



THE EVOLVING AMERICAN PRESIDENCY



# Reagan Faces Korea Alliance Politics and Quiet Diplomacy

Chae-Jin Lee

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# The Evolving American Presidency

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*To Amelia, Nathaniel, and Henry*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

After publishing one of my earlier books, *A Troubled Peace: U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas*, I realized that I had not paid sufficient attention to the crucial period of President Ronald Reagan. Hence I decided to undertake an in-depth study on Reagan's policy toward Korea. In conducting my research, I have attempted to follow two main guidelines. The first guideline was to transcend any particular ideological prescriptions, to minimize my personal preferences, and to primarily rely upon facts and documents. It is my intention to present an objective, fair, and balanced narrative in this book. The second guideline was to recognize the important roles of individuals as much as institutions (states, departments, agencies, parliaments, parties, embassies, civic organizations) in making or implementing a country's foreign policy. Of course, the politics of inter-bureaucratic cleavages is fully examined, but it is ultimately up to individuals or groups of individuals who make a difference in international relations. In this book, therefore, I pay appropriate attention to a number of key individuals who managed US-Korea relations—their educational backgrounds, career patterns, professional networks, and policy orientations.

Even though a majority of confidential diplomatic documents during the Reagan presidency still remain closed, I have been fortunate to obtain some of them via the Freedom of Information Act, to have access to The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library (Simi Valley, California), and to peruse almost all relevant materials in Korean at The Korea National Diplomatic Archives (Seoul). I am pleased to note that a substantial amount of classified US documents is “hidden” (meaning available) among those Korean-language materials that were declassified up to 1988. I have taken full

advantage of The Foreign Affairs Oral History Project of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I have used other important documents and materials from The National Security Archive at George Washington University, The National Archives, The Miller Center of Public Affairs at University of Virginia, and The Hoover Institution Library and Archives at Stanford University. The National Institute of Korean History, The National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, and The Kim Dae Jung Presidential Library were helpful to my research.

In addition, I learned a great deal from many interviews, conversations, or correspondences I had with a large number of US and Korean officials who were active during the 1980s. Among those whom I have met over the years, I wish to express my special appreciation to Michael Armacost, Raymond Burghardt, David Lambertson, Kenneth Quinones, Kathleen Stephens, David Straub, and Paul Wolfowitz who shared their diplomatic experiences and historical perspectives with me. I benefitted much from interviews with all three US ambassadors to South Korea during the Reagan presidency--William Gleysteen Jr., Richard Walker, and James Lilley.

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No scholar can claim his or her accomplishments or contributions in total isolation. I, too, feel indebted to many mentors, colleagues, and friends who have inspired, encouraged, and supported my intellectual growth for almost six decades. I acknowledge only a few of them here—H. Arthur Steiner for teaching me the principles and practices of international relations, William P. Gerberding for introducing me to the history of US foreign policy, Hans Baerwald for guiding me in Asian studies, Robert A. Scalapino for supporting my professional activities, George M. Beckmann for promoting my academic projects, Ward Elliott for sharing warm friendship and stimulating conversations with me, and Charles Lofgren for teaching me the evolution of the US Constitution. I am grateful to James Person for giving me his substantial collection of primary source materials and Robert Wampler for helping me at The National Security Archive. I am much obliged to the two most outstanding scholars



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Several members of my immediate family were indispensable in encouraging and sustaining my scholarly endeavors. Among them are Mija Kang, Chae Deuk Lee, Theodore J. Lee, Natalie C. Lee, and Dane Yang. They deserve my profound gratitude and affection. This book is dedicated to my grandchildren—Amelia, Nathaniel, and Henry with hope that they would enjoy peaceful and cooperative relations between the United States and the Korean Peninsula.

I must make it clear that none of the individuals or organizations acknowledged here should be held responsible for any part of my presentations and interpretations or for any omissions I may have made.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ADST	Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
AFKN	American Forces Korean Network
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
AFP	Agence France-Presse
ANSP	Agency for National Security Planning
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CFC	Combined Forces Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DJP	Democratic Justice Party
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty
IPI	International Press Institute
KBS	Korean Broadcasting System
KNDA	Korea National Diplomatic Archives
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NKDP	New Korea Democratic Party
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSC	National Security Council
POSCO	Pohang Iron and Steel Corporation
RDP	Reunification Democratic Party
ROK	Republic of Korea
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USFK	United States Forces Korea
USIS	United States Information Service
USTR	United States Trade Representative

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Ronald Reagan's Foreign Policy

Even though many books have been written on President Ronald Reagan's foreign policies, there is not a single book in English that specifically addresses the goals that Reagan espoused in his relations with Korea, the methods and procedures employed to achieve such goals, and the legacy he left for the subsequent unfolding of diplomatic and strategic relations between the United States and Korea. This book is designed to fill this lacuna, with emphasis on the realities of "alliance politics" and the tactics of "quiet diplomacy."

It is widely asserted that Reagan showed a simplistic, inattentive, and rigid approach toward foreign affairs during his eight-year tenure. He was even castigated as an "amiable dunce" and a dangerous warmonger. As illustrated in the examination on US-Korea relations, however, his actual foreign policy was far more complicated, nuanced, flexible, and moderate than commonly assumed. My study demonstrates that Reagan was not an irresponsible and dangerous demagogue who would lead the United States toward war or even push the nuclear button.<sup>1</sup> Nor did he show a completely detached and unengaged style in managing his foreign policies. It is postulated that this apparent gap between popular perception and specific records in regard to Reagan's foreign relations is largely due to the interplay of three philosophical or theoretical tendencies—realism, moralism, and pragmatism—that characterized his approaches toward international issues. At times this interplay led to the apparent paradox of his foreign policy and confused his supporters and critics alike.

As testified by his two secretaries of state, Alexander M. Haig Jr. and George Shultz, Reagan was a realist in the sense that he wanted to carry out his policy from a position of strength and that he recognized the primacy of military alliances. In his memoirs, Reagan recalled, “Our policy was to be one based on strength and realism. I wanted peace through strength, not peace through a piece of paper.”<sup>2</sup> As to the Cold War with communists, for example, he held a zero-sum conviction, and his mantra was “We win and they lose!”<sup>3</sup> The Reagan Doctrine was indeed to support all forms of anti-communist crusade.

He exhibited a remarkable degree of policy consistency in nurturing a strong military alliance with South Korea and in pursuing a position of deterrence against a possible threat from North Korea. For his purpose, he unequivocally adhered to the Mutual Defense Treaty signed by US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and South Korean Foreign Minister Pyun Yong Tae on October 1, 1953, at the conclusion of the Korean War (1950–1953). The United States assumed a vast array of regional and global military responsibilities and could not afford to give sustained attention to a relatively small, albeit important ally. Yet South Korea, primarily engaged in a military confrontation with North Korea, expected the United States to continue to uphold its security commitment, provide substantial military assistance, and keep US troops stationed on the Korean Peninsula. Any actual or potential deviation from this expectation tended to generate a sense of disappointment and anxiety among the South Koreans. As examined by Richard Neustadt in a classic study, *Alliance Politics*, intimate military alliances tend to breed paranoia.<sup>4</sup> The South Koreans were constantly worried that the United States might modify its alliance with them or even abandon them altogether. In particular, they underwent a traumatic experience in dealing with Richard Nixon’s and Jimmy Carter’s announcements to withdraw US ground forces from South Korea.<sup>5</sup> Unlike his predecessors, Nixon and Carter, Reagan attempted to practice alliance politics in such a way that the South Koreans, as junior partners in an asymmetric alliance, felt comfortable about the US defense commitment. Mutual trust in security matters was a necessary foundation for America’s effective diplomacy toward South Korea. Yet realism as manifested in military alliance was not a panacea for managing an unequal and hierarchical relationship between the United States as a super power and South Korea as a middle power.

It is worth noting that Reagan’s realism was not always consistent with the Hobbesian concept of *bellum omnium contra omnes*, “the war of all against all.” It was balanced by his subscription to Wilsonian moralism. He



believed that since the United States enjoyed the exceptional moral superiority in the world, it should assume a universal responsibility to spread the messages of freedom, democracy, and human dignity to other countries, especially its authoritarian allies, as far as possible. He was instrumental in adopting the Republican Party Platform, "Morality in Foreign Policy," in July 1976. It praised a Russian dissident, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, as a "beacon of human courage and morality."<sup>6</sup> Speaking before the British Parliament, the cradle of democratic institutions, in June 1982, Reagan stated: "We must be staunch in our conviction that freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings."<sup>7</sup> He declared that "if the rest of this century is to witness the gradual growth of freedom and democratic ideals, we must take actions to assist the campaign for democracy." It was Reagan's view that the United States had "a tremendous heritage of idealism, which is a reservoir of strength and goodness" and that the world should see America that "is morally strong with a creed and vision." "For us," he remarked, "values count."<sup>8</sup> In *Diplomacy*, Henry A. Kissinger, who had reservations about Reagan's foreign policy, recognized Reagan's fidelity to classic Wilsonianism and American Utopianism.<sup>9</sup> In *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, James Mann characterized Reagan as moralistic by having absorbed the small-town Midwestern values in his youth.<sup>10</sup>

"For Ronald Reagan," according to Jack Matlock Jr., who served as senior director of European and Soviet Affairs in the National Security Council and as ambassador to Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, "improving respect for human rights was one of the foremost goals of his foreign policy."<sup>11</sup> In this context, Reagan expressed his opposition to all forms of tyranny—of the left and of the right. However strongly Reagan espoused his personal moral conviction, he was bound to face a difficulty in implementing it in all cases. Impressed by the "Kirkpatrick Doctrine," however, he held an optimistic view that, unlike communist tyrannies that were not malleable, US allies that were dictatorial or authoritarian would be encouraged to become free and democratic with America's patient, proper, and purposeful tutelage. Sensing that South Korea under President Chun Doo Hwan was authoritarian, repressive, and inhumane, the Reagan administration pursued a goal of inducing the Chun government's reluctant but ultimate accommodation of democratic principles.

In order to achieve his moralistic goal, Reagan eschewed ideological fundamentalism or a big-nation chauvinism, but adopted a pragmatic and persuasive approach by seeking a judicious balance between goals and

means in his foreign policy. He preferred to solve international conflicts through persuasion, dialogue, and compromise as far as possible. One of Reagan's long-time political associates, Richard Nixon, felt that Reagan was a "lightweight," who should not be taken seriously, but was a "pragmatic" person.<sup>12</sup> Barry E. Carter, a prominent legal scholar, characterized Reagan as a "principled pragmatist" and a "pragmatic internationalist."<sup>13</sup> It was well known that Reagan was cooperative with the Democratic House Speaker Tip O'Neill; they developed mutual respect and personal rapport across the aisle. As Michael Schaller's book *Ronald Reagan* illustrates, he showed pragmatic flexibility: to achieve 75 percent of what he wanted in a pending bill, he was happy to give up 25 percent.<sup>14</sup> He was patient to wait for another opportunity to fulfill the remaining 25 percent.

In dealing with its highly authoritarian allies that violate democratic values and human rights, the United States had a choice among three possible approaches. The first option was "benign neglect," which Richard Nixon pursued with respect to the violations of democratic principles and human rights in an allied nation so long as the ally's national security and political stability were sustained. This approach was often couched in the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations. Realists such as Nixon and Kissinger may pay lip service to the importance of democratic practices and human rights, but do not put much real emphasis on them. The second option is "public voice," which Jimmy Carter employed in openly condemning the abuses of human rights and democratic values among his allies and friends. This approach was often used as a kind of shaming tactic. Disgusted with the bad behavior of an authoritarian leader, the United States may be tempted to give up an alliance altogether or at least to withdraw or reduce US troops or to deny economic assistance or diplomatic support. The tactics of public voice may be used as leverage to extract concessions or accommodation from a reluctant ally. For all practical purposes, however, it is extremely difficult for the United States to abandon an alliance simply because of a serious disagreement over human rights abuses perpetrated by an autocratic leader. Guided by an idealistic prescription, Carter tried to withdraw US troops from South Korea by citing his anger over human rights abuses under President Park Chung Hee. The direct confrontation between Carter and Park in June 1979 was an unfortunate diplomatic episode.<sup>15</sup> In the end, however, Carter was forced to rescind his decision on troop withdrawal. Nor did he realize much improvement in the conditions of human rights and democratic practices in South Korea.

Unlike Nixon and Carter, Reagan adopted the third option for “quiet diplomacy.” It was a pragmatic way of achieving his moral imperative vis-à-vis authoritarian allies. The Reagan administration argued that in managing its alliance politics with those leaders who violated human rights and democratic principles, quiet diplomacy was a more effective result-oriented approach than either benign neglect or public voice options because it was conducted in private conversations or behind the scenes without public glare. Haig instructed that the practice of publicly denouncing allies and friends on human rights should end.<sup>16</sup> It represented a pointed rebuke to Carter’s high-handed public voice policy.

Critics contended that quiet diplomacy, as an unprincipled tactic, served only to veil inaction or to justify collusion with a dictator. Quiet diplomacy, the Reagan administration countered, “refers only to the confidentiality of the diplomatic channels we use, not the intensity of our representations.” They also asserted that “we do not just want to make grandiose statements that lead nowhere. Our efforts are, therefore, consistently directed at the achievement of results.”<sup>17</sup> Emphasis on quiet diplomacy was most suitable to Reagan’s personal and leadership qualities. As suggested by Joseph Nye Jr. in *The Powers to Lead*, Reagan was an inspirational and transformational leader with the excellent soft power skills of vision, communication, and persuasion.<sup>18</sup> His long acting career served him well in diplomatic activities. According to Nye, Reagan, like Franklin D. Roosevelt, was a master at projecting confidence and optimism. In spite of Reagan’s limited cognitive skills, Nye said, he had good contextual intelligence—the adaptive ability to understand and utilize an evolving reality. In this context, Reagan stated that front-page stories that the United States assailed other countries on human rights abuses might “get us cheers from the bleachers, but it won’t help those who are being abused. Indeed, it could wind up hurting them.”<sup>19</sup> By upholding quiet diplomacy, Reagan intended to show his approach’s difference from Nixon’s and Carter’s foreign policies. However, his quiet diplomacy was bound to lead to a mixed result—both successes and failures—in South Korea, and the controversies over quiet diplomacy persisted throughout the Reagan presidency. It is important to note that the application of Reagan’s quiet diplomacy had a divergent effect on Chun Doo Hwan and Ferdinand Marcos.

Humiliated by Carter’s public lectures on the questions of human rights, the South Korean leaders welcomed and encouraged a quiet, private, and low-key approach from the United States. In his meeting with Michael Armacost (deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and

Pacific Affairs) in October 1980, South Korean Foreign Minister Lho Shin Yung complained about the State Department's negative comments on judicial verdicts in South Korea and stated that "we will listen to our ally's friendly remarks which are not outspoken and are delivered quietly."<sup>20</sup> For a similar reason Minister Sohn Jang Nae of the South Korean Embassy in Washington told President-elect Reagan's chief foreign policy aide Richard V. Allen in December 1980 that in regard to the issues of human rights in South Korea, quiet diplomacy may prove to be a more effective way than public lectures.<sup>21</sup> Lho and Sohn implied on behalf of the Chun Doo Hwan government that while public lectures may be attractive and popular to the audience in the United States and to the liberal segment in South Korea, they turn out to be rather counterproductive because no self-respecting nationalist leaders would bear an appearance of submitting to public pressure from a foreign country. After carefully monitoring the presidential election in the United States, the Chun government confidently expected that unlike Carter, Reagan would faithfully adhere to the age-old US military alliance with South Korea.

The Reagan administration assumed that quiet diplomacy was the best pragmatic and effective way to promote human rights and democratic freedom in South Korea. Yet the actual application of quiet diplomacy was to be limited or constrained by a number of factors. First, quiet diplomacy for human rights was not the only priority for America's overall policy toward Korea, and it was often in conflict with other considerations—such as national security, political stability, and economic development. Second, no matter how ideal the goal of human rights and democratic principles was, the United States at times did not have enough means and instruments to implement it in the changing realities. Imbalance between goals and means was a common dilemma in foreign policies. Third, the leaders in South Korea, in view of their nationalistic assertiveness and domestic political calculations, resisted what they regarded as America's overt interference in their sovereign affairs. Fourth, the pursuit of Reagan's quiet diplomacy was entangled in the dynamics of bureaucratic politics. The promise and paradox of quiet diplomacy were tested in its actual applications during the Reagan administration.

In order to carry out his broad outline of foreign relations, the President-elect Reagan assembled a group of competent and experienced persons. It was easy for him to appoint Richard V. Allen as his national security advisor. Allen had a long record of loyal and able assistance for Reagan. Even though Allen was educated as a Soviet specialist at Notre

Dame University and he wrote a doctoral dissertation on Marxism and Leninism at University of Munich, he was able to broaden his expertise by working at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and at the Hoover Institution. The first time he visited Korea was in late 1967 when he directed a study program at the Hoover Institution. A few months later in 1968, he was dispatched by Richard Nixon to Seoul and other Asian capitals to explain the thrust of his article "Asia after Viet Nam," published in *Foreign Affairs* (October 1967). The following year President Nixon appointed Allen as deputy national security advisor under Henry Kissinger. Soon thereafter, Allen left the National Security Council and entered the private sector.

Impressed by Reagan's credo, "we will win the Cold War," Allen gave up his ambition to run for Governor in his native state, New Jersey, and decided to support Reagan's presidential plan in 1977.<sup>22</sup> Writing about Allen's dominant role in formulating and articulating Regan's foreign policy in 1980, Stephen S. Rosenfeld reported that the forty-four-year-old Allen was not highly intellectual or theoretical, but he was "quick and smart."<sup>23</sup>

At the Republican Party Convention in July 1980, Allen was instrumental in drafting foreign policy segments of the party platform. It accused Jimmy Carter of having "a foreign policy not of consistency and credibility, but of chaos, confusion, and failure" and emphasized the Republican Party's promise to support "a policy of peace through strength." It declared that "the United States is and must remain a Pacific power" and noted that "the balance on the Korean Peninsula has shifted dangerously toward the North." More specifically with respect to Korea, the platform stated:

Republicans recognize the unique danger presented to our ally South Korea. We will encourage continued efforts to expand political participation and individual liberties within the country, but will recognize the special problems brought on by subversion and potential aggression from the North. We will maintain American ground and air forces in South Korea, and will not reduce our presence further. Our treaty commitments to South Korea will be restated in unequivocal terms and we will re-establish the process of close consultations between our governments.<sup>24</sup>

After obtaining a copy of this platform promptly and examining it carefully, the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs assumed that Reagan would be more sympathetic to Seoul's needs than Carter had been. The party platform is often forgotten once the election is over, but this platform

in essence committed its standard-bearer, Ronald Reagan, to two main policy goals—to manage America’s strong military alliance with South Korea in mutually beneficial ways and to promote the process of political democratization. Reagan attempted to achieve these two goals throughout his two-term presidency as far as possible.

Unlike Allen’s appointment, the President-elect agonized over a choice for his Secretary of State. He was initially inclined to favor George Shultz, but Nixon’s strong advice was decisive in choosing Haig. In a letter written to Reagan, Nixon, who intended to reassert a role in US foreign relations, enthusiastically recommended Haig, his former deputy national security advisor and White House chief of staff. It said, “He [Haig] is intelligent, strong and generally shares your views on foreign policy.”<sup>25</sup> More importantly, Nixon added that “he would be personally loyal to you and would not backbite you on or off the record.” In fact, Nixon candidly told his friends that “Al Haig is the meanest, toughest, most ambitious son of a bitch I ever knew. He’ll make a great Secretary of State.”<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, Nixon opposed a possible appointment of Shultz, his former labor and treasury secretary. While praising Shultz for having done “a superb job” in every government position to which he appointed him, Nixon told the president-elect that “I do not believe that he has the depth of understanding of world issues generally and the Soviet Union in particular that is needed for this period.”<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Nixon warned Reagan to watch out for Shultz because he would be disloyal after becoming a member of Reagan’s cabinet.<sup>28</sup> Nixon’s unsolicited advice was basically consistent with the views of Reagan’s “kitchen cabinet,” a group of influential unofficial advisers.

In 1979 Reagan had met Haig three times. As NATO supreme commander, Haig accepted the invitation to meet with Reagan at his ranch, Rancho del Cielo, in California, in the spring.<sup>29</sup> They met at a breakfast meeting in San Francisco in July and at Rancho del Cielo again in August. In addition, Haig, now president of United Technologies Corporation, accepted Reagan’s invitation to deliver a speech on foreign policy at the Republican National Convention in July 1980. Apparently Reagan was impressed by Haig’s rich experience and charismatic leadership. In December 1980 Reagan announced his designation of Haig as Secretary of State—one of his last cabinet nominees. Haig respected Reagan and agreed with his foreign policy preferences. He felt that Reagan had a profound knowledge of international issues and an intimate acquaintance with foreign statesmen and that he had “decency, optimism, a gift for

self-education, a sturdy commonsense affection for the United States and mankind, and a talent for communication that approached the artistic.”<sup>30</sup>

As a junior aide in General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in 1950, he received the first news of the Korean War from a phone call by US ambassador to South Korea, John Muccio. He immediately reported it to General MacArthur.<sup>31</sup> He served in the Korean War as well as the Vietnam War. As President Nixon's assistant, Haig visited Seoul in November 1972 to brief President Park Chung Hee on the Vietnam peace negotiations and again in January 1973 to explain the Paris accords on Vietnam to President Park. Haig's experience with respect to Korean affairs was long and substantial indeed. At the outset Reagan readily accepted Haig's request to be a preeminent “vicar” in foreign policy. He was assisted or counterbalanced by William P. Clark Jr., deputy secretary of state, whom Governor Reagan had appointed as an associate judge of the California Supreme Court. Clark's experience and knowledge in the areas of diplomatic and security policies were rather limited. The Haig-Clark relationship was destined to be difficult.

In addition to Allen and Haig, the President-elect picked Caspar Weinberger, general counsel of the Bechtel Group, as his Secretary of Defense. After graduating from Harvard University and its Law School, Weinberger, a native Californian, joined the army and fought against Japanese forces in New Guinea during the Pacific War. He was a captain on General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence staff in Tokyo. He was elected to the California State Assembly in 1952 and became chairman of the California Republican Party in 1962. Weinberger met Reagan in 1965 for the first time and served as Governor Reagan's director of finance in the late 1960s. Under President Nixon, Weinberger was appointed as director of the office of management and budget and as secretary of health, education, and welfare. He admired Reagan's commitments to oppose communism and to rebuild US military forces. He was described as “the most hawkish cabinet member” and as “slight in build, formal in manner, cultivated and enamored of pomp and ceremony.”<sup>32</sup> Weinberger recalled that Reagan was an open, friendly, and funny person who read voluminously and quickly, had phenomenal memory, and had “a good general knowledge of government.” Reagan knew what he wanted to accomplish and moved steadily and skillfully to reach his goals.<sup>33</sup>

For CIA director, the President-elect Reagan selected William J. Casey, chief of staff in the Reagan campaign. With a strong background in law and business, Casey had a record of service in intelligence areas. He had

worked in the office of strategic services during the Second World War and was a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in the mid-1970s. Reagan chose Jeane Duane Kirkpatrick, whom Allen introduced to him, a life-long Democrat and a professor at Georgetown University, as US ambassador to the United Nations. Reagan was impressed by what was known as the "Kirkpatrick Doctrine." She argued that traditional authoritarian governments were less repressive than revolutionary autocracies and that the United States should encourage liberalization and democracy in autocratic governments for gradual change rather than immediate transformation.<sup>34</sup>

As his Counselor to the President, Reagan appointed Edwin Meese III, his former executive assistant and chief of staff in Sacramento. Meese sat at the National Security Council and was a member of the cabinet. He emerged as one of the most influential persons in the White House. He devised a division of responsibilities with Chief of Staff James A. Baker III, who was a close associate of Vice President George H. W. Bush. The Princeton-educated Baker graduated from the University of Texas school of law and practiced law in Houston. He served as undersecretary of commerce under President Gerald Ford. He managed Bush's unsuccessful campaign in 1980, but made a favorable impression on Reagan. Baker was assisted by Michael Deaver, deputy chief of staff, who had the closest personal rapport with Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan from Sacramento to the White House. He had assisted Reagan's visit to Seoul in October 1971. Reagan treated him almost like a son. Deaver joined Baker and Meese in the "troika" for the first few years of Reagan's presidency. Of course, Bush had extensive experience in diplomatic and intelligence areas. Above all, he served as ambassador to the United Nations, head of the Liaison Office in Beijing, and CIA director during the 1970s. As a harsh critic of Reagan's policies during the Republican primary campaigns in 1980, Vice President Bush found it difficult to join Reagan's tight-knit inner circle in the White House. However, Reagan appreciated Bush's loyalty, competence, and modesty.

Reagan preferred not to concentrate power for foreign and security policies in one person. Unlike Henry Kissinger under Nixon and Gerald Ford and Zbigniew Brzezinski under Carter, none of Reagan's six national security advisors played a central role in foreign and security affairs with the possible exception of Allen. Reagan regarded them as his staff to coordinate policy rather than to initiate policy. The National Security Council under Reagan was relegated to a staffing and coordinating agency.



Once Reagan selected his cabinet secretaries and other senior staff members, he delegated a considerable level of authority to them, especially in regard to foreign affairs. He rejected a commonly held view that during his presidency he suffered from a “hands-off” management style.<sup>35</sup> He articulated his basic and sound management policy—to set clear goals and policies and to appoint good people to help him to achieve them. The chief executive, he said, should not peer constantly over his appointees’ shoulders and tell them every few minutes what to do. If they do not perform well, he wants to fine-tune the policies and to change his appointees, if necessary. This style was perfected during his two-term governorship in California and was applied to the vastly complicated presidency. In essence, Reagan viewed himself as a policy initiator as well as an ultimate arbiter in the milieu of bureaucratic politics. Like all his predecessors, Reagan encountered what his first chief of staff, James A. Baker III, described as the prevalence of suspicion, chaos, backbiting, and mutual distrust in his foreign policy apparatus.<sup>36</sup> Reagan was able to deal with the dynamics of inter-bureaucratic conflicts by superior persuasive power and refined skills of inter-personal relations. In terms of management style, Reagan was closer to Dwight Eisenhower than to Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter, who micro-managed almost all important matters during their respective presidencies.

## NOTES

1. The Carter camp suggested a possible danger of Reagan’s presidency in 1980. In the presidential debate on October 28, 1980, Jimmy Carter accused Ronald Reagan of habitually advocating “the injection of military forces into troubled areas.” Reagan made it clear that he favored world peace and that use of force would be a last resort when everything else failed. He said that he had seen four wars in his lifetime and that “I’m a father of sons, I have a grandson.” Nancy Reagan declared that her husband was not a warmonger. See Michael Beschloss, *Presidential Courage: Brave Leaders and How They Changed America, 1979–1989* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 280–281. The transcript of the Carter-Reagan debate is in *New York Times*, October 30, 1980.
2. See Ronald Reagan, *An American Life: The Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 267.
3. See Beschloss, *Presidential Courage*, 283.
4. Richard E. Neustadt, *Alliance Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 72–73.

5. For a discussion of Nixon's and Carter's military policy toward Korea, see Chae-Jin Lee, *A Troubled Peace: U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 64–91.
6. See James Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan: A History of the End of the Cold War* (New York: Penguin Group, 2009), 22.
7. See the transcript of his address on June 8, 1982, in “The Public Papers of Ronald Reagan,” The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library (Simi Valley, CA).
8. The quotations are from Carol Kelly-Gangi, ed., *Ronald Reagan: His Essential Wisdom* (New York: Fall River Press, 2012), 39–40. For Reagan's belief that freedom was the most fundamental American principle, see Andrew E. Busch, *Ronald Reagan and The Politics of Freedom* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001).
9. Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 767.
10. Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, 18.
11. Jack Matlock Jr., Foreword to *Reagan and the World: Leadership and National Security, 1981–1989*, ed. Bradley Lynn Coleman and Kyle Langley (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2017), ix.
12. Cited in Beschloss, *Presidential Courage*, 282.
13. Barry E. Carter, “Ronald Reagan, the Pragmatic Internationalist,” in Jeffrey Chidester and Paul Kengor, eds., *Reagan's Legacy in a World Transformed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 216–230.
14. Michael Schaller, *Ronald Reagan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 36.
15. See Chae-Jin Lee, *A Troubled Peace*, 91–93.
16. Alexander M. Haig Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), 90.
17. See a copy of “Country Reports on Human Rights Policies for 1983” released by the Department of State on February 10, 1984, reproduced in “Human Rights,” Korea National Diplomatic Archives (hereafter KNDA), 1984, 9605: 201–216, and a statement by Richard Schifter (assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs) on February 19, 1986, before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, reproduced in “Korea Hearings,” KNDA, 1986, 21,519: 008–011.
18. Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Powers to Lead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 71–79, 89–90. For a discussion of Reagan's personality traits in comparison with other presidents, see John Arquilla, *The Reagan Imprint: Ideas in American Foreign Policy from the Collapse of Communism to the War on Terror* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 3–29.
19. Matlock, Foreword to *Reagan and the World*, x.

20. See "Memorandum of Conversation" between Michael Armacost and Lho Shin Yung on October 18, 1980, in "US State Department Visitors," KNDA, 1980, 20,180,413: 021-034. A graduate of Carlton College, Armacost received a PhD degree from Columbia University and taught at Pomona College and International Christian University in Japan. After serving at the US embassy in Japan, the Department of State, and the National Security Council, Armacost became deputy assistant secretary of defense (1978-1980) and deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (1980-1982). Later he served as ambassador to the Philippines (1982-1984), under secretary of state for political affairs (1984-1989), and ambassador to Japan (1989-1993). A native of South Pyongan Province, Lho studied law at Seoul National University and received MA degree from University of Kentucky. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1953. He served at the South Korean Embassy in Washington, DC in 1960 and as consul general in Los Angeles in 1968. After serving as ambassador to Geneva, Lho became vice foreign minister in 1974 and foreign minister (1980-1982). Afterwards he was director of the Agency for National Security Planning (1982-1985) and prime minister (1985-1987).
21. Allen met Sohn on December 9, 1980 in Washington, DC. An English copy of "Memorandum for Record" is available in The Kim Dae Jung Presidential Library (Seoul). A veteran of the Korean War and Vietnam War, Sohn Jang Nae, a retired army general, represented the Korean Central Intelligence Agency in the United States. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency (established in 1961) became the Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP) in 1981 and the National Intelligence Service in 1999.
22. Recalled by Richard V. Allen in "The Ronald Reagan Oral History Project," Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, May 2002.
23. Rosenfeld, "The Return of Richard V. Allen," *Washington Post*, April 18, 1980.
24. The 1980 platform is available in "The American Presidency Project," University of California, Santa Barbara. It was immediately reported in "New Reagan Policy," KNDA, 1980, 20,180,413: 104.
25. See Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, 14.
26. Cited in Beschloss, *Presidential Courage*, 282.
27. See Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan*, 14.
28. Cited in Edmund Morris, *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Random House, 1999), 463.
29. Haig, *Caveat*, 1-8.
30. Haig, *Caveat*, 14.
31. Author's conversation with Haig, July 2003.

32. James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004), 108.
33. See Caspar W. Weinberger, *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York: Warner Books, 1990), 9–13.
34. See Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” *Commentary Magazine*, vol. 68, no 5 (November 1979), 34–45.
35. Reagan, *An American Life*, 161.
36. See James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989–1992* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), 26–27.



## CHAPTER 2

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# Embracing the Primacy of Alliance and Stability

For Ronald Reagan the Korean Peninsula had been a remote, unfamiliar, and negligible place before he was compelled to confront it at the time of his presidential election. The only exception was the Korean War during which he, as a young actor in Hollywood, supported and admired Gen. Douglas MacArthur's anti-communist campaign. A year after the end of the Korean War, Reagan played a major role in the popular movie *Prisoner of War*. Directed by Andrew Marton, this MGM movie was widely advertised to "expose communist propaganda, brain-washing in action, bravery under torture, the terrible march north, life in the POW camps, the naked truth." In the movie, Army Captain Webb Sloane (portrayed by Ronald Reagan) volunteers to investigate real situations inside North Korean POW camps. He parachutes behind enemy lines and infiltrates a group of captured American soldiers on the march to POW camps. He discovers the true conditions in a POW camp—starvation, torture, and violent maltreatment—all in violation of the Geneva Convention on the Status of POWs. In spite of the daily atrocities, Sloane finds that the spirits of POWs cannot be broken. He bravely and smartly devises a way for the POWs to escape from their camps. Sloane is depicted as the hero. Acting in this movie was probably the first time that the forty-three-year-old Reagan had direct experience with Korean affairs, but only in a fictitious way. Since Reagan had appeared in about sixty movies since 1937, it is difficult to know what impact *Prisoner of War* had upon his view of the Korean War or Korea in general. His two autobiographies are silent on this question.