargument to the widespread belief that South Korea's fears of abandonment began with the promulgation of the Nixon Doctrine in 1969; in fact, as the next section shows, those fears had taken root much earlier.

1961-1969: The Force Reduction Debate and the Seeds of Doubt

From the South Korean perspective, the suspension of the Korean War in 1953 did not mitigate Seoul's security concerns; in fact, it only exacerbated existing tensions between the South and the North, which was now more powerful owing in part to support from both the Soviet Union and China. As a result, through the 1960s concerns persisted both in Washington and in Seoul over whether the North would, by virtue of its conventional military superiority,

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[207] Andrew O'Neil, *Asia, the US and Extended Nuclear Deterrence: Atomic Umbrella in the Twenty-first Century* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 55.
[208] Se Young Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 4 (2016): 505-506.

attempt to cross the 38th Parallel and force a Korean unification through a takeover of the South. These concerns, in turn, were intimately tied to the debate over U.S. troop withdrawals from the Korean peninsula.

Beginning in the early 1960s, as North Korea invested heavily in its conventional military capabilities, and as China also became stronger, the credibility of the U.S. security commitment to Seoul was increasingly called into question. However, unlike in the case of Japan, with respect to South Korea these doubts were directly related to U.S. deliberations and decisions to reduce troop numbers on the Korean peninsula. Following the 1953 armistice between North and South Korea and the formal establishment of the U.S.-ROK defense alliance,[209] U.S. and Korean officials debated whether the United States should continue to maintain a military presence on the peninsula and, if so, whether force reductions could take place for cost savings and tactical flexibility purposes, all without degrading the U.S. security commitment to South Korea.

Not surprisingly, the view from Seoul was overwhelmingly in favor of maintaining current levels of U.S. forces without any modifications, as the Korean media demonstrated early on. In a November 1963 message to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul summarized the viewpoints of the major newspapers in South Korea on the question of U.S. force reductions, writing, "The press reaction has been unanimously against any reduction of U.S. forces in Korea. … The psychological impact of a reduction of U.S. forces in Korea is a prevalent theme [in the Korean media]." In particular, "the *Tonga Ilbo* viewed the

[209] "Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea, October 1, 1953," Yale Law School, accessible at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/kor001.asp.

presence of '50,000 U.S. troops' in Korea as a 'potent symbol of U.S. determination to defend Korea from communism'; [therefore] a withdrawal of a part of these forces would undermine Korea's faith in the U.S. determination" to defend the ROK in the event of an attack.[210]

Similarly, analysts and decision makers in Washington were also debating the implications of any drawdown in U.S. forces stationed on the Korean peninsula. Acutely aware of the high costs associated with the maintenance of extant troop numbers in Korea, they recognized that any reduction in those numbers could potentially yield significant cost savings. For example, in 1961 the CIA made it clear that the continued provision of significant levels of military and security support to South Korea would come at a price, writing, "South Korea is a very expensive client. It is a deficit area economically and its defense establishment depends completely upon U.S. support."[211] Likewise, as early as 1962 U.S. State Department officials were acknowledging that reducing the U.S. troop presence in Korea would lead to significant benefits, namely "increased tactical flexibility" and "potential balance of payments savings."[212]

While these cost savings would be significant, a separate set of voices in the U.S. national security establishment concurred with the Korean assessment that withdrawing troops from Korea would run the very real risk of signaling a

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[210] Airgram, "Korean Press Opposes Reduction of US Forces in Korea," Philip Habib to Dean Rusk, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE, November 7, 1963, folder: Korea, Cables, 10/63-11/63, box 129, National Security Files — Countries, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (hereafter JFKL), 1-3.
[211] Memorandum, "US Relations With Client States," SECRET, April 13, 1961, folder: Central Intelligence Agency, General, 1/61-4/61, box 271, National Security Files — Departments & Agencies, JFKL, 20.
[212] Telegram, U. Alexis Johnson to Samuel D. Berger, TOP SECRET, July 27, 1962, folder: Korea, Cables, 7/21/62-8/31/62, box 129, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.

decline in the American commitment to the stability of the Korean peninsula, especially vis-à-vis a conventionally superior North Korean military and a rising China. For example, the Military Representative to President Kennedy, General Maxwell Taylor, believed any reduction in forces would be unwelcome and indeed damaging to Korean security. In a September 1962 memo to Secretary of State Rusk, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Lemnitzer, Taylor simply wrote, "I am convinced that there is no military justification for reducing the present US-ROK military establishment."[213] In the same spirit, a high-level U.S. State Department study group argued in a 1962 paper that the Chinese "have become, if anything, more belligerently aggressive; both the Soviet Union and Red China have undertaken formal military alliances with North Korea; and it is expected that within the next few years the Chinese will demonstrate and widely advertise a nuclear capability." As a consequence, the study argued, a reduction in U.S. troops in Korea would at this time be unwise:

> *A reduction in forces of the size assumed would create a widespread belief, with major political implications, that the military security of South Korea had in fact been jeopardized. This belief in the minds of our Southeast Asian Allies would raise serious questions regarding the validity of dependence on the U.S. … The ultimate conclusion they may well reach is that some shift in U.S. commitment is taking place, but that it is not likely to be a shift beneficial to U.S. allies in Southeast Asia.*[214]

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[213] Memorandum, Maxwell Taylor to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, September 20, 1962, folder: NSAM 188: Limited Benefits of Bases in Japan, 9/24/62, box 338, National Security Files — Meetings & Memoranda, JFKL, 4.

[214] Study Paper, "A Political-Military Study of South Korean Forces," ISA Special Study Group to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, April 16, 1962, folder: Korea: A Political Military Study of

Reducing the number of U.S. forces in Korea would have important nuclear implications as well, especially as China showed signs in the early 1960s of building up its own nuclear program. From Washington's perspective, it was imperative that the U.S. further strengthen its military and security commitment to South Korea; otherwise, it was feared, Seoul would likely demand its own nuclear capability. In line with the earlier recommendations of General Taylor and the State Department study group, a special interagency Korea Task Force argued to the U.S. National Security Council that, in order to enhance its commitment to South Korea, counter a nuclear-armed China, and "redress the balance of military power caused by a significant reduction in ROK ground forces," the United States should deploy "additional tactical nuclear weapons adjacent to the Demilitarized Zone," thereby augmenting the nuclear warheads that were already stationed there since 1958.[215] Thus, the Korea Task Force viewed the presence of tactical nuclear weapons on the peninsula as an effective stop-gap measure that would allow Washington to reduce its troop presence there without eroding Seoul's confidence in the U.S. security guarantee.

If such guarantees were not provided immediately, the consensus belief in Washington was that South Korea would likely demand a joint-control nuclear sharing program with the United States, wherein Seoul would have semi-autonomous possession and control over U.S. nuclear assets. The American

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South Korean Forces, 4/62 (Cary Report), plus Annexes A-H, box 431, National Security Files — Robert W. Komer, JFKL, 50-51.

[215] Study Paper, "Presidential Task Force on Korea," Korea Task Force to National Security Council, SECRET, June 5, 1961, folder: Korea, General, 6/5/61, Task Force Report, box 127, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 3.

Embassy in Seoul pointed out in a 1961 telegram to Secretary of State Rusk that any assessment of the "implications [of] Communist Chinese eventual acquisition [of an] independent nuclear capability must be considered in [the] broad context of [South Korea's] long-term close relationship with [the] U.S." The Embassy added, "Chinese detonation of [a] simple nuclear device or possession of atomic weapons would not in itself lead to [a] change in policy toward the U.S. inasmuch as [the] ROK [is] inextricably dependent [on the] U.S., militarily and economically. However, these developments will possibly lead to increasing ROK pressure for *possession [of] tactical atomic weapons* or dual purpose weapons" [emphasis added].[216]

Likewise, a 1963 study by the high-level U.S. Interagency Policy Planning Council (IPPC) suggested that, if China were to continue along the path towards nuclear weapons acquisition, South Korea might seek "a reaffirmation of the U.S. defense commitment," specifically through "various forms of nuclear cooperation" or "some form of nuclear weapons sharing."[217] The IPPC therefore concluded that, in order to provide reassurances to South Korea in a way that would decrease the ROK's incentive to acquire its own nuclear weapons, the U.S. "should take the initiative to reaffirm its existing defense commitments to allies," but should make clear that Washington "cannot assume responsibility for nuclear defense if [South Korea] initiates military action against an Asian Communist

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[216] Telegram, Marshall Green to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 13, 1961, folder: Korea, Cables, 6/61, box 128, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1-2.
[217] Study Paper, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability," Interagency Policy Planning Council, SECRET, October 7, 1963, folder: China, General, 11/63-12/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 26-27, 60-63.

state without U.S. concurrence." In this statement, the IPPC was arguing that the United States should not allow itself to be dragged into a small regional conflict that might have larger geopolitical implications.[218] This theme would reemerge at the end of the decade in its codified form under the Nixon Doctrine.

In the meantime, as the South Koreans watched the North's conventional military capabilities grow in numbers and strength, they worried increasingly about an invasion by North Korea, possibly backed up by the Chinese. The U.S. intelligence community, confident that the very *presence* of U.S. troops in Korea would sufficiently serve as a symbol of the U.S. commitment to Seoul, worried less about the exact number of troops and thus argued that some troop withdrawals could be made safely. As Director of Central Intelligence John McCone wrote in April 1962, "The chief deterrent to invasion … is not these forces but the general U.S. commitment to defend its ally." He added, "It is possible that the circumstances of the force reduction would be such as to persuade the Communists that this commitment had become less firm, but the U.S. could take steps to prevent this interpretation."[219] Although he didn't clarify what specific "steps" Washington could take, McCone was arguing that the United States could withdraw some of its troops from the peninsula without signaling a decline in its commitment to South Korea and thus potentially upsetting the regional balance of power.

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[218] Study Paper, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability," Interagency Policy Planning Council, SECRET, October 7, 1963, folder: China, General, 11/63-12/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 26-27, 60-63.
[219] Special National Intelligence Estimate Number 42-62, "The Outlook for South Korea," John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, April 4, 1962, folder: South Korea, box 6, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library (hereafter LBJL), 7.

However, if any troop withdrawals were to be done successfully, they would need to be made with very careful consideration. In a telegram to Secretary of State Rusk on January 21, 1964, U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Samuel Berger cautioned strongly against implementing force reduction plans in a haphazard manner, writing, "I would hope that any … U.S. forces reduction will not be done by [the] axe method of simply chopping off numbers and reshuffling [the] rest into existing installations, but would be part of a considered reorganization for [the] improved defense of Korea."[220] The very next day, Secretary Rusk took Berger's advice to heart and met with Secretary of Defense McNamara to do just that, and the two decision makers agreed that a cut of 12,000 troops from U.S. forces in Korea by the end of 1964 would not be so large as to have any "adverse political implication." Still, as National Security Council staffer Robert Komer wrote to President Lyndon B. Johnson that evening, "the plain fact of the matter … is that we're overinsured militarily in Korea at a time when we need strength much more elsewhere."[221] By this, Komer was referring, of course, to the Vietnam theater, in which the United States had, by the end of January 1964, become fully entangled.

As this debate over force reductions in Korea continued through the Johnson years, and as the Vietnam War picked up, the White House expended considerable energy redeploying its limited military resources to Vietnam while

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[220] Telegram, Samuel D. Berger to Dean Rusk, SECRET, January 21, 1964, folder: Korea - Cables - Volume I - 11/63-6/64, box 254, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 3.
[221] Memorandum, Robert W. Komer to President Johnson, SECRET, January 22, 1964, folder: Korea - Memos - Volume I - 11/63-6/64, box 254, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.

simultaneously providing continuous reassurances to the Koreans that their security would not be jeopardized as a result. In multiple meetings with South Korean President Park Chung-hee in 1965 and 1966, President Johnson emphasized time and again that any U.S. force reductions would not affect the strength or credibility of the U.S. security commitment to South Korea. In May 1965, for example, when the heads of state met at the start of a two-day summit in Washington, President Johnson "affirmed that the United States will continue to maintain its armed forces in Korea at a level of strength sufficient to ensure the defense of Korea."[222] The very next day, President Johnson reiterated that the United States "planned to keep its troops there [in Korea], and no reduction of troop strength was contemplated" beyond the already-decided 12,000 troop cut. However, "if there were an adjustment, President Park would be the first to know about it, and full consultation would be held beforehand."[223] The following year, President Johnson traveled to Seoul for a second summit, during which he "reaffirmed the readiness and determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance to defeat an armed attack against the Republic of Korea," and "assured President Park that the United States has no [additional] plan to reduce the present level of United States forces in Korea, and would continue to support Korean armed forces at levels adequate to ensure Korea's security."[224] Even near the end of his tenure, when Johnson met with Park yet again in April

[222] Telegram, Winthrop G. Brown to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, May 17, 1965, folder: Korea - Cables - Volume II - 7/64-8/65, box 254, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 3.
[223] Memorandum of Conversation, "U.S.-Korean Relations," SECRET, May 17, 1965, folder: Korea - Memos - Volume II - 7/64-8/65, box 254, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.
[224] Telegram, U.S. Embassy Seoul to Dean Rusk, Unclassified, November 2, 1966, folder: Korea - Memos - Volume III -11/65-12/66, box 255, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2.

1968, he once more "reaffirmed U.S. readiness and determination to render prompt and effective assistance to repel armed attacks against South Korea."[225]

These public statements of reassurance and support at the highest level of government were intended to mollify the Koreans and restore their faith in their superpower ally, by affirming that U.S. troop levels in Korea, despite the demands of the ongoing Vietnam War, would not be touched. Yet doubts still lingered through the 1960s as to whether, with increasingly staggering military commitments in Vietnam, the United States would actually be able to maintain troop levels in Korea. This question was an especially politically sensitive one in Seoul as well, since President Park had recently taken the domestically unpopular decision to commit Korean troops to the American war effort in Vietnam in an effort to share the burden of "collective security."[226] In a December 1968 memo to President Johnson, Under Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach wrote, "Our present policy effectively ties down in Korea two United States divisions, which are not available for use elsewhere. They require substantial expenditures for support both in Korea and the United States." Therefore, Katzenbach suggested, perhaps South Korea could use its own troops in lieu of U.S. troops on the peninsula, which would then free up at least one U.S. division to be redeployed to the Vietnam theater, while still maintaining "a combined ROK-U.S. strength adequate to provide deterrence [to the ROK] and, if necessary, deal with the likely

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[225] Study Paper, "National Security Interests and Commitments Study for the Defense Program Review Committee," SECRET, June 26, 1970, folder: Defense Program Review Committee - National Security Interests and Commitments Study, 6/26/70, box B1-B3, Melvin R. Laird Papers, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (hereafter GRFL), 13.

[226] Sung Gul Hong, "The Search for Deterrence: Park's Nuclear Option," in *The Park Chung Hee Era: The Transformation of South Korea*, ed. Byung-kook Kim and Ezra F. Vogel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 485, 505.

military threats [i.e., from North Korea or China]."[227] A State Department study paper from the same month suggested that, when the Vietnam War would eventually draw down, "the United States may be able to reduce its two divisions in Korea to one, after the ROK divisions have come home from Vietnam and then, a few years later, to reduce U.S. ground forces [in Korea] to a token deployment designed primarily to convey our continuing commitment."[228]

Thus, U.S. officials argued through the late 1960s, the United States would need to bear in mind that its commitments in Vietnam would need to be balanced against its obligations in Korea, and that Washington would need to find ways to signal its continuing commitment to Seoul, even as the demands of the Vietnam War would increasingly strain its limited resources. Although the force reduction debate in Washington and the corresponding nervousness and fear in Seoul became more urgent and acute from 1969 onwards, this section demonstrates that the groundwork had already been laid in the early to mid-1960s for an impending withdrawal of American troops, whether in whole or in part. By the time Richard Nixon entered office in January 1969, the grain of doubt had already been planted in the minds of South Korean leaders, who now held deep-seated and serious reservations about the long-term commitment of the United States to the security of the Korean peninsula. Thus, these preliminary findings offer a counterpoint to the dominant narrative in the secondary literature that "the

[227] Memorandum, "Review of United States Policy Toward Korea," Nicholas Katzenbach to President Johnson, SECRET, December 23, 1968, folder: Korea - Cables & Memos - Volume VI - 4/68-12/68 [2 of 2], box 256, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 3-5.
[228] Study Paper, "US Security Interests in the Developing World," State Department Policy Planning Council, SECRET, December 1968, folder: Transition: Policy Planning Council Papers - U.S. Security Interests in the Developing World, box 50, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 11.

original seed for the alliance crisis" [emphasis added] was the removal of U.S. troops from Korea in 1971.[229]

1969-1975: Fears of Withdrawal and a Sprint to the Bomb

The tail end of the Johnson years was fraught with uncertainty as Washington became further embedded in the Vietnam conflict and found itself stuck in that increasingly difficult quagmire.[230] With the inauguration of President Richard M. Nixon in January 1969 came a dramatic shift in the U.S.-Korean relationship, as Nixon made clear to America's allies that responsibility for maintenance of the alliance would be expected to evolve. Specifically, on July 25, 1969, President Nixon announced the Guam Doctrine:

> *Asians will say in every country that we visit that they do not want to be dictated to from the outside, Asia for the Asians. … We will give assistance to those plans. We, of course, will keep the treaty commitments that we have. But as far as our role is concerned, we must avoid that kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent upon us that we are dragged into conflicts such as the one that we have in Vietnam.*[231]

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[229] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 484. The secondary literature has coalesced around the removal of 20,000 U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula in 1971 as the start of South Korea's fear of complete abandonment by the United States. See, for example, Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions;" Peter Hayes and Chung-in Moon, "Park Chung Hee, the CIA, and the Bomb," NAPSNet Special Report, September 23, 2011, accessible at http://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-special-reports/park-chung-hee-the-cia-and-the-bomb/; Jonathan D. Pollack and Mitchell B. Reiss, "South Korea: The Tyranny of Geography and the Vexations of History," in *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why Some States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, et al (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 261; and Scott Snyder and Joyce Lee, "Infusing Commitment with Credibility: The Role of Security Assurances in Cementing the U.S.-ROK Alliance," in *Security Assurances and Nuclear Nonproliferation*, ed. Jeffrey W. Knopf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 163.

[230] Pollack and Reiss, "South Korea," 261.

[231] U.S. Government Printing Office, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon, 1969* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971).

Having learned important lessons from observing his predecessor's experience in Vietnam, President Nixon was convinced that becoming further mired in regional or intrastate conflicts around the world would not best serve U.S. strategic interests, and so the rationale behind this announcement was, as scholar Victor Cha writes, to "avoid the entanglement of U.S. ground troops in future wars on the Asian mainland."[232] Indeed, over the coming months Nixon's core philosophy was put into practice and, in December 1969, just five months after the promulgation of the Nixon Doctrine, the groundwork was laid for the eventual removal of U.S. troops from Korea when the White House quietly informed Seoul of its impending plans to reduce the U.S. force presence in Korea, which at the time numbered just over 60,000 troops.[233] As a follow-up, in March 1970 President Nixon issued National Security Decision Memorandum 48, in which he decided to "reduce the U.S. military presence in Korea by 20,000 personnel by the end of [fiscal year 1971]." The President directed the Department of Defense to develop a five-year plan for implementation of this withdrawal of two divisions, with an additional focus on evaluating the "feasibility and timing of further reductions in the U.S. military presence in Korea" after that.[234]

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[232] Victor Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: The United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 63.
[233] Wookhee Shin, *Beyond Compliance and Resistance: The Policies of Syngman Rhee and Park Chung Hee Toward the United States* (Seoul, South Korea: Seoul National University Press, 2010), 77; Seung-young Kim, "Security, Nationalism, and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles: The South Korean Case, 1970-82," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 12, no. 4 (December 2001): 54.
[234] Memorandum, "NSDM 48: U.S. Programs in Korea," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, March 20, 1970, folder: NSDM 1 — NSDM 50 [originals], box H-208, National

Of course, the Nixon administration still sought to retain the credibility of the U.S. commitment to Korea even as troop drawdowns would be implemented. To this end, a June 1970 study paper from the U.S. Defense Program Review Committee confirmed that an absolute and complete removal of all U.S. troops from South Korea would be inadvisable, stating, "U.S. force deployments in Korea give us a measure of political influence which will be somewhat diminished as troop levels are reduced, although the credibility of the U.S. commitment probably will be retained *as long as sizable U.S. units remain*" [emphasis added].[235] Therefore, and although they did not quantify the phrase "sizable U.S. units," Nixon's advisors were counseling him against a total withdrawal from the peninsula, even as he remained committed to reducing the number of U.S. troops in Korea beyond the initial two divisions.

Although at the time the Koreans were unaware of Nixon's aim to make further troops cuts after 1971, they were already tuned in to the fact that the U.S. was serious about reducing its overall presence in Korea.[236] Concerned about South Korea's security above all else, President Park sought to leverage the impending drawdown to strengthen Seoul's conventional capabilities, especially in light of the fact that North Korea was outspending South Korea on defense at

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Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Policy Papers (1969 - 1974), Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library (hereafter RMNL), 1-3.

[235] Study Paper, "National Security Interests and Commitments Study for the Defense Program Review Committee," SECRET, June 26, 1970, folder: Defense Program Review Committee - National Security Interests and Commitments Study, 6/26/70, box B1-B3, Melvin R. Laird Papers, GRFL, 17.

[236] Won-chul Oh, *Hangukhyung Gryungje Gunsul* (Economic Construction in Korean Style) (Seoul, South Korea: Kia Gryungje Yungooso, 1996), 22.

the time.[237] Specifically, he requested a U.S. military assistance package of $10 billion over five years to modernize Korean forces,[238] and subsequently told Vice President Spiro Agnew in August 1970 that he had "no objection to [the] U.S. force reduction of 20,000, provided ROK forces equipment is modernized, and national defense capability is increased."[239] After extensive negotiations between Seoul and Washington, an agreement was reached wherein South Korea would receive funding in the form of military assistance for modernization projects, while the United States would withdraw the already agreed-upon 20,000 troops by the last day of June 1971.[240]

Once this initial withdrawal had been completed and Congress had authorized a $1.5 billion military aid package to South Korea, President Nixon, true to his word, began exploring the option of further drawdowns.[241] However,

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[237] Pollack and Reiss, "South Korea," 261; Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 84.
[238] Telegram, John S. McCain, Jr. to Marshall Green, SECRET, July 23, 1970, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX: Korea, 1969-1972* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2010), accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v19p1/d67.
[239] Telegram, William J. Porter to Henry Kissinger, TOP SECRET, August 25, 1970, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v19p1/d71. In signaling to Agnew that he would be comfortable with the withdrawal of one U.S. division from the peninsula, Park hoped to ease Korean concerns about American intentions; however, at the end of that meeting, Agnew announced in a press conference that all U.S. forces would be withdrawn within five years. See U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, *Investigation of Korean-American Relations*, October 31, 1978 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 62-66.
[240] U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, *Investigation of Korean-American Relations*, 66-68. See also Memorandum, "NSDM 113: ROK Forces in South Vietnam," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, June 23, 1971, folder: NSDM 101 — NSDM 150 [originals], box H-208, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Policy Papers (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 1; Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 487.
[241] Memorandum, "NSDM 129: ROK Force Structure and Modernization Program," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, September 2, 1971, folder: NSDM 101 — NSDM 150 [originals], box H-208, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Policy Papers (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 1.

this notion was quickly discarded due to two related considerations. The first, as President Park had made abundantly clear to U.S. officials, was that the new U.S. policy of rapprochement with China, coming shortly on the heels of the Nixon Doctrine, sent a very strong signal to Seoul that, if Taiwan could be so easily abandoned by its more powerful ally, then South Korea could not be far behind.[242] Second, South Korea was still providing significant troops of its own to the war effort in Vietnam, and analysts estimate that two divisions, or roughly 50,000 Korean soldiers, had been deployed to assist the United States in Vietnam.[243] Because the United States relied heavily on these forces, President Nixon and his staff recognized that, for the time being, it was more important to keep Seoul happy than to implement further cuts in the U.S. troop presence in Korea; as National Security Adviser Kissinger wrote in a top secret memo to Secretary of State William Rogers and Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, "Our discussions with the ROK should not link the presence of U.S. forces in Korea to the retention of ROK forces in Vietnam."[244]

As a result, President Nixon assured President Park in a May 1972 letter that no additional drawdowns would take place for at least another year, while simultaneously pointing to the success of the military assistance program so far in helping modernize Korean forces, as promised. Nixon wrote:

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[242] Pollack and Reiss, "South Korea," 262.
[243] Kim, "Security, Nationalism and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 55; Jacques E.C. Hymans, et al, "To Go or Not to Go: South and North Korea's Nuclear Decisions in Comparative Context," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (February 2001): 97.
[244] Memorandum, "NSDM 161: ROK Forces in South Vietnam," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, April 5, 1972, folder: NSDM 151 — NSDM 200 [originals], box H-208, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Policy Papers (1969 - 1974), RMNL, 1. See also Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions," 15.

> *We plan no changes in the level of our forces stationed in the Republic of Korea through the end of Fiscal Year 1973. ... Before undertaking any further reduction of United States forces in Korea, we will consult fully with you and make a joint assessment of any threat to your country's security. The five-year program for modernizing your military forces continues to be of great importance to us. We are happy that we have been able to provide support for this program during its first two years—some $440 million in grant funds, and approximately $16 million worth of excess defense articles and the equipment of the division which we withdrew from Korea in Fiscal Year 1971.*[245]

These deliberations and exchanges highlight the interdependency between the United States and South Korea: As the Koreans depended on U.S. troops for their security, so the Americans were dependent on Korean troops in the Vietnam theater. In fact, it was precisely because President Park had committed his forces to Vietnam that Washington could justify maintaining such a sizeable troop presence on the Korean peninsula. Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, both Korean and American officials used the threat of further troop withdrawals as a bargaining chip to extract stronger commitments from the other party. For example, a few months after Nixon's letter to Park, the Korean Defense Minister, Yu Chae-hung, informed U.S. Ambassador Philip C. Habib that Seoul aimed to begin withdrawing its troops from Vietnam in January 1973, and that all Korean troops would be out of Vietnam by June of the same year.[246] Seemingly in angry response to this statement, which he may have interpreted as a Korean threat to abandon the United States during the height of its efforts in Vietnam, Habib

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[245] Letter, President Nixon to President Park Chung-hee, SECRET, May 19, 1972, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v19p1/d142.

[246] Telegram, "ROK Forces in Viet-Nam," Philip C. Habib to State Department, SECRET, December 16, 1972, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v19p1/d171.

drafted a policy paper proposing that Washington further reduce troop levels in the Korean peninsula in 1974, with an aim to have all U.S. soldiers out of Korea by 1976.[247] Although Habib's retaliatory proposal was immediately sidelined, a high-level U.S. interdepartmental study group within the National Security Council, specially convened to study U.S.-ROK relations, did conclude in the spring of 1973 that the United States could continue to "use the force levels as a bargaining chip," threatening troop reductions "to induce concessions" from the Koreans.[248]

Of course, such threats would ultimately be empty, because for both the United States and South Korea, the maintenance of U.S. troop levels in Korea served each country's respective national interests beyond meeting the immediate needs of the Vietnam War. For the Koreans, American troops sent a strong reassurance signal about the strength of the U.S. commitment to South Korea's security; for their part, the Americans believed providing such reassurances to the Koreans ultimately would help advance U.S. nonproliferation objectives in a region fraught with tension and multiple nuclear powers. To that end, U.S. officials were concerned that South Korea might, in the event of a perceived

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[247] Memorandum, Richard Kennedy to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, January 16, 1973, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve12/d231.

[248] Study Paper, National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for East Asia and Pacific Affairs to multiple recipients, SECRET, date unknown, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve12/d235. In the meantime, however, National Security Adviser Kissinger sent a memo to Secretary of State William Rogers and Secretary of Defense William Clements, summarizing President Nixon's guidance on U.S. policy vis-à-vis South Korea and concluding that further reductions in U.S. troop levels in Korea were undesirable at the time. See Memorandum, "U.S. Policy Toward the Korean Peninsula," Henry Kissinger to multiple recipients, SECRET, July 18, 1973, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume XIX*, accessible at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve12/d241.

decline in the U.S. security commitment to Seoul, lose confidence in its superpower ally and decide to develop its own nuclear weapons program. In a 1974 report, the National Security Council's Under Secretaries Committee (USC) issued a paper in response to President Nixon's request for a study on U.S. nonproliferation policy. In the case of South Korea, the committee wrote, "the mutual defense treaty *and the presence of U.S. forces* have been sufficient to reassure the ROK that their security needs are being met without having to consider nuclear weapons development programs" [emphasis added]. The committee stressed that "American troops in South Korea enhance the credibility of our commitment under the U.S.-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty," thereby suggesting that any reduction in these troops would negatively affect the strength of the U.S. commitment to the ROK and, consequently, could increase Seoul's incentive to embark on a nuclear weapons program. Equally importantly, the USC's report implicitly counseled against a total withdrawal, arguing that the very presence of U.S. troops on the peninsula was integral to the maintenance of the U.S. security commitment to Seoul, and that the Koreans valued this presence highly.[249]

Indeed, as the U.S. State Department's Director of Policy Planning, Winston Lord, reported to National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger after a trip to East Asia, the Koreans were especially sensitive during this period to any intimation, no matter how small, that Washington was reducing its commitment to

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[249] Study Paper, "U.S. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy (NSSM-202)," National Security Council Under Secretaries Committee to multiple recipients, SECRET, June 24, 1974, folder: U/SM 10-13 [1 of 2], box H-249, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Under Secretaries Study Memorandums, RMNL, 16-19.

Seoul. In his memo, Lord wrote, "The Koreans [exhibit] continuing concern over North Korea's intentions and strength and need continual assurance of our involvement."[250] From Washington's perspective, added the special NSC interdepartmental study group, the primary U.S. objective in Korea remained the prevention of "major hostilities between North and South," which, if left unchecked, "could reverse present desirable trends toward U.S. disengagement, run the risk of major escalation, and have an important impact on the situation in Northeast Asia." However, as long as the Mutual Security Treaty and a U.S. troop presence in Korea were to remain "essentially intact," Seoul should continue to feel reassured about the U.S. commitment to its security.[251]

KOREAN NUCLEAR EFFORTS AND U.S. PRESSURE

During this period, from the late 1960s through the mid-1970s, President Park launched a program to acquire nuclear weapons. From the review that follows, it becomes clear that what motivated Park to start down this road was indeed the fear that the United States would eventually abandon South Korea; given that Washington and Seoul had been debating force reductions for the better part of the decade already, President Nixon's arrival onto the world stage and his promise to shift the burden of defense arrangements to allies catalyzed Park's extant concerns. Park also was motivated to keep his true intentions regarding

[250] Memorandum, "Highlights of the 19th U.S.-Japan Planning Talks and My Trip to Korea," Winston Lord to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, July 31, 1974, folder: Japan (4), box 4, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 8.
[251] Study Paper, "NSSM 211 - Security Assistance to the Republic of Korea," National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for East Asia and the Pacific to Brent Scowcroft, SECRET, November 14, 1974, folder: NSSM 211 - Review of U.S. Security Assistance to the Republic of Korea (1), box 32, U.S. National Security Council Institutional Files, GRFL, 1-2.

nuclear weapons hidden, under the guise of developing an indigenous nuclear weapons program, so as to avoid international attention and condemnation.

Despite having launched a modest nuclear energy program in the late 1950s, South Korea did not embark on the military nuclear path until sometime in either 1970 or 1971. The precise launch date of South Korea's nuclear weapons program is unclear because sources differ on the exact moment at which President Park Chung-hee made his decision. For example, in a 2010 interview with the *Weekly Chosun*, Oh Won-chul, who had served as Senior Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Park administration, said Park's first decision on this question was in mid-1970.[252] On the other hand, according to the *JoongAng Ilbo*, Park made his decision in March 1971,[253] while Park's daughter, Pak Kun-hye, recalled that her father made the decision in July 1971.[254] At any rate, the secondary literature concurs, and archival research confirms, that Park's decision to launch a nuclear weapons program, driven by his perception that the strength of the U.S. commitment to Seoul's security was eroding, was catalyzed by no later than the end of 1971.

By early 1972, therefore, Park had taken a number of important steps towards launching a military nuclear program configured to produce a plutonium-based bomb. First, he established the Agency for Defence Development in August

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[252] Dae-hyun Kim, "Oh Won-Chul, Former Economic Advisor, Spoke for the First Time after 30 Years," *Chosun Weekly*, January 12, 2010, accessible at http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/01/12/2010011200988.html. I thank Lami Kim for her invaluable assistance in translating this article.
[253] *JoongAng Ilbo*, November 3, 1997; quoted in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 488.
[254] Kang Yong-won, "Pak Kun-hye's Testimony: Father's Death and Nuclear Development," *Monthly Chosun*, April 1994, 228-229; quoted in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 488.

1970 and the Weapons Exploitation Committee shortly thereafter.[255] He next installed Yun Yong-gu as the new director of the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI) in August 1971, and charged him with heavily recruiting Korean scientists, both at home and abroad, to build Korea's knowledge base in the various technical components of a nuclear weapons program.[256] Third, when Park met with Oh Won-chul in November 1971, he told Oh to lay the organizational foundation for a national nuclear weapons program, saying, "To become secure and independent, we need to free ourselves from dependence on U.S. military protection."[257] Oh, in turn, met with Yun and the Korean Minister of Science and Technology, Choi Hyung-seop, a few weeks later to establish a clandestine organizational structure to support a military nuclear program.[258] Thus, by early 1972, when Park authorized Oh to "acquire [the] required technology," the requisite organizational and scientific building blocks to sustain a large-scale national nuclear weapons effort had already been put in place.[259]

From this point until early 1976, South Korea did everything in its power to acquire nuclear weapons as soon as possible, though under the ostensible auspices of a civilian nuclear energy program so as to avoid international sanctions and condemnation. In May 1972, Choi, the Minister of Science and Technology, made trips to France and the United Kingdom to establish relationships with nuclear technology suppliers, ultimately finding partners in key

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[255] Pollack and Reiss, "South Korea," 262; Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions," 12-16.
[256] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 489-490.
[257] *JoongAng Ilbo*, November 3, 1997; quoted in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 483.
[258] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 488.
[259] Kim, "Oh Won-Chul, Former Economic Advisor, Spoke for the First Time after 30 Years."

French companies willing to provide reprocessing and fuel fabrication equipment to South Korea.[260] Namely, the ROK signed a contract with Saint-Gobain Technique Nouvelle (SGN) for the design of a reprocessing facility, and by April 1975 another French company, CERCA, had agreed to construct a fuel fabrication plant in Korea and lend Seoul $2.6 million to help cover the capital costs of the project.[261] In the meantime, Korean scientists visited Canada and France in March 1974 to examine the CANDU and NRX heavy water reactors, the latter of which was especially effective in producing large quantities of weapons-grade plutonium.[262] KAERI continued to recruit Korean scientists, both at home and abroad, and the ADD completed a feasibility study on the time and money required to acquire nuclear weapons, estimating the total cost to be nearly $2 billion over six to ten years.[263]

Thus, by the spring of 1975, South Korea had procured, or was in the process of obtaining, many of the necessary facilities and technologies to support a national military nuclear program, including a small reprocessing facility and a large natural-uranium research reactor, along with uranium mining, uranium processing, and fuel fabrication equipment.[264] All indications suggest that Seoul would have been able to continue unabated and undetected with its nuclear program, possibly to the point of successfully acquiring a functional and

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[260] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 489.
[261] *JoongAng Ilbo*, November 6, 1997.
[262] Leonard S. Spector, *Nuclear Proliferation Today* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1984), 341.
[263] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 491.
[264] See: National Intelligence Estimate, "International Oil Developments," CIA to multiple recipients, SECRET, June 1, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-7-48-1-3-8, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Subject Files (NSA 7), Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (hereafter JCL), 3-4; Cable, "Nuclear Complex in Korea," Mike Mansfield to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, November 22, 1978, folder: 9/78-11/78, box 12, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1.

deliverable plutonium-based nuclear device, had it not been for the timing and circumstances of India's first nuclear test in May 1974. Because India in the 1960s and 1970s had acquired nuclear technologies — particularly from the United States, France, and Canada — under the auspices of a peaceful nuclear energy program and then diverted those technologies into a parallel, clandestine military program, the United States and the international community were put on high alert after May 1974 regarding the dual-use nature of nuclear fuel cycle technologies and equipment, especially proliferation-sensitive technologies like uranium enrichment and spent fuel reprocessing.[265]

As such, it was only from late 1974 onwards that the U.S. intelligence community and government officials began to pick up on South Korea's nuclear progress and ultimate intentions, and in those crucial early months they had to quickly bring themselves up to speed. U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Richard Sneider, in particular, was one of the first and most consistent individuals in the U.S. government at the time to sound the alarm on the Koreans' interest and progress in nuclear weapons. In a December 1974 memo to National Security Adviser Kissinger, he summarized the information his embassy staff had gathered so far, although he inaccurately concluded that the Koreans were not as far along with their nuclear ambitions as they actually were. He wrote, "Evidence accumulated in recent months justifies strong presumption that the Korean [government] has decided to proceed with the *initial phases* of a nuclear weapons

[265] For the definitive histories of India's nuclear weapons program, see: Itty Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb: Science, Secrecy and the Postcolonial State* (London, UK: Zed Books, 1998); George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).

development program … [which] is still in [the] *rudimentary stage and lacking a number of critical items*" [emphasis added].[266]

Based on this alert, the State Department in December 1974 requested the U.S. intelligence community to prepare a comprehensive analysis of South Korea's nuclear progress and potential;[267] that detailed assessment, which was completed by March 1975, determined that it would take South Korea less than a decade to acquire nuclear weapons.[268] However, Ambassador Sneider, who took a more pessimistic view, argued that it would almost certainly take less time than that.[269] Moreover, recognizing that the Canadians were already putting pressure on South Korea to ratify the NPT as a precondition to their planned sale of the CANDU reactor to Seoul,[270] and speculating that the Koreans were acquiescing to this demand only because they suspected the United States was "on to them," Sneider cautioned that South Korea's ratification of the NPT would be necessary but insufficient. Specifically, he wrote in March 1975, South Korea's move to ratify the NPT and accommodate French and Canadian requests for safeguards on

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[266] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, December 2, 1974, folder: Korea (4), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-5.
[267] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Robert Ingersoll to Richard L. Sneider, SECRET, December 11, 1974, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — From SECSTATE - NODIS (2), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.
[268] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Henry A. Kissinger to Richard L. Sneider, SECRET, March 4, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — From SECSTATE - NODIS (3), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 2.
[269] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, March 12, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - NODIS (4), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.
[270] Telegram, "Non-Proliferation Treaty," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, February 26, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.

its nuclear facilities "is not [an] indication they are giving up. To the contrary, it appears to indicate they will be as hypocritical as necessary."[271] Thus, when South Korea did ratify the NPT the following month in remarkably quick fashion, it only served to heighten suspicions in the United States, as analyst Sung Gul Hong has argued, that "ratification was only an opportunistic move aimed at silencing U.S. objections" to these international nuclear technology sales.[272]

These concerns persisted even as U.S. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, on an August 1975 trip to Seoul, praised the Korean government for ratifying the NPT,[273] to which President Park responded that the "ROK had every intention of living up" to the treaty.[274] Despite this overture, Sneider firmly believed, and the U.S. government concurred, that the driving force behind Park's pursuit of nuclear weapons was his diminishing trust in the credibility of the U.S. security commitment to Korea.[275] President Park himself substantiated this belief when he gave an interview to the *Washington Post* in June 1975, in which he claimed South Korea would "do everything in its power to defend its own security—including development of nuclear weapons if necessary—*if the U.S.*

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[271] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, March 12, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - NODIS (4), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.
[272] Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 499.
[273] Memorandum of Conversation, SECRET, August 26, 1975, folder: Korea (11), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 10.
[274] Memorandum of Conversation, SECRET, August 26 or 27, 1975, folder: Korea (11), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.
[275] Telegram, "ROK Views of US Security Commitment," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, April 18, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-3.

nuclear umbrella were withdrawn" [emphasis added].[276] This public statement stood in stark contrast to Park's meeting with Ambassador Sneider the month before, when he had claimed he had no plans to develop nuclear weapons.[277] Unsurprisingly, therefore, senior officials in the U.S. State Department and on the National Security Council became united in their conviction that Park was lying and that, truly fearing a removal of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, he was putting South Korea on a path towards rapid nuclear weapons acquisition.[278] As a result, the United States determined that the most effective manner of curtailing South Korea's nuclear ambitions would be to inhibit Korea's access to sensitive technology and equipment, "both through unilateral U.S. action and through the development of common supplier nation policies," as Kissinger wrote, and by ramping up surveillance and intelligence-gathering efforts on Seoul's activities.[279]

Although these U.S. policy decisions were important and necessary, they were also reflective of Washington's central challenge at the time, which was that the United States was doing too little and too late. As further illustration of how

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[276] Don Oberdorfer, "Park: Seoul Target of North, Denies Nuclear Plans," *The Washington Post*, June 27, 1975, A32.
[277] Telegram, "Meeting with President Park: Missile Strategy," U.S. Embassy Seoul to Henry A. Kissinger, May 1, 1975, MLF MR Case no. 94-146, Document no. 54; cited in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 498.
[278] See, for example: Memorandum, "Approach to South Korea on Reprocessing," Robert Ingersoll to Henry A. Kissinger, Classification Unknown, July 2, 1975, folder: Korea (9), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL; Memorandum, "Approach to South Korea on Reprocessing," Jan M. Lodal and Dave Elliott to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, July 24, 1975, folder: Korea (9), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL.
[279] Telegram, "ROK Plans to Develop Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," Henry A. Kissinger to Richard L. Sneider, SECRET, March 4, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — From SECSTATE - NODIS (3), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-5. See also Memorandum, "Development of U.S. Policy Toward South Korean Development of Nuclear Weapons," W.R. Smyser and David D. Elliott to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, February 28, 1975, folder: Korea (4), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.

far behind the United States was on South Korea's nuclear progress, it was not until the summer of 1975 that the U.S. government was made aware of Seoul's efforts to acquire a reprocessing facility, and even then the resultant assessment was untimely and inaccurate. Although South Korea had completed a contract with SGN in 1973 for a reprocessing plant, it took two years for Washington to catch on: A July 1975 memorandum from Robert Ingersoll, the Deputy Secretary of State, to Kissinger assessed that "the South Korean Government *has been negotiating to purchase* a small pilot scale reprocessing plant from France" [emphasis added].[280] Senior staff members on the National Security Council pointed out to Kissinger that, in the case of South Korea, investing in an indigenous reprocessing capability did not make much economic sense, arguing, "Reprocessing will not be necessary for South Korea's nuclear power economy for several years and, in view of [the] current controversy over the dangers of plutonium recycle, perhaps not for the foreseeable future."[281] Therefore, their memo implied, South Korea's interest in reprocessing needed to be taken more seriously from a national security and nonproliferation standpoint, because the notable absence of a compelling economic argument for acquiring reprocessing technologies could only mean Seoul was pursuing nuclear weapons.

Indeed, the United States did take South Korea's reprocessing ambitions more seriously going forward, even though Washington was already two years

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[280] Memorandum, "Approach to South Korea on Reprocessing," Robert Ingersoll to Henry A. Kissinger, classification unknown, July 2, 1975, folder: Korea (9), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.
[281] Memorandum, "Approach to South Korea on Reprocessing," Jan M. Lodal and Dave Elliott to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, July 24, 1975, folder: Korea (9), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 2.

behind. And luck was on Washington's side, in that the French reprocessing facility had not yet been constructed in South Korea. Taking advantage of this narrow but fortuitous window of opportunity afforded them, the Americans immediately began negotiating with the French to cancel the reprocessing deal,[282] while also getting the Canadians to agree to not provide reprocessing capabilities if the Koreans came to them next.[283] At the same time, Washington sent multiple diplomatic missives directly to Seoul, requesting that South Korea also cancel its reprocessing deal with France. Unfortunately, these requests were ignored. Maintaining that President Park's determination to acquire a reprocessing facility was driven by a desire to exercise the "nuclear option should [the] U.S. nuclear deterrent not be available to him," Ambassador Sneider reported to Kissinger in October 1975 that Park had rejected Washington's request to cancel the reprocessing agreement not once, but twice. In Sneider's opinion, Park had ignored U.S. requests to cancel the deal only "after full and serious consideration of our position," and the United States was "now at an impasse on this issue,"[284] meaning Washington now had to turn up the pressure even more.

As a result, over the coming months U.S. officials launched an all-out campaign to pressure President Park to cancel the French reprocessing agreement;

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[282] Cable, "ROK Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing Plans," unknown author to U.S. Embassy Seoul, SECRET, June 30, 1975, folder: Korea (9), box 9, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-3.
[283] Telegram, "ROK Reprocessing Plant," Henry A. Kissinger to Richard L. Sneider, SECRET, January 14, 1976, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 2.
[284] Telegram, "ROKG Nuclear Reprocessing," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, October 31, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - NODIS (7), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1-2.

taking a lesson from its recent history with Seoul, one of the key ways in which Washington applied this pressure was by threatening the removal of the U.S. security commitment to South Korea. In late 1975, Kissinger dispatched the former U.S. Ambassador to South Korea, Philip Habib, to Seoul, where Habib met with Park and told him the United States would reconsider the entire structure of the U.S.-South Korea security alliance, should Seoul proceed with the reprocessing agreement.[285] As researcher Peter Hayes notes, Kissinger himself also told Park that Washington "would cancel its security commitment to the ROK if the South persisted with its nuclear weapons program."[286] Ambassador Sneider, in particular, recognized that continued U.S. pressure would force the Koreans to the table, and that the ultimate bargaining chip with the Koreans, and the lynchpin in U.S. efforts to prevent a nuclear-armed South Korea, was the threat of removal of U.S. security commitments and military assistance to Seoul. Therefore, Sneider argued in December 1975:

> *I believe we must make it indelibly clear that far more than our nuclear support is at stake here, [and] that if ROKG proceeds as it has indicated to date, [the] whole range of security and political relationships between [the United States] and ROK will be affected, including potential for adverse congressional action on security assistance for [South] Korea.*[287]

By referencing the "whole range" of relationships, Sneider appeared to be alluding to multiple issues at once, including the U.S. military aid package to

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[285] Kim, "Security, Nationalism, and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 66.
[286] Peter Hayes, "The Republic of Korea and the Nuclear Issue," in *Asian Flashpoint: Security and the Korean Peninsula*, ed. Andrew Mack (Canberra, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 52.
[287] Telegram, "ROK Nuclear Reprocessing," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, December 10, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams, to SECSTATE - NODIS (8), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.

Korea that had been negotiated in the early 1970s, the possibility of further troop withdrawals from the Korean peninsula, and even the complete removal of the U.S. nuclear umbrella and treaty-based security guarantee. Taking heed to Sneider's advice, the United States kept up the pressure on South Korea by sending to Seoul a group of delegates, who urged Park to cancel the reprocessing agreement and threatened to suspend U.S. military assistance if he did not do so.[288] These efforts brought the directors of KAERI and the Korean Ministry of Science and Technology to the negotiating table and, when they met with Ambassador Sneider in December 1975, they intimated that they were open to terminating further negotiations on the French reprocessing deal.[289]

Finally sensing an opening in the negotiations, and believing the Park administration was close to capitulating to U.S. demands, Sneider wrote to Kissinger in January 1976 that Washington's objective of getting South Korea to cancel the French reprocessing agreement could be achieved in short order if the Americans could keep up the pressure just a little longer.[290] Indeed, a few days later President Park met with the Korean Minister of Science and Technology, Choi Hyung-seop, and told him that it would "be better to give up reprocessing in light of U.S. threats to suspend its military assistance."[291] Finally, on January 29,

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[288] Hyung-seop Choi, *Bul-I-gguhjiji Anneun Yonguso* (Research Lab Lit Throughout Night) (Seoul, South Korea: Chosun Ilbo-sa, 1995), 132-133.
[289] Telegram, "ROK Nuclear Reprocessing," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, December 16, 1975, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams, to SECSTATE - NODIS (9), box 11, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 1.
[290] Telegram, "ROK Nuclear Reprocessing," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, January 5, 1976, MLF MR Case no. 94-146, Document no. 42; cited in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 502.
[291] Choi, *Bul-I-gguhjiji Anneun Yonguso*, 132-133.

1976, the U.S. State Department announced that the ROK had officially canceled its plans to purchase a reprocessing facility from France.[292]

What emerges from this account of South Korea's nuclear decisionmaking between 1971 and 1976 is that, in the end, Park terminated his efforts after caving to enormous U.S. pressure. But why did he start down the military nuclear road in the first place? Two potential, non-mutually exclusive responses can be given: Park was responding to a conventionally superior and increasingly strong North Korea with even stronger Chinese backing; and/or the U.S. commitment to South Korea was perceived to be damaged.

On the first possibility, the North certainly had become more provocative in the late 1960s, and tensions between Pyongyang and Seoul had reached an all-time high: North Korean actions against South Korea along the 38th parallel had increased by more than ten-fold in 1967 and 1968, and North Korean commandos had even attempted to assassinate President Park in 1968.[293] Pyongyang's defense spending in this period was more than twice the amount spent by Seoul, and its conventional military capabilities were significantly stronger than those held by the South.[294] Thus, by the early 1970s, it can be argued that South Korea faced a clear threat to its security in the form of a militarily superior Pyongyang. However, these considerations do not make a convincing case for why Park

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[292] David Burnham, "South Korea Drops Plan to Buy a Nuclear Plant From France," *The New York Times*, January 30, 1976, accessible at http://www.nytimes.com/1976/01/30/archives/south-korea-drops-plan-to-buy-a-nuclear-plant-from-france-seoul.html.
[293] Report, United Nations Command to United Nations, classification unknown, April 1969, folder: Review Group N. Korean Downing of U.S. Aircraft, box H-035, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Senior Review Group Meetings, RMNL.
[294] Chung-in Moon and Sangkeun Lee, "Military Spending and the Arms Race on the Korean Peninsula," *Asian Perspective* 33, no. 4 (October 2009): 69-99.

pursued nuclear weapons. In fact, as analyst Se-yang Jang argues, if President Park were to respond militarily to a conventionally superior and increasingly provocative North Korea, it would have made more sense to do so with conventional weapons, "instead of investing in an uncertain nuclear project … [which] would have been a very costly and unnecessary project if its sole purpose had been to deter the stronger conventional forces of North Korea."[295]

Two additional factors may have played into Park's thinking regarding the balance of military capabilities between North and South Korea. First, the United States had based tactical nuclear weapons on South Korean soil since the late 1950s, thereby sending both a strong deterrent signal to the North and a strong reassurance signal to the South.[296] Second, and more significantly, South and North Korean officials had increased their diplomatic contact starting in the early 1970s, which led to the North-South Joint Statement of July 1972 and subsequently eased, even if marginally, tensions between North and South Korea. Yet, despite this diplomatic thawing, President Park's nuclear weapons program continued unabated, which suggests, as Jang writes, that it "was not merely targeted against North Korea."[297] Therefore, as a single causal mechanism, the first argument for why Park started a nuclear weapons program loses much of its explanatory power.

The second explanation, that the U.S. commitment to South Korea was perceived to be waning, aligns with the evidence presented in this chapter,

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[295] Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions," 7.
[296] Peter Hayes, *Pacific Powderkeg: American Nuclear Dilemmas in Korea* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1993), 52.
[297] Jang, "The Evolution of US Extended Deterrence and South Korea's Nuclear Ambitions," 14.

especially in light of the force reduction debate in the 1960s and statements made by President Park himself to his senior government staff in the 1970s. Although the United States and Korea had been engaged in lengthy discussions since the 1960s about reducing the U.S. troop presence on the Korean peninsula without eroding the U.S. commitment to South Korea's security, Park launched his nuclear weapons program as a way to hedge his bets against the possibility of a complete removal of the U.S. umbrella. In his assessment, it was better to invest in a military nuclear program under the auspices of a nuclear energy program, and especially with open and legitimate global access to sensitive nuclear fuel cycle technologies, than to forgo the option altogether, especially in the face of ongoing and additional planned reductions in U.S. troop numbers in Korea.

Interestingly, each side used the same issue — the complete withdrawal of U.S. protection for South Korea — in its own way, to attempt to advance its own policy objectives. For South Korea, the driving factor behind its decision making was a fear of abandonment by the United States, and it tried to play on Washington's concerns over regional nuclear proliferation to attempt to extract the highest possible commitments to its security from the United States. As the above pages demonstrate, this need for strengthened U.S. security assurances became especially acute during the Vietnam War, when President Park feared that his superpower ally would abandon him during a time of heightened regional instability. Likewise, the United States tried to leverage this Korean fear of abandonment to advance its nonproliferation objectives, using the threat of complete removal of the U.S. security commitment to pressure Park into giving

up his nuclear weapons ambitions. In the end, it was a combination of fortuitous coincidence — in the form of India's 1974 nuclear test, which clued the United States in to Park's nuclear weapons program — and subsequent intense diplomatic pressure that stopped South Korea's military nuclear aspirations from becoming a reality.

1976-1979: A Move Towards Latency

As a result of these first efforts to acquire the bomb, U.S. officials kept a close eye on Seoul's nuclear potential through 1976 and beyond. After all, the circumstances that had led to the U.S. discovery of the Korean nuclear weapons program in 1974 were entirely accidental, and Washington was determined to avoid being blindsided again. Therefore, it kept a close eye on South Korea's threat perceptions and technical capabilities through the end of the Ford administration and into the Carter era.

In a reflection of this sustained diligence, the U.S. NSC staff wrote in a July 1976 report to National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft that, although Park had nominally suspended his nuclear weapons program five months earlier, South Korea still continued to "develop the potential, the nuclear materials, and the supporting technology necessary to realize the country's long-term nuclear weapons goals."[298] Even one year later, a special U.S. National Security Council group on nonproliferation was arguing that South Korea still maintained facilities

[298] Memorandum, "Evening Notes - East Asia," SECRET, July 12, 1976, folder: Evening Reports - July 12, 1976, box 1, National Security Adviser — White House Situation Room - Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-1977, GRFL, 1.

for conducting weapons-related research and likely had regional security-based justifications for its sustained interest in nuclear weapons.[299] Thus, as the White House transitioned from Gerald Ford to Jimmy Carter in the winter of 1976-1977, the U.S. government continued to believe that South Korea had both the intention and the wherewithal to go down the military nuclear path again. This belief was legitimate, and for good reason: The force reduction debate, which had begun in the early 1960s and was temporarily put aside towards the end of the Ford administration, returned to the fore during the 1976 presidential election season. In particular, as part of his campaign platform, Jimmy Carter had made it a priority to remove all troops from the Korean peninsula,[300] and Korean officials subsequently had expressed heightened concern at his intentions, even going so far as to threaten to completely break off Korea's dependence on the United States.

However, not all Korean leaders felt this way. For example, when Ambassador Sneider met privately with the former Korean Prime Minister, Kim Chong-pil, right after Carter had won the general election in November 1976, Kim told him, "It is self-deluding to think Korea can be truly self-reliant and

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[299] Study Paper, "Program for Development of Non-Nuclear Energy Alternatives," National Security Council Ad Hoc Group on Non-Proliferation, CONFIDENTIAL, May 12, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-132-5-1-5-3, NSC Institutional Files - 1977-1981, JCL.

[300] See, for example, Kim, "Security, Nationalism and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 67; William H. Gleysteen, Jr., *Massive Entanglement, Marginal Influence: Carter and Korea in Crisis* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 17. Analyst Larry Niksch writes that Carter's promise was based on a deep-seated desire to shift U.S. foreign policy away from East Asia and towards Europe, as well as on the legacy of the Vietnam War. See Larry A. Niksch, "U.S. Troop Withdrawal from South Korea: Past Shortcomings and Future Prospects," *Asian Survey* 21, no. 3 (March 1981): 325-341.

independent of [the] U.S. It needs U.S. support and [a] close relationship for [the] foreseeable future." As Sneider reported to Kissinger following this meeting:

> *Self-reliance and self-sufficiency have been [the] slogans and stated goals of the Park administration, ... [but] they had not been viewed as a realistic and desired alternative to [the] continued U.S. relationships, but rather as [a] contingency in case [the] U.S. pulled out of Korea as it did in Vietnam.*

However, as Sneider shared with Kissinger, his team had recently picked up on "increasing support" in the Park administration "for [the] view that Korea should 'go it alone,' free from encumbrances or U.S. ties."[301] Hence, even before Carter formally took office after winning the 1976 presidential election, the force reduction debate had already returned, and the question still remained as to whether a further minimization of the U.S. security commitment to South Korea, in the form of additional troop reductions, would have an adverse effect on Korea's perceptions of regional security and stability and therefore could affect its nuclear weapons decision making. For example, in an unmarked September 1976 trip report discovered in the NSC institutional files of the Nixon Library archives, an unknown author, most likely a staff member on President Nixon's NSC, contributed to the discussion on troop withdrawals with the following analysis:

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[301] Telegram, "Growing Korean Concern About Future of US-ROK Relations," Richard L. Sneider to Henry A. Kissinger, SECRET, November 22, 1976, folder: Korea - State Department Telegrams — To SECSTATE - NODIS (12), box 12, National Security Adviser — Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific, GRFL, 3-4.

> *A threat to South Korea's security through a major reduction in our commitment is likely to lead to less democracy, not more; it could lead to a large war threatening Japanese as well as Korean security and ultimately dragging the U.S. in anyway; and finally but not so incidentally, it would almost certainly start Korea on a major nuclear weapons development program. [Furthermore,] a total withdrawal of American combat personnel (including the air force) [...] would under most circumstances greatly reduce the credibility of our commitment [emphasis added].*

Having determined that both a "major reduction" and a "total withdrawal" would be undesirable, the author then attempted to quantify the number of U.S. troops required to establish a minimum credible commitment to South Korea's security, writing that the United States could still maintain the strength of its commitment to Korea "without having 40,000 troops sitting on the front line of the main invasion route. A lesser number of troops somewhat further back from the front should be more than sufficient for a credible commitment."[302]

However, President Carter had promised on the campaign trail to remove *all* U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula. Thus, upon entering the White House in January 1977, and refusing to heed the advice of his NSC staff, Carter demonstrated his intention to keep his campaign promise by issuing a directive on January 26, 1977, not even one full week after being inaugurated, ordering the National Security Council to conduct a study on how to implement a complete troop withdrawal from Korea.[303] Crucially, the President, in his absolute determination to follow through on his word, neglected to ask for an assessment

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[302] Study Paper, "Korea," classification unknown, September 8, 1976, folder: NSC Subject [Korea] [1 of 2], box H-311, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Miscellaneous Institutional Files of the Nixon Administration, RMNL, 1.
[303] Memorandum, "Presidential Review Memorandum / NSC-13: Arms Transfer Policy Review," Zbigniew Brzezinski to multiple recipients, SECRET, January 26, 1977, folder: Presidential Review Memorandum (11-35), box 105, Vertical File, JCL.

of possible consequences resulting from complete withdrawal; nonetheless, the Central Intelligence Agency provided its own unsolicited analysis, writing in March 1977 that "the U.S. defeat in Indochina, the continuing debate over withdrawal of American troops from abroad, and mounting evidence of wide popular support [in the United States] for reducing the level of U.S. commitments generally" would affect the nuclear weapons calculus of "nuclear threshold states," such as Taiwan and South Korea.[304] The CIA determined, therefore, that any further marginal reductions in U.S. troops stationed in Korea, to say nothing of a total withdrawal, would have a decisively negative impact on Seoul's sense of security, which in turn would increase the likelihood of South Korea going down the nuclear path again. In its intelligence estimate, the CIA argued:

> *Measures aimed solely at curbing the ability of additional states to develop nuclear weapons ... very likely will do no more than slow the process of nuclear proliferation. Unless measures are also taken to curb the motivations for attaining nuclear status, primarily security concerns and secondarily prestige, the prospects are strong that over the next decade a number of additional countries will either fabricate nuclear devices or develop the capacity to assemble them on very short notice [emphasis original].*[305]

Therefore, especially given the U.S. experience with South Korea in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and in light of the fact that the Carter administration had made nonproliferation a central pillar of its foreign policy platform, Carter's NSC staff and the CIA were strongly advising against the further removal of U.S.

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[304] National Intelligence Estimate, "Political Perspectives on Key Global Issues," Central Intelligence Agency, CONFIDENTIAL, March 1, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-31-46-8-1-8, Staff Material - Defense/Security Files (NSA 31), JCL, 14-15.
[305] National Intelligence Estimate, "Political Perspectives on Key Global Issues," Central Intelligence Agency, CONFIDENTIAL, March 1, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-31-46-8-1-8, Staff Material - Defense/Security Files (NSA 31), JCL, 7.

troops from the Korean peninsula. Despite this counsel, however, Carter pressed ahead, issuing Presidential Directive 12 on May 5, 1977, calling for the removal of one brigade by the end of 1978, with a view to completely withdrawing all U.S. troops by 1982.[306] This plan was immediately communicated to South Korean officials, who expressed serious concern over what they perceived to be a gradual but inexorable shrinking of the U.S. presence in East Asia. As a result, through the opening months of Carter's presidency, senior U.S. government officials were dispatched to reassure Korean officials of the continuing U.S. commitment to East Asia.[307]

In the meantime, in a separate classified memo President Carter authorized the complete removal of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea by 1980.[308] This plan, however, was not overtly shared with Seoul. As the cables sent between U.S. embassies in Tokyo, Seoul, and Washington demonstrate, the Carter administration's deliberations on troop and nuclear weapons withdrawals continued to be a cause of significant uncertainty in the region. Three weeks after Carter issued his May 1977 directive, U.S. Under Secretary of State Philip Habib met with representatives from the Japanese government in Washington to discuss U.S. policy towards Korea. In that meeting, Habib explained President Carter's "intention to withdraw troops from ROK without disturbing [the] military balance in Korea or in [the] region while continuing to maintain our commitment to the

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[306] Memorandum, "Presidential Directive / NSC-12: U.S. Policy in Korea," Jimmy Carter to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, May 5, 1977, folder: Presidential Directives (1-20), box 100, Vertical File, JCL.
[307] Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism*, 149-152.
[308] Memorandum, "East Asia," date unknown, RAC Project Number NLC-128-6-17-3-2, Plains File, 1973-1982, JCL.

security of ROK." Seeking to reassure the Japanese that U.S. troop reductions in Korea would not be implemented haphazardly, Habib said, "Withdrawal would be carefully phased and coordinated to assure [the] development of [a] valid, credible, defensive deterrent capability, assuring [the] safety of ROK at [the] end of withdrawal." Furthermore, he added, the United States would "take compensatory measures to assure that [any] reduction in military capability that would occur as result of [the] Second Division's departure does not endanger [the] military balance or ROK security."[309] While it is unclear what Habib meant by "compensatory measures" in his meeting with the Japanese, it is clear these measures would not include the provision of U.S. nuclear weapons to the ROK or the development by South Korea of its own nuclear weapons. When the Japanese Foreign Minister, Iichiro Hatoyama, asked whether South Korea would be allowed to develop nuclear weapons, "Habib answered no. President [Carter] had made his policy of nuclear nonproliferation unequivocally clear." However, when "Hatoyama asked if it was correct to assume nuclear weapons under control of U.S. ground forces would be withdrawan [sic] with units," Habib demurred, replying only that the "U.S. had no intention of transferring nuclear weapons to ROK."[310]

This episode, then, underscores the point that, while the Carter administration had no qualms about making its troop withdrawal plans known to its allies, its plans to remove tactical nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula

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[309] Cable, "Brown/Habib consultations with Japanese foreign office," Thomas P. Shoesmith to U.S. Embassy Seoul, SECRET, May 28, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-16-11-2-11-8, JCL, 1-2.
[310] Ibid., 4-5.

were to be kept secret, thereby suggesting that the White House believed its Korean ally would ultimately put more stock in nuclear weapons than in troops as a symbol of the U.S. security commitment. This contrast between the Carter administration's candidness about troop withdrawals, on the one hand, and its secrecy about nuclear weapons removal, on the other hand, suggests President Carter and his senior staff were already acutely aware of the need to strike a delicate balance between reducing U.S. military commitments overseas and preventing further nuclear proliferation. As another example of this sensitivity, in an undated report most likely written by General William Odom, the military assistant to Zbigniew Brzezinski, the author zeroed in on the proliferation implications of U.S. troop withdrawals from the Korean peninsula, pointing out that "American military drawdowns vis-à-vis South Korea and Taiwan raise the more fundamental question: the relationship between American alliance commitments and American nuclear non-proliferation policies. Retrenchment of American military commitments increases the probability of nuclear proliferation … [therefore,] it may be that the United States can have military disengagement or it can have non-proliferation, but it cannot have both." The author continued:

> *Where military disengagement is the first priority, new ways will have to be found to mitigate security anxieties in threatened states of the region, or plans will have to be made about how to respond to such nations' eventual acquisition of nuclear weapons. Where non-proliferation is the first priority, however, military disengagement will have to be considered in a critical light.*[311]

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[311] Memorandum, "Alliances and Nuclear Proliferation," SECRET, date unknown, RAC Project Number NLC-12-33-7-8-7, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - General Odom Files (NSA 12), JCL, 1-3.

In the context of this report, the phrase "military disengagement" clearly referred to the removal of troops; however, because the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons assigned to those divisions in Korea would be eventually withdrawn from the peninsula as well, the Carter administration wanted to better understand how the Koreans would react to this move if it were made public; in order to provide the relevant background, the CIA prepared a classified intelligence estimate sometime in the summer of 1977 on the implications of the removal of nuclear weapons from Korea.[312] Unfortunately, this estimate has not yet been declassified and made available, so it is difficult to conclude how U.S. officials believed Park would respond if Carter's plans were made public; however, given the U.S. experience with South Korea earlier in the decade and the Koreans' visceral aversion to the removal of troops from South Korea, a strong argument can be made that the possible removal of tactical nuclear weapons would have had the same effect, perhaps even to a stronger degree.

Since these American deliberations on tactical nuclear weapons withdrawals remained confined to the U.S. government, the Park administration at the time remained officially unaware of Carter's plans. Nonetheless, news that the United States was contemplating such a move was leaked to the Koreans, as the

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[312] The reference to the CIA study comes from an August 1977 cover memo, in which Karl Inderfurth, Special Assistant to National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, tells Michael Armacost, an NSC staffer: "ZB [Zbigniew Brzezinski] received today the attached CIA memo on the implications of withdrawing nuclear weapons from Korea. He would like you to prepare a brief covering memo for the President." Memorandum, "Implications of withdrawing nuclear weapons from Korea," Karl Inderfurth to Michael Armacost, SECRET, August 24, 1977, folder: Korea, Republic of, 7-9/77, box 43, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Country Files (NSA 6), JCL, 1.

U.S. National Security Council's Far East team wrote to National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski in June 1977:

> *Rumors suggesting the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from South Korea have aroused concern as Seoul regards the presence of nuclear weapons a deterrent to North Korean aggression. Previously taboo, the South Korean Government has been tolerating discussion of nuclear arms development in recent weeks as a means of reminding us in a not too subtle way of one of the potential consequences of U.S. disengagement from Korea.*[313]

Thus, barely halfway through Jimmy Carter's first year in the White House, South Korea was already indicating, as it had done in the past, that any further reductions in the U.S. troop presence would be detrimental to South Korean security. More importantly, however, South Korean officials were also starting to view both troop withdrawals and the removal of nuclear weapons as equally concerning symbols of the overall decline in the U.S. security commitment to Seoul, and were signaling that they were prepared to take appropriate action if that commitment were to further erode. To that end, even before Gerald Ford had left office, President Park had already authorized a new effort to procure the wherewithal to build nuclear weapons, instructing Oh Won-chul, his senior economic advisor, in November 1976 to quietly resume full-scale development of the nuclear fuel cycle and to "acquire the capability [to develop nuclear weapons], but in a manner not inviting foreign pressure."[314]

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[313] Memo, "Evening Report," Far East Desk to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET/CODEWORD, June 21, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-26-39-8-9-4, JCL, 1.
[314] Won-chul Oh, "Pakjonghi-wa Kato-ui Hyoltu (Bloody Fight Between Park and Carter)," *ShinDongA* (November 1974), 430; quoted in Kim, "Security, Nationalism, and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 67.

However, this new effort did not advance much in the coming years. Marginal investments in dual-use and missile technologies were made, but large-scale efforts to acquire enrichment and/or reprocessing technologies were much more difficult after 1975, due to South Korea's ratification of the NPT, the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the strengthened IAEA safeguards system which had been put in place in Korea as a result. To be sure, as Oh Won-chul argued, South Korea aimed to model itself after Japan and certain Western European countries by acquiring the capability to develop the bomb if and when necessary without going all the way;[315] nonetheless, Park's decision to continue making inroads into developing the full nuclear fuel cycle signaled that the Korean leadership was entertaining the thought of acquiring at least a latent nuclear capability, even if its access to key technologies was already blocked.[316]

Moreover, far from being kept secret, these renewed discussions amongst high-level Korean decision makers on the acquisition of nuclear weapons had, by the late 1970s, entered the Korean public domain as well. For example, in May 1977, the Korean Foreign Minister, Park Tong-jin, was quoted in the *Donga Ilbo* as claiming Korea could produce nuclear weapons, although in follow-up remarks with the Ambassador Sneider in Seoul he clarified that "his comments were offhand and not actually intended for publication," for fear of the "U.S.

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[315] Oh, "Pakjonghi-wa Kato-ui Hyoltu (Bloody Fight Between Park and Carter)," 426; quoted in Hong, "The Search for Deterrence," 508.
[316] Kim, "Security, Nationalism and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 68.

commitment to Korea [being] withdrawn."[317] Yet, later that same month, in a hearing in front of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Korean National Assembly, he said, "Our basic position is that we do not intend to develop nuclear weapons by ourselves. But if it is necessary for national security interests and people's safety, it is possible for Korea as a sovereign state to make its own judgment on the matter."[318]

The Korean media was amplifying these policy discussions as well, often in an uninformed way. In an October 1977 telegram to the U.S. Information Agency in Washington, the staff at U.S. Embassy Seoul described the following situation in Korea:

> *As the U.S. ground troop withdrawal from Korea proceeds, we anticipate continued concern on the part of the Korean public for the security of the Republic. … One specific evidence of this concern is a continuing dialogue and heightened interest in the possibility of ROK acquisition of nuclear weapons, as a means of bolstering ROK self-reliance. These views are at the moment being discussed mainly within a circle of intellectuals as well as ex-military, but their dialogue occasionally is also told in the press. Much of this dialogue is uninformed and unrealistic, but yet already sufficiently current and likely to spread to a wider Korean circle.*[319]

From the U.S. perspective, these amplified calls for a discussion in Korea about acquiring an indigenous nuclear deterrent were understandably concerning. The Embassy provided its assessment based on the situation on the ground, writing, "Even the *appearance* of [a] Korean desire to acquire [a] nuclear

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[317] Cable, "Foreign Minister quoted on nuclear weapons development," Richard L. Sneider to Zbigniew Brzezinski, CONFIDENTIAL, June 1, 1977, folder: 5/77-8/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-2.
[318] "Official Hints South Korea Might Build Atom Bomb," *The New York Times*, June 30, 1977, 4.
[319] Telegram, "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Public Affairs Project," U.S. Embassy Seoul to U.S. Information Agency, CONFIDENTIAL, October 21, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-17-144-9-1-4, JCL, 1.

weapons capability will incur serious negative consequences," which would "far outweigh any benefits" [emphasis added]. To be clear, "it would therefore be in Korea's interest to continue to adhere to a policy of non-proliferation."[320]

Thus, for Carter, the need to provide strengthened reassurances to President Park in order to prevent further proliferation had to be balanced against his commitment to remove all U.S. troops from the peninsula. Despite his 1976 campaign promise, which he earnestly tried to implement in the opening year of his presidency, Carter eventually realized that the only way to prevent Seoul from developing nuclear weapons would be to reverse his troop withdrawal plans. Although Carter had warned Park in the summer of 1977 "any move to produce nuclear weapons would terminate our security relationship,"[321] it was in fact this very threat of abandonment that had reinvigorated Park's drive for an independent nuclear capability. Therefore, the Carter administration, forced to choose between troop withdrawals and nonproliferation, chose the latter: In February 1979, the White House announced that any further withdrawals of U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula would be suspended, and then extended that suspension in July 1979 through at least the end of the Carter administration.[322]

Then, in October 1979, President Park was assassinated by the head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. His successor, Chun Doo-hwan, who

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[320] Telegram, "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Public Affairs Project," U.S. Embassy Seoul to U.S. Information Agency, CONFIDENTIAL, October 21, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-17-144-9-1-4, Staff Material - Office Files (NSA 17), JCL, 1.
[321] Memorandum of Conversation, May 21, 1977, folder: 5/16-23/77, box 3, Staff Material – Far East Files (NSA 26), JCL.
[322] Jimmy Carter, "United States Troop Withdrawals From the Republic of Korea," July 20, 1979, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1979, Book 2: June 23 to December 31, 1979* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), 1275-1276.

belonged to a younger generation of Korean military leaders that wanted Korea to cultivate closer ties with the United States, was willing to accede to the Carter administration's demands that all nuclear-weapons activities be fully and formally terminated.[323] With this decision came a formal end to South Korea's second attempt to venture down the military nuclear path.[324]

CONCLUSION

For South Korea, the decision to pursue nuclear weapons in 1970-1971 was motivated by President Park's fears that the United States would abandon the ROK during a time of great regional instability and uncertainty. However, this fear, stoked in the early 1960s by the rapidly increasing relative strength of the North Korean military, was significantly mitigated by the presence of U.S. troops in South Korea as a potent and highly visible symbol of Washington's commitment to Seoul's security and to the stability of the Korean peninsula. Thus, as American presidential administrations debated whether to reduce the number of U.S. troops in Korea for cost-savings purposes, President Park and his senior leadership became increasingly nervous through the latter half of the 1960s. By the time Richard Nixon entered office, Park's concerns had been building for nearly a decade, and Nixon's Guam Doctrine provided the catalyst that set South Korea on a crash course to build its own nuclear deterrent as an insurance policy

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[323] Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 73; Kim, "Security, Nationalism and the Pursuit of Nuclear Weapons and Missiles," 68-70.
[324] Study Paper, "Non-Proliferation Country Problems," TOP SECRET, RAC Project Number NLC-31-14-5-2-5, Staff Material - Defense/Security Files (NSA 31), JCL, 4; see also Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers*, 21.

against the perceived inevitability of a complete removal of the U.S. nuclear umbrella over South Korea.

Yet, although Seoul tried to acquire nuclear weapons, it never succeeded. For the United States, which had established the principle of nonproliferation as a cornerstone of its foreign policy shortly after the end of the Second World War, preventing Seoul from acquiring nuclear weapons was in its supreme national interest, and ultimately it was able to prevent Park from acquiring the bomb. However, while it is true that a combination of U.S. political and diplomatic pressure, economic incentives, and threats of abandonment was sufficient to pull South Korea back from the nuclear brink, the archival record indicates that it was only due to a stroke of sheer luck in 1974 that Washington was even made aware of Park's intentions and actions in the first place.

However, in its own way, South Korea won as well. Given President Park's overwhelming fear that the United States would abandon Seoul in its darkest hour, he sensed a weak point in deliberations with his American counterparts. Attuned to the geostrategic and domestic political implications of the force reduction debate in Washington, Park leveraged the threat of withdrawing his military support for the U.S. war effort in Vietnam in order to secure reassurances that U.S. troops would not be completely removed from the peninsula. This strategy was so successful that, even after the implementation of the Nixon doctrine and two changings of the guard in the White House, he was able to keep Jimmy Carter from following through on his campaign promise to remove all U.S. troops and nuclear weapons from Korea. Park also successfully

used these arguments as bargaining chips to lock in significant military assistance packages from the United States, in order to strengthen conventional South Korean military capabilities.

However, despite winning such concessions over the course of a decade, South Korea still ventured down the nuclear path, trying first to acquire a plutonium-based nuclear weapons capability as quickly as possible and then, after that effort failed, to acquire latency. The archival record indicates that this strategy was driven by a deep-seated conviction that a withdrawal of the U.S. security guarantee was inevitable, and that as a result Park felt the need to hedge against that eventuality. In both instances, whether deliberately or inadvertently, Park hit the rawest of nerves in Washington, that of the fear of nuclear proliferation, and ultimately forced the United States to choose between reducing the burden of its security commitments to Korea and meeting its nonproliferation objectives.

Thus, South Korea's nuclear decision making appeared to be driven entirely by security considerations. Compared to the case of Japan, the archival record in the case of South Korea does not support the argument that domestic political bureaucracies or prestige considerations had any significant effect on Park Chung-hee's calculus, although detailed biographies of Park do paint the picture of a man who was intent on developing a "rich nation" with a "strong army."[325] Specifically, the rise of a conventionally superior, superpower-backed

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[325] Carter J. Eckert, *Park Chung Hee and Modern Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 44; Byung-kook Kim, "Introduction: The Case for Political History," in *The Park Chung Hee Era: The Transformation of South Korea*, 3.

North Korea coincided with a marked shift in U.S. strategy with the promulgation of the Nixon Doctrine in the late 1960s. This combination of geostrategic events was, in Park Chung-hee's calculus, sufficient to tip the scales in favor of acquiring nuclear weapons as quickly as possible. Later in the 1970s, once the United States had demonstrated the endurance of its commitment to South Korea even in the face of regional policy shifts, the stated intent of the Carter administration to completely withdraw the U.S. troop presence from the peninsula reignited in Park the fear of abandonment that had led him down the nuclear path the first time.

Finally, the case of South Korea highlights the centrality of perceptions in understanding both allies and adversaries alike. The U.S.-ROK dynamic during the 1960s and 1970s demonstrates that how each state perceived the other informed threat assessments, policy analyses, and decision making.[326] Resultantly, the case underscores the need for senior allies to do two concurrent things over the course of an alliance relationship. The first is that, while patrons should have faith in the security guarantee as a policy tool that helps allay junior allies' security concerns, they should still take care to ensure that any actions taken by either side will not affect the other party's perception of the strength of the security relationship. The second is that patrons should remain ever vigilant, even with allies, so as to detect as soon as possible any junior-ally behavior that would run counter to senior-ally national interests. Thus, extending a security

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[326] For the seminal book on perceptions in international relations, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976).

commitment to a junior ally is only beneficial to the senior ally when it facilitates desirable behavior and outcomes from the protégé.

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CHAPTER 5 — THREADING THE NEEDLE: TAIWAN, 1961-1979

Unlike in Japan, and to an even greater extent than in South Korea, decision makers in the Republic of China (ROC), also known as Taiwan, demonstrated a determination to pursue the bomb in the 1960s and 1970s. While China's entry into the nuclear club following its 1964 test sent shockwaves throughout East Asia, nowhere were those reverberations felt more acutely than in Taiwan; indeed, as analyst and former American diplomat Derek Mitchell writes, Taiwan faced "only one clear and ever-present external threat: that from mainland China." Even to this day, "Taiwan's consideration of its security, including the development of nuclear weapons, occurs within this single, fundamental context of sovereignty — and vulnerability — in relation to its Chinese rival across the Taiwan Strait."[327]

As with Japan and South Korea, the United States did at the time have a firm treaty commitment to the security and defense of Taiwan, as codified in the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of China.[328] In force until 1980, this commitment went, at least in spirit, beyond providing security assurances; for example, as mainland China lobbied to take a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council in the 1960s and 1970s, the United States pushed back against this in favor of maintaining the ROC's seat.

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[327] Derek J. Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program: Deterrence, Abandonment, and Honor," in *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why Some States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, et al (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 293-294.
[328] "Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of China, December 2, 1954," Yale Law School, accessible at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/chin001.asp.

Of course, that battle ultimately was lost and, beginning with the Nixon administration's rapprochement with China, the United States began to slowly move away from Taiwan in favor of building stronger relations with Beijing. Ultimately, the United States reverted in 1979-1980 to recognizing the regime in mainland China as the *de facto* Chinese government, and subsequently annulled its mutual defense treaty with Taiwan. However, Taiwan pursued its own nuclear capability during the 1960s and 1970s, when the treaty was still in force, and despite the protection of the United States. This chapter attempts to explain why.

Exiled from the mainland shortly after the end of World War II, the Taiwanese government saw itself as the rightful holder of authority over the Chinese nation and people, and developed its national identity on the basis of opposition to what it claimed to be the illegitimate parallel government established in Beijing. Moreover, with merely one hundred miles separating the island from the mainland,[329] Taiwan remained acutely sensitive to any Chinese military actions, suggested or otherwise; to remedy this, it relied heavily on the commitment and involvement of the United States in the region as a deterrent to Chinese pressures. It is no surprise, then, that even before China tested its first nuclear device in October 1964 Taiwanese leaders were already expressing deep misgivings about the future of Taiwan's security, especially as the United States became more embroiled in the Vietnam War. As the following analysis of archival documents shows, one way in which Taiwan's fear of U.S. abandonment manifested itself was through the pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

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[329] Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program," 293.

1961-1964: Chinese Aggression and Early Taiwanese Misgivings

After the second Taiwan Strait Crisis ended in 1958, the leadership of the Taiwanese government, under Chiang Kai-shek, was determined to never again allow the offshore islands of Penghu, Quemoy (Kinmen), and Matsu to be threatened by the mainland Chinese government. As a result, the Taiwanese turned to the United States for strong reassurances of U.S. commitment to the security of Taiwan and its island territories; as documents from the 1960s reveal, however, they were not fully convinced that the United States would remain committed to Taiwan's defense in the event of future Chinese belligerence against the offshore islands.

Part of the reason for this uncertainty was that the White House was undergoing a major transition of its own, as John F. Kennedy entered office on January 20, 1961. Under outgoing President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the United States had signed the Mutual Defense Treaty in 1954 and had twice demonstrated to Taiwan and the international community, in the 1954 and 1958 Taiwan Strait Crises, that it would uphold and honor its obligations to the island. Thus, from the start, the new Kennedy administration was eager to send strong signals that it would continue to support Taiwan as President Eisenhower had done earlier. For example, in a February 1961 meeting with George Yeh, the Taiwanese Ambassador to the United States, Secretary of State Dean Rusk "assured [Yeh] that [the] New Administration fully intends to meet U.S. commitments under [the]

Mutual Defense Treaty and support GRC [the Government of the Republic of China] in accordance [with the] Treaty."[330]

Indeed, far from simply paying lip service to the U.S.-Taiwan alliance, Rusk was reflecting in his statement a deep-seated conviction in the new Kennedy administration that Taiwan was far too important to lose in a future conflict with China. From the perspective of the Central Intelligence Agency, "maintenance of the GRC on Taiwan has provided the U.S. with a valuable strategic military outpost and intelligence-collecting point in the Western Pacific. A Chinese government has been maintained which challenges the legitimacy of the Peiping regime and exists as an alternative to it."[331] And in a memo to McGeorge Bundy, President Kennedy's National Security Adviser, NSC staffer Robert Komer wrote, "Taiwan is well worth even a local war to preserve … we are still with it, and are not starting to sell it out."[332]

Yet, despite the White House's expressed determination to continue to uphold its commitments to Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek began to express misgivings as early as June 1961 about Washington's reliability. These doubts were driven primarily by evidence of military preparations by China for a possible invasion of Taiwan. This Chinese military buildup, and Taipei's response to it, would drive bilateral U.S.-Taiwan talks for the next few years. Acknowledging Chiang's

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[330] Telegram, Dean Rusk to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, February 4, 1961, folder: China, Cables, 2/61-8/61, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (hereafter JFKL), 1.
[331] Study Paper, "US Relations With Client States," SECRET, April 13, 1961, folder: Central Intelligence Agency, General, 1/61-4/61, box 271, National Security Files — Departments & Agencies, JFKL, 6-10.
[332] Memorandum, "Strategic Framework for Rethinking China Policy," Robert Komer to multiple recipients, SECRET, April 7, 1961, folder: China (CPR), 1961-1963 [Folder 3 of 3], box 410, National Security Files — Robert W. Komer, JFKL, 12-15.

concerns, the Director of Central Intelligence, Allen Dulles, pointed out that the United States could use its position as Taiwan's superpower patron to both provide reassurances to the Taiwanese and keep them from taking undesirable actions, writing, "The GRC has no feasible alternative to continuing to depend on the U.S. for maintenance of its military strength, protection against attack, economic aid, and diplomatic support. Without U.S. aid and support, its prospects would be dark indeed."[333] Building on this analysis and seeking to provide immediate and satisfactory reassurances to Chiang, Secretary of State Dean Rusk sent the following telegram to the U.S. Embassy in Taipei:

> *[The State] Department [is] disturbed by [the] fact that [Chiang's views] show lack of confidence in United States intentions and policies [regarding] China. While it [is] inevitable that two allies no matter how friendly will have some disagreements as to policy resulting from different national interests, we [are] concerned that much of Chiang's criticism [of] United States policy appears [to be] based on misunderstanding [of the] United States position and on unfounded suspicion [of] United States motives.*

Rusk then instructed his Embassy staff to pass on the message to Chiang that the United States had "stood solidly by GRC in times of crisis, as in 1954-55, when [the] Mutual Defense Treaty was concluded, and in 1958, when our determination [to] fulfill treaty commitments was powerfully demonstrated. [The] Chinese Communists have repeatedly made clear that [a] major deterrent to their attack on Taiwan is [the] continued presence in [the] area of [the] United States

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[333] National Intelligence Estimate Number 43-61, "Prospects for the Government of the Republic of China," Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, June 20, 1961, folder: Republic of China, box 7, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library (hereafter LBJL), 8-9.

Seventh Fleet and other United States forces, which play [a] major role in guaranteeing GRC's security."[334]

Rusk's message, which was then relayed to President Chiang and other Taiwanese officials, was fortunately well received at the highest levels of Taiwan's government, as evidenced by a meeting one month later between the Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy Taipei, Joseph Yager, and the Taiwanese Foreign Minister, Shen Chang-huan. In that meeting, Shen assured Yager that the "GRC desires to be [a] good ally of [the] U.S. and to gear its policies into general U.S. strategy for region." Shen also "volunteered [the] statement that GRC has no intention of taking actions which would embarrass [the] U.S. [or] tend to draw [the] U.S. into war."[335] Similarly, when the CIA's station chief in Taiwan, Ray Cline, met with President Chiang Kai-shek the very next week, Chiang was "particularly complimentary to President Kennedy saying he expected [Kennedy] to be [the] 'Lincoln-like' leader of [the] free world in opposing [the] twentieth century 'slavery' [which the] Communists [are] trying to impose on [the] world." As the reporting CIA officer wrote in his memo, the "atmosphere [of] tension and recrimination against United States has largely evaporated at least at these top levels [of the] GRC."[336]

However, just as U.S.-Taiwan relations seemed to be improving, the Taiwanese were starting to mobilize troops once again in response to the Chinese

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[334] Telegram, Dean Rusk to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, June 29, 1961, folder: China, Cables, 2/61-8/61, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1-2.
[335] Telegram, Joseph Yager to Dean Rusk, EYES ONLY, July 21, 1961, folder: China, Cables, 2/61-8/61, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.
[336] Memorandum, J.S. Earman to Chester Clifton, classification unknown, July 27, 1961, folder: China, General, CIA Cables, 7/61-10/16/61, box 22a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.

military buildup; specifically, Taiwanese forces were conducting military planning exercises for an invasion of mainland China, while the Chinese were amassing troops near the offshore islands, in Fukien (Fujian) province, close to Matsu, in the spring of 1962. Thus, there arose a critical difference in perception, both in Taipei and in Washington, on whether the mainland Chinese troop buildup was offensive or defensive in nature. To be sure, these massive Chinese military mobilizations were a cause of great consternation among the Taiwanese leadership, who saw them as a sign of imminent mainland attack against Taiwan and its offshore islands. Therefore, according to the CIA, President Chiang himself believed this buildup "was offensive in nature, and not defensive preparation in anticipation of Government of the Republic of China (GRC) action against mainland China." President Chiang, the CIA specified, "believed recent Chinese Communist troop deployments were intended for action *against* the offshore islands" [emphasis added].[337]

On the other hand, the United States government disagreed with President Chiang's assessment and felt the mainland Chinese military buildup was essentially defensive in nature. While the CIA in a separate June 1962 telegram wrote that China's growing military strength on the coast "*might* reflect a Chinese Communist decision to attack the Matsu" [emphasis added],[338] U.S. State Department officials stationed in Taiwan felt differently. Namely, Marshall

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[337] Telegram, "Chiang Kai Shek's Estimate of Chinese Communists in Mainland Areas Opposite the Offshore Islands," CIA to unknown recipient, SECRET, June 20, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.
[338] Telegram, "Chiang Kai-shek's Estimate of Chinese Communist Motivation and Possible Tactics for Attack on the Offshore Islands," CIA to McGeorge Bundy, SECRET, June 22, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.

Green, the U.S. Consul General in Taipei, saw the buildup "as being essentially defensive in character, reflecting [Chinese] fears of [Taiwanese] attacks on [the] mainland … and possibly apprehension over U.S. intentions toward China as result [of] recent U.S. military moves in [Southeast] Asia."[339] The Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy Taipei, Ralph Clough, concurred with this assessment, telling Secretary of State Rusk that, "on [the] basis [of] intelligence available to date and study of past CHICOM behavior, we agree … that buildup in [Fukien] military region [is] essentially defensive."[340]

These telegrams demonstrate that the United States and Taiwan were clearly split in their views on whether Chinese troop mobilizations were offensive or defensive in nature. Hence, as President Chiang continued to prepare for a possible attack on the mainland, the crucial question in Washington was how the United States should respond to China's growing military capabilities while simultaneously preventing Taiwan from taking hasty military action that would risk dragging the United States into a war with China. For their part, the U.S. Joint Chiefs prepared a top secret assessment, which Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara passed up to President Kennedy, on the advisability of deploying nuclear weapons to the offshore islands as a deterrent or a response to further Chinese action. In the view of the Joint Chiefs, while "at the present time it does not appear that atomic weapons would be required to defend the islands

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[339] Telegram, Marshall Green to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 22, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.
[340] Telegram, Ralph Clough to Dean Rusk, SECRET, June 26, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.

successfully," the United States should nonetheless "be prepared to employ tactical nuclear weapons if we are faced with an overwhelming attack."[341]

The State Department, in its deliberations, argued that the best course of action for the United States would be to maintain a policy of "ambiguity," keeping both the Chinese and the Taiwanese in the dark on U.S. strategy. In an example of this thinking, the director for Intelligence and Research at the State Department, Roger Hilsman, sent a memo to Averell Harriman, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, on June 21, 1962, writing, "There are clear cut disadvantages in making any firm decisions on U.S. defense of the offshore islands under present circumstances. ... Continued ambiguity as to U.S. intentions … avoids a sharp worsening of U.S.-GRC relations and possibly serious domestic U.S. repercussions, while keeping the Chinese Communists seriously in doubt as to the ultimate risks involved in a grab for the offshore islands."[342]

Clearly, then, one of the U.S. government's key fears at that time was that the United States could be dragged into a war between China and Taiwan that might escalate to higher levels. Indeed, this fear was so well-known and pervasive amongst Taiwanese leaders that President Chiang sought to exploit it, sharing with the CIA station in Taipei on June 26 that he was preparing the Taiwanese military for an attack on the mainland in response to a Chinese invasion of the

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[341] Study Paper, "Questions Related to the Defense of the Offshore Islands," Robert McNamara to President Kennedy, TOP SECRET, June 25, 1962, folder: China, General, 6/62, box 23, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 6.
[342] Memorandum, "US Posture, Nationalist Chinese Interests, and Chinese Communist Intentions," Roger Hilsman to W. Averell Harriman, SECRET, June 21, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.

island. In his remarks, Chiang said that "should GRC action against the mainland bog down or fail … United States air and naval strength under the terms of the Mutual Defense Treaty" would "guarantee the security of Taiwan."[343] Chiang's statement was designed, evidently, to signal to Washington that his actions would almost certainly bring the United States into a larger regional military confrontation. As Ambassador Clough wrote to the State Department in 1963, in the event of such an escalation of tensions, the United States would have no choice but to get involved, as "we would be unwilling to suffer the damage to our position in this part of the world which would result from non-intervention. The US, in fact, has relatively little freedom of choice with respect to the offshore islands, in the event of a Chinese Communist attack."[344] And, as Clough wrote in a separate message, President Chiang's statement contained a certain defeatist logic that would make it difficult for the United States to keep Taiwan from taking any undesirable independent actions against the mainland. According to Clough:

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[343] Telegram, "Chiang Kai-Shek's Views on Mainland Recovery, 26 June 1962," CIA to McGeorge Bundy, CONFIDENTIAL, June 27, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 6/16/62-6/30/62, box 25, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1-3.
[344] Airgram, "Transmitting Study Paper Entitled 'U.S. Policy and the Offshore Islands'," Ralph Clough to U.S. State Department, SECRET, May 24, 1963, folder: China, Cables, 3/63-5/63, box 26, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 2.

> *The more dynamically anti-Communist U.S. policy appeared to President Chiang, particularly in this part of the world, the more he would be encouraged to believe we would come around to support the counterattack and the more likely he would be to prepare vigorously for it and actively seek our support. … [On the other hand,] the more compromising and appeasing U.S. policy toward the Communists appeared to him, the more worried he would become about the future of the GRC and the more he would be tempted to take unilateral action against the China mainland in a desperate attempt to salvage the situation before it was too late.*[345]

In short, then, it appeared that, regardless of what Washington could or would do next with respect to Taiwan, Chiang was prepared either way to launch an offensive against the mainland, which fit well with earlier U.S. assessments that the Chinese military buildup was defensive in nature.[346] Thus, the question in Washington now focused on how the United States could minimize the chances of Chiang taking such an undesirable action and, failing that, how any resultant damage could best be mitigated. In his missive, Clough offered his personal prescription, saying Washington should provide assurances to Taiwan that "U.S. resistance to Communist encroachments upon the free world is firm and effective," and should "dispel any suspicion that the U.S. is moving in the direction of a deal with Communist China." Simultaneously, Clough recommended that Washington deter Taiwan from taking undesirable unilateral

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[345] Airgram, "GRC Mainland Aspirations and US-GRC Relations: Recent Developments, Present State, and Prospects," Ralph Clough to U.S. State Department, SECRET, October 12, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 9/5/62-10/15/62, box 25a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 6-8.
[346] It is worth noting that, in a meeting with National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, Chiang Ching-kuo said Taiwan was "not planning a large scale attack on the China mainland." See Memorandum, "Visit of General Chiang Ching-kuo," William Colby to McGeorge Bundy, SECRET, September 19, 1963, folder: China, General, 9/63-10/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 3.

action against China by "convincing GRC leaders that they cannot hope for U.S. support in a military assault on the mainland under present circumstances."[347]

Despite these suggested efforts, Chiang Kai-shek's determination to launch an attack on mainland China, whether as an offensive or a defensive maneuver, was so overwhelmingly singular, and so crucial to the Taiwanese leadership's sense of identity, that it remained a key sticking point in U.S.-Taiwan relations. By early 1963, the U.S. Embassy in Taipei was reporting that the Taiwanese Premier, Chen Cheng, had declared on multiple occasions that U.S.-Taiwan relations were "at a low ebb." From the Embassy's perspective, "a certain strain in U.S.-GRC relations is inevitable, so long as the GRC continues to prepare vigorously for military action to fulfill its goal of mainland recovery and the U.S. continues convinced that any overt military action for this purpose is bound to fail." Indeed, "the Embassy expects an intensification of GRC activities toward mainland recovery during 1963 and the prospect is, therefore, that U.S.-GRC relations will get worse — perhaps a good deal worse — before they get better."[348]

China's advancements in its nuclear weapons program during the early 1960s did little to mitigate Taiwan's anxiety and temper its eagerness to "recover the mainland," which as demonstrated was already a point of contention between Taipei and Washington; indeed, these nuclear developments only further strained

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[347] Airgram, "GRC Mainland Aspirations and US-GRC Relations: Recent Developments, Present State, and Prospects," Ralph Clough to U.S. State Department, SECRET, October 12, 1962, folder: China, Cables, 9/5/62-10/15/62, box 25a, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 6-8.
[348] Airgram, "U.S.-GRC Relations," Ralph Clough to U.S. State Department, SECRET, February 15, 1963, folder: China, Cables, 12/62-2/63, box 26, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 2-4.

U.S.-Taiwan relations. In June 1961, the Director of Central Intelligence, Allen Dulles, wrote, "The immediate GRC reaction [to the detonation of a nuclear device by the Chinese Communists] would be one of great concern … [Taiwan] would almost certainly urge the U.S. to provide it with nuclear weapons."[349] While Chiang never did make such a request of the United States, Dulles was correct that the Taiwanese would react to China's nuclear weapons test with great consternation and fear.

From the U.S. perspective, a possible Chinese nuclear weapons capability was equally concerning. By October 1963, both the U.S. State Department and the high-level Interagency Policy Planning Council had weighed in on the implications of a Chinese nuclear test for U.S. policy and interests in East Asia. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research found that, while convincing China to forego its nuclear weapons ambitions was a topmost goal, achieving this objective would come at a very steep price. To be precise, wrote the Bureau's George Denney to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "There are at least three steps that Peiping might seriously consider as inducements to abandon its nuclear program, and each is highly disadvantageous to the U.S.: (1) removal of the U.S. military presence in the Far East; (2) establishment of a nuclear-free zone including all of China and the United States; and (3) the turning over of Taiwan

[349] National Intelligence Estimate Number 43-61, "Prospects for the Government of the Republic of China," Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, June 20, 1961, folder: Republic of China, box 7, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 10.

and the offshore islands to Peiping."[350] As Denney had noted, all three of these possibilities were undesirable from the U.S. perspective. The thought of removing all U.S. presence from East Asia or giving up Taiwan was simply intolerable, and discussions on a nuclear-free zone were not feasible at that time.

Recognizing that it would be much more difficult for the Taiwanese to attack the mainland after the Chinese had nuclear weapons, the U.S. Interagency Policy Planning Council therefore suggested the United States try to change the narrative, in order to prevent Chiang from launching a premature attack at the first available opportunity:

> *The possible use of its nuclear capability by Peiping ... provides an additional reason for concerted long-term efforts to lay the basis in the GRC for a different vision of the future than return to the mainland. ... The GRC should be discouraged from launching against the mainland more than small-scale raids of the general size of those undertaken in the past. We should, moreover, wherever possible strengthen our efforts to identify in advance (and if necessary take action to preclude) major GRC attacks.*[351]

However, applying such "persistent pressure" would prove to be quite difficult to do, especially as the Chinese got closer to detonating their first nuclear device. Indeed, the Taiwanese would come to feel immense pressure to make significant military preparations, including substantial investments in nuclear technologies, in order to be ready to take matters into their own hands if necessary. As the Director of Central Intelligence, John McCone, summed up in

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[350] Memorandum, "Possible Inducements for Peiping to Abandon Nuclear Program," George Denney to Dean Rusk, SECRET, July 3, 1963, folder: China, General, 7/63-8/63, box 24, National Security Files — Countries, JFKL, 1.
[351] Study Paper, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability," Interagency Policy Planning Council, SECRET, October 15, 1963, folder: China (CPR) Nuclear Explosion, 1961-1963 [Folder 1 of 2], box 410, National Security Files — Robert W. Komer, JFKL, 84-85.

March 1964, "The U.S. is likely to find the GRC increasingly difficult to work with. … Uncertainty as to the future and lack of confidence in the direction of U.S. policy in the Far East are likely to reinforce the GRC's desire to maintain a *maximum military capability* of its own" [emphasis added].[352]

1964-1972: Seeking Reassurances While Hedging Bets

As the previous section demonstrates, since 1961 the Taiwanese leadership had consistently doubted the durability of the U.S. commitment to Taiwan, especially in the face of a rising China. And, up to the point of China's first nuclear test, all signs indicated the Taiwanese were still in an aggressive enough frame of mind to act independently, if necessary, and launch an attack on the mainland, irrespective of how such an action might impact U.S.-Taiwanese relations. However, as researchers David Albright and Corey Gay write, "Taiwan's sense of security was badly shaken by China's first nuclear test,"[353] and, as the following analysis of archival documents demonstrates, the Taiwanese reaction was to turn to the United States, its superpower patron, for immediate reassurances, while simultaneously making a modest start to its national nuclear program.

The very next day after the Chinese conducted their first nuclear weapons test, on October 16, 1964, the U.S. Ambassador in Taipei, Jerauld Wright, met

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[352] National Intelligence Estimate Number 43-64, "Prospects for the Government of the Republic of China," John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, March 11, 1964, folder: Republic of China, box 7, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 14.
[353] David Albright and Corey Gay, "Taiwan: Nuclear Nightmare Averted," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 54, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 55.

with Taiwanese Foreign Minister Shen, who disclosed that he feared the test "may encourage defeatist attitudes [in Taiwan] since both [the] civilian population and armed forces tend to see it in terms [of] prospects for accomplishment [of] mainland recovery." In addition, Shen said, "he had considered [the] question of how GRC might handle news of [the] detonation;" thus far, he said, "he had not thought of [a] good formula for [a] statement that would neutralize [the] situation." Seemingly left with no other option, Shen then made the following "off the cuff" suggestion:

> *[A] prompt firm statement by [the] U.S. might be [the] only effective means [to] handle [the] adverse psychological results of [the] detonation. [Shen] said that [the] time is appropriate, even urgent, for [the] U.S. to state publically that it is determined [to] maintain the peace and that nuclear attacks against friends will bring U.S. nuclear retaliation. Only such [a] statement, he said, can stabilize [the] psychological situation here.*[354]

In fact, far from being a casual, spur-of-the-moment suggestion, Shen's comment actually appeared to be a carefully choreographed statement, intended to convey to Ambassador Wright a sincere desire on the part of the Taiwanese government for U.S. support. Indeed, from this sudden change of tone in Shen's statement, it appeared that, for all of their bluster and saber-rattling in the previous three years, the Taiwanese were reevaluating their security relationship with the United States in the face of a newly nuclear-capable China, and were now actively and vigorously seeking a clear and demonstrable commitment from the United States to Taiwan's security.

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[354] Telegram, "ChiCom Atomic Detonation," Jerauld Wright to Dean Rusk, SECRET, October 17, 1964, folder: Nuclear Testing - China, Vol. I [1 of 2], box 31, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 2-3.

For its part, Washington was more than happy to oblige, reaffirming once again its willingness to uphold its treaty obligations. For example, when Wright met with President Chiang's Secretary General, Chang Chun, a few weeks after his meeting with Shen, he sought to convey the unwavering support of the United States to Taiwan's security. In his conversation with Chun, Wright made reference to Chiang's concerns over the "vulnerability of Taiwan to Chinese Communist nuclear weapons," and likened the situation in East Asia to what the United States faced in Europe vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. There, Wright said, "when [the] Soviets exploded [their] first nuclear weapon, there was [a] good deal of concern among people in Western Europe, but there was confidence that [the] U.S. would respond with nuclear weapons were Western Europe attacked. U.S. nuclear strength has deterred any Soviet action against Western Europe for more than 15 years and European confidence in [the] effectiveness of [the] U.S. nuclear deterrent has been maintained." In East Asia, Wright continued, the situation was similar, "except that [the] disparity between U.S. strength and ChiCom strength is far greater. *Our security treaty with ROC is just as strong as our treaty arrangements with Western Europe*" [emphasis added].[355]

This central message, that the United States was unwavering in its commitment to Taiwan, seemed to resonate more strongly with the younger generation of Taiwanese leaders. In particular, President Chiang Kai-shek did not share the same level of trust which his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, placed in the United States. Thus, it was the younger Chiang, at the time the Minister of

[355] Telegram, Jerauld Wright to Dean Rusk, SECRET, November 7, 1964, folder: China - Cables - Volume II - 9/64-2/65, box 238, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.

National Defense, who was sent to Washington in September 1965 to "establish a mechanism for a dialogue on American policy in Asia and to plan for a war with Communist China."[356] That meeting was ultimately unsuccessful for Chiang Ching-kuo, who was unable to get the specific policy promises from Washington that he had hoped to secure. Nonetheless, according to a CIA analysis, he and his younger Taiwanese compatriots continued to believe that the "only hope for GRC survival," absent a complete takeover or destruction of the Communist regime in Peiping, was absolute Taiwanese support of U.S. interests in East Asia, as well as an unwavering reliance on the United States for Taiwan's protection. The younger Chiang and his contemporaries remained firm in this conviction, even while they believed that a return to the mainland, which Chiang Kai-shek was so fervently striving to accomplish, would not occur "in their own lifetimes." According to the CIA intelligence cable:

> *Because the knowledgeable younger generation of GRC leaders know that they cannot at any foreseeable time in the future be sure of destroying the Chinese communist regime, they feel the primary aim of GRC policies and strategy should be to maintain an intimate and cooperative understanding with the United States and to support U.S. policy in East Asia. ... The GRC wants to develop a candid and thorough partnership with the United States, assisting the United States in every way possible to maintain its position of strength in the Far East. The GRC will always adjust its policy and interests to fit the United States.*[357]

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[356] Intelligence Memorandum, "Growing Pessimism Among Nationalist Chinese Leaders," CIA Office of Current Intelligence, SECRET, May 17, 1966, folder: China - Memos - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [1 of 3], box 240, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.
[357] Intelligence Cable, "Chiang Ching-kuo's Desire to Discuss GRC/U.S. Strategy Against Communist China," CIA to multiple recipients, SECRET, September 22, 1965, folder: China - Cables - Volume IV - 7/65-10/65, box 238, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 4-5.

Of course, because the older Chiang was still in power, and because he continued to hold deep-seated reservations about the sincerity of the U.S. security commitment to Taiwan, American officials had to continue providing regular reassurances. For example, when McGeorge Bundy met with both Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo in March 1966, the central theme of their discussion was the "threat of ChiCom action against Taiwan in [the] near future." Bundy, for his part, "assured both [Chiangs] that in [the] event of such action our treaty commitment would come into play and there could be no doubt of our action."[358] That same day, when Chiang Ching-kuo met privately with Bundy, he told his American counterpart:

> *I want to tell you of the Chinese Communist plan. ... Senior Chinese Communist officials say that in order to neutralize Taiwan an effort will be made to air drop troops and bomb military centers. They also discussed plans for establishing bases in the mountains of Taiwan from which to conduct guerrilla operations. ... Perhaps it would be wise to make known the U.S. knowledge of this plan and to emphasize that the U.S. will honor its mutual defense treaty. Perhaps if we do this it would avert any Chinese Communist action.*

Once again, Bundy reiterated that the United States was committed to Taiwan, replying, "If [a Chinese attack on Taiwan] occurred there would be no question whatever that it would cause the Defense Treaty to come into effect and we would take very strong action."[359]

However, because Chiang Ching-kuo's earlier trip to Washington in September 1965 had not yielded the outcomes that President Chiang had hoped

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[358] Telegram, McGeorge Bundy to Dean Rusk, SECRET, March 12, 1966, folder: China - Cables - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [2 of 2], box 239, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.
[359] Telegram, "Draft Summary of Bundy - Chiang Ching-kuo Conversation 9:30 AM March 12," Arthur Hummel, Jr. to Dean Rusk, SECRET, March 14, 1966, folder: China - Cables - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [2 of 2], box 239, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.

for, which in turn "revived [his] suspicion that the United States is losing interest in Nationalist China as an ally,"[360] these statements from Bundy and other American officials were insufficient to fully reassure Taipei, and senior Taiwanese leaders found they did not have the level of confidence in the U.S.-Taiwan security relationship that many had hoped for. In addition to these general concerns, many of President Chiang's closest advisors, perhaps foreseeing what was coming in the late 1960s and early 1970s, believed that a "softening of American policy toward Communist China [would] weaken Taiwan's international position." Consequently, according to a CIA analysis, Taipei would likely become a more difficult ally in the coming years; in particular, the analysis seemed to imply, the Taiwanese might seek to acquire more advanced military capabilities, such as nuclear weapons:

> *The Nationalist regime is likely to become less responsive to American suggestions and increasingly rigid and uncompromising in international relations. ... The Nationalists are likely to seek to reduce their reliance on the United States. Recent moves to develop a capability to produce scientific and technical apparatus for military and intelligence use and to buy what cannot be produced might well be expanded.*[361]

Through the mid- to late 1960s, this concern over nuclear weapons increasingly animated discussions between high-level Taiwanese and U.S. officials over the security of Taiwan and the future of East Asia. When Secretary of State Rusk met with President Chiang in July 1966, for example, Chiang made

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[360] Intelligence Memorandum, "Growing Pessimism Among Nationalist Chinese Leaders," CIA Office of Current Intelligence, SECRET, May 17, 1966, folder: China - Memos - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [1 of 3], box 240, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.
[361] Ibid., 4-5.

it clear that he worried about mainland China's capacity to "seriously cripple GRC's military capability." In response, Rusk assured Chiang that the "U.S. commitment in [its] defense treaty is strong and well known," and that the "U.S. commitment to curb [the] Communists is entirely firm."[362] Here, Rusk was reminding Chiang that, should Taiwan and China become involved in a military conflict, the United States would fulfill its treaty commitments and step in to aid the Taiwanese. However, Rusk added in private, if the United States did "get involved in any part of an attack on the Chinese Communist mainland[,] then USG must see the conflict through to a conclusion and cannot be half in and half out." Rusk concluded his meeting with President Chiang by mentioning, somewhat ominously, that he could not imagine "any general engagement between U.S. forces and ChiComs being limited to conventional weapons,"[363] thereby implying that a conflict between China and Taiwan which would engage the United States could likely end in a nuclear exchange.

Rusk's suggestion seemed to stoke Taiwanese fears and renew their calls for U.S. assurances. Hence, when Rusk met with Chiang Ching-kuo a few months later and in advance of China's expected fifth nuclear test, the younger Chiang asked "whether it would be possible for the Secretary or some other high ranking U.S. official to make a clear public statement that if the Chicoms were to use their nuclear weapons the U.S. would definitely retaliate." To this request, Secretary

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[362] Telegram, Walter McConaughy to Dean Rusk, SECRET, July 5, 1966, folder: China - Cables - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [2 of 2], box 239, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 2.
[363] Telegram, Walter McConaughy to Dean Rusk, TOP SECRET, July 5, 1966, folder: China - Cables - Volume VI - 3/66-9/66 [2 of 2], box 239, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1.

Rusk replied, "Statements along these lines had already been made [and] our alliances are not limited by the character of the weapons that might be used against us." Rusk emphasized that "the USG would find ways to make it continuingly clear to the Chicoms that any use of their nuclear weapons would be suicidal."[364] In his use of such strong language, Rusk evidently was signaling to senior Taiwanese leadership that they should not worry about a conflict escalating to nuclear use, and that, in fact, the mainland Chinese had more to fear from such an escalation.

By this point, however, and despite these multiple assurances from senior U.S. officials, President Chiang's fears of a Chinese attack on Taiwan had reached a fever pitch. Between June and September of 1968, Taiwanese policy makers met with their American counterparts on no less than ten separate occasions, each time claiming that the mainland Chinese were preparing to attack Taiwan's offshore islands that year. And, despite the lack of "hard intelligence confirming any basis for this GRC fear of attack,"[365] which Chiang Kai-shek freely admitted, this fear nevertheless appeared to be very real.

The U.S. Embassy in Taipei concluded that Taiwan's concern was "based at least in part on its desire to alert [the] U.S. to [the] possibility [of Chinese attack] in [the] hope of winning additional U.S. assistance or commitment."[366] Indeed, as National Security Council staffer Alfred Jenkins wrote to his colleague

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[364] Memorandum of Conversation, "The Situation in Mainland China and Chicom Nuclear Developments," SECRET, December 8, 1966, folder: China - Memos - Volume VIII - 12/66-3/67 [2 of 2], box 240, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 6.
[365] Telegram, "Country Team Assessment of GRC Intentions," Walter McConaughy to Dean Rusk, SECRET, September 5, 1968, folder: China (C) - Volume XIII - 7/68-12/68, box 243, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-2.
[366] Ibid.

Walt Rostow in August 1968, a few months before the November presidential election that Richard Nixon would eventually win, Chiang Kai-shek appeared to be "trying to get a new, high-silhouetted U.S. commitment of support in the later days of the Johnson Administration, which would be difficult to overlook by the new administration."[367] According to Jenkins, Chiang's fears were based on a combination of factors, including:

> *President Johnson's retirement from office and uncertainty as to the degree of our continued presence in East Asia; the likely retirement of Secretary Rusk, whom Chiang considers an exceptionally staunch supporter of the GRC position; [and] indications from several Presidential aspirants [i.e., Nixon] of a desire for further movement toward contact with Peking.*[368]

Of course, providing such a commitment to Taiwan by signaling that Chinese use of nuclear weapons would be "suicidal" was critical, but sending similar signals directly to China was equally, if not more, important. Indeed, Washington was truly intent on keeping mainland China from attacking Taiwan, even as the sun was setting on the Johnson administration and transition teams were preparing for Richard Nixon to take office in January 1969. This continuation of U.S. foreign policy across administrations was evidently due as much to U.S. fears of being dragged into a regional war between China and Taiwan as to a U.S. obligation and willingness to uphold its treaty commitments to Taiwan's security. To this end, in a transition policy paper drafted in advance of President-elect Nixon's inauguration, the State Department Policy Planning

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[367] Memorandum, "The Gimo's Latest Worries," Alfred Jenkins to Walt W. Rostow, SECRET, August 28, 1968, folder: China (C) - Volume XIII - 7/68-12/68, box 243, National Security File — Country File, LBJL, 1-3.
[368] Ibid.

Council wrote, "We should do what we can to make less likely a military clash with Peking over Taiwan. This means that we should try … to keep the Chinese Communists convinced of the serious risks attached to any attempt to pursue their objective by force."[369]

Crucially, however, the same document from December 1968 demonstrates that, contrary to the conventional wisdom on the origins of the Guam Doctrine, the Johnson administration was already preparing the groundwork for a paradigmatic shift in U.S. policy that would eventually culminate in Nixon's announcement of his new doctrine a few years later. In that transition paper, the Policy Planning Council wrote, "The long-range aim of United States policy is a [mainland] China which has been brought out of its largely self-imposed isolation, to become a constructive member of the world community." In advancing this objective, the paper recommended the following:

> *We should … convey credible assurances that the United States has no aggressive designs against mainland China. One means of conveying such assurances is to be increasingly explicit in public references to the Peking regime as a firmly established government with which we deal on matters relating to the China mainland [emphasis added].*[370]

Over the next two years, the Nixon administration continued to build on this foundation in preparation for an eventual recognition of the Chinese government in Peking and, by 1970, the White House had fully and formally acknowledged that normalizing relations with the PRC was a major U.S. foreign

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[369] Study Paper, "U.S. Policy Toward Communist China," State Department Policy Planning Council, SECRET, December 1968, folder: Transition: Policy Planning Council Papers - U.S. Policy Toward Communist China, box 50, National Security File — Subject File, LBJL, 6.
[370] Ibid.

policy goal. At the same time, the high-level Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC) acknowledged that the U.S.-Taiwan relationship would become increasingly strained as the United States sought to achieve this objective.[371] Specifically, the DPRC wrote, "Recent actions by the U.S. [such as] opening contacts with Peking … have already caused Taipei to seek reaffirmation of U.S. treaty obligations on which military and bureaucratic morale are focused. Over the next five years, should U.S. policy toward Peking tend to enhance the Communists' international standing, there will be further erosion of morale in Taiwan." Acknowledging that Washington's treaty-based commitment to Taiwan's security was of paramount significance for the Taiwanese, the DPRC offered the following observation:

> *The Nationalist Chinese government considers the U.S. military presence on Taiwan and in the area to be politically and psychologically important … The single most important factor in the Chinese Nationalists' assessment of their own defense capability is the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty with the U.S. Any development that shakes their belief in the determination and ability of the U.S. to honor that treaty causes serious political repercussions in Taipei.*[372]

As the above analysis demonstrates, the cornerstone of Taiwan's security in the 1960s was its reliance on the United States as its sole guarantor and protector. Although since 1961 Taiwanese leaders had expressed occasional doubts about the long-term commitment of the United States to Taiwan's security,

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[371] The DPRC, a high-level interagency group headed by National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, comprised officials from the Treasury, State and Defense Departments, the Joint Chiefs, the CIA, the Office of Management and Budget, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the National Security Council.

[372] Study Paper, "National Security Interests and Commitments Study for the Defense Program Review Committee," SECRET, June 26, 1970, folder: Defense Program Review Committee - National Security Interests and Commitments Study, 6/26/70, box B1-B3, Melvin R. Laird Papers, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (hereafter GRFL), 14-17, 42.

especially as mainland China became stronger, they had turned to their American counterparts immediately following the Chinese nuclear test with renewed vigor, calling for clear and unequivocal U.S. statements of commitment to Taiwan's security. Crucially, throughout this period, every American official was more than happy to oblige, providing reassurances to Chinese and Taiwanese leaders alike that the United States remained firmly by Taiwan's side.

Chiang Kai-shek's fears, therefore, should have been mitigated by these statements and actions. Taiwan's calls for U.S. reassurances were met with precisely the reassurances it sought, and therefore no additional steps should have been taken by the Taiwanese to increase its own independent military capabilities. Yet Taiwan did precisely that, making early investments during the 1960s into an indigenous nuclear program.

EARLY TAIWANESE NUCLEAR INVESTMENTS

As the following paragraphs demonstrate, Taiwan sought to develop a scientific and technical base in nuclear weapons and the nuclear fuel cycle during the 1960s. By making these indigenous investments in parallel with urgent requests for strengthened U.S. support, Taiwan's leadership sought to maximize its chances of survival while hedging against the possibility of abandonment by its primary ally.[373]

To this day, there remain some uncertainties regarding the origins of the Taiwanese military nuclear program. For example, in the secondary literature on

[373] Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program," 294.

Taiwan's nuclear weapons ambitions, a consensus view has emerged that President Chiang Kai-shek launched the program sometime in the late 1960s.[374] This view was also shared in the 1960s by the U.S. intelligence community, as evidenced by a 1966 CIA estimate which read, "Chiang Kai-shek, shortly after the first Chinese Communist nuclear detonation in October 1964, set up a scientific research institute; there is some evidence that one of its purposes is to study the possibility of Nationalist China's acquiring its own nuclear weapons."[375] However, this view is not entirely conclusive; for example, according to a 1975 statement made by then-Taiwanese Premier Chiang Ching-kuo, the "timeline for Taiwan's research on nuclear weapons" began in 1958.[376]

Also unclear is whether these efforts to build an independent Taiwanese military nuclear capability were spearheaded by Chiang Ching-kuo or by his father, Chiang Kai-shek. According to a former member of Taiwan's National Security Council, the younger Chiang led the charge on the Taiwanese nuclear weapons program without his father's knowledge;[377] on the other hand, in 1966 the U.S. Embassy in Taipei reported that President Chiang himself had

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[374] Albright and Gay, "Taiwan;" Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program;"
[375] National Intelligence Estimate Number 4-66, "The Likelihood of Further Nuclear Proliferation," Richard Helms, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, January 20, 1966, folder: Arms and Disarmament, box 1, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 11.
[376] Alan K. Chang, "Crisis Avoided: The Past, Present and Future of Taiwan's Nuclear Weapons Program" (MA Thesis, Hawaii Pacific University, 2011), 31.
[377] Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program," 296; Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 56; Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo's Son: Chiang Ching-kuo and the Revolutions in China and Taiwan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 248.

championed the nuclear program and, despite advice to the contrary from some of his key advisors, "had insisted that the effort continue."[378]

Regardless of these discrepancies, what is clear is that Taiwan, under the nominal leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, did launch a robust nuclear program around the time of China's first nuclear test. In addition to renewing their pleas following that test for U.S. support in guaranteeing Taiwan's security, and despite U.S. reassurances to that effect, the Taiwanese leadership decided that a concurrent mastery of the full nuclear fuel cycle was also a worthwhile endeavor.

Taiwan sought to acquire nuclear energy technologies from legitimate international sources through the 1950s and 1960s; however, following the October 1964 Chinese nuclear test, Taiwan's leaders made the decision to exploit those legitimate channels to create a covert military nuclear program. Since 1955, when Taiwan and the United States signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, Taipei had been granted access to nuclear technologies of varying levels of sensitivity from countries like the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and South Africa. These nuclear assets were acquired legally and transparently and, while Taiwan did not ultimately succeed in getting the bomb, the degree of progress it did make towards a military nuclear capability while relying on legitimate channels was significant and impressive.

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[378] Airgram, "Indications GRC Continues to Pursue Atomic Weaponry," Arthur Hummel, Jr. to U.S. State Department, SECRET, June 20, 1966, in "Electronic Briefing Book 20: New Archival Evidence on Taiwanese 'Nuclear Intentions,' 1966-1976," ed. William Burr, The National Security Archive, George Washington University, October 13, 1999, accessible at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB20/ (hereafter EBB20).

In late October 1964, shortly after the first Chinese nuclear test, President Chiang Kai-shek set up a scientific research institute under the auspices of the "Hsin Chu Program," named after the city in which the institute would be based.[379] The initial objectives of this project were to acquire a heavy water reactor, a heavy water production plant, and a plutonium reprocessing plant; since Taiwan had capable scientists but no access to fissile materials, these three assets alone, if acquired and made fully operational, could give Taiwan the independent capability to produce weapons-grade plutonium for use in a bomb program. As of January 1966, however, the U.S. intelligence community believed that it would take considerable time for Taiwan to acquire the requisite technologies and equipment to stand up a nuclear program, and that, "for the next few years, at least … Nationalist China would have great difficulty in obtaining such unsafeguarded materials and equipment."[380]

Indeed, Chiang did encounter difficulties in convincing foreign countries and companies to sell nuclear technologies to Taiwan. He first sought to acquire a 50-megawatt natural uranium-fueled, heavy water-moderated reactor from West Germany, initiating contact with the German company Siemens in early 1966.[381] While Siemens and the German Ministry of Science were very much in favor of making the sale to Taiwan for economic reasons, the German Foreign Ministry

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[379] Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 55; Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program," 293-316.
[380] National Intelligence Estimate Number 4-66, "The Likelihood of Further Nuclear Proliferation," Richard Helms, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, January 20, 1966, folder: Arms and Disarmament, box 1, National Security File — National Intelligence Estimates, LBJL, 11.
[381] Telegram, "German Nuclear Reactor for Taiwan," Martin Hillenbrand to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, April 15, 1966, EBB20.

was against it for "political reasons," and the German government agreed that if the United States were to oppose the deal it would block the sale altogether.[382]

From the American perspective, placing the reactor under IAEA safeguards was an absolute prerequisite to making the sale, as the "Germans, French, and others in [the] community [were] watching U.S. actions in connection [with] nonproliferation and safeguards."[383] Although the GRC was "apparently agreeable" to the safeguards requirement,[384] the U.S. Ambassador to Taipei, Arthur Hummel, was "not convinced that [the] purpose motivating GRC desire for [the] Siemens reactor is unrelated to [Taiwan's] interest in nuclear weapons research." As a result, he argued, "efforts should continue to be made to preclude [the] consummation of [the] sale of [the] Siemens reactor."[385] The State Department, however, disagreed with this recommendation, pointing out that, if the United States were to make known its concerns over the Siemens reactor being used in possible weapons-related research, this approach "would cast doubt on U.S. confidence in IAEA safeguards."[386] Thus, after much deliberation the Americans and Germans agreed to the sale of the Siemens reactor to Taiwan, but in the end the Taiwanese dropped out of the deal, evidently because the cost was prohibitively high.[387]

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[382] Telegram, "German Nuclear Reactor for Taiwan," George McGhee to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, March 25, 1966, EBB20.
[383] Telegram, "Possible German Nuclear Reactor Export to TTaiwan [sic]," John Tuthill to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, April 7, 1966, EBB20.
[384] Telegram, "German Nuclear Reactor for Taiwan," Martin Hillenbrand to Dean Rusk, CONFIDENTIAL, April 15, 1966, EBB20.
[385] Airgram, "GRC Plans for Purchase of 50 Megawatt Heavy Water Nuclear Power Plant," Arthur Hummel, Jr. to U.S. State Department, SECRET, February 16, 1967, EBB20.
[386] Telegram, Dean Rusk to multiple recipients, SECRET, March 20, 1967, EBB20.
[387] Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 55-56.

Chiang next turned to other countries for a more affordable nuclear reactor, and in 1969 Taiwan's Institute for Nuclear Energy Research (INER) purchased from Canada a small heavy-water, natural-uranium reactor, based on the same NRX design that South Korea would later consider buying in the mid-1970s and which India would use to produce its first nuclear weapon in 1974.[388] Construction on this reactor, which would later come online in 1973 and be commonly known as the Taiwan Research Reactor (TRR), began that same year. INER also acquired from Canada a heavy water supply and natural uranium fuel rods.[389]

Later in 1969, Taiwan began work on its other key facilities, which, according to Albright and Gay, Taiwan built "itself, with equipment acquired from France, Germany, the United States, and other countries."[390] Specifically with regards to the reprocessing facility, Taiwan first asked the United States for such a plant; when Washington denied the request, Taipei turned instead to the French, and some evidence exists that, by the early 1970s, the French company Saint Gobain — the same firm that would later provide a reprocessing facility to South Korea as well — had "supplied the Taiwanese with some sort of smaller reprocessing facility," likely a lab-scale facility capable of handling only a few grams of plutonium per year.[391]

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[388] Ron Finch, *Exporting Danger* (Montreal, Canada: Black Rose Books, 1986), 48.
[389] Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 56-57.
[390] Ibid., 57.
[391] Cited in Steven R. Weisman and Herbert Krosney, *The Islamic Bomb* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1981), 152-153.

Thus, by the end of the 1960s, Taiwan had made significant investments into creating a national nuclear enterprise that could be used for potentially military applications. Although Taipei continued to clamor for, and did receive, enhanced U.S. security assurances following the first Chinese test in 1964, it had already begun to lay the groundwork for advanced nuclear research and weapons-related activities. Moreover, even though Taiwan signed the NPT in 1968 and ratified the treaty in 1970, the international diplomatic shift in recognition of the Chinese government away from Taipei in favor of Beijing in 1970-1971 would cause great consternation in Taiwan throughout the 1970s. As the next section demonstrates, part of Taipei's reaction to this watershed event was to accelerate its nascent nuclear efforts in the coming decade.

1972-1979: Losing Confidence and Aiming for Latency

For Chiang Kai-shek and his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, reliance on the United States had been the surest way so far of guaranteeing Taiwan's security in the face of a nuclear-armed and increasingly belligerent China. After all, the Mutual Defense Treaty between Taiwan and the United States had served as the bedrock of this security relationship since 1954, and it was the single greatest source of reassurance to an increasingly nervous Taiwanese leadership during the 1960s. Even after President Nixon announced the Guam Doctrine in July 1969, Taiwan's primary reaction had been to increase its calls for clear and unequivocal statements affirming Washington's commitment to Taiwan's security. For its part,

the United States had gladly obliged these requests, thereby apparently satisfying the immediate security concerns of the Taiwanese.

However, that sense of comfort eroded in the 1970s. For the Taiwanese, the final straw came on July 7, 1971, when the White House announced that President Nixon planned to visit Peking for the first time. This announcement deeply shook Chiang Kai-shek and his leadership, who believed theirs to be the sole and rightful representative government of all of China. Indeed, the decision for a sitting U.S. President to grant the Peking regime an audience was so unnerving that, for the Taiwanese, it represented a significant crack in the U.S.-Taiwan security relationship, to the point where the Taiwanese once again felt they would have to take matters into their own hands in order to provide for their security.

This shift in Taiwanese strategic thinking, in turn, was a source of concern for the United States, because Taiwan could now be incentivized to pursue nuclear weapons. According to the U.S. National Security Council at the time, American security commitments had been generally effective in preventing nuclear proliferation amongst allies, but "in the case of the Republic of China, the situation [was] less clear." Specifically, since the July 1971 announcement about Nixon's plan to visit Beijing, "Taiwan has increasingly come to believe that it cannot rely on the U.S. commitment indefinitely and that it may have to rely on its own resources, including nuclear weapons if necessary to provide for its own defense. The pace of the drive toward self-sufficiency … will depend on the

ROC's assessment over time of the extent to which the U.S. commitment has eroded."[392]

Therefore, a topmost objective for the Nixon and Ford administrations was to prevent proliferation in Taiwan by signaling that Washington's commitment to Taiwan's security remained steadfast, even as the United States and the international community moved to further normalize relations with mainland China. It did not help matters that on October 25, 1971 the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 2758, which granted official diplomatic recognition to the Peking government as the sole representative government of all of China, including Taiwan. The UN decided to "expel" the Taiwanese delegates from their positions in the General Assembly, which they were now deemed to "unlawfully occupy," and Taiwan went overnight from being the representative seat of government of China to having no official status in international politics.[393]

These events, happening in rapid succession and occurring at the same time that U.S. forces were being withdrawn from Vietnam, constituted a new reality for Taiwan and did indeed make the Taiwanese very nervous; consequently, their reaction was to take a dual-track approach, seeking reassurances from the United States *and* making preparations to take charge of their own security if necessary. For Washington, these geopolitical changes

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[392] Study Paper, "U.S. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy (NSSM-202)," National Security Council Under Secretaries Committee to multiple recipients, SECRET, June 24, 1974, folder: U/SM 10-13 [1 of 2], box H-249, National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files — Under Secretaries Study Memorandums, Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library (hereafter RMNL), 16-17.
[393] "Restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations," UN General Assembly Resolution 2758, October 25, 1971, accessible at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2758(XXVI).

reflected the importance of strengthening its diplomatic relationship with China while maintaining a security relationship with Taiwan and preventing further nuclear proliferation;[394] however, as the United States would come to find, striking this balance would prove to be a very challenging exercise.

In September 1974, Chiang Ching-kuo, now the Premier of Taiwan under the continuing presidency of Chiang Kai-shek, sent a letter to Gerald Ford, who had just become the President of the United States following the resignation of Richard Nixon. In his letter, Chiang congratulated Ford on his inauguration and, in seeking to secure from the new U.S. administration a continuation of Nixon's Taiwan policy, asked Ford for "a Presidential reaffirmation of the U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty." In their top secret memo to National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger on how to respond to Chiang's request, two National Security Council staffers pointed out that, while the United States "[has] continued to make rather explicit references to either the Mutual Defense Treaty or to our security commitment to Taiwan in contacts with ROC officials," the more important question at this juncture in U.S.-Taiwan relations was whether and how Washington should "attempt to move along another step or two in the process of conditioning the ROC leadership to the evolution of our China policy." The NSC staffers therefore recommended that President Ford "not specifically reaffirm the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954. It seems more appropriate at this point in time to have him make an *indirect* affirmation of our commitment to Taiwan's security

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[394] Memorandum, "National Security Study Memorandum 212: U.S. Security Assistance to the Republic of China," Henry A. Kissinger to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, October 8, 1974, folder: Originals - NSSM 207 to NSSM 227, box 49, U.S. National Security Council Institutional Files, GRFL.

but not to be as forthcoming as Premier Chiang clearly would like him to be" [emphasis original].[395] President Ford's subsequent reluctance to extend to Chiang Ching-kuo the same ironclad security guarantees that Johnson and Nixon had done before him was not indicative of a desire on the part of the Ford administration to redefine the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, but instead reflected the continuation of an international diplomatic trend favoring China that had culminated in Nixon's visit to Peking two years earlier.

Crucially, the process of normalizing Sino-American relations would necessarily include key obligations for the United States to reduce its military presence on Taiwan, including removing the tactical nuclear weapons it had stationed on the island. American officials were initially nervous about bringing up such a sensitive subject with Chiang Ching-kuo, especially in light of the larger geopolitical shifts happening in East Asia, but they were surprised to find how immediately agreeable Chiang was to the proposal to remove American nuclear weapons from Taiwan. In April 1974, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger made the case to U.S. Ambassador to Taipei Leonard Unger that "we must get the nuclear weapons out (of Taiwan) … because we should not offer the GRC a temptation or opportunity to take some unforeseen action."[396] Unger met with Chiang Ching-kuo the following month to convey the Defense Department's

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[395] Memorandum, "Proposed Reply from the President to Republic of China Premier Chiang Ching-kuo," W.R. Smyser and Richard H. Solomon to Henry A. Kissinger, TOP SECRET, December 12, 1974, folder: China, Republic of (5), box 3, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL, 1-3.

[396] Memorandum of Conversation, "Call by Ambassador Unger," TOP SECRET, April 12, 1974, in "United States Secretly Deployed Nuclear Bombs in 27 Countries and Territories During Cold War," The National Security Archive, George Washington University, October 20, 1999, accessible at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/news/19991020/index.html.

view and, after the meeting, reported back to Secretary of State Kissinger that, rather surprisingly, "CCK [Chiang Ching-kuo] in effect gave us [the] green light to withdraw nuclear weapons in accordance with [our] planned schedule."[397] Thus, the next week the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a cable to its military commands in the Asia Pacific region, advising them that "all nuclear weapons will be withdrawn from Taiwan" that year,[398] and by July 1974 the United States had withdrawn the last of the tactical nuclear weapons it had stationed on Taiwan.[399]

Seemingly caught off guard by Chiang's easy acquiescence to the U.S. request to remove nuclear weapons from Taiwan, the U.S. Embassy in Taipei wrote to Kissinger, "We are pleased that [the] nuclear weapons issue has caused even less difficulty than anticipated … Perhaps even more important, [it] would seem to confirm that we can deal with CCK on remaining issues in [a] straight forward way without too much fear that we are presenting him with insuperable obstacles."[400] However, historian Nancy Tucker argues that this precise combination of simultaneous developments in the 1970s — reducing the U.S. force presence in the Asia Pacific region, removing nuclear weapons from Taiwan, and strengthening diplomatic ties with the mainland Chinese — actually

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[397] Telegram, "Conversation with CCK regarding Redeployments," William H. Gleysteen to Henry Kissinger, TOP SECRET, May 1, 1974, in "United States Secretly Deployed Nuclear Bombs in 27 Countries and Territories During Cold War."
[398] Cable, "Changes in US Force Levels on Taiwan," Joint Chiefs of Staff to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, May 7, 1974, in "United States Secretly Deployed Nuclear Bombs in 27 Countries and Territories During Cold War."
[399] Robert S. Norris, William M. Arkin, and William Burr, "Where They Were," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 55, no. 6 (Nov/Dec 1999): 34.
[400] Telegram, "Conversation with CCK regarding Redeployments," William H. Gleysteen to Henry Kissinger, TOP SECRET, May 1, 1974, in "United States Secretly Deployed Nuclear Bombs in 27 Countries and Territories During Cold War."

indicated that Taiwan's willingness to go along with the American withdrawal plan belied a conviction on the part of Chiang Ching-kuo that having a Taiwanese nuclear weapons option was more important than ever before.[401]

As a result, in the coming years the Taiwanese would return to their national nuclear program, trying to capitalize on their limited successes in the 1960s in an effort to build a nuclear weapons capability. Yet, to be sure, throughout the 1970s high-level Taiwanese officials stressed time and again to their American counterparts that they had absolutely no interest in acquiring nuclear weapons outright. In June 1975, for example, when Ambassador Unger met directly with Chiang Ching-kuo, he mentioned "the growing concern in the U.S. about nuclear weapons prolifiration [sic]" in Taiwan. In response, Chiang "stated quite specifically with regard to nuclear weapons development that the Republic of China will not, repeat not, take any action to engage in the production of nuclear weapons."[402] Two years later, when Ambassador Unger met again with Chiang in February 1977, shortly after Jimmy Carter had been inaugurated, he conveyed to Chiang the "prime importance" which the new Carter administration ascribed to the dangers of nuclear weapons proliferation; in response, Chiang said "as he has on several occasions in the past that [the United States] can depend on the GROC following through on its word." Fred Chien, Taiwan's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, told Unger in the same month that he recognized that "any

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[401] Nancy B. Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992* (Woodbridge, CT: Twayne Publishers, 1994), 146. See also Nancy B. Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[402] Telegram, "Nuclear Weapons, Taiwan," Leonard S. Unger to Henry A. Kissinger, CONFIDENTIAL, June 12, 1975, folder: China, Republic of - Taipei's Nuclear Program, box 3, National Security Adviser — NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, GRFL.

intention to go ahead with nuclear weapons is 'suicidal.'"[403] The following month, Ambassador Unger met with Chien's superior, Taiwanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Chou Shu-kai, and, when Unger reemphasized President Carter's focus on nuclear nonproliferation as a cornerstone of his administration's foreign policy, Chou also said Taiwan had no desire to pursue nuclear weapons.[404] And when Unger and Chien met once more in April 1977, Chien said his government's decision "to comply fully with [U.S. nonproliferation] requests was made at the 'highest level' after very careful and serious consideration among all concerned departments and agencies of the GROC. The decision was based on the GROC's fundamental policy of 'sincere friendship and cooperation' with the USG."[405]

These multiple overtures from high-level Taiwanese officials in the early months of Jimmy Carter's presidency were intended to convey to American officials, in clear and unequivocal terms, that Taiwan had no interest in pursuing nuclear weapons. Yet, as the next section will demonstrate, the United States was justifiably unsatisfied. By April 1977, the U.S. government had sent an official letter to Taiwan, writing, "The Republic of China would henceforth avoid any program or activity which, upon consultation with the United States, is

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[403] Telegram, "ROC Nuclear Activities," Leonard S. Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, February 16, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-6-11-5-16-1, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Country Files (NSA 6), Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (hereafter JCL), 1-3.
[404] Cable, "Nuclear Proliferation," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, March 11, 1977, folder: 2/77-4/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL; see also Cable, "Nuclear Proliferation," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, March 5, 1977, folder: 2/77-4/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-2.
[405] Cable, "Nuclear Representation to the ROC," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, April 13, 1977, folder: 2/77-4/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-2.

determined to have application to the development of a nuclear explosive capability." To this demand, the Taiwanese government replied:

> *The government of the Republic of China fully supports the statement made by President Carter on April 7, 1977 outlining a program aimed at reducing the risks of nuclear proliferation. In this connection, the Chinese [Taiwanese] government wishes to reiterate its determination to utilize nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, and to reaffirm its resolute position as has been repeatedly declared in the past that the Republic of China will not manufacture nuclear weapons [emphasis added].*[406]

Yet, despite this clearly worded official communication from the Government of Taiwan, the United States still remained unconvinced, for reasons discussed in the next section. Thus, when Ambassador Unger met with President Chiang the following year, in September 1978, he asked once again for Chiang to provide a good-faith declaration that Taiwan was not involved in any nuclear weapons activities. At this point, Chiang expressed his frustration, complaining that "the United States Government must realize that on numerous occasions he, the President, has formally declared (including in testimony in the legislative Yuan) the policy of the Republic of China, i.e., that the Republic of China has no intention of manufacturing nuclear weapons, and this policy remains unchanged." According to Unger, Chiang, "referring to many clear and unequivocal statements already made, said that the United States must take [his] word." Nonetheless, Chiang said "he would take this one more opportunity to reaffirm his basic

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[406] Cable, "Nuclear Representation to the ROC," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, April 13, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-16-11-1-22-7, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL.

position which is that the Republic of China will not manufacture nuclear weapons."[407]

In his report of this meeting with President Chiang, Unger provided his own observations of Chiang's demeanor, writing, "President Chiang …was more obviously annoyed and disturbed than I have ever seen him in the course of our discussions on this or any other issue. In part no doubt he resents the fact that the United States Government, in spite of his repeated personal reassurances that the Republic of China will not manufacture nuclear weapons, nevertheless keeps questioning his government's, and therefore his, good faith and intentions on this score, either directly or indirectly."[408]

As the next section illustrates, the United States had good reason to question Chiang's "good faith and intentions" on the question of Taiwan's nuclear weapons efforts. In the meantime, although he had made a clear, albeit brusque, overture to Ambassador Unger in their September 1978 meeting, Chiang evidently felt the need to send a follow-up letter directly to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance the next week, in which he gave "explicit assurances that no research is now underway or will be conducted in the future in nuclear enrichment, reprocessing, or heavy water production."[409] In this letter, dated September 13, 1978, Chiang Ching-kuo wrote in no uncertain terms:

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[407] Cable, "Follow-up to nuclear team visit; demarche to President Chiang," Leonard S. Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, September 8, 1978, folder: 9/78-11/78, box 12, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-4.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Memorandum, "Taiwan," Warren Christopher to President Carter, SECRET, September 14, 1978, RAC Project Number NLC-133-7-1-53-7, Donated Historical Material — Mondale, Walter F., JCL.

> *I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to reaffirm the policy of my government to develop nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, and also to reassure Your Excellency that the government of the Republic of China has no intention whatsoever to develop nuclear weapons or a nuclear device or to engage in any activity related to reprocessing purposes [emphasis added].*[410]

This official statement from the head of the Taiwanese government was meant to put to bed the question of whether Taiwan was pursuing nuclear weapons in the 1970s, although it, and the many statements before it, did not suffice in satisfying the United States. At the same time, throughout the 1970s, and especially as Washington prepared to end formal diplomatic relations with Taipei towards the end of the decade, this concern over Taiwan's possible nuclear weapons activities ran up against the perpetual question of the continuation and strength of the U.S. security guarantee to Taiwan. Unsurprisingly, these two issues dominated discussions between high-level American and Taiwanese decision makers. The U.S. Embassy in Taipei, for example, indicated in June 1977 that it believed "ROC fears [of U.S. abandonment] will continue to provide some elements with an argument for nuclear weapons development."[411] The following month, the director of the Taiwanese National Security Bureau claimed "his chief fear is that [after normalization of U.S.-China relations] the U.S. would lose interest in Taiwan and … it would be too late for effective American

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[410] Cable, "President Chiang's reply to Secretary Vance's letter on nuclear matters," Leonard S. Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, September 14, 1978, folder: 9/78-11/78, box 12, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL.
[411] Memorandum, "U.S. Technical Team Visit to ROC," unknown author (most likely Zbigniew Brzezinski) to President Carter, TOP SECRET, June 6, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-1-2-8-33-4, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - President's Daily Report Files (NSA 1), JCL.

assistance to the ROC."[412] American officials, for their part, pointed out to their Taiwanese counterparts in December 1978 that, "in our talks with the PRC over the years, we had consistently asserted our intention to continue sales of defensive arms to Taiwan after normalization," and that the United States "saw no PRC actions which could be interpreted as threatening Taiwan."[413] These statements were intended to reassure the Taiwanese that, even after the termination of formal diplomatic relations with Taipei, Washington's commitment to Taiwan's security would continue.

Despite these assurances, however, the Taiwanese were still feeling shaky. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher shared in his report to President Carter at the very end of calendar year 1978, "The Taiwan officials expressed concern about the military threat they believe the PRC poses against them," and the Taiwanese chief of general staff "asked that the United States bring Taiwan 'under the U.S. nuclear umbrella,' by giving written assurance that in the event the PRC threatens Taiwan with nuclear weapons, the United States will come to Taiwan's defense. In addition, he asked for a written arrangement which would serve in lieu of the MDT [Mutual Defense Treaty] and assure Taiwan that we would help defend it from attack." In response to this request, Christopher emphasized "our intention to continue to make certain defensive weapons available to Taiwan and the lengths to which we had gone in our negotiations with

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[412] Memorandum, "ROC Reaction to Secretary Vance's Speech," White House Situation Room to Zbigniew Brzezinski, TOP SECRET, July 9, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-1-2-4-42-8, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - President's Daily Report Files (NSA 1), JCL, 1-2.
[413] Cable, "Christopher Mission, talks morning December 29, 1978," Warren Christopher to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, December 29, 1978, RAC Project Number NLC-16-12-3-9-9, JCL, 1-2.

the PRC to preserve that position." Christopher's final analysis to President Carter was accurate and prescient:

> *The Taiwan authorities have undergone a major shock and are still seeking to adjust to the new realities. They are deeply concerned about the military threat posed by the PRC in the absence of the MDT ... In a sense, they are continuing to deny to themselves the fact that we have recognized the PRC and that our decision is irreversible. I believe they may maintain this illusion so long as they perceive any hope, through Congressional and public pressure, of forcing us to modify our position. Short of that they may hope to maneuver us into making seemingly minor adjustments in our policy which could damage our relations with the PRC. Thus I expect the next two months will remain an unsettled period in our relations with the authorities on Taiwan.*[414]

As this section shows, throughout the 1970s the Taiwanese provided multiple verbal and written assurances that they had no interest in building nuclear weapons, even as the geopolitical situation in East Asia, from Taipei's point of view, continued to deteriorate. And these assurances, though misleading, were not outright fabrications: Rather than go for the bomb, the Taiwanese had instead decided to continue secret research and development on acquiring a nuclear weapons *capability*, as opposed to developing nuclear weapons outright. As the next section demonstrates, the Taiwanese sought to utilize legitimate acquisition channels to split this difference between a technical capacity to quickly produce the bomb and a functioning arsenal, thereby remaining at least nominally in compliance with its statements and nonproliferation commitments; nevertheless, the Ford and Carter administrations, unwilling to accept even a

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[414] Cable, "Report to the President on Mission to Taiwan," SECRET, December 30, 1978, RAC Project Number NLC-16-12-3-1-7, JCL, 8.

latent Taiwanese nuclear weapons capability, moved swiftly and decisively to fully halt Taipei's nuclear progress.

TAIWANESE NUCLEAR WEAPONS EFFORTS

Justifiably fearful that Taipei's earlier investments in nuclear infrastructure, combined with the changing geopolitical landscape, would catalyze Taiwan's decision to acquire the bomb, the U.S. intelligence community had continued to keep a close eye on Taiwan's nuclear efforts since the end of the 1960s. As this section demonstrates, American officials were mostly correct to suspect Taiwan's intentions because, while Taiwanese officials stressed repeatedly that they had absolutely no interest in building nuclear weapons, it became evident that their real interest was in creating a nuclear weapons *capability*. As a result, the United States moved to preclude such a capability before the end of the 1970s.

For example, in November 1972, the U.S. Director of Central Intelligence, Richard Helms, released Special National Intelligence Estimate [SNIE] 43-1-72, on the capabilities and intentions of Taiwan to develop nuclear weapons, and made the following determination:

> *Certainly, in the eight years since [Chiang Kai-shek] made his decision [to initiate a nuclear weapons program in 1964], Taipei's concern over standing alone has grown. While the nuclear umbrella of the U.S. is still implied by the Mutual Defense Treaty, some on Taiwan may be questioning how long they can count on all-out U.S. support. In this perspective, a nuclear weapons option may be seen by the GRC as one of the few feasible deterrents to communist attack in an uncertain future.*[415]

By the time this intelligence estimate was put together, Taiwan had already completed construction on the TRR, which would go live less than two months later, on January 3, 1973.[416] A 40-megawatt natural uranium reactor using a heavy water moderator, it was capable of producing approximately 10 kilograms of plutonium per year.[417] As a result, the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were concerned that, should the TRR continue operations, especially if unsafeguarded, Taiwan could have easy access to weapons-usable fissile material. As discussed later in this section, immense pressure would therefore be put on Taiwan later in the 1970s to convert the reactor to run on more proliferation-resistant low-enriched uranium.

In the meantime, Taiwan was continuing its efforts to acquire a reprocessing facility, which would be necessary to extract the weapons-usable plutonium from the irradiated spent fuel coming out of the TRR. Although Taiwan's earlier efforts in the 1960s to buy a reprocessing plant from Germany

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[415] National Intelligence Estimate, "SNIE 43-1-72: Taipei's Capabilities and Intentions Regarding Nuclear Weapons Development," Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, November 16, 1972, folder: National Intelligence Estimates, box 361, National Security Council Files — Subject Files, RMNL.
[416] Telegram, "Chung Shan Nuclear Research Institute," Walter McConaughy to William P. Rogers, SECRET, February 24, 1973, EBB20.
[417] National Intelligence Estimate, "SNIE 43-1-72: Taipei's Capabilities and Intentions Regarding Nuclear Weapons Development," Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, November 16, 1972, folder: National Intelligence Estimates, box 361, National Security Council Files — Subject Files, RMNL, 3.

had been unsuccessful, by 1972 the Taiwanese had signed a new preliminary contract for a German company to supply parts for a reprocessing plant.[418] The United States, unsurprisingly, was firmly against the deal on nonproliferation grounds, and the State Department instructed its ambassadors to convey the official U.S. position to their respective German and Taiwanese counterparts.[419]

On January 31, 1973, when the U.S. Ambassador to Taipei, Walter McConaughy, met with Taiwanese Foreign Minister Shen, he stressed U.S. concerns over Taiwan's efforts to acquire a reprocessing capability, and asked that Taiwan rescind its contract with the German firm. In response, Shen said that, while his government had not made a final decision yet, the Republic of China "had neither the intent nor the ability to acquire nuclear weapons, and that its chief interest in a nuclear reprocessing plant was to assure a dependable and adequate fuel supply for its nuclear power plants."[420] Shen's statement, like many of the similar official statements that his colleagues would issue in the coming years, was designed to mitigate American concerns over Taiwanese interest in nuclear weapons. Unconvinced by this statement, however, American officials sought to definitively block Taiwan's access to reprocessing technology by

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[418] Memorandum of Conversation, "German Inquiry Regarding Safeguards on Export of Parts to ROC Reprocessing Plant," CONFIDENTIAL, November 22, 1972, EBB20; Cable, "Proposed Reprocessing Plant for Republic of China," U.S. State Department to multiple recipients, SECRET, January 19, 1973, EBB20. Taiwan was also in an "advanced stage" of negotiations at this time with a separate French company for a reprocessing facility. See National Intelligence Estimate, "SNIE 43-1-72: Taipei's Capabilities and Intentions Regarding Nuclear Weapons Development," Director of Central Intelligence, SECRET, November 16, 1972, folder: National Intelligence Estimates, box 361, National Security Council Files — Subject Files, RMNL, 3.

[419] Cable, "Proposed Reprocessing Plant for Republic of China," U.S. State Department to multiple recipients, CONFIDENTIAL, January 4, 1973, EBB20; Telegram, "Proposed Reprocessing Plant for Republic of China," Water McConaughy to William P. Rogers, CONFIDENTIAL, January 16, 1973, EBB20.

[420] Telegram, "Proposed ROC Reprocessing Plant," Walter McConaughy to William P. Rogers, SECRET, January 31, 1973, EBB20.

putting continued pressure on the Germans, and by February 7 the German firm had backed out of the deal. But the next day, Shen met again with McConaughy and, in an effort to save face, told him that "in compliance with U.S. wishes, ROC had decided against … purchase [of the] nuclear reprocessing plant."[421]

As this episode demonstrates, American officials were unwilling to accept Taiwanese assurances at face value. Suspicious of Taiwan's actions and possible motives, they instead sought to put in place mechanisms that would conclusively block Taiwan's access to key nuclear technologies. Moreover, the Americans were not the only ones wary of Taiwanese actions and intentions: The very day before Shen informed McConaughy that Taiwan would terminate the German reprocessing agreement, two officials at the British Embassy in Washington approached the State Department with news that British intelligence had picked up "activity at a facility in northwest Taiwan which they suspect is related to the development of a nuclear weapons capability."[422] A report from the U.S. Embassy in Taipei a few weeks later confirmed much of this suspicion; especially concerning was the fact that the earlier plan to purchase a German reprocessing plant had been spearheaded by a former Taiwanese military official who previously had worked directly for the head of INER, and who seemed to still be involved in certain military aspects of Taiwan's nuclear program.[423]

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[421] Telegram, "ROC Decides Against Purchase of Nuclear Reprocessing Plant," Walter McConaughy to William P. Rogers, SECRET, February 8, 1973, EBB20.
[422] Memorandum of Conversation, "Nuclear Programs in Republic of China," LIMITED OFFICIAL USE, February 9, 1973, EBB20.
[423] Telegram, "Chung Shan Nuclear Research Institute," Walter McConaughy to William P. Rogers, SECRET, February 24, 1973, EBB20; see also Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 56.

The U.S. response to these findings was to devise new ways to increase its surveillance and monitoring of Taiwan's nuclear activities and intentions; after all, the more it could glean from Taiwanese decision makers and scientists about the details of ongoing efforts at key installations in Taiwan, the more decisively and effectively the United States could take action to prevent a future Taiwanese nuclear weapons capability. Thus, on March 20, 1973, when the Secretary-General of the Taiwanese Atomic Energy Council, Victor Cheng, met with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Richard Sneider, in Washington, Sneider proposed that a "U.S. study group" be permitted to visit Taiwan in order to work with Taiwanese scientists on "mutually profitable" nuclear activities. Cheng nominally welcomed the idea.[424] Of course, as Secretary of State William Rogers clarified in a classified telegram to the U.S. Embassy in Taiwan, the actual purpose of this study mission was not simply to work on such "mutually profitable" areas of nuclear research, but rather to acquire "information about [the] identity and progress of [the] ROC coterie which advocates development of [a] nuclear weapons capability." The team of nuclear experts "would seek to talk to selected persons knowledgeable about ROC activities in this area and to visit all sites of interest to [the United States]."[425] In gathering this information, the United States could then implement a targeted strategy focused not on trying to change Taiwan's intentions, but instead on blocking Taiwanese actions that could lead to possession of a nuclear weapons capability.

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[424] Cable, "ROC Nuclear Research," U.S. State Department to multiple recipients, SECRET, March 20, 1973, EBB20.
[425] Telegram, "ROC Nuclear Intentions," William P. Rogers to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, April 17, 1973, EBB20.

While the details of this study mission were being finalized, Cheng visited Washington and met with his American counterpart, Abraham Friedman, Director of International Programs at the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, on August 29, 1973. He also met with Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs Arthur Hummel two days later. In both of these meetings, Cheng raised the topic of reprocessing in the context of Taiwan's overall nuclear fuel cycle development. From the Taiwanese perspective, according to Cheng and his staff, using plutonium as a source of energy would need to be a key part of Taiwan's overall nuclear fuel cycle development, especially as Taipei aimed to "reduce its dependence on the Middle East as a source of energy" by creating "a six or seven million kilowatt nuclear power capacity" by 1985. The Americans had no problem with this general idea, as long as both parties continued to agree that the British Nuclear Fuel Laboratories (BNFL) would be contracted to handle all Taiwanese reprocessing needs, thereby concluding the need for Taiwan to have an indigenous reprocessing facility.

However, differences between the Americans and the Taiwanese arose when the Taiwanese claimed it would be "more economical to reprocess on Taiwan" after their contract with BNFL would end in 1985, and that "preparations for reprocessing [on Taiwan] should commence" immediately. To this, Friedman told Cheng, "The AEC [U.S. Atomic Energy Commission] has very serious problems with reprocessing nuclear fuels on Taiwan … [and] it would be extremely imprudent for the ROC to begin planning for a reprocessing plant." Friedman concluded his remarks by saying very clearly, "We strongly discourage

you from proceeding with your plans."[426] Likewise, Hummel in his meeting with Cheng made it clear that a reprocessing plant on Taiwan would be "not economic for reasons of scale," and that "continued ROC interest in reprocessing could cause some countries to be concerned about [the] applications to which ROC intends to put its nuclear program."[427]

Evidently, Cheng and his team did not take these messages to heart, because two months later it was reported that the Taiwanese had informed Comprimo, a Belgian firm, and Saint Gobain Nucleaire (SGN), a French company, that Taiwan's plans to acquire a reprocessing facility were still moving ahead. Evidently, Taiwan had already contracted SGN as the lead on the construction project as well. Therefore, as the U.S. study group was being put together, the State Department's director for Taiwan affairs, Roger Sullivan, argued to Hummel that the "purpose of the study group's visit is primarily *political*. The visit should serve to demonstrate concretely our suspicions of ROC intentions and the seriousness with which we regard this matter" [emphasis added]. Moreover, Sullivan suggested that, when members of the study group would meet with Cheng and Foreign Minister Shen at the end of the visit, they make the following démarche:

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[426] Memorandum of Conversation, "ROC Nuclear Energy Plans," SECRET, August 29, 1973, EBB20.
[427] Cable, "Call on Assistant Secretary Hummel by Victor Cheng," Kenneth Rush to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, September 4, 1973, in "Electronic Briefing Book 221: U.S. Opposed Taiwanese Bomb during 1970s," ed. William Burr, The National Security Archive, George Washington University, June 15, 2007, accessible at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb221/index.htm (hereafter EBB221).

> *Despite ROC disclaimers, we have reason to believe they are still interested in developing a capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons. We consider the ROC desire to establish an independent reprocessing facility as one sign of this intention. We regret that despite continuing USG efforts to discourage the ROC, their interest apparently persists. Should we have reason to believe that the ROC has moved from consideration of a nuclear weapons program to actual implementation, we would be forced to react. That reaction would be based upon the circumstances at the time [emphasis original].*[428]

The study group, headed by Abraham Friedman, conducted its mission from November 15 to November 20, 1973 and visited key installations in Taiwan, including the Chung Shan Institute of Science and Technology (CIST) and Institute of Nuclear Energy Research (INER), which were the facilities most strongly suspected of being linked to a military nuclear program in Taiwan.[429] On the final day of their trip, the members of the U.S. delegation met with Foreign Minister Shen and shared their findings. Seemingly taking a gentler tack than what had been proposed in Sullivan's memo, Friedman "acknowledged that all people on ROC side with whom [the] group had talked had stressed ROC's exclusive interest in peaceful uses program. Yet we had [the] impression that some individuals and segments of government viewed [a] full fuel cycle and chemical reprocessing plant as [a] way to keep open [the] military option." Friedman stressed that it would be "extremely difficult to justify development of [a] reprocessing capability in Taiwan. Hence, he felt very strongly that it was not

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[428] Memorandum, "Nuclear Study Group Visit to Taiwan," Roger W. Sullivan to Arthur Hummel, SECRET, October 29, 1973, EBB221. It should also be noted that this memo listed the people who would comprise the study group from the United States: Abraham Friedman (AEC), Nelson Sievering (State), Frank Houck (ACDA), Gerard Helfrich (AEC), and William Gleysteen (U.S. Embassy Taipei).

[429] Cable, "Atomic Energy Study Team Visit to Taiwan," Kenneth Rush to U.S. Embassy Brussels, SECRET, November 14, 1973, EBB221.

in ROC's best interest to go any further in this direction." To this, Shen responded that he "understood precisely [the] points" the U.S. team had made, and that the "earlier plan for purchasing [a] reprocessing plant had been definitely dropped and ROC had no intention of proceeding in [the] face of U.S. opposition."[430]

Overall, the team concluded its mission satisfied that, per Shen's reassurances, Taiwan would no longer seek a reprocessing capability.[431] However, this satisfaction would not last. As discussed earlier, the United States withdrew its tactical nuclear weapons from Taiwan in 1974; at the time, Taiwanese Premier Chiang Ching-kuo had expressed no concern over this decision and, indeed, had appeared to support it fully. While the U.S. Embassy in Taipei at the time interpreted this easy acquiescence as a sign that "we can deal with CCK on remaining issues in [a] straight forward way," Taiwan actually continued to harbor secret plans to acquire a reprocessing plant in order to gain a nuclear weapons capability, as American officials would soon learn; in fact, the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Taiwan may have actually accelerated these efforts. Moreover, the death of Chiang Kai-shek in April 1975 solidified the younger Chiang's control over the Taiwanese government and appeared to provide him a firmer grip on the country's nuclear efforts.

Although it was previously believed that the earlier deal with Belgian firm Comprimo had been terminated, the U.S. government and the Belgian Foreign Ministry decided nonetheless to investigate the issue in July 1976, in order to

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[430] Cable, "FONMIN Reaffirms ROC Decision to Refrain from Acquiring Nuclear Reprocessing Plant," Walter McConaughy to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, November 23, 1973, EBB221.
[431] Letter, William H. Gleysteen to Thomas Bleha, SECRET, November 23, 1973, EBB221.

clear up any lingering doubts.[432] Surprisingly, the U.S. State Department reported in September that, contrary to Taiwan's assertions that "ROC nuclear research is conducted solely for peaceful purposes," there existed "conclusive evidence that [Taiwan] is continuing its clandestine efforts to acquire reprocessing technology and equipment from Comprimo."[433] In the meantime, it was also reported that Taiwan had approached a second Belgian company, Belgo Nucleaire, to "try to acquire spent fuel reprocessing technology and plant equipment" as well.[434]

Leonard Unger, who had been serving as the new U.S. Ambassador to Taiwan since May 1974, presented a veiled version of this intelligence in a meeting with Premier Chiang and Foreign Minister Shen in September 1976, saying it was "clear INER has been making inquiries in Europe regarding the acquisition of reprocessing technology and equipment."[435] In response, Chiang and Shen denied such claims and emphasized the "peaceful uses" of Taiwan's nuclear activities. Stating that the policy of Taiwan was "not to manufacture nuclear weapons," Chang Ching-kuo said all reprocessing activities would be henceforth terminated and that no further inquiries on reprocessing technologies would be made with European companies. He added, "We do not deny that we

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[432] Memorandum, "Evening Notes - East Asia," SECRET, July 26, 1976, folder: Evening Reports - July 26, 1976, box 1, National Security Adviser — White House Situation Room - Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-1977, GRFL.
[433] Cable, "ROC's Nuclear Intentions," Charles W. Robinson to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, September 4, 1976, EBB221.
[434] Cable, "Nuclear Reprocessing in ROC," U.S. Embassy Brussels to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, August 20, 1976, EBB221.
[435] Cable, "Demarche on ROC's Nuclear Intentions," Leonard Unger to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, September 9, 1976, EBB221.

have made some progress in nuclear research, but this progress is not towards weapons; it's toward peace."[436]

Although Chiang provided these strong verbal assurances that it was the policy of the government of Taiwan not to manufacture nuclear weapons, and that he considered these assurances to be "a binding commitment to an ally," Chiang appeared to be choosing his words very carefully. While rejecting any Taiwanese intention to build the bomb on the one hand, he also was leaving open the technical possibility, on the other hand, of creating the capability to build nuclear weapons. Ambassador Unger apparently picked up on this nuance; referencing the evasiveness with which the Premier made these assurances, he commented to Secretary of State Kissinger, "I could not escape the impression that the Premier had hoped to be able to obfuscate or skirt the principal cause of our current concern, namely, GROC interest in acquiring a pilot reprocessing facility."[437]

As a way of clearing up this lingering doubt and building confidence with the United States by providing transparency into Taiwan's nuclear activities, Premier Chiang on two separate occasions offered to have a second nuclear team come to Taiwan to work closely with Taiwanese nuclear scientists.[438] Unger saw this as a chance to not only gain clarity on Taiwan's nuclear activities, but also to put renewed pressure, in the waning days of the Ford administration, on Chiang to

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[436] Cable, "ROC's Nuclear Intentions: Conversation with Premier Chiang Ching-kuo," Leonard Unger to Henry Kissinger, classification unknown, September 15, 1976, EBB221.
[437] Ibid.
[438] Cable, "ROC's Nuclear Intentions: Conversation with Premier," Leonard Unger to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, October 12, 1976, EBB221.

cease his nuclear weapons activities; thus, as he wrote to Kissinger, he believed "the Premier's offer provides us with an opportunity that should not be lost."[439]

In the meantime, while the White House transitioned from Gerald Ford to Jimmy Carter in the winter of 1976-1977, it was revealed that, contrary to what Chiang Ching-kuo had said in September 1976, Taiwan's dealings with Comprimo were still continuing.[440] The incoming Carter administration had made nonproliferation a cornerstone of its foreign policy platform, and the recent passing of the Symington Amendment in the U.S. Congress only strengthened this view in Washington;[441] thus, as the second U.S. study visit prepared to fly to Taiwan, the team was given an explicit mandate to emphasize to the Taiwanese, yet again, that no reprocessing of any kind could take place, even if under the auspices of advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.[442]

The second study team conducted its mission in February 1977 and, at the end of its trip, confirmed that Taiwan had indeed "continued its Comprimo dealings … in violation of the Premier's flat assurances." More importantly, the team's findings confirmed Unger's suspicion that Premier Chiang was trying to

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[439] Cable, "ROC Nuclear Intentions; Premier Chiang's Offer for American Resident Experts," Leonard Unger to Henry Kissinger, SECRET, October 12, 1976, EBB221.
[440] Cable, "Taiwan's Continuing Interest in Reprocessing," Henry Kissinger to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, January 8, 1977, EBB221.
[441] Mitchell B. Reiss, *Bridled Ambition: Why Countries Constrain Their Nuclear Capabilities* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 213-215; John Maxwell Hamilton and Leonard S. Spector, "Congressional Counterattack: Reagan and the Congress," in *The Nonproliferation Predicament*, ed. Joseph F. Pilat (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Book, 1985), 60-63.
[442] This second study team was larger than the first, comprising the following seven individuals from the U.S. government: Burton Levin (State), Gerard Helfrich (ERDA), Joerg Menzel (ACDA), Dean Cooper (State), Raymond Wymer (Oak Ridge National Laboratory), T. Murray Kavanagh (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory), and Allen Locke (State). See Cable, "US Nuclear Team," Henry Kissinger to U.S. Embassy Taipei, CONFIDENTIAL, January 10, 1977, EBB221.

acquire "a nuclear explosive *capability*," rather than nuclear weapons outright, and that, "in the absence of effective U.S. action, the ROC will have the *ability* to detonate a nuclear explosive device in the next two to four years" [emphasis added].[443] For Washington, the question now was how to forcefully and conclusively halt Taiwan's nuclear progress, so that a latent nuclear capability could not be established. In addition to keeping up pressure on Taiwan to halt all reprocessing activity, Unger suggested that one option would be "shutting down the TRR," which in its original configuration was capable of producing weapons-usable plutonium.[444] After all, a reprocessing facility would be necessary in order to extract that plutonium, and clearly Taiwan had indicated to date that it was determined to acquire reprocessing technologies. However, if the U.S. government could convince or force the Taiwanese to reconfigure the reactor such that it would not produce plutonium in its spent fuel, then Taipei's efforts to create a reprocessing capacity, even if successful, would ultimately be fruitless.

The U.S. government quickly picked up on this notion and turned its attention to the Taiwan Research Reactor next. The first step was to get the Taiwanese to immediately suspend operations at the TRR so that the core could be converted to run on an alternate, proliferation-resistant fuel source such as low-enriched uranium. In March 1977, President Carter's new Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, decided that "determined and far-reaching action is required to

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[443] Telegram, "ROC Nuclear Activities," Cyrus Vance to Leonard S. Unger, SECRET, February 12, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-6-11-5-1-7, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Country Files (NSA 6), JCL.
[444] Cable, "U.S. Nuclear Team Conclusions and Recommendations," Leonard Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, February 17, 1977, EBB221.

eliminate the nuclear proliferation risk we now face on Taiwan." This urgency, already keenly felt following the findings of the U.S. nuclear study team the previous month, was made especially acute following the recent revelation that the Taiwanese had constructed a secret diversion port in the spent fuel pool at the TRR, presumably to quietly siphon off irradiated fuel rods from which plutonium could be clandestinely extracted.[445] Indeed, some evidence exists that the Taiwanese did in fact divert some spent fuel from the TRR for reprocessing in their laboratory.[446] Ambassador Unger was therefore instructed to convey to Chiang Ching-kuo that Washington would, amongst other measures, demand immediate suspension of the TRR and a transfer of all remaining spent fuel in the reactor pool back to the United States. Unger was also to stress to Chiang that "there is no give in our position on these principles, although obviously [the] implementing details will have to be worked out … at a technical level."[447] While the minutes of the meeting between Unger and Chiang are as of yet unavailable, Unger appeared to have been successful in his mission: By May 1977 it was confirmed that operations at the TRR had indeed been suspended.[448] In a top secret memo to President Carter, Brzezinski, obviously pleased with the outcome,

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[445] Cable, "ROC/IAEA Safeguards," Thomas P. Shoesmith to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, March 8, 1977, EBB221.
[446] Study Paper, "Non-Proliferation Country Problems," unknown author to multiple recipients, TOP SECRET, date unknown, RAC Project Number NLC-31-14-5-2-5, Staff Material - Defense/Security Files (NSA 31), JCL, 1-2.
[447] Cable, "Nuclear Representation to the ROC," Cyrus Vance to Leonard Unger, SECRET, March 26, 1977, EBB221.
[448] Cable, "Nuclear Demarche to ROC," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, April 28, 1977, folder: 2/77-4/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-2; Cable, "Visit of CAEC Secretary General -- Dr. Victor Cheng," Warren Christopher to the White House, SECRET, May 6, 1977, EBB221.

remarked, "The American effort to crack down on this project clearly yielded the desired results."[449]

Having completed this task, the next step was to work with the Taiwanese to reconfigure the TRR such that it would run on low-enriched uranium, rather than natural uranium, and therefore produce significantly less plutonium in its spent fuel. Washington's approach was to lower the technical barrier for Taiwan to convert the reactor, while offering a firm stick in the event things did not go as planned. The United States therefore sent a team of technical experts to Taiwan in late May 1977 to assist in the "reorientation of [the] ROC nuclear research program in accordance with recent U.S.-ROC agreements,"[450] and proposed in the winter of 1977-1978 that Taiwanese scientists work with their American and Canadian counterparts to determine the feasibility of "developing a suitable low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel for use in reactors such as the TRR. If this proves reasonably practicable, the TRR should be converted to operate on LEU fuel" and could then resume operations. U.S. officials made it absolutely clear that their willingness "to agree to the resumption of TRR operation is, of course, based upon the premise that [Taiwan] will adhere to its non-proliferation policies and … [to its] commitments to avoid activities in sensitive areas of the nuclear fuel cycle." Failure to adhere to these obligations, the Americans warned, would "not only require a reversal of our attitude on TRR operation but would undermine the

[449] Memorandum, "Weekly National Security Report #11," Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, TOP SECRET, April 29, 1977, EBB221, 2.
[450] Cable, "US Technical Team Visit," Leonard Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, May 31, 1977, EBB221.

basis of any continuing cooperation with your nuclear power program and jeopardize our overall bilateral relations."[451]

This final comment, on the potential to endanger U.S.-Taiwan relations, was intended to keep the Taiwanese firmly in line by exploiting their fear that, after 1979, they might lose their strongest ally. Coming in the late 1970s, as Washington was preparing to fully shift its diplomatic recognition of the Chinese government from Taipei to Beijing and, therefore, formally terminate the Mutual Defense Treaty, the strategy seems to have worked. The démarche was reportedly well received by the Taiwanese Foreign Ministry,[452] and a third U.S. team of nuclear experts was dispatched to Taiwan in May 1978 to conduct a feasibility study on converting the TRR.[453] By the fall, it was agreed that the TRR would be converted from a natural uranium, heavy water-moderated reactor to a LEU, light water-moderated reactor,[454] and the Canadians agreed to assist the Americans in transporting the existing natural uranium spent fuel out of Taiwan and back to the United States.[455] The next few years, through the end of calendar year 1980, would see American and Taiwanese scientists work closely together on the technical aspects of converting the reactor.

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[451] Cable, "The Taiwan Research Reactor," Cyrus Vance to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, December 22, 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-16-110-3-35-1, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 2-5.
[452] Cable, "The Taiwan Research Reactor (TRR)," Leonard S. Unger to Zbigniew Brzezinski, SECRET, December 27, 1977, folder: 12/77, box 11, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-2.
[453] Cable, "US Nuclear Team Visit," Warren Christopher to U.S. Embassy Taipei, SECRET, August 9, 1978, EBB221.
[454] Cable, "Nuclear team visit; final call on Vice Minister Chien," Leonard S. Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, August 1, 1978, folder: 7/78-8/78, box 12, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 1-3.
[455] Telegram, "Conversion of Taiwan Research Reactor to Use of Low Enriched Uranium and Disposition of Natural Uranium Spent Fuel," Warren Christopher to U.S. Embassy Ottawa, SECRET, September 23, 1978, EBB221.

Thus, by the end of 1978, it appeared that Taiwan's attempts to acquire a plutonium-based nuclear weapons capability had ended, as evidenced by Chiang Ching-kuo's more comprehensive statement of July 18 that Taiwan "would not become involved in *any military research* in the nuclear field" [emphasis added].[456] A combination of intense diplomatic pressure and U.S. moves to prevent access to key nuclear technologies had succeeded in stifling Taiwan's efforts, and ultimately Chiang relented, giving in to the inevitability of continuing to rely on the United States for its security, even during this period of uncertainty leading up to the end of the Mutual Defense Treaty and full normalization of U.S. relations with mainland China.

Thus ended Taiwan's efforts to develop a latent nuclear weapons capability in advance of the impending termination of the Mutual Defense Treaty. Of course, while this was all good news for Washington, U.S. officials continued to keep a close eye on Taiwan through the end of the 1970s. While Ambassador Unger noted in August 1978 that the United States was "satisfied that the activities presently underway at INER are in compliance with our agreements," there was still a lingering concern about Taiwan's interest in nuclear weapons because its "facilities continue, either by intent or by circumstance, to represent a capability which could be quickly converted to produce weapons useable materials." This doubt, Unger wrote, was based "not so much on any specific

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[456] Cable, "Nuclear Team Visit: Initial Calls: Discussions with CIST Director Tang," Leonard Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, July 31, 1978, EBB221.

activity but on the pattern that emerges from the totality of the activities."[457] Indeed, Unger had good reason to caution his American colleagues about Taiwan's nuclear weapons ambitions, as Taiwan would return to this endeavor for a brief period in the late 1980s.

CONCLUSION

From the early days of the Kennedy administration to the end of the 1970s, Taiwan consistently expressed considerable concern over the rise of its mainland Chinese rival, which posed a direct threat to the legitimacy of the government in Taipei. However, while Taiwan's reaction in the early 1960s was to attempt to strengthen its conventional military capacity due to a fear of U.S. abandonment, the first Chinese nuclear test in 1964 reinforced in the minds of the Taiwanese the notion that a treaty-based security assurance from their nuclear-armed superpower ally was the best guarantee of their defense. Nonetheless, in an effort to hedge its bets, Taipei began making early investments into developing a full nuclear fuel cycle, ostensibly for energy and research purposes but certainly with an eye to keeping its weapons options open, should the United States indeed decide to abandon its East Asian ally.

Following the announcement of the Guam Doctrine and President Nixon's first visit to Peking, however, Taipei's security calculus shifted and President Chiang Kai-shek determined that it was now in Taiwan's best interests to get

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[457] Cable, "Nuclear team visit; final call on Vice Minister Chien," Leonard S. Unger to Cyrus Vance, SECRET, August 1, 1978, folder: 7/78-8/78, box 12, Zbigniew Brzezinski Material - Cables Files (NSA 16), JCL, 3-4.

closer to acquiring nuclear weapons. Rather than make an all-out sprint for the bomb, Taiwan sought to acquire nuclear technologies through legitimate international channels, hoping to then funnel these resources into a secret, parallel military program in order to develop a latent capability to build the bomb. In so doing, Chiang Kai-shek and his successor, his son Chiang Ching-kuo, were unprepared and unwilling to completely forego the security relationship they had with the United States. For all of their concerns that the United States might abandon Taiwan in a confrontation with a nuclear-armed China, or that the United States might eventually see the Nixon Doctrine through to its logical end and completely sever ties with Taiwan, decision makers in Taipei maintained, even in their deepest moments of despair, that securing an extension of the U.S. security commitment was preferable to launching a crash program to build nuclear weapons, which almost certainly would have guaranteed a loss of U.S. support and likely invited significant Chinese pressure, including the possibility of pre-emptive military action against Taiwan.

In short, a perceived existential security threat in the form of a nuclear-armed mainland China was enough to spur simple Taiwanese investments into a national nuclear fuel cycle program, but the announcement that the United States would normalize relations with China was the singular event that catalyzed Taipei's decision to move towards the bomb. What kept Chiang Ching-kuo from launching an all-out crash program in the 1970s was the consistent stream of high-level assurances of the continued U.S. commitment to Taiwan's security, even as Washington shifted its diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Peking.

Instead, Chiang chose to hedge his bets by splitting the difference between acquiring the bomb, on the one hand, and running the risk of being abandoned by the United States, on the other hand.

For the United States, its rhetoric and actions during this time period were motivated by the fear of being dragged into a military conflict between Taiwan and mainland China, which would carry a high risk of quick escalation. Although nonproliferation remained a closely related and equally important policy objective, from Washington's perspective it was paramount to avoid another massive entanglement in East Asia. As a result, the United States sought to leverage Taiwan's dependency on its superpower ally by putting immense diplomatic pressure on the highest levels of the Taipei government to commit to forgoing a nuclear weapons capability, while working with nuclear supplier countries to ensure Taiwan could not access key nuclear technologies.

Crucially, Washington sought to achieve these objectives while simultaneously ending its military engagement in Vietnam and shifting its official recognition of the government of China from Taipei to Beijing. The confluence of shifting trend lines and catalyzing events in East Asia made the U.S.-Taiwan relationship during this time period very tenuous, and unsurprisingly, therefore, tremendous mistrust existed on both sides of the alliance. On the one hand, the United States made frequent and explicit statements affirming its obligation and willingness to defend Taiwan, but Taiwanese decision makers still harbored serious doubts about the sincerity, or the ability, of the United States to follow through on those promises. Likewise, Taiwanese officials repeated, nearly *ad*

nauseam, that Taiwan would not pursue nuclear weapons, yet their American counterparts never fully believed them.

This seemingly irreconcilable disconnect bears important lessons for the management of alliance dynamics. First, in order for the senior ally's security guarantee to be credible, it must explicitly cover all of the protégé's security needs; while necessary, however, such coverage in and of itself is insufficient. Therefore, to bolster its credibility, the patron must provide constant reassurances, especially when its wider regional policy priorities evolve, since such policy shifts carry the risk of sending signals to the junior ally of possible abandonment. Third, the emplacement of physical troops and even tactical nuclear weapons in the territory of the junior ally helps strengthen the security commitment, although such physical acts may be neither necessary nor sufficient to fully allay protégé security concerns.

Finally, as in the case of South Korea, the Taiwan case illustrates the need for senior allies to strike a balance between implicitly trusting their junior allies, on the one hand, and being wary of suspicious actions and motives, on the other hand. American officials never fully took at face value Taiwanese statements on nuclear weapons ambitions, and this healthy skepticism helped confirm that Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo were in fact interested in more than just the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Because nonproliferation remained one of Washington's core foreign policy pillars, the early and decisive steps the United States took, immediately after the detection of Taiwan's nuclear weapons program, to end Taipei's access to nuclear technologies and reduce its motivations

to pursue nuclear weapons were effective in upholding U.S. nonproliferation objectives and had a dispositive outcome on Taiwan's nuclear ambitions.

CHAPTER 6 — CONCLUSION

The case studies of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan during the 1960s and 1970s present a rich bed of evidence in which the dominant theories of nuclear proliferation can be tested. More importantly, they offer the chance to stress-test the effectiveness, and to delineate the limits, of the security guarantee as a nonproliferation tool. Each of the above cases has illuminated the interplay between alliance dynamics and nuclear weapons behavior; in this chapter, the cases are subjected to a comparative analysis that will help identify commonalities as well as differences across all three cases. This chapter will then discuss the contributions of this dissertation to our collective understanding of nuclear proliferation, before turning to future derivative research agendas and concluding with policy implications and recommendations going forward.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In all three of the above cases, key common themes emerge, which can be tested both against the specific hypotheses laid out in Chapter 1 and, at a higher level, against the existing theories of nuclear proliferation. First, each case is examined in light of the four non-mutually exclusive hypotheses laid out in Chapter 1 of the dissertation. The hypotheses are listed here again.

H1 — Acute Threat: A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the security threat posed by its adversary is sufficiently overwhelming, acute, and urgent, and the senior ally is not perceived to be covering all of its security needs.

H2 — Fear of Abandonment: A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the credibility of the senior ally is questionable, and the junior ally is hedging against possible abandonment in its moment of greatest need.

H3 — Upwards Pressure: A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because the credibility of the senior ally is questionable, and the junior ally is exploiting the senior ally's proliferation concerns to keep the latter fully committed.

H4 — Tacit Support: A state pursues nuclear weapons after having received a security assurance because its senior ally tacitly encourages such development, in order to create coercive leverage on the state's adversary over a separate issue.

This dissertation finds strong support for Hypothesis 2, moderate support for Hypothesis 1, mixed support for Hypothesis 3, and no support for Hypothesis 4. These findings are summarized in the table below.

Table 4. Support for Hypotheses

	Hypothesis 1: ***Acute Threat***	**Hypothesis 2:** ***Fear of Abandonment***	**Hypothesis 3:** ***Upwards Pressure***	**Hypothesis 4:** ***Tacit Support***
Japan	○	●	●	○
South Korea	●	●	◐	○
Taiwan	●	●	○	○

In the case of Japan, the rise of a nuclear-armed China did not pose an existential security threat to Tokyo in part because of the presence and perceived strength of the U.S. security guarantee; hence, the evidence does not support

Hypothesis 1. However, since the Mutual Security Treaty had a clause whereby the agreement would expire in 1970, Japan expressed constant concern over losing the support of its superpower ally and being left out in the cold after that time; therefore, the Japan case does support Hypothesis 2. Subsequent actions taken by the Japanese to get the United States to commit to an extension of the treaty consisted primarily of constant pleas for reassurance, especially as the two states came closer to the termination of the MST in 1970, but also included multiple feasibility studies from 1967 to 1970 on nuclear weapons development. These studies, in and of themselves, did not appear to be serious endeavors by the Japanese government to actively pursue a military nuclear program, but instead were used as leverage vis-à-vis the United States, whereby Japanese officials would quietly share with their American counterparts that such studies were taking place in Tokyo. The intention behind these leaks was to exploit Washington's concerns over nuclear proliferation in East Asia and hence secure a stronger security commitment from the United States; thus, evidence is found to support Hypothesis 3.

In the case of South Korea, Park Chung-hee and his senior government leaders did feel an acute security threat emanating from the North, which factored strongly into Seoul's nuclear decision making; this constitutes strong evidence of Hypothesis 1. The South Korean response to this threat was to both seek reassurances from the United States and to make a modest start to a national nuclear fuel cycle program, which was driven by deep-seated Korean concerns that the United States would abandon South Korea by withdrawing its troops from

the peninsula; thus, Hypothesis 2 is also supported. Only moderate support is found for Hypothesis 3 because Park's exploitation of Washington's proliferation concerns appeared to not be entirely deliberate; while he did purposely threaten the removal of Korean troops from the Vietnam theater as a way to halt the planned withdrawal of U.S. troops from the peninsula and thus secure a stronger U.S. security commitment, his nuclear weapons decisions were not made solely to create upwards coercive leverage on the United States. Indeed, it appears that, to the contrary, South Korea had every intention of keeping its nuclear program secret, and only a stroke of luck brought the military ambitions of South Korea to Washington's attention.

Finally, in the case of Taiwan, the adversarial relationship between Taiwan and mainland China that began in 1949 only became more acute after the Taiwan Straits crises of the 1950s and as China developed its military nuclear program in the early 1960s. By the time Peking tested its first nuclear weapon in October 1964, Taiwan did face what it perceived to be an acute and overwhelming security threat; therefore, Hypothesis 1 finds strong support. Taiwan's initial reliance on Washington's security guarantee remained firm, even as Chiang Kai-shek launched a modest program to foster Taiwan's mastery of the nuclear fuel cycle. However, nascent fears of a U.S. shift away from Taipei in favor of Peking had fully materialized by the late 1960s, when Richard Nixon announced his Guam Doctrine and made his first official state visit to mainland China shortly thereafter. Hypothesis 2 also, therefore, finds strong support. Taiwan then launched a concerted effort to develop a nuclear weapons capability,

but, unlike in the cases of Japan and, to a lesser extent, South Korea, Taiwanese leaders did not seek to leverage this program to pressure the United States to reaffirm its commitment to Taiwan. Instead, the two Chiangs determined that the safest path forward was to pursue a latent capability, all the while denying their interest in nuclear weapons. Thus, there is no support for Hypothesis 3. Nevertheless, U.S. suspicion of Taiwan's investments in nuclear fuel cycle technologies, along with a strong nonproliferation bent in U.S. foreign policy, yielded immense downward pressure on the Taiwanese, to include visits from U.S. nuclear experts who worked with Taiwanese scientists on the ground to halt all proliferation-sensitive technologies. Although Taipei believed it could keep the best of both worlds — maintaining the U.S. security guarantee, on the one hand, and achieving a latent military nuclear capability, on the other — it underestimated the determination with which Washington would move to shut down any proliferation-sensitive activities around the world.

There are two key implications that emerge from this comparative analysis. First, the fact that Hypothesis 2 is strongly supported across all cases indicates that larger regional and geopolitical considerations affected all three states in a similar manner, irrespective of the specific security environment in which each individual state found itself. This also suggests that, even where a junior ally has received a bilateral, treaty-based security guarantee from a superpower ally, constant reassurances must still be provided to the junior ally. This is because the protégé may harbor suspicions that the patron's commitment will not extend in perpetuity. In particular, when the senior ally's engagement in

the broader region changes, especially in significant and sudden ways, that shift can send a signal that the future of the bilateral alliance should not be assumed to be immutable. Similarly, the anticipated termination of a mutual security and defense treaty, whether as a result of the aforementioned policy shifts or a sunset clause, can make junior allies nervous.

The second implication is that, where acute and overwhelming security threats do assume primacy in the junior ally's decision making, there exists a strong imperative to launch a military nuclear program not for the purpose of leveraging it to extract from the senior ally a stronger security commitment, but rather for the explicit purpose of acquiring at least a latent nuclear capability, if not a fully functional and deliverable arsenal. As the cases of South Korea and Taiwan demonstrate, the combination of an acute existential threat and doubts about the credibility and strength of the senior ally's security guarantee has a high likelihood of motivating the protégé to attempt to develop its own nuclear weapons capability; moreover, in such instances the junior ally was also incentivized to keep its activities and intentions hidden. By contrast, where security concerns do not constitute a dominant factor motivating nuclear weapons behavior, it is more likely that any military nuclear activities conducted by the client state are being undertaken not to serve and sustain a serious national effort to acquire nuclear weapons, or even a nuclear weapons capability, but rather to put pressure on the senior ally to strengthen its security commitment to its protégé in order to avoid junior-ally proliferation.

Finally, Hypothesis 4 has not found any support in the three case studies that comprise this dissertation. This result could be a function of the specific cases themselves, of the region in which all three case countries are located, or of the unlikelihood of the hypothesis itself in international politics. While theoretically it is possible to conceive of a situation in which the tacit encouragement of at least a modest junior-ally nuclear program could be exploited by the senior ally to put coercive leverage on a third-party adversary, this dissertation does not find any evidence of such a scenario playing out, at least vis-à-vis the U.S. experience in East Asia during the Cold War.

At a higher level, the analysis of the case studies with respect to the three dominant theoretical constructs of nuclear proliferation behavior finds, based on the limited survey of solely U.S. archival sources that informed this dissertation, that while there is strong support for the security imperative there is insufficient evidence to make any claims on whether there is support for the prestige and bureaucratic imperatives. First, the security imperative finds high support in two out of three cases; for South Korea and Taiwan, adversarial relationships with conventional- and/or nuclear-armed neighbors caused great consternation, whereas Japan did not express the same fears over a perceived external security threat. Specifically, South Korea felt threatened by a conventionally superior North Korea with Russian and Chinese backing, and Taiwan felt threatened by a conventionally superior mainland China that, in October 1964, also became a nuclear-armed state. Indeed, both South Korea and Taiwan had engaged with their respective adversaries in more than just the realm of conflict rhetoric: Seoul and

Pyongyang had fought a bitter war in the 1950s, and likewise Taiwan and China had endured two separate crises during the same time period. Thus, by the beginning of the Kennedy administration, both Taipei and Seoul were locked in adversarial relationships with their neighbors. By contrast, Japan did not operate in an analogous adversarial construct; in the Japanese national identity, there was no external enemy against which the survival of Japan needed to be ensured. To wit, even the first Chinese nuclear test did not generate fears in Tokyo for Japan's security. Of course, in all three cases, national leaders looked to their alliance relationships with the United States, although there were obvious limitations to the degree to which Washington could fully allay its junior allies' fears. Nonetheless, in examining the causes of nuclear weapons behavior in East Asia during the Cold War, it becomes clear that the security imperative had a significant effect on two of the three cases presented in this dissertation.

Second, sufficient evidence of any normative motivations is found in only one of the three cases. Whereas the U.S. archival record supports the claim that concerns over prestige and the shifting norm in nuclear weapons possession had a non-trivial effect on Japanese deliberations over the pursuit of nuclear weapons, comparable evidence of these same normative considerations is not found in South Korea and Taiwan, based on the evidence gathered for this dissertation. A lack of evidence, of course, does not constitute absence of motivation, and certainly further research in Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese archives may provide important additional perspectives on this question. With this very important caveat in mind, the U.S. archival record demonstrates that decision

makers in Japan looked to the models of China and India, which acquired nuclear weapons in the 1960s and 1970s and subsequently saw an improvement in their standing in international politics, and argued that Japan, as an aspiring rising power, should also have an advanced nuclear program in order to derive those same attendant prestige benefits. As the Non-Proliferation Treaty came into force, however, the Japanese shifted their tactics, recognizing that their efforts to increase Japan's standing with the international community would now be best served by embracing and championing the new norm of nuclear weapons rejection. By contrast, according to U.S. archival documents, neither South Korean nor Taiwanese leaders expressed concern to their American counterparts over whether possession of nuclear weapons would enhance their prestige. Finally, the bureaucratic imperative has a similar record to the norms imperative in the three case studies. Japan's nuclear decision making, especially in the 1970s, was motivated in part by domestic politicking, whereas the U.S. archival record does not support similar claims in the cases of South Korea and Taiwan. It bears repeating that these findings are based only on a thorough examination of U.S. documents thus far, and additional research in Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese archives may shed new light on the questions of whether and to what extent prestige considerations and domestic political factors played a role in national nuclear weapons decision making.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

This dissertation contributes primarily to our deeper understanding of why Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan conducted nuclear weapons activities in the 1960s and 1970s, and secondarily to our general collective understanding of nuclear proliferation as a distinct phenomenon. First, this dissertation contributes to the extant case study literature on Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan during the Cold War. As more archival material is uncovered, declassified, and made available to a public audience, our collective understanding of each country's decision making deepens and benefits from additional richness. In that regard, many of the documents unearthed in the course of this research do corroborate and reinforce some of the dominant narratives on why Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan conducted nuclear weapons activities during the Cold War. At the same time, however, the archival evidence presented in this dissertation also forces us to reevaluate, sometimes significantly, our conventional thinking on key aspects of these countries' decision making processes.

With respect to Japan, the above case study in Chapter 3 strengthens three key existing arguments: First, the U.S. archival record confirms conclusively that Japan did not see a newly nuclear-armed China as an existential threat following China's first nuclear test in October 1964, due largely to the U.S. security guarantee; second, Japan's nuclear weapons studies in the late 1960s were indeed designed to be a diplomatic ploy to strengthen the U.S. commitment to Japan; and third, Japan's six-year delay in ratifying the NPT, between 1970 and 1976, was due nearly entirely to domestic politicking in Japan. At the same time, the case

study presented here also helps amend some of the existing thinking on Japan's nuclear weapons past. First, despite the multitude of public statements from both American and Japanese leaders from 1964 onwards affirming Japan's faith in the U.S. security guarantee, there was also a hidden side of private statements of serious doubt, on the part of Japanese decision makers, that the United States would not abandon Japan after the Mutual Security Treaty would expire in 1970. Second, there is evidence to suggest that, for all of his contradictory statements on nuclear weapons, Eisaku Sato may have wanted nothing more than a latent capability all along. Third, while traditionally Japan has been associated with a strong culture of anti-militarism in the post-World War II era, the archival record indicates that, in fact, there was a vibrant debate in Japan in the 1960s on whether a resurgent Japanese nationalism and desire for elevated standing in international politics would necessitate building a strong national military and even acquiring nuclear weapons. Finally, this case study shows that, to the extent that the Japanese government did explore the nuclear weapons option, it was as much to prevent proliferation as it was part of a hedging strategy.

Second, the case study on South Korea strengthens two existing arguments: First, the archival record demonstrates that, without any doubt, Park Chung-hee was motivated to pursue nuclear weapons based on his fear that the United States would abandon Seoul; and second, South Korea's ratification of the NPT, rather than representing its acceptance of the shifting global norm of nuclear weapons possession, was in fact nothing more than an opportunistic move designed to secure access to sensitive French and Canadian nuclear technologies

and to get the United States to ease up on its nonproliferation pressure. At the same time, this case study also contributes to our understanding of South Korea's nuclear weapons activities in two key ways. First, the archival evidence presented in this dissertation demonstrates definitively that Park's fear of abandonment did not begin with the promulgation of the Nixon Doctrine in 1969; while this fear had become acute by then, it had taken root much earlier, in the early to mid-1960s during the Johnson administration. Second, in much of the proliferation literature that focuses on past U.S. efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, the United States government is often portrayed as omniscient, competent, thoughtful, deliberate and effective; at least in the case of South Korea, however, the archival record shows that, if it were not for the Indian nuclear test of 1974, the United States would likely have not been made aware of Park's clandestine nuclear weapons activities. While American diplomats, intelligence services, and policy makers should be duly credited for taking swift action once they were clued in to South Korea's nuclear weapons program, it was only a stroke of luck that brought Park's efforts to light in the first place.

Finally, this dissertation serves to corroborate and reinforce the dominant narrative that explains why Taiwan conducted nuclear weapons activities, while keeping the analytical lens squarely on the ways in which the U.S.-Taiwan alliance dynamic affected Taiwanese perceptions of security and influenced nuclear weapons decision making. In addition, the case study on Taiwan improves, in two major ways, upon the extant literature regarding Taiwan's nuclear proliferation activities. First, it demonstrates that, while the seeds of

Taiwan's doubt in the U.S. security guarantee had been planted in the early to mid-1960s, the announcement of the Guam Doctrine in 1969 was not a novel concept born in the Nixon camp; in fact, the outgoing Johnson administration's interagency policy advisors were already advocating for an immediate normalization of relations with China, for which the Guam Doctrine was intended to set the eventual stage. Second, due to the relative shortage of scholarly articles examining Taiwan's nuclear weapons activities, the case study in this dissertation represents one of the fullest and most comprehensive accounts of nuclear proliferation in Taiwan in the context of U.S.-Taiwan alliance dynamics. Specifically, most contemporary accounts[458] tend to rely overwhelmingly, and almost exclusively, on three deservedly notable studies;[459] while also drawing on and paying appropriate respect to these earlier works, this study also adds significant new material to the existing body of research on Taiwan's earliest nuclear weapons efforts.

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[458] Three of the most commonly cited contemporary examinations of Taiwan's nuclear history include: Mark Fitzpatrick, *Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 127-160; Derek J. Mitchell, "Taiwan's Hsin Chu Program: Deterrence, Abandonment, and Honor," in *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why Some States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, et al (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 293-313; and Monte Bullard and Jing-dong Yuan, "Taiwan and Nuclear Weaponization: Incentives versus Disincentives," in *Forecasting Nuclear Proliferation in the 21st Century: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. William C. Potter and Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 182-204.

[459] David Albright and Corey Gay, "Taiwan: Nuclear Nightmare Averted," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 54, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 54-60; "Electronic Briefing Book 20: New Archival Evidence on Taiwanese 'Nuclear Intentions,' 1966-1976," ed. William Burr, The National Security Archive, George Washington University, October 13, 1999, accessible at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB20/; "Electronic Briefing Book 221: U.S. Opposed Taiwanese Bomb during 1970s," ed. William Burr, The National Security Archive, George Washington University, June 15, 2007, accessible at http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb221/index.htm.

In addition to the deep contributions to the case-specific literature, the research presented in this dissertation advances our general understanding of the causes of nuclear proliferation by lending important nuance to the argument that proliferation is truly multicausal. This research highlights an evident dynamic between the different causal mechanisms of nuclear proliferation that is potentially a very interesting and ripe area of additional research: Where security concerns appear to be high, normative considerations appear to be low, and vice versa. Japan's perceived absence of a security threat, and subsequently its lack of deliberations on whether nuclear weapons would enhance its security, stand in stark contrast to the nuclear weapons decisions of South Korea and Taiwan, which were driven entirely by external security pressures, at least as based on U.S. archival documents. Likewise, Japan was motivated by prestige considerations, whereas South Korea and Taiwan may not have been. These observations, then, might suggest that a state that faces acute external security threats cannot be bothered as much by normative considerations, since the survival of the state becomes the paramount concern; conversely, a state that does not face existential threats is afforded the luxury to deliberate whether nuclear weapons possession will affect its international prestige. A similar argument can be made with respect to the bureaucratic politics model. Here, again, an interesting observation arises about the correlative significance of the bureaucratic imperative relative to the other two models of proliferation behavior: Where prestige considerations are high, domestic political factors appear to be positively correlated, and vice versa. In the case of South Korea and Taiwan, where prestige

motivations were low or non-existent in the U.S. archival record, domestic bureaucratic politics likewise did not appear to have a dispositive effect on those countries' nuclear deliberations.

Thus, the implication of this observation, which deserves to be examined further, is that proliferation may be less multicausal than scholars have heretofore believed. The conventional wisdom in the extant proliferation literature is that the development and acquisition of nuclear weapons is not a monocausal phenomenon; while this may still hold true, the above observation would suggest that, at least between the security imperative and the norms imperative, there may be more of a binary construct than previously believed. That is, a state may be preoccupied either with security concerns or with prestige concerns, but not both.

Future Research Agendas

This dissertation advances both our case-specific understanding of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan's nuclear weapons programs, as well as our general understanding of the causes of nuclear proliferation; however, as with any thesis, much more work remains to be done. The findings and analysis of this research creates space for three avenues of further inquiry.

First, and most importantly, while the deep archival research that went into the construction of the case studies in this dissertation represents some of the most extensive efforts to get at the heart of the alliance dynamics between the United States and three of its key allies, it reflects a mostly American perspective,

with its attendant biases, analytical shortcomings, and subjectivities. Therefore, additional work in Japanese, Taiwanese, and Korean archives must be conducted. Such research would help strengthen or, possibly, refute some of the core arguments put forth in this dissertation.

Second, the hypotheses as laid out in Chapter 1 should be tested against additional cases, especially those outside of East Asia, those using other countries besides the United States as the senior ally, and those in different time periods. While the claims made in this dissertation are of course specific to the alliances between the United States and East Asian countries during the Cold War, they may or may not be generalizable. Thus, testing the findings from this study against findings from other regions, with other alliance parties, and across different time periods would help us understand how broadly the lessons from this dissertation can be applied.

Finally, one of the implicit lessons that can be extracted from the case studies is that the technical route chosen by the country to achieve some nuclear capability matters. Thus, two important and related questions arise. The first is whether treaty-based security guarantees incentivize junior allies to aim for latency, rather than go all the way, and, if so, the second is whether a uranium- or plutonium-based pathway best serves the junior ally's proliferation objectives. On the first question, this "sweet spot" strategy seems to be supported by the case studies in this dissertation, wherein all three countries under examination examined the feasibility of developing a latent capability; even South Korea, which first tried to get the bomb as quickly as possible, eventually settled for

latency. It is curious that, given the contours of the research design and the scope conditions for including cases in this dissertation, all three exhibited the same pattern. The question naturally arises, therefore, whether there is some causal link between security guarantees and latency; this area of further research would not only be interesting and useful in advancing the scholarly literature, it would have significant policy implications as well.

Likewise, the second question, on proliferation pathways, is equally important. It is interesting to note that all three states considered only the plutonium pathway to the bomb. None considered the uranium pathway, either exclusively or in tandem with the plutonium route. Vipin Narang, in his recent work on the strategies of proliferation argues that states "choose the pathway that is most expedient, whether through plutonium reprocessing or uranium enrichment or both."[460] While the case studies of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan would seem at first glance to validate this argument, additional research on why the leaders of these countries looked exclusively at the plutonium route would be useful in helping us understand how strategies of proliferation are operationalized.[461]

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[460] Vipin Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation: How States Pursue the Bomb," *International Security* 41, no. 3 (Winter 2016/2017): 124.

[461] Preliminary conclusions can be drawn from the supply-side literature that seeks to explain why certain technologies were more widely disseminated, and therefore from a proliferation perspective more pernicious, than others. For two contemporary studies on this question, see: Matthew Kroenig, *Exporting the Bomb: Technology Transfer and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010); Matthew Fuhrmann, *Atomic Assistance: How "Atoms for Peace" Programs Cause Nuclear Insecurity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the strengths of this dissertation is simultaneously one of its shortcomings: It compares three countries in close geographic proximity to each other, in the same time period, and all sharing a common superpower senior ally. On the one hand, standardizing the test cases to the greatest extent possible helps introduce common controls and isolate variables that may have significant explanatory power. On the other hand, larger structural or environmental changes that may have considerable effects on one state are likely to have similar effects on the other states as well, which can complicate efforts to disaggregate higher-level regional or international factors from state-level variables.

With this in mind, there are six key policy lessons that can be extracted from this research. The first is that, while larger geopolitical events and evolutions in the policy and actions of the common superpower ally can obviously affect the calculus of all states in the region, those effects can manifest in different ways. Whereas one state may seek reassurances from the senior ally, another may decide to devise alternate national strategies and begin the process of weaning itself off of dependence on its patron. Of course, a state could do both at the same time, seeking from the senior ally renewed and strengthened demonstrations of commitment in the near term, while simultaneously laying the groundwork, often quietly, for an enhanced capacity to assume primary responsibility for its own defense and security, in anticipation of what it assesses to be an eventual and inevitable termination of its patron's support. Influencing junior-ally state

behavior, then, is harder to do than alliance theories would suggest because states, and their leaders, can often act in unpredictable ways.

Of course, this is not to say protégé behavior cannot be influenced at all. This leads to the second lesson, which is that, while senior allies can certainly reassure their clients, they can equally importantly deter undesirable junior-ally behavior. While the provision of a security guarantee may not work every time in preventing proliferation behavior, threatening to fully remove that guarantee is one of the strongest nonproliferation tools in a senior ally's policy toolkit. As the cases in this dissertation demonstrate, while the maintenance and extension of the security guarantee can serve as a carrot to incentivize desirable junior-ally behavior, the promise of retracting that guarantee serves as an effective stick. In short, then, both sides of the security guarantee — extension as reassurance, and threat of removal as deterrent — are equally important.

With this in mind, security guarantees are never sure bets. Indeed, the very puzzle motivating this research — that Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan *did* conduct nuclear weapons activities while under the U.S. nuclear umbrella — is a reminder that, in international relations, no policy mechanism is guaranteed to work flawlessly every time, and that statecraft is as much an art as it is a science. In that spirit, the third lesson is that the mere signing of a security treaty, while necessary in and of itself, is almost always insufficient to fully mitigate junior-ally security concerns. Constant reassurances are needed, especially though not exclusively when the senior ally's own national interests evolve in a way that signal to a junior ally that the continued provision of protection by its patron may

not be eternal. Moreover, the manifestation of that security guarantee beyond the signing of a treaty, such as the provision of troops and the stationing of military assets on or near the junior ally's territory, certainly can send strong signals to both allies and adversaries alike of the senior ally's commitment to its client; however, even such deployments often are insufficient to quell protégé fears of abandonment. The most important element of the security guarantee, then, is rhetoric. Constant public and private statements, using strong and unequivocal language, must form the basis of any efforts to reassure nervous allies.

However, rhetoric and actions go both ways, and the fourth lesson from this research is that, in the construct of a patron-client alliance, junior allies have more coercive leverage over their patrons than perhaps senior allies would prefer or like to admit.[462] Theoretically, the provision of a security guarantee from the patron to the protégé lends credibility to the very idea that, as the provider, the senior ally is the more powerful state in the relationship and thus has full leverage over its weaker, dependent client state. However, junior allies can wield outsized power vis-à-vis their senior allies and, using their negotiating leverage to win concessions from their patrons, can thus secure their own objectives. The cases in this dissertation demonstrate that, where the junior ally is able to correctly identify its patron's most acute concerns, it likely will not hesitate to exploit that fear out of self-interest.

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[462] Gene Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint: How the United States Thwarted West Germany's Nuclear Ambitions," *International Security* 39, no. 4 (Spring 2015): 91-129; Francis J. Gavin, "Strategies of Inhibition: U.S. Grand Strategy, the Nuclear Revolution, and Nonproliferation," *International Security* 40, no. 1 (Summer 2015): 9-46.

Therefore, from the perspective of the senior ally, it becomes imperative to find ways to minimize the considerable power that its protégé may be able to hold in the alliance construct. Curtailing the junior ally's actions becomes just as important as influencing its intentions and, to that end, the ability of the senior ally to gather accurate and actionable intelligence and information on its client state is crucial to aiding efforts to prevent undesirable behavior. Unfortunately, the fifth policy lesson from this research is that the senior ally's intelligence apparatus often can be slow to catch on to junior-ally actions, and the estimates generated by intelligence-gathering efforts are not always accurate. This may be driven as much by a desire and tendency to implicitly trust one's allies as by any possible shortcomings in the intelligence collection and analysis process; still, an inability and/or unwillingness to carefully monitor junior-ally actions can have negative consequences for the achievement of senior-ally policy objectives.

Finally, one of the most significant, though subtle, lessons from this research is that individual people and their personalities matter. That is, the strategic vision and policy objectives that different national leaders bring to office can shape, in very significant ways, the relations between countries. Similarly, the personalities of individual decision makers and national leaders can yield either the basis of trusting relations between two heads of state or a recipe for mistrust, doubt, and suspicion. Moreover, while this dissertation does not employ personality profiling or leadership analysis techniques, the archival record demonstrates that the past life experiences and upbringings of key decision makers can have considerable influence on their adult worldviews and risk

tolerance levels. Hence, in the efforts of senior allies to advance the causes of security and stability, it is critical to remember that, for all of the assurance and deterrent signals, intelligence and monitoring activities, and public and private rhetoric, the most important element of alliance dynamics continues to be the people who make up a country's government and decision making apparatus..

Based on the above policy implications, four key policy recommendations are put forward. These should be considered especially carefully today, as this dissertation is being concluded during the administration of Donald Trump, who has openly questioned the utility of the existing U.S. alliances in East Asia.[463] The baseline assumption for the following recommendations is that, consistent with the theoretical literature on alliance dynamics and nuclear proliferation, the senior ally's objective in providing a treaty-based security guarantee to a junior ally would be two-fold: (1) to ensure security and stability; and (2) to prevent junior-ally proliferation.

First, once the treaty has been signed, the most important thing the senior ally can do to increase the likelihood of meeting the two objectives stated above is

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[463] See, for example: Van Jackson, Michael Horowitz and Ali Wyne, "Asia in the Age of Trump: Stability, China Victory, or Nuclear War," *War on the Rocks*, November 18, 2016, accessible at https://warontherocks.com/2016/11/asia-in-the-age-of-trump-stability-china-victory-or-nuclear-war/; Daniel Twining, "Assessing Trump's Emerging Asia Policy," *Foreign Policy*, December 24, 2016, accessible at http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/24/assessing-trumps-emerging-asia-policy/; Brian Padden, "Trump Uncertainty Fuels South Korea Nuclear Talk," *VOA News*, January 25, 2017, accessible at http://www.voanews.com/a/trump-uncertainty-south-korea-nuclear/3691290.html; Laura Rosenberger, "Can the U.S.-Japan Alliance Survive Trump?" *Foreign Policy*, February 9, 2017, accessible at http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/09/can-the-u-s-japan-alliance-survive-trump/; Rizwan Ladha, "How Trump Can Strengthen the U.S.-Japan Alliance," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, February 17, 2017, accessible at http://www.fletcherforum.org/home/2017/2/17/ how-trump-can-strengthen-us-japan-alliance; Dan De Luce and John Hudson, "U.S. Allies Are Learning that Trump's America Is Not the 'Indispensable Nation,'" *Foreign Policy*, February 27, 2017, accessible at http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/27/u-s-allies-are-learning-that-trumps-america-is-not-the-indispensable-nation/.

to be in constant contact with its ally. Communication is key, and both public statements and private reassurances should be used to signal to the junior ally and its adversaries that the senior ally's commitment remains firm. The importance of regular and clear communication becomes even more acute when the patron's own foreign policy interests and objectives evolve in a way that could potentially affect, in an adverse manner, its protégé's security calculus. By providing constant reassurances, the patron increases its chances of successfully meeting both of its objectives.

Second, and especially when the protégé may be inclined to distrust the credibility of the security guarantee, the patron should monitor its client for signs of any independent efforts. It is generally thought that countries only spy on their enemies, but the archival record and other sources of scholarship demonstrate that it is just as crucial, and in some instances more important, to monitor one's allies.[464] Through a combination of intelligence gathering activities, fact-finding missions, and technical exchanges, the senior ally should continue to gather information on its client state's actions. By not falling into the trap of complacency and assuming that allies will always behave in a preferred manner, the senior ally increases its likelihood of preventing undesirable efforts and, where such efforts are already under way, of hindering them.

Third, and to be clear, while security guarantees are good tools, treaty-based security guarantees are even better. However, simply signing a bilateral

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[464] Jeffrey T. Richelson, *Spying on the Bomb: American Nuclear Intelligence from Nazi Germany to Iran and North Korea* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2007); Peter Schweizer, *Friendly Spies: How America's Allies Are Using Economic Espionage to Steal Our Secrets* (New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1993).

security and defense treaty, in and of itself, is insufficient, and the senior ally must, in the interest of advancing its two concurrent objectives, engage its protégé through various channels. These can include troop deployments, the stationing of military assets on or near the junior ally's territory, military assistance packages, economic trade, and more. The purpose of such engagements is to draw the junior ally further into a web of dependency on its patron, to demonstrate and reinforce the inextricable ties binding the two states, and, thus, to signal the durability of the senior ally's commitment to its client's security.

Finally, the senior ally's government leaders should take the time and make the effort to develop close personal relations with their allied counterparts. In international politics, where nothing is immutable and anything can change at a moment's notice, fostering trust between individuals is key to weathering unexpected events together. The deeper the personal relations between and among decision makers, the more likely it becomes that any seismic shifts in geostrategic issues, international considerations, or foreign policies can be jointly endured. To this end, where decision makers, especially at the sub-principals' level to include deputies and assistants, can engage in regular exchanges in both formal and informal settings, the higher the likelihood that deep, trusting personal relationships can be built.

While the above four policy recommendations are germane to the senior ally, there are an additional four suggestions that can be applied to the junior ally. Here, and again in keeping with theory, the assumption is that, in receiving a security guarantee from a nuclear-armed patron, the protégé's primary motivation

is to ensure survival and security. First, the junior ally must determine whether the security guarantee will adequately cover the entire spectrum of its security needs, to include future threats that may not have arisen at the time of negotiating and signing the treaty. Of course, it is better if such an assessment can be completed before the treaty is negotiated and signed, but it should also be done after having signed the treaty. If the answer to this question is in the affirmative, the junior ally should then utilize a variety of channels to engage regularly with its senior ally to strengthen the security guarantee; for example, it can engage in diplomatic and technical exchanges, deepen trade ties, share intelligence on common adversarial threats, and conduct joint military exercises.

Second, if the answer to the above question is in the negative, and if the junior ally feels that, in taking primary responsibility for its own security, it must launch a national nuclear program, it should decide whether its end objective is to acquire a functional, deliverable arsenal, or simply to achieve latency.[465] The cost-benefit analysis that would be a prerequisite to making such a decision would consider such factors as: the time, money, and national resources that would need to be dedicated to such an endeavor; the expected utility of such a program in enhancing the state's security; and the anticipated drawbacks, especially vis-à-vis the state's relationship with its senior ally, of embarking on such a program. Particularly with respect to this last point, the state should carefully consider whether it is willing to invite condemnation, diplomatic pressure, and even the threat or use of force from its senior ally in order to achieve some level of nuclear

[465] Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation," 116-125. Narang categorizes the three case studies in this dissertation as having pursued an "insurance hedging" proliferation strategy.

capacity. Third, in either of the above two cases, the junior ally should make a determination as to whether its interests would be best served by being transparent and forthcoming with its senior ally, or if it should keep its actions and intentions secret. Again, here a cost-benefit analysis would need to be conducted to determine the best path forward.

Finally, once the state has gone through the above processes and determined the best path forward, it should commit fully to the course it has charted, in order to maximize its chances of success.

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