

The Vietnam War and the 'Miracle of East Asia'

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Introduction

Remarkable economic development in East Asia after the latter half of 1960s provided a tremendous shock against the perception relating to the North–South problem that the economic gap between the north and the south continues to widen. Unsurprisingly, a lot of research interest centres on the resolution of the issue, with the development structure of the East Asian economy in particular being analysed from various angles. Due to such interests, it cannot be denied that much research, including that analysing the progress of economic growth in East Asia, tended to search for general theories of economic development for present day developing countries. The effects of the Vietnam War, which cannot be ignored in Asian economic development, have until now hardly been verified. This can be attributed to the thinking that accidental factors, including the Vietnam War, should be abstracted from economic development theory.

Most research so far, including that examining the impact of the Vietnam War on the Asian economy, is merely about Vietnam-related procurement. The effects of the Vietnam War on economic development in Asia included not only cash revenue aspects due to 'Vietnam-related procurement', but also a profitable climate in international economic relationships, which played a definite important role. For the East Asia region, temporary revenues, such as those from Vietnam-related procurement, were surely significant. However, rather than that, issues, including the development of America's Asian policy and its economic impact on the East Asia region, are more important.¹ Specifically, it is necessary to examine not only Vietnam-related procurement, which was temporary, but also how continuous economic aid and the global trading market contributed to economic development in the East-Asia region.

While doing this, I would also like to examine in detail how the Vietnam War impacted on economic development in Korea. Issues regarding the Korean army's dispatch of troops to Vietnam are recently garnering attention in Korean society in various forms. Many issues, including the harm to Korean troops caused by defoliant used during the Vietnam War and after-effects problems, such as post-war neurosis, and issues such as civilian massacres by Korean troops, have not yet been explicated. This paper aims to examine these issues as well. In particular, the issue regarding the civilian massacre by Korean troops is significant in the sense that the Korean people, who had been seeing themselves as victims, began to face their own wrongdoings. The pursuit of American government responsibility in the 'NoGeunRi Massacre', in which American soldiers killed civilians during the Korean War, and the responsibility of the Japanese government regarding comfort women, while leaving to one side the issue of the Korean army massacring civilians, were also because these were seen as unforgivable problems. In January 2000, the 'Korean Truth Committee on the Vietnam War' was formed in cooperation with 12 NGO groups, and has been working to investigate the truth and to promote a campaign for Truth and Reconciliation concerning the Vietnam War. In this way, responsibility not only as victims, but also as wrongdoers, has begun to be pursued. Furthermore, the enormous scale of the massacres, as well as the distinct possibility that they were done indiscriminately, adds to this issue. However, it is a reality that the reasons such

massacres occurred have not yet been clarified, despite their significance. This, needless to say, is largely due to the fact that the truth of the issue has not yet been revealed, and that research on the topic has been deficient. Thus, this paper aims to examine the background of the genocide of Vietnamese civilians based on materials including notes and testimonies by Korean soldiers who participated in the Vietnam War, and on a damage fact-finding inquiry by a Korean NGO.

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'Special support for Southeast Asia operations' and Vietnam-related procurement

'The Vietnam War, which developed into large-scale combat in 1965, the turning point of the war came in January 1969 when President Johnson stopped bombing North Vietnam, ended in 1975 with the North and South Vietnam were unified after the collapse of the South Vietnamese government.' The Vietnam War, which lasted 11 long years between 1965 and 1975, had an immeasurable impact on the economies of Asian countries. After March 1965, when President Johnson started sending US combat troops to Vietnam, the Vietnam War escalated and US intervention into Vietnam became full-scale. 1965 can be seen as the turning point of the expansion of the Vietnam War. The number of US soldiers sent to South Vietnam sharply increased to 180,000 in 1965 from 23,000 at the end of December 1964. At its peak, that number rose to as high as 550,000 in 1968. As Table 1 shows, military spending began increasing rapidly from the latter half of 1965 in line with the escalation of the Vietnam War. In the budget for fiscal 1965 (July 1964 to June 1965), before the intensification of the war, US national defence spending had decreased from 52.7 billion dollars to 48.6 billion dollars. However, spending increased to 55.9 billion dollars in fiscal 1966, to 69.1 billion dollars in fiscal 1967, and to 80.2 billion dollars in fiscal 1969.

The major part of the increase in national defence spending after fiscal 1965 was due to 'Special Support for Southeast Asia Operations'. This increase in national defence spending could also be seen as an increase in expenditure on the Vietnam War. Although only 103 million dollars was appropriated as Special Support for Southeast Asia Operations in the fiscal 1965 budget, that number rose sharply to 5.8 billion dollars in the budget for fiscal 1966. Furthermore, in fiscal 1967, this exceeded 20 billion dollars, and at its peak in 1969 rose to 28.8 billion dollars, accounting for 36% of the national spending, 16% of the federal budget and 3% of GDP (US Department Commerce 1975). Following the start of the withdrawal of US troops along with the end of the bombing of North Vietnam in 1969, war expenditures started gradually to shrink, decreasing to 9.4 billion dollars in 1972.

At the time of the Korean War, national defence spending accounted for 12.5% of US GDP, of which 6–7% was actually spent directly on the Korean War. In contrast, national defence spending accounted for 9% of GDP during the Vietnam War, of which only 3% was expenditure for the Vietnam War. From the perspective of its ratio to US GDP, spending on the Vietnam War was only half that on the Korean War. However, the total amount of direct expenditure on the Korean War was 69 billion dollars, while that on the Vietnam War was 148.8 billion dollars. Expenditure on the Vietnam War largely exceeded that on the Korean War because the Vietnam War lasted longer and the scale was larger than the Korean War (US Department Commerce 1975).

Needless to say, the occurrence of Vietnam-related procurement was based on the 'Special Support for Southeast Asia Operations' resulting from full-scale intervention in the Vietnam War by the US. Within 'Special Support for Southeast Asia Operations', overseas military spending, which the US army directly used for purchases of goods and services overseas, was distributed to South East Asian countries through (1) US army spending; (2) munitions goods

Table 1. American national defence budget and the Vietnam War

	Federal Annual Spending (A)	National Defense Spending (B)	Special Support for Southeast Asia Operations (C)	(Unit: Hundred Million Dollars)	
				C/A	C/B
1964	1186	527		0%	0%
1965	1184	486	1	0%	0%
1966	1347	559	58	4%	10%
1967	1583	691	201	13%	29%
1968	1788	794	265	15%	33%
1969	1846	802	288	16%	36%
1970	1966	793	231	12%	29%
1971	2114	768	147	7%	19%
1972	2319	774	94	4%	12%
1973	2465	751	63	3%	8%
1974	2684	786	31	1%	4%
1975	3134	853	15	0%	2%

(Source: US Department Commerce. Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1975.)

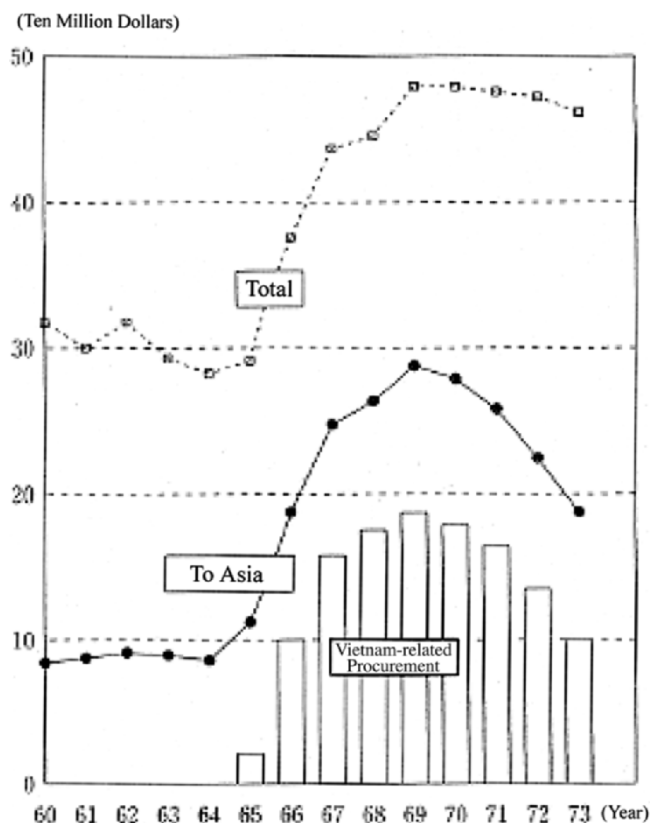


Figure 1. US Foreign Military Expenditure

(Source: US Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, Feb. 1992, April 1975)

supplied to US troops in Vietnam; and (3) spending by US soldiers on leave. When looking at this from an economic viewpoint, the effect of Vietnam-related procurement on South East Asian countries was extremely large. As Figure 1 shows, US foreign military expenditure rapidly increased after 1965, along with the development of the Vietnam War, from 2.95 billion dollars in 1965 to 3.76 billion dollars in 1966 and to 4.86 billion dollars in 1969. In line with this increase, US military expenditure in the Asian region increased sharply from about 1.1 billion dollars in 1965 to 1.8 billion dollars in 1966, 2.5 billion dollars in 1968, and to 2.7 billion dollars in 1969.

The US government estimated its Vietnam-related procurement was about 1 billion dollars in fiscal 1966, 1.5 billion dollars in fiscal 1967, 1.9 billion dollars in fiscal 1969, and totalling 10.8 billion dollars in the period between 1965 and 1972 (see Figure 1). When comparing the size of Vietnam-related procurement with the GNP of the countries around Vietnam, the ratio remained slightly less than 1% in 1965, but sharply increased in 1968 to 7.8% for Singapore, 4.7% for Thailand and 3.5% for Korea (Bank of Japan Research Department 1970: 4-7). Vietnam-related procurement had a large impact on Thailand and Korea, because these countries were deeply involved in the Vietnam War. Furthermore, foreign exchange reserves of the six countries around Vietnam reached 4.1 billion dollars by the end of 1969, increasing by 1.7 billion dollars, or 70%, from the end of 1964. This was due to annual increases in

Vietnam-related procurement and resulting continuous inflows. Therefore, the import capacity of each country had increased greatly.

The Vietnam War and the 'Miracle of East Asia'

The East Asian economy faced growth stagnation in the 1960s with a slowdown in primary goods exports, an increase in imports resulting from the promotion of development plans, and difficulty in international balance of payments after aid from developed countries peaked. Under such circumstances, the enormous amount of Vietnam-related procurement contributed a great deal to improving the international balance of payments of East Asian countries, and played a significant role in promoting economic development in the latter half of the 1960s. In addition, the escalation of the Vietnam War had an enormous impact on US foreign aid policy, with the US not only increasing military aid to East Asian countries, but also increasing economic aid and trade expansion. By the beginning of the 1960s, it had changed the economic climate in East Asia, which until then had been gloomy.

First of all, economic aid from developed countries to the East Asian region rapidly increased from the latter half of the 1960s. In particular, the East Asian region became an important target region for US economic and military aid. Looking at US economic aid, the target region had been mainly focused on South Asia until the first half of the 1960s, but from 1965 there was a significant shift to the East Asian region. As Figure 2 shows, while the amount of aid to South Asia rapidly decreased after 1965, aid to East Asia increased. In addition, looking at the amount of US economic aid to East Asia, its sum amount increased from 5.8 billion dollars between 1958 and 1965 to 8.3 billion dollars between 1966 and 1973, while the amount of aid to South Asia decreased from 11 billion dollars to 10 billion dollars over the same period (US Department Commerce Colonial to 1970, Part 3, 1971 to 1985, Part 3.). The target region of military aid also showed a significant change with a major increase in aid to East Asia and a considerable decrease in aid to the 'Near East and South Asia'.² Looking at the ratio of US military aid going to East Asia, between 1966 and 1973 the total amount of military aid was 24 billion dollars, of which 20.6 billion dollars, or 86%, was supplied to the East Asian region. Such increases in military aid helped decrease national defence costs in East Asian countries, and had extremely large economic effects by not only improving financial conditions, but also by the funds being used for economic development. In the case of Korea, the expansion of US military aid contributed a great deal in limiting national defence costs in Korean public finances, which allowed additional spending and increased fiscal investment and loans (Park 1993: 96–102). US foreign economic and military aid totalled 53.9 billion dollars between 1966 and 1973, of which 28.9 billion dollars, or 54%, went to East Asia. This demonstrates how significant US aid to the East Asian region was (Park 1997: 156).

Secondly, the escalation of the Vietnam War had a tremendous impact on Asian exports in the latter half of the 1960s. This impact was due not only to Vietnam-related procurement, but also to rapid entries into the US market. Exports by Asian countries sharply increased after 1965, rising from 8.8 billion dollars in 1964 to over 10 billion dollars in 1966 and to 20.2 billion dollars in 1972 (UN 1965–1973). The yearly average export growth rate was only 4% in 1959–64, but this jumped to 11.7% in 1965–72. Such rapid growth in the latter half of the 1960s was largely due to increases in exports to the US. Growth in Asian exports to the US exceeded the growth of total Asian exports, with yearly average export growth rates to the US increasing to 17% in 1965–72 from 8% in 1959–64. The amount of Asian exports to the US totalled only 3.8 billion dollars in 1964, but this increased to 9.6 billion dollars in 1970, 2.5 times more than in 1964. As a result, the proportion of Asian exports to the US rose to 24% in 1968 from 18% in the period between 1962 and 1964. Consequently, one quarter of Asian exports came to be for the US, making the US an important export market for Asia.

The amount of US imports began rapidly increasing after 1965 along with the escalation of

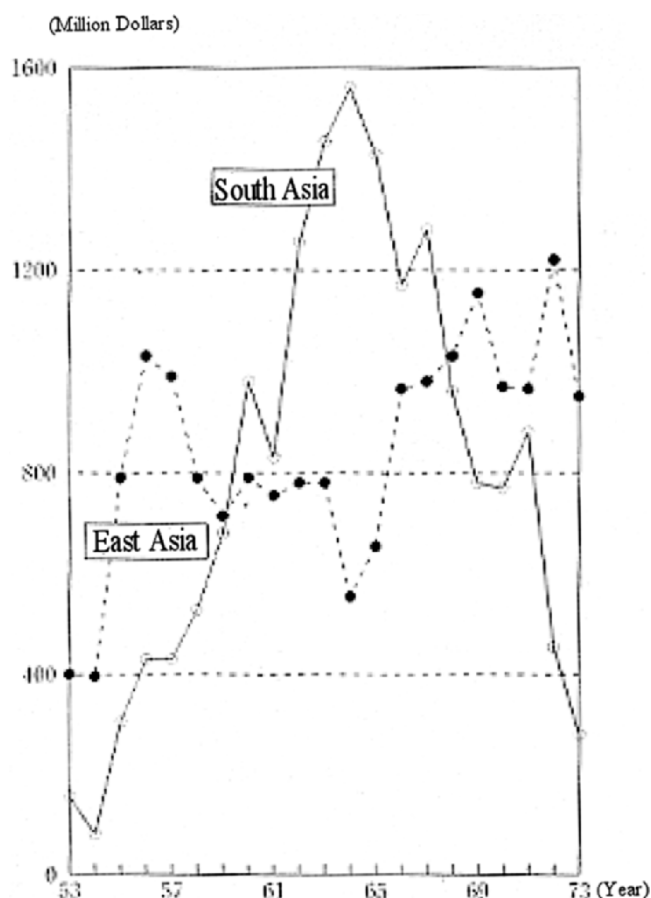


Figure 2. US Economic Aid in the Asian Region

(Source: US Department of Commerce, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial to 1970, 1971 to 1985)

the Vietnam War. Yearly average import increase rates reached a high of 14.8% in the 8 years between 1965 and 1972, from 5.6% in the 8 years in 1957 and 1964. The amount of imports grew three times to 55.6 billion dollars from 18.7 billion dollars in 1964, showing a significant increase after 1965. However, according to data, the increase in imports into the US was mainly due to imports from developed countries. While the increase of yearly average import rates from developing countries was 8.3% in 1965–72, the rate from developed countries was 18.4% in the same period. Imports from developed countries increased rapidly because industrial products were the main elements in munitions orders. The proportion of industrialized countries in the total amount of US imports increased largely to 73.7% in 1972 from 57.5% in 1964. In contrast, imports from developing countries continued to stagnate. As a result, the proportion of exports from developing countries rapidly decreased to 25.6% in 1972 from 42.0% in 1964. Therefore, it is difficult to say that the increase in US imports immediately provided a large market for developing countries.

While US imports from developing countries continued to stagnate in the latter half of the 1960s, the rate of imports from the East Asia region rose after 1965 (see Figure 3). The US yearly average increase for imports from East Asia was only 5.4% in 1960–64, but had risen to 20.4%

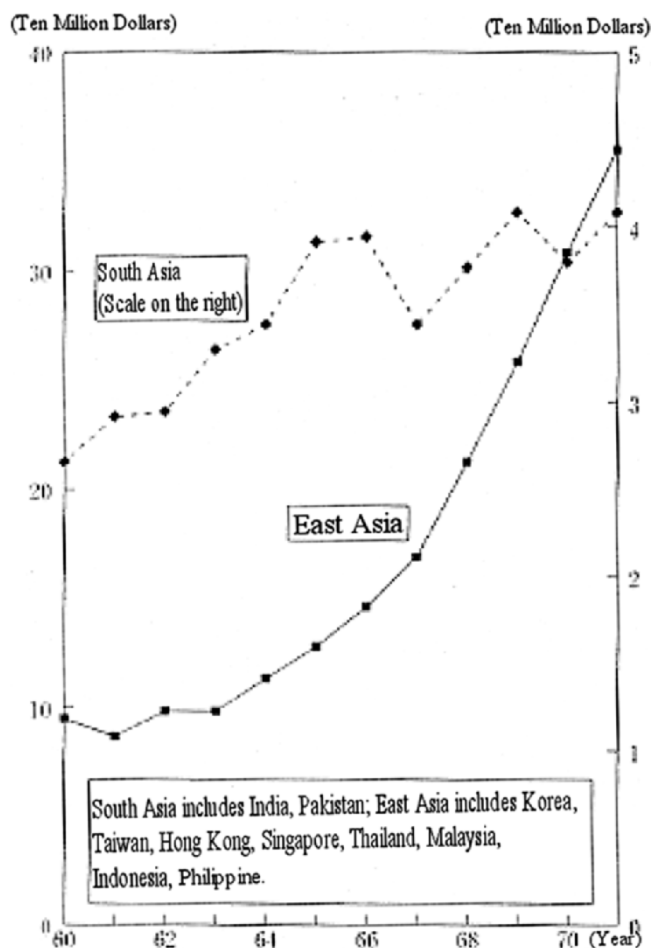


Figure 3. US Imports from the Asian Region

(Source: UN Yearbook of International Trade Statistics 1965–1973)

by 1965–72. Because imports from East Asia increased at a pace much faster than of overall US imports, the proportion of these countries in US imports increased to 8.6% in 1972 from 6.1% in 1964. Although the South Asia region's imports to the US had been steadily increasing at the beginning of the 1960s, they became stagnant in the latter half of the 1960s. In contrast to the stagnation and sharp drop in the proportion of US imports from the South Asia region, the proportion of imports from the East Asia region increased. It is obvious that the impact of the Vietnam War is one of the factors of this change.

The Vietnam War, which escalated and lasted over a long period of time, had an immeasurable impact on Asia's politics, economy, and society. Looking at the impact of the war from an economic perspective alone, not only Vietnam-related procurement, but the expansion of economic and military aid and exports also had an enormous impact on East Asia. This was due to the East Asian economy beginning to revive due to increased inflows of dollars along with the escalation of the Vietnam War, which allowed much higher growth compared with other developing countries. As Figure 4 shows, the rates of economic growth in East Asia after 1965 exceeded that of the first half of the 1960s, apart from the Philippines. In particular, growth

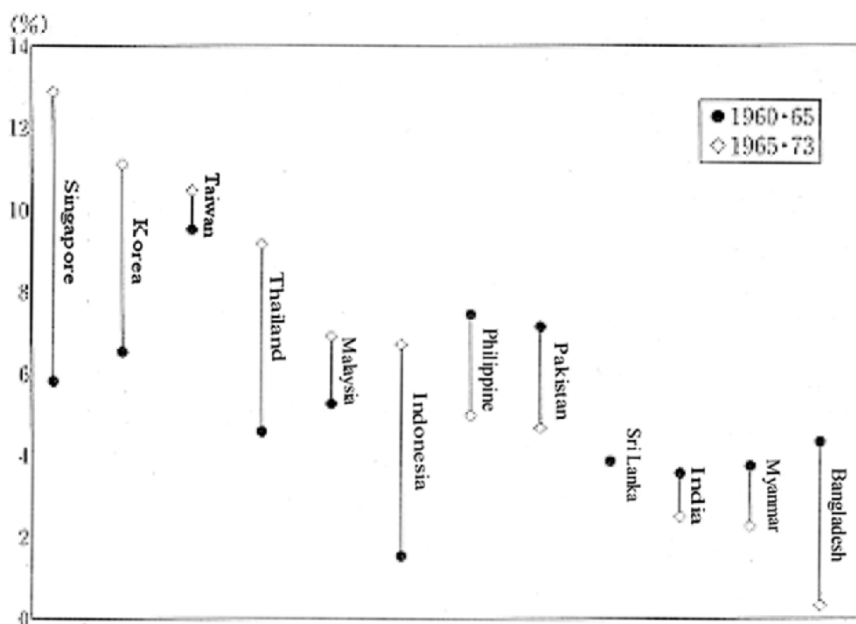


Figure 4. The Rates of Economic Growth in the Asian Region

(Source: World Bank, World Table 1976, UN Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East, 1971, p. 77)

was significant in Korea, Thailand and Singapore, where the impact of Vietnam-related procurement was large. On the other hand, South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, did not receive any economic benefits from the Vietnam War at all, resulting in lower growth rates compared to the first half of the 1960s. It can be said that this was the major turning point in history.

The Vietnam War and Korea

The 'Free World Assistance Program' and Korea

During the Vietnam War, the 'Free World Assistance Program' (commonly known as 'more flags'), appealed for by the US, was offered to the South Vietnamese government. From 1964, 39 countries cooperated in this program by supplying goods and making a military contribution. Korea played a significant role, sending a total of 310,000 soldiers until its withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973. Korea's dispatch started in September 1964 when 140 troops, including army surgeons, were sent. In February 1965, 2000 engineer soldiers, the so-called 'Dove Unit', were added. Furthermore, in October 1965, combat troops, including the Fierce Tiger Unit and the Blue Dragon Unit, began to be sent, taking the total number to around 18,000. Increased numbers of combat troops continued to be sent, reaching an annual figure of 50,000, the second highest after the US. In total, 312,853 soldiers were sent during the period between 1964 and 1975. As Table 2 shows, compared with other countries that sent troops, the size of Korea's dispatch is considerably larger, aside from the US. Furthermore, while other countries, outside the US, mainly sent non-combat troops, only Korea mainly sent combat troops. In other words, while other countries sent small numbers of non-combat troops, only Korea sent large numbers of combat troops.

Table 2. Troop strengths in Vietnam (1965–1972)

	(Unit: person)									
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972		
US	184,300	388,568	497,498	548,383	475,678	345,074	156,975	29,566		
Korea	20,620	45,605	48,839	49,869	49,755	48,478	45,663	37,438		
Taiwan	20	30	30	29	29	31	31	31		
Philippine	72	2,063	2,021	1,593	189	74	57	47		
Thailand	16	224	2,242	6,009	11,568	11,606	6,265	38		
Australia	1,557	4,533	6,597	7,492	7,643	6,793	1,816	128		
New Zealand	119	155	534	529	189	416	60	53		
Spain	0	12	13	11	10	7	□	□		

(Source: Park 1993: 15)

The US government started the 'more flags' campaign in April 1964, and promoted a plan to collect 70,000–80,000 soldiers to form the Free World Military Assistance Force (FWMAF). The US government sought military and policy cooperation in particular from the member nations of the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), including the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia and the UK. The US considered SEATO as group defence system to contain China and protect South Vietnam and South East Asian countries, and requested active support by member nations. In return, the US provided economic and military support and promoted the modernization of the armies of these countries. However, the majority of SEATO member nations did not change their passive attitude in providing military contribution. Only the Philippines showed interest in responding to the US requests. After secret negotiations continued between the US government and President Macapagal, the Philippines was expected to send 1800 soldiers, the largest of any military contribution (Position Paper on South East Asia, NSF, 1964). However, on 9 November 1964, President Macapagal was defeated in the presidential election. The newly elected President Marcos decided against a military contribution to Vietnam, and only showed positive interest in a revision of an economic agreement that had been granting privileges to Americans. In this way, the Philippines became a dispatch country in name only, betraying the US's expectations.

The 'more flags' campaign hence was the Free World Military Assistance Force in name only, and essentially the Vietnam War became an independent intervention by the US. In fact, 13 flags contributed a total number of only 584 soldiers (Third country Assistance to Vietnam, NSF).³ Therefore, the 'more flags' campaign had to shift its focus to a substantial 'more soldiers' campaign. Furthermore, in order to make up for the 1800 soldiers expected from the Philippines, the US had no choice but to request 'more soldiers' from Korea and Taiwan. However, although Taiwan had been discussing a division-scale dispatch with the US, they had to give up sending troops, because the US had rejected its offer due to the anti-Chinese sentiments of the Vietnamese. Korea also had several offers to send combat troops rejected by the US for the reason that 'it is not a war that requires combat troops'.

Korea and Taiwan, which responded to the US's request in December 1964, started preparations for dispatch, and were planning to head for Vietnam in January 1965. However, the US cancelled these plans with Taiwan immediately before the dispatch due to concerns that it would give a chance for China to intervene in the Vietnam War. Meanwhile, Korea sent 2000 engineer troops in February 1965 after being told by the US that 'it is not that kind of war' and being requested to send non-combat troops. However, all of a sudden, the US asked Korea to send a large number of combat troops. Thus, Korea sent 18,000 combat troops in October 1965. It was, in reality, only Korea that responded to the 'more combat troops' campaign when the war was escalating with the beginning of the bombing North Vietnam in February 1965 and the constant rolling thunder tactics on 2 March 1965. Furthermore, additional requests for more combat troops were made to Korea as a result of the US plan to gather 70,000–80,000 as the Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF). Therefore, Korea was able to send its 'dearest wish' of 50,000 troops annually under deadlock of the 'more flags' campaign and the escalation of the Vietnam War.

Regarding Korea's dispatch to Vietnam, there was a tacit understanding that the Korean troops in Vietnam were actually the US's 'mercenary soldiers'. For instance, the biggest issue at a public hearing in the US Senate was about battle allowances paid to Korean troops in Vietnam. It was pointed out at the hearing that Korean troops were receiving battle allowances and sought profit from the war, and they were the US's mercenary soldiers. The research that empirically clarified this issue is Blackburn's 'Mercenaries and Lyndon Johnson's "More flags"' (Blackburn 1994). According to Blackburn, Korean troops were the US's mercenary soldiers, and did not have any interest except to make money. However, Saratakes argues against Blackburn, saying, 'Korean troops in Vietnam were not under military control of the US army commanders. Also, it did not explain the reason for Korea's Vietnam dispatch policy' (Saratakes

Table 3. Military subsidy for soldiers of countries participated in South Vietnam War

Country /Range	(Unit: Dollar)				
	Korea	South Vietnam	Philippine	Thailand	America
Rear Admiral	354.2	217.4			1294.2
Vice-Admiral	320.0	212.4	641.6		1060.7
Captain	291.7	170.4	590.5	590.8	833.2
Commander	256.7	153.7	539.2	563.4	686.7
Lt Commander	224.6	138.6	500.8	518.4	601.5
Lieutenant	190.4	123.5	475.2	406.9	569.1
Lieutenant (JG)	166.7	111.7	454.7	395.2	483.9
Ensign	151.6	103.4	441.9	389.3	435.9
Warrant Officer	137.1	86.6	404.8		430.2
Sergeant Major	102.5	76.5	284.8	266.4	402.3
Sergeant	86.4	69.8	282.2	261.5	366.3
Corporal	82.9	68.1	279.6	257.6	333.4
Lance Corporal (leading Private)	64.5	62.6			304.8
Superior Private	56.8	58.5			259.2
Private First Class	51.4	57.2			238.7
Private	51.1	55.8			235.2

(Source: Park 1993)

1999: 425–449). Saratakes concludes Korea's dispatch to Vietnam was not for the interest of troops themselves but for Korea's 'national interests'.

Although the Korean government made various requests regarding 'national interests' when negotiating troop dispatch with the US government, it did not have much interest in requesting better treatment and security of soldiers. In official US documents, which have recently become public, Korea only asked for improvements in allowances from the US Government because allowances for Korean troops were less than those for South Vietnamese troops. This is in contrast with the Filipino government, who negotiated with the US to give the highest priority to the treatment and security issues of Filipino soldiers. In addition, as Table 3 shows, battle allowances for Korean troops were not only lower than that for the US army, they were only one fifth of those for the Filipino and Thai armies. Furthermore, battle allowances for lower level soldiers (privates), which accounted for the majority of Korean troops, were lower than those for Vietnamese troops, and the lowest of all countries who participated in the war. This is despite the fact that Korean troops were fighting in the most dangerous conditions, while other participating countries were not sending combat troops. A total of about 90,000 South Korean soldiers were killed or wounded, the largest loss. This included 5051 soldiers killed, 10,411 injured and 74,230 harmed by defoliant. 'The price for blood' was too low to be called mercenary soldiers. Even considering the profit that Korean companies made in loading and construction through dealings with the US army, and the income that Korean engineers made at the time, the damage was still too great. Korean troops were different from 'mercenary soldiers' who participated by their own will, because they had to obey 'orders' under extremely difficult decision-making conditions. Furthermore, Korean troops were sent to Vietnam under national orders based on the Korean government's principle of prioritizing the 'national interest'. Thus, it would be more accurate to describe Korean troops as 'sacrifices' of the Park Chung Hee regime's modernization policy, rather than 'mercenary soldiers'.

Korea's dispatch to Vietnam and 'killing three birds plus alpha with one stone'

The US CIA's report on Korea analyses the motivation of Korea's dispatch to Vietnam as a combination of justice and interest. In other words, it was combined motivation of justification, or 'obligation repayment' to the US's positive support during the Korean War in 1950, and interest or economic profit from the war, similar to how Japan had made massive economic profits from the Korean War (CIA Report, NSF 1966). The Korean government showed strong interest in Vietnam-related procurement until it sent non-combat troops. President Park Chung Hee and senior government officials, who knew more than anyone else that the Korean War was divine wind for the postwar Japanese economy, were behind this interest. They pinned their hopes on the US's Vietnam-related procurement, and appealed to the US to ensure economic profits.

The Korean government began actively to request profits of 'modernization' from the US from the point when Korea sent combat troops. The larger the size of the dispatch and importance of Korean troops in the Vietnam War became, the more support the Korean government expected from the US. Korea's requests to the US were mainly about Vietnam-related procurement and the reduction of military support before the dispatch of combat troops. However, when Korea began to send large numbers of combat troops, their requests escalated to include economic development and security issues. In response, the US highly valued Korea's military contribution to Vietnam, and considered Korea as 'a staunch friend of United States, on with whom the US has especially close and friendly ties', and provided unlimited 'special support' (Memorandum of Conversation, NSF 1965). To indicate Korea's contribution level, Rostow often used an index comparing the number of troops sent to Vietnam out of the total population (see Table 4). Korea did make simply a rudimentary contribution to Vietnam; rather, its contribution level was about as same as the US. The contribution level of the US was 0.16% and that of Korea was 0.14%, indicating the significance of Korea's contribution.

Furthermore, the performance of the South Korean economy below that of North Korea was another important factor for US support of Korea. A strong Korean economy was necessary in order to make Korea 'a breakwater that protects from communism'. As Table 5 shows, North Korea was more advanced than South Korea in industrial production. 'The most practical and effective way to frustrate North Korean tactics to alienate the ROK people from the government and from US is to accelerate the ROK's economic development' (ROK Economic Development as the Answer to North Korea 1968).

A memorandum about Korea's dispatch of combat troops was exchanged between the US

Table 4. Troop strengths in Vietnam as a percentage of national populations

	National Populations (million)	Troop Strengths in Vietnam	Percentage (%)
US	197.5	316,381	0.16
Korea	29	40,974	0.14
Philippine	33.5	981	0.003
Australia	11.6	4495	0.039
New Zealand	2.5	162	0.006
South Vietnam	16.5	709,477	4.3

(Source: Troop Strengths in Vietnam as Percentage of National Populations, October 10, 1966, Asian Trip Cys of memos, Files of Walt W. Rostow, Box 8, NSF, LBJ Library.

Table 5. Industrial productivity

	Korea (1971)	North Korea (1970)
Coal (1000 tons)	14,000	23,000–25,000
Electricity (million kWh)	8,000	16,000–17,000
Steel production (1000 tons)	686	1,600–1,800
Chemical Fertilizers (1000 tons)	374	1,500–1,700
Cement (1000 tons)	4,520	4,000–4,500

(Source: ROK Economic Development as the Answer to North Korea 29 Februray 1968, Korea Cables and Memos Vol. 5 (9/1967–3/1968), Korea, Box 255, NSF, LBJ Library.)

government and the Korean government. It was formed on 4 March 1966, and is called the ‘The Brown Memorandum’. The commitment was formed after many negotiations between the Korea and US governments about the dispatch of combat troops, and in response to strong requests from Korea, and concretely stated what the US would offer in return. In the process of the negotiations, Brown, the American Ambassador to Korea, reported to US Vice President, Humphrey, on the Korean government’s attitude to the dispatch of combat troops. The report analysed that Korea’s dispatch to Vietnam would have an effect of ‘killing three birds plus alpha with one stone’: build up Korean industry, Train ROK Troops, and strengthen the long range ties of friendships between our two countries (Cable 1966a).

There was an understanding that there had been tenacious negotiations between Korea and the US when sending Korean troops to Vietnam, because it was difficult for Korea to reject the US’s request. The negotiations between the two governments over the ‘The Brown Memorandum’ are often mentioned as proof of such negotiations. The Korean government suggested various conditions to the US government in order to get as many concessions as possible from the US. However, according to Ambassador Brown, in reality the Korean government played only a ‘one-man stage play’ in an attempt to create the impression of tenacious negotiations to impress the Korean public (Cable 1966b). In other words, the Korean government ‘performed’, in order not to be seen as the US’s ‘mercenary soldiers’. The entire contents of the joint statement of the ‘The Brown Memorandum’ was not revealed by the Korean government’s will; only security issues were revealed, leaving issues regarding the economic burden in secret.

The ‘give and take’ relationship between Korea and the US

The participation of Korean troops in the Vietnam War played a large role in Korea’s foreign economic relationships, particularly with the US. The relationship between Korea and the US faced an important turning point when Korea sent combat troops to Vietnam. In the latter half of 1960s, the US President, Vice President and senior government officials often visited Korea, seen as a small country situated in the Far East. The relationship between Korea and the US became intimate, and it was the first time in history that top-level meetings between Korea and the US were held almost every year. President Park Chung Hee’s visit to the US in 1965 marked a turning point in the relationship between Korea and the US, and also became a chance for Korea to have a stronger voice when dealing with the US. Since the dispatch of combat troops in particular, the Korea–US relationship rapidly changed to an ‘interdependence’ relationship rather than a one-sided relationship dominated by the US. The report of President Park Chung Hee’s visit to the US says that President Park Chung Hee showed strong ‘initiative’ and cooperative diplomacy with the US based on ‘give and take’ principles (Korean Central Intelligence Agency 1965: 6).

The US played a significant role in the high growth of the Korean economy after Korea's dispatch of combat troops to Vietnam. According to President Johnson's memo regarding the US's role in Korea's economic growth, 'The US has provided substantial amounts of economic and technical assistance to Korea and has played a direct role in influencing and charting Korea's economic policies' (Memorandum for the President, NFS 1968). At the same time, Korean government officials in charge of policy argued against policy officials in the US government that the Korean economy should achieve rapid development under Vietnam-related procurement in the same way Japan experienced a postwar recovery due to special demand from the Korean War. However, the US provided policy suggestions and positive support focusing on Korea achieving economic independency, rather than temporary economic profits due to Vietnam-related procurement.

It was Walt W. Rostow who backed up the US's Korean development policy. Rostow was an academic who proposed the importance to the US of constructing 'Self-sustained Growth' in third world countries. Rostow was also a person who had a tremendous impact on US foreign policy formation, being an Acting Assistant to President Kennedy and an Assistant to President Johnson. Rostow became deeply involved in Korean development policy since visiting Korea in May 1965 to begin pre-negotiations on topics for the Korea-US top-level meeting. In particular, Rostow had a strong interest in the second 5-year economic development plan, and was actively involved in it from policy advice to policy support (WWR memorandum of conversation on Korean economy, NSF 1966).

Korea: Towards a time of high economic growth

When summarizing the characteristics of Korea's high economic growth, the following two factors should be pointed out; first, being driven by export expansion, Korea achieved much higher growth compared with other countries; second, the growth triggered a rapid progress in industrial structure, or the so-called 'Compressed Pattern of Development Economics'.

Korea at the beginning of the 1960s fell into a 'vicious circle of poverty', typical of a developing country with little savings and investment, and of which half was supplied by the US. Korea did not have any industries except for agriculture, had few natural resources, and more than 40% of the population was in the 'absolute poverty stratum'. Furthermore, income per capita was below 100 dollars, exports were extremely low, and Korea's balance of international payments continued to show chronic deficits. To make things even worse, there was speculation of a foreign currency crisis at the end of 1964, because foreign currency holdings had fallen to 130 million dollars at the end of 1964 from 205 million dollars at the end of 1961. However, the Korean economy, which was falling into the 'vicious circle of poverty' at the beginning of the 1960s, achieved astonishing development in the latter half of the 1960s. The development of the Korean economy in the latter half of the 1960s was remarkable, and showed a surprising growth rate. Yearly average growth rates rose to 11.8% in the latter half of the 1960s from 5.5% in the first half of the 1960s. This previously unknown high economic growth was reflected in the GNP per capita figure, which rose to 319 dollars in 1972 from 103 dollars in 1964. The impact that the Vietnam War had on the economic growth in the latter half of the 1960s was tremendous. This was due not only to the Vietnam-related procurement, but also to rapid progress in export-oriented industrialization, which supported high economic growth.

Vietnam-related procurement and its economic impact

As the Vietnam War continued over a long period of time, economic profits increased. The war resulted in a total amount of Vietnam-related procurement of 1.22 billion dollars between 1965 and 1972 (Park 1993: 19). This is almost as much as the total amount of

foreign currency importation from Japan of 1.89 billion dollars during the same period.⁴ Furthermore, the scale was enormous. Compared with only 0.6% in 1965, it accounted for 3.0% of Korea's GNP in 1969, 3.2% in 1968, and 3.5% in 1967. Thus, it played a large role in benefiting the Korean economy. It is estimated the Korean War-related procurement accounted for 3.8% of Japanese GNP. In this perspective, although the impact of Vietnam-related procurement on Korea did not quite reach the level that Japan experienced, because the Vietnam-related procurement lasted over longer period, the total impact was larger than that on Japan. Also, the impact was mainly through remittance of dispatched troops and engineers, and military-related services, such as military supply of construction and loading. This total reached 738.9 million dollars, or 72% of the total Vietnam-related procurement amount. Looking at the breakdown of the total amount of Vietnam-related procurement, 306.77 million dollars, or 36%, was from remittance of dispatched troops and engineers, 286.5 million dollars, or 28%, was from military supplies for construction and loading, 283.1 million dollars, or 27.7%, was from merchandise exports (including military goods) and 84.70 million dollars, or 8.3%, was from other factors including insurance.

Taking advantage of Vietnam-related procurement, many companies succeeded in boosting their new industries, which supported company expansion. Those companies grew to become financial cliques, or chaebol, which represent modern day Korea. Examples of such are Hyundai, Dong-a, Hanjin and Daewoo. In the case of Hyundai, Hyundai Construction, which forms a core part of the group, grew rapidly by being taken on as subcontractor of a major US construction company and by entering into the cleaning business. The company made profits of 2.8 billion won during the period between 1966 and 1972. Considering sales were 374 million won in 1965, this increase was astonishing. Using these profits, the company established Hyundai Automobile and Hyundai Heavy Industry, and built up its status as a new chaebol through business expansion in the heavy industry area. Hanjin chaebol made 25 million dollars (about 7 billion won) annually in the military goods transportation business, and became the highest income earner in Korea for 4 years from 1968 to 1971. It is also remarkable that 'Cheil Jedang', a major company of the Samsung chaebol, recorded sales of 1.6 billion won in 1965. With capital from Vietnam-related procurement, it built a basis as a new chaebol, expanding its business to the transportation market by taking over Korean Air Lines from the Korean government in 1969.

Furthermore, many construction companies, aside from Hyundai Construction, achieved a rapid growth as new chaebol, taking advantage of Vietnam-related procurement. Companies such as Daewoo Construction, Sam Hwan Company and Dong-a construction became massive enterprises. Growing rapidly in the construction area, they undertook construction work in harbours and dredging and military construction as subcontractors of major US construction companies. Furthermore, Korean construction companies, after accumulating construction expertise during the Vietnam War, turned their eyes to overseas markets, causing a Middle-East construction boom. Korean construction companies took orders of major construction work from Middle Eastern oil-producing countries with excess dollars. The amount of these orders totalled 13.4 billion dollars in 1982. Along with such a move, migrant workers to the Middle East increased from 1976 to 100,000 in 1979, and peaked at 151,000 in 1982. As a result, the total amount of remittance of migrant workers and construction profit reached 19 billion dollars during the period between 1976 and 1982. This amount is equal to 18% of Korea's total export amount during the same period (The Federation of Korean Industries 1983: 11; Korea National Statistical Office 1993 2/4).

Economic development and industrialization

From the latter half of the 1960s, Korea's industrialization developed to a considerable degree. Needless to say, it was active investments that supported the development. The total invest-

ment increase rate was only 18.2% in the first half of 1960s, but this rate jumped to 33.8% in the latter half of the 1960s. As a result, the rate of total domestic investment in GNP jumped to 23.0% in the latter half of the 1960s from 14.0% in the first half of the 1960s. In fact, high investments at the time were supported by imports of foreign capital. The US played an extremely important role in importing foreign capital. For instance, the US estimated the total investment funds necessary for Korea's second 5-year economic development plan, and examined in detail how much foreign capital was needed and from where to import it. Thus, the US not only increased economic support based on the 'The Brown Memorandum', but also strengthened pressure on Japan to normalize relationships with Korea. Furthermore, the US asked for a consortium for Korea to the World Bank, IMF and European countries. As a result, the total amount of foreign capital importation reached 4.09 billion dollars from 1966 to 1972. The US contributed 1.97 billion dollars, or 48%, Japan contributed 1.09 billion dollars, or 27% and a loan from International Economic Cooperation Organization for Korea (IECOK), which was established by calls from the US, exceeded 1.004 billion dollars. Needless to say, this foreign capital supported rapid industrialization. Meanwhile, the Korean government intervened strongly in the distribution of foreign capital, and used its strong influence on private corporations particularly through policy money.

Also, in the case of Korea, fiscal investment and loans contributed a great deal to capital formation, accounting for 30% of domestic total capital formation throughout the 1960s. Furthermore, although fiscal investment and loans were only about 30 billion won in the first half of the 1960s, they had jumped to 309.8 billion won by 1972. As a result, the ratio to GNP rose to 7.7% in 1972 from 3.3% in 1964. Fiscal investment and loans were mainly distributed from the government's budget, and were used as public investment for infrastructure. However, to increase fiscal investment and loans, Korea's fiscal policy strived to reduce national defence expenditure, the most rigid part that accounted for more than 30% of fiscal expenditure. However, the ratio of national defence expenditure to total fiscal expenditure fell to 22.3% in 1969 from 33.2% in 1964, marking the lowest level in Korean history. It was under such circumstances that tensions with North Korea increased in the latter half of the 1960s. There was increased military support for Korea from the US to modernize Korean troops based on the 'The Brown Memorandum' following such a decrease in the national defence expenditure. The amount of US military support to Korea sharply increased to about 1.608 billion dollars during the period between 1966 and 1970 from about 820 million dollars during a period between 1961 and 1965. This is a large amount, accounting for 37.1% of Korea's fiscal expenditure during the same period. Thus, it is not too much to say that the expansion of US military support for Korea had an extremely strong economic effect, in the respect that it expanded fiscal investment and loans while pressuring national defence expenditures, in addition to the original purpose of modernization of the Korean army.

To develop new products, improve technology and strengthen international competitiveness, industrial technology development is necessary above anything else. To achieve this, having technological skills that can directly contribute to industrial technology and research activities is important. It was the Korean Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) that was in charge of the important role of developing Korea's technology and educating capable people. In fact, at the Park-Johnson summit meeting in 1965, President Johnson himself suggested an establishment of the Korean Institute of Science and Technology, in response to an inquiry from Dr Hoenik, President Johnson's Scientific Advisor, about what the US can do to promote Korea's science and technology (Memorandum for the President, NSF 1966). It was allegedly suggested in return for President Johnson's personal appreciation of Korea's large-scale dispatch of combat troops. In February 1966, the Integrated Research Institute, consisting of 15 research departments including chemistry, metals and electronics, and a technology centre, was established by a 10 million dollar support fund and high-level technology from the US. This played a tremendous role in Korea's industrial development.

Export-oriented industrialization and the triangle of growth

Due to the expansion of economic cooperation between Korea and the US coinciding with increases in Korean troop participation in the Vietnam War after 1965, Korea entered a high growth era with sharply increasing exports and a rapid advance of export-oriented industrialization. Since then, the terms *export-dependent economy* and *export-oriented industrialization* began to be mentioned because of increases in the export-to-GNP ratio and the export-to-industrial production ratio.

Total trade was only 376 million dollars in 1960, but rose to 2.819 billion dollars in 1973 and to 332.748 billion dollars in 2000 (Korea National Statistical Office, March 2001). The characteristics of Korea's trading expansion in the latter half of the 1960s included not only the considerable growth, but also the participation in the world trading market, and diversification of exporting partners and trading industrial products. First, the amount of exports increased to 3.225 billion dollars in 1973 from 119.1 million dollars in 1964, an increase of 27 times. The growth rate of Korea's exports was significantly high compared with the world average. The 49.8% growth rate in Korean exports during the same period largely exceeded the world average exports growth rate of 16.5%. The ratio of Korean exports in world export increased to 0.8% in 1973 from 0.1% in 1965. Imports of intermediate goods and capital goods, and exports of manufactured goods played a significant role in helping to achieve rapid participation in the world trading market.

Furthermore, a rapid increase in exports in the latter half of the 1960s was achieved due to the expansion of exports in industrial products. Korea's export industrialization rate rose to 75% in 1969 from 13% in 1960 (United Nations 1970). Looking at the 10 major export products, primary products such as mine products, raw materials and agriculture and marine products accounted for 62% of total exports in 1961. In 1970, the top 10 products were industrial products, including textile goods, plywood, footwear, electric products and metal products, suggesting that Korea's export-oriented industrialization was led by these industries. Also, it shows that it was in the latter half of the 1960s when export-oriented industrialization led by exports of industrial products started to gain momentum.

The high economic growth in the 1960s was achieved through export-oriented industrialization due to the expansion of exports of industrial products. This is also explained by two factors: first, that the government's 'exports for exports' sake' development strategy prompted by the shortage of foreign currency; and secondly, the existence of the US's preferential policy created by the dispatch of Korean troops to Vietnam.

At the Park-Johnson summit in May 1965, Korea's dispatch of combat troops was practically decided, and the US promised in return to expand economic and military aid to Korea, and to increase exports of Korean products to the US. A part of this was included in the 'Park-Johnson Joint Statement' announced on 18 May 1965. The joint statement was a total of 14 pages, one of which was about the US promise to increase exports of Korean products to the US. President Park Chung Hee emphasized that the US's continuous cooperation was necessary for Korea to achieve a Self-sustained Growth, and especially asked for the expansion of Korean exports. President Johnson indicated his view that Korea's export expansion was important, and clarified that the US would to continue its efforts to promote trade with Korea (Joint Communiqué, NSF 1965). Given the favourable climate, at the outcome meeting and policy meeting during President Park's visit to the US on 25 May 1965, it was decided to set a target for an increase in exports of 300 million dollars during the first stage (Korean Central Intelligence Agency 1965: 89).

At that time, the US had a policy called 'Buy American', which encouraged the purchase of necessary goods for the Vietnam War from countries participating in the war if not enough were supplied within the US. However, at the Park-Johnson summit meeting, it was promised that the Buy American policy would be relaxed with regards to Korea (Korean Central

Intelligence Agency 1965: 89). First, the ratio of exports to the US of total Korean exports was 20–25% in the beginning of the 1960s before any troops were dispatched to Vietnam. This rose to over 50% in 1968 and 1969, and accounted for an average of 46% during the period between 1965 and 1972 when Korea sent troops to Vietnam. Therefore, the fact that about half of Korea's exports during the same period went to the US suggests that the US accounted for a large portion of Korea's exports during the period when Korea was sending troops to Vietnam.

This raises the question of how many of the munitions for the US were supplied from Korea. According to material from the US House of Representatives, munitions supply from Korea by the US Department of State and the US Agency for International Development rose to 400 million dollars from 1966 to 1970, among which 250 million dollars went to the US (House of Representatives 1978). This amount accounts for 20% of total exports to the US during the same period, with one fifth of exports to the US being war supplies. Korea was given the highest priority to receive orders of war supplies in return to sending the second largest-number of troops after the US to Vietnam.

Furthermore, there was a strong industrial policy called 'Ball mission' promoted by the US as a part of Korea's export expansion to the US. The Park-Johnson meeting held in Seoul in November 1966 agreed that the expansion of US investment and trading to Korea was ideal for Korea's economic growth. The aim of the mission was to promote investment and trading. Ball's mission, led by former Vice-Secretary of State George Ball, was supported by three agencies: the Department of State, the Department of Commerce and the Agency for International Development (Memorandum for the President, NSF 1967).⁵

Entrepreneurs and bankers representing the US participated in this mission to promote investment and trade with Korea. George Ball directly sent the outcome report of the mission to President Johnson. The contents are as follows: 'the mission of industrialists and bankers I had organized to explore trade opportunities in South Korea. You asked me at that time to let you know the results we were able to achieve. Of twenty-three companies other than banks, represented on the mission, seventeen have already taken follow-up steps in Korea or have advised me of their plans to do so; three others said they would increase or begin purchases from Korea but did not intend to manufacture there; two of the remaining three have not yet advised me of their intentions, while only one company has reported definitely that it had no further plans. We can conclude from this that at least ninety percent of the companies represented on the mission will at least go forward with careful feasibility studies.' (Letter, NSF 1967).

Being supported by strong US policy, foreign direct investment into Korea jumped from the latter half of the 1960s. The amount of direct investment, which was only 11 million dollars until 1965, rose to 245 million dollars in total from 1966 to 1972. Looking at the amount of approved direct investment amount by country, as Table 6 shows, as of 25 March 1969, the number of direct investments totalled 117, and the total value of the investments reached approximately 100 million dollars. The US made 57 investments, worth 65 million dollars, accounting for 48.7% and 67.0% respectively of total investment in Korea. Furthermore, investment by Koreans living in Japan was significant at the time, with the number of investments at 25 and an amount of 12.25 million dollars, accounting for 21.4% and 12.6% of the total respectively. These figures largely exceeded that of Japan. Direct investment in the latter half of the 1960s was mainly in fertilizers, chemicals, fibres, and electrical and electronic goods. Particularly in the electrical and electronic area, US investment accounted for a significant amount.

In Korea, along with the rapid increase in exports, a majority of the raw materials, intermediate goods, and capital goods necessary for the production of export goods, was covered by imports. Looking at the dependence on imports of raw materials by major export products, clothing accounted for 70%, footwear for 60%, electric parts for 60%, and electronic

Table 6. Overseas investment approval status

(Unit: Thousand Dollars)				
Country	No. of Approval	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
US	57	48.7%	64,963	67.0%
Korean in US	2	1.7%	304	0.3%
Japan	17	14.5%	6,929	7.1%
Korean in Japan	25	21.4%	12,254	12.6%
Panama	5	4.3%	3,810	3.9%
West Germany	3	2.6%	794	0.8%
Hong Kong	2	1.7%	1,704	1.8%
Netherlands	2	1.7%	4,608	4.8%
Others	4	3.4%	1,582	1.6%
Total		100.0%	96,948	100.0%

(Note: Data as of March 25, 1969)

(Source: *The Japanese Economic Investigative Committee: 'Report on the Status of Overseas Investment in Korea'*, 1969, p. 11)

machinery for 50% (Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry 1971: 21–37). In addition, the majority of raw materials and intermediate goods used in export industries were imported from Japan. 'Trade Yearbook' from the Japan Tariff Association comments on Japan's export increase to Korea as follows:

Vietnam-related procurement is bringing larger amount of orders to Korea and Taiwan rather than Japan. Just as Japan received a large amount of war-related procurement during the Korea War, Korea and Taiwan are receiving the majority of orders from Vietnam-related procurement at present... Because of this, Japan's exports to Korea have significantly increased recently. As long as Vietnam-related procurement lasts, Japan's exports to Korea and Taiwan are expected to sharply increase' (Japan Tariff Association 1966: 39).

Such dependency on Japan was a basic feature of Korean industry's processed trade, where industries supporting the export industry were not well developed. The Japan Tariff Association's 'Trade Yearbook' analyses the import situation of raw materials at the time as follows:

Exports to Korea saw a large increase of 190.3 million dollars, or 65.6% year-on-year, in 1965. The increase in exports was the second largest after Indonesia in Asian exporting market. This is because Vietnam-related procurement had only a cushioned impact on Japan. In other words, most raw materials including military uniforms and jungle shoes were imported from Japan, and what Korea did was only the processing. This is because a Japan-Korea-US army route was established. (Japan Tariff Association 1966: 87).

Korea achieved high economic growth by importing raw materials and capital goods from Japan and exporting final consumer goods produced and processed using low-cost domestic labour to the US. Thus, taking participation in the Vietnam War as an opportunity, Korea formed international specialization relationships with the US and Japan, and was able to set up conditions for high economic growth and export-oriented industrialization in the Korea-Japan-US triangle trading structure.

The sorrow and memory of the war

The tragedy of defoliant

Although more than 20 years have passed since the end of the Vietnam War, the damage of the war is still profound and many people still bear pain from the war. Korea sent large numbers of combat troops, who killed many Vietnamese people and shed blood themselves. Korean soldiers were injured from the use of defoliant, and incurred significant psychological damage after returning from the war, which cast a dark shadow on Korea's high economic growth society. Similar to the US, many people still suffer from mental disorders, including health problems caused by the defoliant, resulting in suicides and having a serious impact on Korean society. According to the Defoliant After-effects Comrade Association of Korea, 74,230 returned soldiers suffer from peripheral nerve neurosis, lung cancer, skin cancer and general paralysis. Ten thousand people had already died due to the after-effects of defoliant as of May 2001. In addition, the number of 'second generation patients' born from parents suffering these after-effects is increasing.⁶

The US sprayed a large amount of defoliant from aeroplanes to jungles and fields between 1961 and 1971. The aim was to destroy the base and food source of the Vietnamese liberation force. The defoliant contained the deadly poison dioxin, and its effects not only destroyed the ecosystem but also tortured more than 2 million people with various skin diseases, cancer and birth problems. The damage from the defoliant was starting to be seen not only among Vietnamese people, but also amongst returned US and Korean soldiers. The US, and Korean soldiers, who were supposedly the wrongdoers, ended up suffering as victims. More than 200,000 returned US soldiers became victims of the defoliant, with the rate of incidence estimated to be about 10%. On the other hand, Korea victims total more than 80,000 and the rate of incidence was about 27%, meaning that one in four soldiers became victims. The reason behind the much higher rate of incidence in Korea than the US is that some 60 million litres, or 80%, of the 75 million litres of a defoliant called 'Agent Orange' sprayed by the US Air Force, was sprayed on the area in which the Korea troops were operating.⁷ Furthermore, Korean troops were in the jungle for the cleanup operation after spraying, and sometimes were even being sprayed during the cleanup operation. In addition, although the US government knew it was poison, it reinforced its defoliation tactics with utmost secrecy, spraying the defoliant in a concentrated torrential downpour-style from 1967 to 1969 (Nakamura 1995: 67). The cleanup operation by Korean troops was being conducted at the same time.

Furthermore, although the defoliant injured Korean troops, they had no choice but to maintain silence under the military regime. In the 1970s, problems caused by the defoliant were closed up as a social issue in the US, prompting many lawsuits by the victims against the US government and defoliant production companies, as well as public hearings at the US Congress. However, not only under the Park Chung Hee regime, but also under the Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo regimes, the after-effects of the defoliant were seen as a 'taboo', and even the actual conditions were not clarified. After President Park Chung Hee was murdered, it was expected that the military regime would end and 'Spring of Seoul' would come. However, the military took over the regime again after the coup d'état of Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, resulting in a 32-year military regime. Moreover, another reason behind the damage of the defoliant being hidden was that Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo were the successful commanders at the Vietnam War, and were given opportunities of social success. Speech control was strict under the military regime, and reporters who wrote critical articles on participation to the Vietnam War in newspapers or magazines were taken to the police or were dismissed from work. When the Joongang Daily newspaper reported on the defoliant problem in 1984, the Chun Doo Hwan regime dismissed the reporter and pressured other media not to report the issue, effectively standardizing speech control.⁸ Furthermore, the fact that members of the armed forces supported the military regime as civilians and military values penetrated

into all of Korean society was another reason behind that the defoliant issue being taboo. The ratio of former members of the armed forces in political and administrative executive position rose to 44% in the 1960s from 8.8% in the 1950s (Chi 1995: 56).

However, with democratization, Korean finally won freedom of speech, and 'taboo areas' were finally removed. Since the Korean media reported a lawsuit by a defoliant victim in the US, the actual circumstances of defoliant victims in Korea began to become clear. The September issue of 'Shin Dong-A' in 1992 did a cover story called 'Patients of defoliant are dying', and reported the conditions of the victims in detail. The story reported that returned soldiers were now fighting the second war against 'death', and that the pain of the patients is affecting their children's generation and threatening the whole family with 'shades of death' (Kim 1992: 532–541). According to the Defoliant After-effects Comrade Association of Korea, 10,000 defoliant victims died after suffering from skin and peripheral nerve diseases without receiving the proper treatment because the causes were unknown. In addition, the 20-year long fight under medical treatment triggered poverty and family disruption. Many victims were abandoned by their wives, as there was no prospect for cure and the medical treatment costs continued to increase despite there being no income. On 10 May 1993, a law concerning the after-effects of defoliant was brought into force, and as of May 2001 about 44,000 people were receiving medical subsidies or medical support totalling 20,000–40,000 yen per month.⁹

In fact, the Korean military regime was not only hiding the damage from the defoliant, but also disliked references to Korean troops' participation to the Vietnam War. Therefore, it is also a fact that the number of young people who do not even know the history of Korea's participation in the war is increasing. It was the release of the movie called 'White Badge' that provided an opportunity for those young people to increase their interests in Vietnam War and to review the Vietnam War for Korea. The movie, which was the first Korean movie about Korea's participation in the Vietnam War, was highly acclaimed for its description from a Korean's own point of view, and won the main prize and the best director prize at the Tokyo International Film Festival in 1992. The movie garnered social attention as it was based on the novel 'White Badge',¹⁰ written by a returned soldier from the Vietnam War, Ahn Junghyo, and starred a top Korean star, An Seong Ki. Newspapers and magazines ran many cover stories on 'Korea's Vietnam War participation' based on the movie. Moreover, the description of Korean troops' massacre of Vietnamese civilians led people's attention to the truth.

Another 'Sanguang Strategy'

Thanks to efforts by the Hankyoreh newspaper and NGO 'Nawauri' (I and us), facts about how the Korean troops massacred Vietnamese civilians were revealed. Based on the material 'War Criminal Investigation Report — Crimes by Korean Troops in South Vietnam' published by the Vietnam Political Department, the 'Hankyoreh 21' collected stories from survivors in five provinces in central Vietnam where Korean troops operated, and published these as a series of special reports on Vietnam (Hankyoreh newspaper 1999: 56–59). In addition, KBC television produced a programme in February 2000 called 'The Truth of the Vietnam War Memorial' based on the investigation by 'Hankyoreh 21'. The programme showed the deeply pained testimony of former soldiers about civilian massacres, making an enormous impact on Korean society (KBS 2000). In the meantime, according to the 'The War History of the Korean Army's Dispatch to Vietnam' by the Korean National Defence Department, during the participation to the Vietnam War, Korean troops were involved in over 580,000 battles, including 1174 large-scale operations and 576,302 small-scale operations. As a result, Korea lost approximately 5000 soldiers, and achieved the 'military results' of shooting 41,462 'enemies'. However, recent testimonies and historical materials estimate that there were at least 9000 civilians included in his definition of the 'enemies' (Ku 2002).¹¹

Regarding such civilian massacres of civilians, although the former Supreme Commander of

the Korean Dispatch to Vietnam, Choi Myung Shin, admitted that Korean troops killed civilians, he argued that it was inevitable in guerrilla warfare, as it is difficult to distinguish between enemies and allies. Also, he argued, 'historically we were the only army that tried to protect civilians. We did good deeds for Vietnamese people. We planted rice. We built houses and held parties for children' (Noda 2001: 237). In fact, Korean troops contributed a great deal to support activities for civilians by improving roads, building hospitals and schools and providing daily necessities. However, it can be said that such arguments have no persuasiveness due to the following two points. First of all, these arguments are not only similar to those that attempt to deny Japan's aggressive war, but they are also extremely self-centred. Kyoto Women's University Professor, Masaaki Noda, who interviewed Korean soldiers sent to Vietnam as a psychiatrist, is critical, 'This is same theory as Japanese conservatives who insist Japan promoted Korea's modernization and prepared infrastructures through colonial rule. There is only "us" in this theory, and is no link to any others. It totally ignores those Vietnamese massacred and the sorrow of their families' (Noda 2001: 238). Secondly, based on testimonies by Korean soldiers, it is highly likely that this was done systematically and indiscriminately, and cannot be explained only by the reasoning that it was a 'morass war' (KBS 2000, Noda 2001: 236-247, Kyung 2000: 254-281).

The massacre of civilians by Korean troops was a major problem, not only because the scale was considerable, but also because it is highly likely that it was done systematically and indiscriminately. I would like to examine the background of such genocide. This paper aims to examine the issue by arguing the following three factors, (1) the anti-Communist ideology of Korean troops, (2) the cleanup operation of Korean troops and (3) the competition of 'military results' under Korea commanders. First, Korean troops' anti-Communist ideology can be considered as one of the factors behind the civilian massacres. Anti-Communist ideology was considered as a national policy by the Rhee Syngman and Park Chung Hee regimes after the Korean War, changing Koreans' social awareness. Also, such anti-Communist ideology was planted by political rulers empirically and emotionally, rather than being formed by Koreans themselves who understood it ideologically and theoretically. In particular, political rulers pushed the empirical anti-Communist ideology based on the tragedy of the Korean War. They introduced brainwashing education, which taught that Communists were equal to wolves. Furthermore, Korean troops' anti-Communist consciousness, being impelled by the extreme conditions during the Korean War, viewed communism as the enemy. This led to the distorted ideology that 'Reds' were not human beings and it would not matter if they were killed. For Korean soldiers who had such strong feelings, the Vietnamese Liberation Army and the civilians who support it were all the same 'Reds', who were not viewed as human beings and therefore could be killed. Thus, it was a sign of further tragedy that Korean troops in Vietnam obtained the right to command their own battles while being supported by the US.

Second, I would like to consider competition over 'military results' among Korean commanders, and the 'tragedy of war' that the competition triggered. The Vietnam War for Korean troops was a 'training ground' to gain practical battle experience. For officer levels in particular, the war was a 'competition field' to test their abilities and obtain a 'medal'. Originally, one of the most significant motivations for Korea to participate in the Vietnam War was that the battlefield was the best training ground for soldiers. In addition, wars have always provided the best promotion opportunities for many members of the armed forces. Needless to say, military results were the best valuation method for promotion. Officer level servicepersons dreamed about 'success' while risking their lives to participate in the war. While most Korean soldiers participated under orders, officer level service persons competed to participate.

Since 'military results' became the basis of assessment on the battlefield, commanders who were seeking opportunities to succeed were in competition over military results. The competition over 'military results' went so far that it became an issue even within the Korean army. Regarding this, a general of the White Horse Unit at the time said, 'The White Horse Unit

judges the results of the battle from the number of seized weapons. The Fierce Tiger Unit, which competed with the number of kills it had made, killed too many', (Kameyama 1970) emphasizing 'killed too many'. These words 'killed too many' reflected not only jealousy from the White Horse Unit, but also that the Fierce Tiger Unit killed too many civilians who had done no wrong. As a result of competing by the 'number of kills' they had made, Korean troops added the number of massacred civilians to their 'number of kills' to improve their 'military results'. This is proof that for commanders, 'promotion' and 'military results' were the only significant issues, and not 'freedom' and 'human life'. Korean commanders seemed to consider civilian massacres as a good chance to achieve 'military results', so they ignored human massacres, or even encouraged them. In fact, commanders not only ignored civilian massacres, but also used to report them as 'military results', purchasing National Liberation Front of South Vietnam weapons at the black market to make the massacres look like acts by the 'Viet Cong' (You 1992: 156). A company commander explained the conditions at the time by saying, 'the Vietnam War created bad traditions in Korean troops of false reporting. Because they reported exaggerated military results, it became a custom to ensure military results by cutting off victims' ears. In many cases, guns were purchased from the Viet Cong on the black market to report them as collected weapons, or to report mistakenly shot civilians as military results. False reports should have been strictly punished at court-martials, but because there were so many they simply became a custom' (You 1992: 159). In other words, not only did they not raise the problem of civilian massacres, they even created a custom of reporting massacred civilians as 'military results' to create opportunities for their own success. For instance, former Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo are examples of successful commanders with glorious military results, who seized power at a coup d'état after President Park Chung Hee was murdered. Chun Doo Hwan led the 'bat 28' operation in Hon Chu on 29 January 1971, as the Commander of the No. 29 regiment of the White Horse Unit. He reported the Unit's military results as having 'shot and killed 326 Viet Cong', most of which were actually women and children in a village (Nakamura 1995: 144). Such 'military results' were recognized and he was promoted to a general, where he was appointed as leader of the Special Airborne Unit. Using his experiences in Vietnam, he ordered airborne troops to attack civilians in Kwangju in 1980 where people were demanding democracy. Many civilians and students were indiscriminately massacred.

Third, the Korean troops' 'cleanup operation' also contributed to civilian massacres. The Supreme Army Commander in Vietnam, Choi Myung Shin, argued that they tried to protect 'good citizens' and did not massacre these 'good citizens'. It suggests that civilians were merely either 'good citizens' or 'not good citizens', or in other words, 'white' or 'black' to Korean troops with anti-Communist sentiments. The ideology that anti-Communists are 'good citizens' and people who are not anti-Communist are 'Red' must have existed. In fact, they distinguished 'good citizens' by putting up signs saying, 'even if you miss 100 Viet Cong, you cannot touch even good citizen'. In the meantime, they conducted the cleanup operation under a tactical strategy which attacked civilians themselves by saying 'it is better to shoot mistakenly than to miss', 'what you see are all Viet Cong', 'draw water (people) and catch fish (Viet Cong)', 'children are spies', 'houses with holes are all Viet Cong'. Furthermore, the cleanup operation was developed under a slogan 'kill all, plunder all, burn all' (Ku 1999: 44). This cleanup operation was similar to the Sanguang (Three-All) Strategy of the massacres in China by Japanese troops.

Mr Chung Jinsu, who is suffering from postwar neurosis, testified to the repeated cruel acts by saying,

we were putting up a tent and covering it with sticks and leaves to camouflage it. Three were shot and injured trying to get the sticks and leaves. The senior soldier was a bloodthirsty killer, and with his anger he said to kill all the villagers who failed to

escape. I chased more than 20 women, children, and older people into a pit of about 15 meters created after the bombing, and threw in hand grenades and shot them as I was ordered. When the cloud of dust vanished, I heard someone crying. A girl was screaming. There was a face. I shot it. My mind was blank and I felt nothing (Noda 2001: 241).

Also, 'Hankyoreh 21' reported on the pattern of civilian massacres by Korean troops based on testimonies of survivors (Hankyoreh newspaper 1999: 59).

They would gather residents (mostly women, older people and children) in one place, divide them into groups, and shoot and kill them all with a machine gun. They would chase all the residents into one house, shoot them, set fire to the house and burn them all including the survivors, smash the heads of children, slit their throats, cut off their arms and legs, and throw them into the fire, rape the women in turn and kill them, stomp on the stomachs of pregnant women with their army boots until the unborn fetus came out, and chase residents into pits in the village and kill them with poison gas.

It is clear that in the process of the cleanup operation by the Korean troops, 'civilians' were considered enemies from the beginning, and were not simply victims caught up in the 'morass war'. It was the cleanup operation, which was just like the 'Sanguang Strategy', which caused the most serious problems in terms of the cruel acts of 'slaughter'. These were repeated, leading to increases in the number of victims. In other words, the repeated actions of Korean troops, including tactics of killing and injuring unarmed civilians and burning human beings despite being prohibited by International Wartime Law, was a repeat of the 'Sanguang Strategy'.

NGOs and the 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation'

The Vietnamese government does not seek compensation nor hope to make this information available to the public, despite knowing that Korean troops massacred civilians. However, a movement to seek their own responsibilities as wrongdoers, and not only as war victims, is active in Korea now. Amongst the mass media and NGOs in particular, a 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation on Vietnam civilian massacre' is being promoted. The Hankyoreh newspaper started a Vietnam fundraising campaign as a part of the Vietnam 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation', resulting in 142.89 million won in funds having been collected as of March 2002.¹² There are plans to found a 'Peace Park (tentative name)' in Vietnam with these funds, and the groundbreaking ceremony for the park was held in April 2002. In addition, the 'Korean Truth Committee on the Vietnam War' amongst NGOs is continuing its investigations, and is also promoting the 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation' at the same time. In particular, they are promoting the 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation' with various programmes such as a peace music festival. The production of a CD entitled 'Forgive us, Vietnam!' is one such programme. This CD was produced by musicians who participated in the requiem performance for Vietnamese victims called 'Saigon, Songs of that Day'. It contains requiem songs for the victims of the Vietnam War, and also an apology message for the people of present-day Vietnam. Ms Mun Myunggeum, a former comfort woman to the Japanese army, responded to this 'Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation' by contributing 43 million won, which was given to her as national compensation from the Korean government, to the 'Korean Truth Committee on the Vietnam War'. These funds are to be used in the construction of 'Peace History Museum (tentative name)' in addition to the 'Peace Park'. Fund raising has begun, and construction should be complete in 2004.

While the Campaign for Truth and Reconciliation is continuing amongst the mass media and NGOs, the government has started to act. President Kim Dae Jung apologized to Vietnam for Korea's participation to the Vietnam War at the summit meeting with the Vietnamese National Chairman Tran Duc Luong on 23 August 2001, going further than his 'regret'

comments of three years earlier. At the meeting, President Kim also revealed his intention to construct hospitals in five provinces in central Vietnam. A three million dollar budget was allotted for the hospital construction project, and Korea is aiming to complete construction by 2004. The construction of 40 primary schools was planned in the 'five central provinces' of Vietnam in 2000, among which 20 schools have already been completed. Korea's Vietnam support project concentrating on the five provinces in central Vietnam symbolizes the 'dark history' there. These 'five central provinces' of Vietnam are Quang Ngai, Quang Nam, Phu Yen, Binh Dinh and Khanh Hoa, where Korean troops of the Fierce Tiger, Blue Dragon and White Horse Units repeatedly undertook 'cleanup operations' in which many civilians were massacred. Also, in January 2002, the Korean government officially raised the issue, making it a topic for the Korean Permanent National Security Council. In response, the Ministry of National Defence obtained materials on the Vietnam War criminal investigations and the US Civilian Report, and has begun to examine the facts.

Conclusions

The Vietnam War had an enormous impact on the 'Miracle of the East Asia'. First, dollar revenues increased due to military goods supplies and purchases of services by the US army, resulting in Vietnam-related procurement of 10.8 billion dollars between 1965 and 1972. Along with the expansion of the war, US aid was added to income stemming from Vietnam-related procurement, leading to a total of 8.3 billion dollars in US aid to the East Asian region between 1966 and 1973. Furthermore, East Asian exports to the US sharply increased, providing the opportunity to launch the export-oriented industrialization of East Asia. As a result, production ability rapidly increased in East Asia, and high economic growth became possible.

In particular, Korea's high economic growth was achieved not only due to a product of policy, but also due to favourable external conditions and the importance of ample foreign capital such as official development assistance (ODA) and bank loans. Such favourable external conditions were brought about by Korea's dispatch of troops to Vietnam rather than as a result of the situation in the international political economy surrounding the intense postwar East-West stand off. It may be more accurate to say that the Park Chung Hee regime actively promoted the dispatch of Korean troops to Vietnam to overcome the stagnant Korean economic situation in 1964 after the first 5-year plan launched in 1962 failed due to decreased US aid and the failure of fund procurement. Furthermore, Korea asked for capital, technological and market support in return for the dispatch of Korean troops to Vietnam, as shown in The Brown Memorandum. Thus, rather than temporary Vietnam-related procurement, Korea achieved a basic structure of industrialization, or rather infrastructure maintenance, including electricity and roads, and developed basic industries.

It was the latter half of the 1960s when Korea, which is often mentioned as a typical example of export-oriented industrialization, launched its exports. The scale of exports was extremely small — much smaller than most Asian countries — before the early 1960s. For instance, looking at the total amount of exports in 1962, Indian exports totalled 1.4 billion dollars, Singapore 1.1 billion dollars, Indonesia 682 million dollars, the Philippines 563 million dollars, Pakistan 397 million dollars and Korea was only 55 million dollars, the lowest level in Asia and less than one seventh those of Pakistan. However, 'luckily', Korea created favourable conditions for economic development triggered by its participation in the Vietnam War.

It is a common view that export-oriented industrialization was achieved by actively promoting a 'market liberalization policy'. However, the impact of the Vietnam War on Korea's economic development prompted by export-oriented industrialization is immeasurable. In particular, the 'triangle of the growth' cannot be well explained by economic policy alone. Korea achieved export-oriented industrialization by importing capital goods and raw industrial materials from Japan, by engaging in construction and processing using low-cost domestic

labour, and exporting final consumer products to the US market. When entering the massive US market, the special political and economic conditions of 'give and take' between the US and Korea, as apparent in 'Ball's mission' and Rostow's policy intervention, played a very significant role. The dispatch of Korean troops to Vietnam was also important as a political and economic condition of the 'give and take' arrangement.

It was the Vietnam War that provided a rare opportunity for Korea to launch its high growth and export-oriented industrialization. It is correct to say that using the trump card of its participation in the Vietnam War, Korea created a favourable international political economic environment for export-oriented industrialization, and was able to walk the path to high growth. Due to the effect of 'killing three birds plus alpha with one stone' brought about by troop dispatch to Vietnam, Korea established an export-led economic structure and achieved a high growth rate of the kind not seen in the rest of the world.

However, Korea also incurred many losses by participating in the Vietnam War. Korea sent a large number combat troops to Vietnam, who massacred many Vietnamese, bled themselves, were injured by the use of defoliant and incurred mental anguish after returning home to Korea, casting a dark shadow on the high growth society. In particular, not only was the compensation insufficient for those who had long been suffering from the after-effects of the war, or the so-called 'Vietnam syndrome', but the investigation on postwar neurosis is also yet to be done.

One bereft family, while holding the body of their dead son in their arms, screamed, 'Park Chung Hee, you bastard! Revive my son!' Over 30 years have passed since then, and amidst the spreading argument over rights and wrongs, the planned construction of 'Park Chung Hee Memorial Hall' with funding by the Korean government is progressing. The aim is to praise the achievements of President Park Chung Hee in 'modernizing' Korea, but it is also a fact that it praises his 'shadowy achievements', such as his politics of tyranny due to his military dictatorship. Rather than only judging his responsibility concerning various issues over the dispatch to Vietnam, the 'Park Chung Hee Memorial Hall' should also commemorate how many people were massacred and how many people are still suffering from after-effects of the war because of the dispatch of Korean troops.

Furthermore, in order to build trust with the Vietnamese people, it is necessary to add descriptions of Korea's participation in the Vietnam War from the Vietnamese perspective into history textbooks. The current history textbooks state only that 'Korean troops were sent to Vietnam to protect freedom'. Similar to Japan, there is hardly any opportunity to learn about this kind of history through school education, increasing the number of young people who do not even understand such historical facts. In order to avoid problems similar to Japan's 'history textbook problem', it is important to deal seriously with the issue as soon as possible. In this perspective, Japan is a good example of how not to behave.

Furthermore, although the Korean government itself is 'in reality compensating' for the civilian massacre problem, it must be said that its actions are still passive. First, it is necessary to deal more actively with fact-finding and truth investigations by establishing investigation committees within the government. At the same time, investigations are necessary to seek not only facts but also reasons for the cruel and inhumane acts that occurred under the Korean troops' so-called 'Sungang Strategy'. In addition, it is more important to clarify the Korean government's responsibility concerning these war crimes, and along with this, to offer compensation at a national level, and to apologize for, and offer compensation to, killed and injured people and their families.

Notes

1. In this paper, the definition of East Asia includes countries situated on the east side of Thailand as well as South-East Asia. These eight countries include Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, The Philippines and Indonesia. South Asia includes India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

2. The US military aid definition for East Asia includes Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Thailand, and 'Near East and South Asia' includes Egypt, Turkey, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
3. 167 Australians, 140 Koreans, 85 Taiwanese, 80 Japanese, 34 Filipinos, 32 New Zealanders, 17 Thais, 12 Western Germans, 9 Italians, 7 British, 2 Canadian, and a supply of training fields for guerrilla fighting by Malaysia and a supply of microscopes from Sweden.
4. A total amount of official development assistance (ODA), bank loans and direct investment.
5. It was difficult to find documentary records on the role of Ball's mission despite its significance. The author was given a chance to learn about the role by an official document released to the public only recently.
6. Defoliant After-effects Comrade Association of Korea, The present situation of defoliant patients, (<http://www.kaova.or.kr>), 9 February 2002.
7. Defoliant After-effects Comrade Association of Korea, What is defoliant?, (<http://www.kaova.or.kr>), 28 February 2002.
8. Defoliant After-effect Comrade Association of Korea, What is defoliant?
9. The lawsuit by defoliant victims against six American companies — including The Dow Chemical Company — in July 1994 was rejected and received no compensation.
10. This was published serially in the literary magazine 'Shilchon Munhak', but the magazine was discontinued by the Chun Doo Hwan regime.
11. According to official statistics of the Vietnam Ministry of Culture and Information alone, 5000 civilians are included.
12. Hankyoreh 21 Fund Raising Campaign (<http://www.hani.co.kr/h21/vietnam/vietnam.htm>).

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